

## **SUPPORT ASSISTANT (BUSINESS DISCUSSION GROUPS) AIS Ref: SA/BDG/22/01**

AI Services (NI) Ltd, as the CAFRE appointed contractor wishes to expand its team of Support Assistants located throughout Northern Ireland to deliver elements of the DAERA Knowledge Transfer Programme through their Business Discussion Groups (BDG) & Technology Demonstration Farms (TDF).

### **BACKGROUND TO THE SCHEME**

CAFRE use the BDG learning model to deliver its' industry training, knowledge and technology transfer, benchmarking and business development provision to provide an holistic roadmap of services which will improve the business and technical efficiency of participating farm businesses. 150 BDGs have been formed, each containing between 15 and 20 farmers/growers.

Each BDG is facilitated by a CAFRE Development Adviser (or a Specialist Technical Facilitator) with the help of a Support Assistant. The range of duties that the Support Assistant will undertake will depend on specific programme requirements.

### **DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

This position shall require the individual to provide support of up to eight Business Development Groups across the Dairying, Beef, Sheep, Arable or Environmental sectors. The main roles of the Support Assistant shall be to:

***Capture data/financial & Carbon benchmarking*** – Support Assistants shall visit each farm that has been identified by CAFRE and work with the farmer to collect the relevant data required to complete a full financial or carbon benchmark. The data collected by the Support Assistant shall be recorded and submitted online by them to CAFRE for processing.

***Training farmers/growers to benchmark*** – Support Assistants shall be required to provide one to one training (on farm) to farmers/growers to encourage them to collect and submit their own data.

***Training Event Support*** – The Support Assistant shall assist the CAFRE Development Adviser with the preparation of on farm training events, either on BDG's or TDF's. This shall include:

- Collating physical benchmarking data and presenting this information to group members
- Carrying out Health & Safety Risk Assessments on farm, prior to training events
- Carrying out bio-security checks on host farms
- Erection of signage/display boards
- Preparation of training aids

***Technical skills training*** – Support Assistants shall attend each training event and upon request from the CAFRE Development Adviser, shall deliver specific skills training that shall complement the topic the group have discussed.

***Administrative duties*** shall include:

- Issuing invites to group members
- Booking venues for training events
- Recording attendance and evaluation forms

## **SUPPORT ASSISTANT JOB CRITERIA**

### **Essential Criteria**

- Level 3 qualification in agriculture/horticulture or closely related subject (equivalent to a National Diploma)
- Sector specific knowledge of the agricultural industry, e.g. dairying/beef/sheep/cereals
- ICT literacy - competent in the use of Excel/Microsoft Office/Powerpoint
- Excellent communication skills
- Knowledge and understanding of on farm benchmarking
- CIEH Level 3 Award (or equivalent) in Risk Assessment (prior to commencing duties).
- Knowledge of APHIS online
- Ability to work irregular hours, i.e. evenings

### **Desirable Criteria**

- Previous experience of financial benchmarking and its benefits
- Computer literacy qualification
- Experience of providing a support service to the agricultural/horticultural industry
- Previous experience of liaison with farmers/DAERA/CAFRE technical staff
- First Aid Certificate
- Demonstration of handling confidential information/data

## **REMUNERATION PACKAGE – OTE £22.5k per annum**

- This position offers a competitive basic salary of £12,506 per annum
- Completion and approval of a benchmark 'fee' paid at £140 per business (100+ benchmarks to be completed per year)
- Mileage is paid at NICS rates for all business miles incurred.  
On target bonus is payable on completion of the initial contract.
- Flexible working hours and working from home are an attractive part of this package.
- Annual leave of 21 days plus 8 Statutory days per annum

## **NOTES**

- You will need to have access to a vehicle to carry out your duties.
- The Benchmarking 'fee' will only be paid following Contract Manager validation that the benchmarking data collation has been satisfactorily completed
- It is envisaged that Support Assistants will collect and collate data at a time arranged to be mutually agreeable with the BDG member – flexibility of time available may be an advantage
- You shall be required to attend all Training Events as scheduled by the CAFRE Development Adviser or Specialist Technical Facilitator (up to 8 per group)
- You shall be provided with a laptop computer and mobile phone for work purposes
- You shall be provided with training by both the Contract Management and CAFRE
- AI Services can arrange for you to attend CIEH training to achieve Level 3 Award in risk assessment principles and practice. The cost of training shall be borne by Ai Services.

## **CLOSING DATE FOR RECEIPT OF COMPLETED APPLICATION FORMS**

Completed application forms must be returned to Linda Peoples, Ai Services, Ballycraigy, 671 Antrim Rd, Newtownabbey, Co. Antrim. BT36 4RL or by e-mail to [lpeoples@ai-services.co.uk](mailto:lpeoples@ai-services.co.uk) to arrive no later than 12pm on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> January 2022.

Candidates are reminded that the application form must be fully completed. Incomplete application forms will not be considered. CV's, letters or any other supplementary material will not be accepted in place or in addition to completed application forms. Only the information presented in the application form will be considered by the Selection Panel.

Where applicants hold a qualification which is not a level 3 in agriculture or horticulture but is a closely related subject, CAFRE will decide on the eligibility of related disciplines.

*Ai Services (NI) Ltd is an equal Opportunity Employer.*

*The Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 is part financed by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA).*