

Internship

Transfer and upscaling of innovations for nature restoration

THE ORGANISATION

ACTeon is a French-based human size (20 staff) research and consultancy company active in the field of ecological and climate transition in Europe. It is specialised in the “soft” components of environmental management and policy, i.e. social values & perceptions, economics including economic values of ecosystem’s services, incentives (knowledge, processes, economic instruments) to steer change in behaviour, prospective and policy (*ex-ante* and *ex-post*) evaluation, governance & institutions, and mediation & communication. ACTeon is providing support to policy development, implementation and evaluation at different scales (from local to European) in the field of marine resources, water, biodiversity, climate change and adaptation, agriculture and the environment, renewable energy, etc. The geographic focus of its activities includes France, Europe, the Mediterranean Sea and the Caucasus regions. For more information: www.acteon-environment.eu

THE OBJECTIVES OF THE INTERNSHIP

ACTeon is looking for an intern to contribute to its research on **development, diffusion and upscaling of innovations (including nature-based solutions) supporting the restoration of aquatic ecosystems.**

The research and the internship are linked to two EU-funded research projects **ECODALLI** (<https://ecodalli.eu>) and **A-AAgora** (<https://a-aagora.eu>) in which ACTeon plays a lead role in relation to innovation transfer and upscaling. Both projects aim at identifying the right enabling conditions (including in terms of innovation ecosystem and services) that will support a wide application and upscaling of technological, institutional and social innovations including Nature Based Solutions¹.

The projects contribute to the so-called area-based **Lighthouses** (Danube-Black Sea for ECODALLI, Atlantic-Arctic for A-AAgora) that have been rolled out to support the achievement of the ambition of the **EU Mission “Restore our Ocean and Waters by 2030”** in particular the achievement of the EU Green Deal marine and freshwater targets. The mission calls for innovative and transformative solutions to protect and restore marine and freshwater ecosystems and biodiversity, to prevent and eliminate pollution of our seas and water and to make the blue economy sustainable. The lighthouses that act as hubs for the development, demonstration and deployment of innovative solutions will help increasing their technological and societal readiness levels and set conditions that will enable the transfer and upscaling of the most promising ones.

The objective of the internship will be to develop and apply a framework to analyze the development, diffusion and upscaling of innovative solutions that contribute to the restoration of aquatic ecosystems, in particular Nature Based Solutions. The framework will need to account for the unique/typical characteristics of the types of innovations considered, providing a detailed understanding of existing barriers to innovation upscaling as well as levers, including in terms of innovation ecosystem governance and innovation services.

¹ For example, NBS can be a technical solution or a process innovation (the innovation lies in the governance approach, business models, citizen engagement required to accelerate their development...); NBS provide mainly public value (i.e. water retention services, biodiversity, protection against flooding). Meaning that the added value of the innovation does not flow directly to the developer in terms of financial compensation, and which has consequences for the design of business models; The success of NBS is not only judged by commercial criteria (market share, profits), but (also) by social impacts, impact on ecosystems, biodiversity, landscape.

WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT TO DO DURING YOUR INTERNSHIP?

As intern, you will:

- **Review the international scientific and grey literature** on key frameworks and approaches to study innovation ecosystems as well as their applications and adaptation to innovations that contribute to nature restoration;
- Identify **key research questions** (including via interviews with key researchers and stakeholders associated to both projects) that need to be addressed in relation to the transfer and upscaling of innovations that supports the restoration and protection of aquatic ecosystems;
- Propose a **conceptual framework** that allows for the systematic analysis of the transfer and upscaling of nature restoration innovations, including Nature Based Solutions;
- **Test and apply the conceptual framework** to contexts/demonstrators/case studies proposed under the two research projects: taking stock of the (technical, economic, governance...) innovations proposed; accounting for activities and (stakeholder) processes put in place within the frame of the projects; contributing to information gathering (e.g. online surveys, in-depth interviews, extraction of data from existing databases...); carrying out their analysis to derive answers to research questions;
- **Report**, presenting in particular: (1) key results related to barriers and levers that can steer transfer and upscaling; (2) lessons from the application of the proposed conceptual framework; (3) areas that would require further investigation beyond the scope of the internship;
- **Share** your research results and recommendations – orally during a seminar (for ACTeon staff and interested partners) and in a two-page synthesis note to be disseminated.

You will work in **close collaboration with Acteon's staff and project partners**. Building on a first literature review and scoping interviews with key researchers, the initial phase of your internship will provide you the opportunity to develop a more detailed description of tasks to be carried out during your internship (including tasks not listed above but necessary for the completion of your work) as well as a detailed workplan.

WHO ARE WE LOOKING FOR?

- **Master student** in **Environmental Economics, Innovation Management, Management or Business**;
- **Taste & skills** for developing and applying (**analytical**) **frameworks** to innovation upscaling;
- Knowledge of **innovations supporting nature restoration**, including Nature Based Solution or Ecosystem Based Management, is seen as an advantage;
- **Proactive** with **intellectual curiosity**, able to work **autonomously** with a strong **team & collective spirit**
- **Committed** to ecological and climate transitions;
- Excellent **English (written and oral)** communication skills. Mastering French is seen as an advantage;
- Currently **enrolled** in University degree or engineering school.

ADMINISTRATIVE & WORKING ARRANGEMENTS

The internship will take place at ACTeon's Colmar office (France – 30 minutes by public transport from Strasbourg or Basel). The intern will receive a regular internship allowance as defined by French law. The internship duration is expected to be **6 months** starting ideally in September 2023.

HOW to APPLY?

You can apply **by September 5th 2023** at the latest by sending your application (including a cover letter and a CV) to: **Rianne van Duinen, senior economist, at r.van-duinen@acteon-environment.eu**. The screening of applications being a continuous process, the vacancy will be closed as soon as a suitable candidate has been found.