



TERMS OF REFERENCE – RESEARCH OFFICER

Reporting to: Science Director

Introduction

Ya'axché staff are expected to work cooperatively with others, demonstrate flexibility in organizing work, have good communication skills and demonstrate thoughtfulness in decision making. Staff must be non-judgmental and receptive, live up to the values of integrity, respect and professionalism while reflecting genuine concern toward both the biosphere and the communities where Ya'axché is active.

The Research Officer is responsible for supporting Ya'axché's Science Program by assisting with trainings for research and monitoring activities, overseeing research and monitoring related to freshwater and vegetation, managing databases, conducting analysis, and writing reports. The position also assists with equipment inventory and disseminating results of research and monitoring to communities.

The Research Officer maintains strong relationships with the Science Program staff, PAM and COL staff, and student partners of Ya'axché.

Primary relationships

- Supervisor: Science Director
- Science program staff
- Protected Areas Program Director
- Protected Areas Manager
- COL team
- Communications and Education teams
- Visiting researchers and student groups

Key areas of responsibility

- Science Program Support
- Biodiversity Research and Monitoring Support
- Fieldwork and Logistics Coordination Support
- Data Analysis and Reporting Support

Accountabilities:

1. Provide support and training to research and monitoring rangers to ensure proper data collection in field activities related to freshwater quality and vegetation.
2. Continuous data management, cleaning, and entry to appropriate databases for freshwater and vegetation, and other program areas as needed.
3. Work with the Science team in planning, designing, and modifying monitoring methodologies where appropriate and ensuring that the ranger team is informed of any changes.
4. Assist with data analysis for freshwater quality and vegetation and contribute to annual and project reports requiring this data.

5. Assist in coordinating field work, logistics, and implementation for any projects which require freshwater and vegetation expertise.
6. With Science team, develop and refine investigative data sheets for the program as needed and inform rangers.
7. Identify native bees and freshwater macroinvertebrates with guidance from the Science Director.
8. Assist the Science Manager in the maintenance and seasonal inventory of equipment for the Science Program.
9. Support the Science Program with the development of Education and Outreach materials for dissemination to schools and Ya'axché educational activities and community forums and meetings.
10. Liaise with COL team to share results of research and monitoring activities to communities.
11. Manage external relationships related to this position.
12. Take on other duties and responsibilities related to the Science Program or other Ya'axché programs/activities not mentioned in this ToR, that may arise from time to time.

Outcomes to be achieved by the position:

Goals/Outcomes	Indicators
<p>1. Research & Monitoring Branch Support</p> <p>Scientifically sound and effectively functioning research, inventory, and monitoring activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ranger team is collecting high quality data ▪ RIM activities are scheduled each month according to the Biodiversity Research, Inventory, and Monitoring protocol 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 90% of scheduled monitoring activities are accomplished on time having considered logistical limitations beyond Ya'axché's control ▪ In collaboration with Science Director, at least 4 biodiversity training sessions are held annually for Research and Monitoring rangers based on needs assessment ▪ BRIM guidelines are updated as the need arises based on new developments in science and technology
<p>2. Data Management and Reporting</p> <p>Accurate and complete freshwater and vegetation data entered in databases on a regular basis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Accurate data collection and robust analysis which informs management decisions ▪ Databases are maintained to facilitate analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ranger monitoring data are entered in an accurate and timely manner ▪ Databases are maintained and improved where necessary; where recommendations are made, new databases created to accommodate new data sets ▪ Data storage safeguards are in place (backup of electronic and proper storage of hard copy) ▪ All data are ready for analysis by the end of the year ▪ Farmscape and State of the Park reports are

produced annually in collaboration with Science Director

3. *Research & Monitoring Branch Project Activities*

Efficiently implement projects as outlined in the funding agreements.

- Ya'axché's donors satisfied with quality and professionalism of Research Branch
 - Project research activities contribute to Ya'axché's decision making process for management of protected areas
 - Public awareness of Research Branch activities is increased
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- 100% of project research activities are completed where feasible and modified where necessary
 - Project supporting documentation submitted to project manager in a timely manner
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4. *External Relationships and Outreach*

Contribute to the organization's overall success by communication with partners.

- Contribute to Ya'axché's reputation as a reliable, science-based organization
 - Raise public awareness of the science behind Ya'axché's messages
 - Science Program contributes effectively to the implementation of education and awareness events
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- All current partner relationships remain strong and support establishment of new collaborations
 - Ya'axche is represented at national working groups, workshops, and other relevant meetings
 - With COL and Communications teams, science program activities/findings are regularly shared with communities and the public
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Qualifications:

Essential

- Minimum of a bachelor's degree in Conservation Science, Biology, Natural Resource Management, Applied Ecology or a related field.
- Alternatively, 2 years in field research and data handling and management
- Ability to work with a diverse team and diverse cultures.
- Proactive at work and willing to learn
- Ability to work independently and within a team
- Ability to work in remote and dense jungle for an extended period of time
- Experience working on research projects
- Capacity to do basic statistical analysis
- Excellent technical writing skills

Desired

- Experience identifying Belizean flora
- Driver's license