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| **Project:** | |
| **Title: PhD student placement opportunity –** *“How does antimicrobial resistance (AMR) enter and spread via the water environment, impacting on animal and human health?”* | |
| The Water and Flood Division of Welsh Government is seeking a PhD student for a placement opportunity within one of its teams. Water is one of Wales’ most valuable natural assets and an essential contributor to our economy. The Water team is responsible for developing bespoke policy for Wales for sustainably managing its water systems, including inland waters, estuaries and coastal waters. The team also oversees the effective functioning of Wales’ water industry and safeguards drinking water quality in line with statutory specifications.  The team‘s remit falls under the portfolio of the Minister for Energy, Economy and Rural Affairs which supports delivery objectives identified under primary legislation such as the Environment Act and Wellbeing of Future Generations Act. The team works closely with a wide variety of internal and external stakeholders and representatives of the UK Government and the other Devolved Administrations.  **Purpose of the Post**  There are many challenges facing our water bodies and the effective functioning of our water systems. The continuous supply of safe and clean water is under pressure from climate change, extreme weather events, increased pollution levels and population growth. An emerging threat to healthy water systems comes from the pharmaceutical industry and the over-use of antibiotics, leading to the prevalent antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in living organism and the wider environment.  AMR is a global and complex threat but it can be addressed in a local context. For this reason, the Welsh Government launched an implementation plan for dealing with this threat in Wales in 2019. This Implementation Plan for Wales sets out the ways in which we intend to address the risks of the development and spread of AMR in animals and the environment. It aligns to the UK AMR Five Year National Action Plan and, through that, to international and global AMR control plans. The Plan can be accessed at the following link: <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-07/antimicrobial-resistance-in-animals-and-the-environment-implementation-plan.pdf>  For the successful implementation of the plan, it is necessary to gain a better understanding on the impact of release of antimicrobials into the environment from hospitals and drug manufacturing sites, together with the accumulation and spread of AMR residues in water. The post-holder is expected to carry out a literature review of relevant existing studies, liaise with water companies and environmental regulators to access Wales-specific data and identify gaps in the current evidence base. The aim of the research and analysis is to identify how and where contamination of water occurs and what can be done at policy and delivery levels to prevent it happening.  The post-holder will actively support the development of longer-term policy direction in addressing water pollution issues and emerging threats to health and the environment. This area of research overlaps with other policy areas such as animal and human health, environmental standards and monitoring and waste management.  In addressing AMR, Wales is playing its part in ensuring the efficacy of antibiotics for future generations. This complex problem can only be tackled by an integrated approach between  policy areas, expanding the existing contribution already made by animal and human health professionals in this field.  **Key Tasks**   * Collation and review of relevant research and data sources * Analysis of complex information and data trends * Engagement with internal and external stakeholders * Drafting of briefing papers for senior officials and the Minister * Development of policy recommendations * Development of longer-term policy direction | |
| **Details** | |
| **Skills required:** | **Key Skills**   * Excellent research skills and the ability to analyse complex information and data * Ability to write clearly and concisely and present technical material in an accessible format * Presentation skills * Creative thinking * Ability to apply an innovative approach |
| **Outputs:** | As agreed with line manager and in relation to the above priorities |
| **Host organisation:** | Welsh Government |
| **Duration, location, working arrangements and environment:** | The role will be full-time and is normally based with the policy team in one of Welsh Government’s regional offices. In view of current Covid-19 restrictions, the post-holder will be required to work from home in-line with working arrangements for all Welsh Government employees and it is unlikely that this will change for the foreseeable future.  Post-holders will be provided with a laptop to facilitate regular contact with the policy team members and line management, other policy teams and external partners. Due to the remote nature of working, the policy team will ensure that the post-holder is fully supported during the placement and endeavour to ensure that the placement is as close to the in-team office-based experience as possible.  The placement will be for a 3 month period and will focus on delivering the objectives set out in the job specification. The option to extend for a further 3 months is possible if the project team feel there is merit in doing so and if it is compatible with the post-holder’s university research schedule and DTP/CDT arrangements. **All applicants must seek approval from the academic supervisor before applying.**  The Welsh Government is a bilingual organisation and Welsh language skills are considered an asset to the organisation. We encourage and support staff to use their Welsh language skills during a placement.  Start date will be agreed following successful Welsh Government security clearance. |
| **Funding** | |
| The placement will be funded by Welsh Government and will match the current UKRI PhD stipend rate, payable in one sum at the beginning of the placement (to minimise financial administration). The payment process aims to compliment PhD student university stipend payment structures, i.e. WG pay the university and the funds are passed-on to the student’s account. **Please note:  we cannot pay students directly.** | |
| **Contact** | |
| **Name:** | Caroline Fallone ( [Caroline.Fallone@gov.wales](mailto:Caroline.Fallone@gov.wales) ) / Tel: 07967 303629 |
| **Application process** | |
| **Please submit CV and covering letter and indicate the earliest and latest dates you can take-up a 3 month placement**  **All applicants must seek approval from the academic supervisor before applying**  If you have an impairment or health condition, or use British Sign Language and need to discuss reasonable adjustments for any part of the placement programme, or wish to discuss how we will support you if you are to be successful, please contact [caroline.fallone@gov.wales](mailto:caroline.fallone@gov.wales) as soon as possible to discuss your requirements and any questions you may have. | |