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| **Project:** | |
| **Title: PhD student placement opportunity –** *“The impact of COVID-19 on Welsh Greenhouse Gas Emissions”* | |
| The Water and Flood Division of the Welsh Government is seeking a PhD student for a placement opportunity within its Water policy team. The team‘s remit falls under the portfolio of the Minister for Environment, Energy, 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.  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.  **Purpose of the Post**  There are many challenges facing our water bodies, including the quality of inland waters such as rivers and their tributaries. These water bodies are under continuing pressure from climate change, extreme weather events, pollution levels and increased demand for water to support population growth.  As part of the Welsh Government’s commitment to delivering high environmental water quality, there is also increasing recognition of the value of inland waters as recreational assets. This includes supporting increased public health protection for bathers at these sites and recreational and wellbeing opportunities (Wales’ Wellbeing Goals can be accessed at the following link: <https://gov.wales/well-being-wales-2019>). Such an approach could also help drive improvements in agricultural practices and sewage pollution management in a similar way in which the identification of beaches as bathing waters has achieved for Wales. This in turn would benefit both water quality and the wider environment.  The [Bathing Water Regulations 2013](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/1675/made) transposed the Bathing Water Directive 2006/7/EC and sets out its main objectives to safeguard public health and protect the aquatic environment in coastal and inland areas from pollution. Currently there are no rivers in Wales designated as bathing waters. This means people who swim at these sites do not currently benefit from a bathing water quality-monitoring regime or have ready access to water quality information. Wales has one designated inland waterway, the lake Llyn Padarn.  To evaluate and develop a successful approach to increasing designation of inland bathing waters, over and above the current designation process, it is necessary to gain a better understanding of the benefits and risks such an approach would present. Therefore, this placement post-holder will be required to carry out a literature review of relevant existing studies, liaise with the environmental regulator (Natural Resources Wales - NRW), Welsh Government Recreational and Tourism colleagues and other relevant stakeholders to access Wales specific data, information and identify trends. The aim of the research and analysis is to identify and quantify what are the specific benefits and challenges of pursuing an active programme in Wales to increase the designation of inland waters, in particular rivers. In addition to this, there is also scope for the post-holder to consider and present alternative well developed mechanisms and ideas for an alternative approach to ‘designation’, which would deliver the aforementioned benefits/outcomes.  The post-holder will:   * actively support the development of a longer-term policy direction/strategy to take forward these proposals based on their research findings * evaluate the benefits of increased safe and accessible bathing water sites, potentially alongside current and growing recreational facilities * identify the related benefits that such an approach could deliver in terms of driving a re-evaluation of the role that inland waters/rivers play in the lives of the people and communities of Wales in terms of wellbeing, environmental amenity, economic benefits and potential increased tourism opportunities. There is scope for this to include the development of a methodology for identifying appropriate inland sites for potential designation/identification.   **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 and strategic direction   The exact tasks required of the student will be dependent on the particular focus of the team at the time of the placement and the student will likely have the opportunity to become involved in other work areas where they have a specific interest | |
| **Details** | |
| **Skills required:** | **Key Skills**   * Excellent research skills * Ability to analyse complex information and data * Ability to write clearly and concisely * Ability of presenting 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 |
| **Placement Start Date** | March 2021 |
| **Development Opportunities** | The placement provides an opportunity to gain insight into the functioning of Welsh Government and evidence-based policy development at the highest level. The post-holder will work in an interesting and diverse team, contributing to the shaping of a future policy direction. The post-holder will be expected to work independently within parameters and guidelines provided by the Welsh Government. Working closely with a wide range of colleagues the successful candidate will build valuable working relationships, broaden their knowledge of public policy-making and enhance their existing transferable skills.  The student will join an analytical team managing a diverse evidence-base and delivering technical and advisory support across the Decarbonisation programme. This is an interesting and diverse role, working on a high-profile programme across Welsh Government portfolios which will allow the student to gain a broad knowledge and understanding of Welsh Government policy work. With support from their WG supervisor, the student will be expected to take responsibility for managing and delivery of work commitments during the placement period. |
| **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 will 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.  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. |
| **Application criteria** | **Welsh Government can only accept applications to the PhD student placement programme from registered students**.  **All applicants must seek approval from their academic supervisor before applying** |
| **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 do not pay students directly** | |
| **Contact** | |
| **Name:** | Caroline Fallone (Research & Academic Engagement Manager)  [caroline.fallone@gov.wales](mailto:caroline.fallone@gov.wales) |
| **Application process** | |
| Please submit CV and covering letter to Caroline Fallone. **NOTE: All applicants must confirm that they have received authorisation to take an interruption of studies from their academic supervisor**  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. | |