Doctoral Training Policy and Evidence Placement

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| **Project** | |
| **Title:** Marine Essential Fish Habitats | |
| **Description (250 words max):** Click or tap here to enter text.  Natural Resources Wales needs to better understand marine Essential Fish Habitats (EFH) to provide holistic nature conservation advice. EFH has recently been defined in work by Natural England as “*a habitat or area according to its physico-chemical attributes (e.g. substrata, water quality, water parameters, current speed), biological attributes (e.g. dominant flora such as reedbeds or saltmarshes, availability of a specific prey species), and geographical location, required for the survival or wellbeing of a species relating to breeding, spawning, feeding or growth to maturity*.”  The successful applicant will identify, collate, review and analyse relevant research and data to produce a report on the EFH of a single fish species in Wales. The report will build on existing EFH methodologies developed by the Marine Management Organisation, Natural England and NatureScot and include maps and/or GIS outputs of the location of EFH for the species in Wales. The legacy of the placement will be development of a replicable process and format to produce additional EFH reports on other species.  While there can be some discussion around the species studied, Natural Resources Wales’ has identified Atlantic herring *Clupea harengus* as potentially suitablebecause it is of commercial, conservation, ecosystem and cultural/heritage importance in Welsh waters, it is the subject of recent research and it is understood that certain life stages show preferences for specific seabed and water column habitats and conditions. The work should, however, avoid duplicating existing methods for habitat suitability assessments for Atlantic herring and instead extend or improve upon these methods. | |
| **Details** | |
| **Skills required:** | Evidence/literature reviews, data analysis, GIS, technical authoring/report writing. |
| **Anticipated outputs:** | Literature review, evidence report, GIS mapping of EFH for a single species. |
| **Host organisation:** | Natural Resources Wales |
| **Duration and format (full time/part time):** | Full-time for 3 months (or e.g. 0.5FTE for 6 months) |
| **Development opportunities** | The placement provides an opportunity to gain insight into the functioning of Natural Resources Wales and evidenced based decision making within the Welsh environment context. The post-holder will work in an interesting and diverse team, and their contributions to tackling the nature and climate emergencies will be highly valued.  The post-holder will be expected to work independently within parameters and guidelines provided by Natural Resources Wales. Working closely with a wide range of colleagues the successful candidate will build valuable working relationships, broaden their knowledge of this sector, and enhance their existing transferable skills.  The student will join a team managing a diverse range of programmes and providing technical and advisory support across our Operational and Evidence, Policy, and Permitting directorates.  This is a fantastic opportunity to understand how research and evidence is used to inform decisions. With support from their NRW supervisor, the student will be expected to take responsibility for managing and delivery of work commitments during the placement period. |
| **Location and working environment:** | Flexible within the UK, including home-based |
| **Start date:** | As soon as possible |
| **Application criteria** | Natural Resources Wales (NRW) can only accept applications to the PhD student placement programme from registered students who are within their funded period.  All applicants must seek approval from their academic supervisor before applying |
| **Funding** | |
| The placement will be funded by NRW and will match the current UKRI PhD stipend rate. The payment process aims to compliment PhD student university stipend payment structures, i.e. NRW pay the university and the funds are passed-on to the student’s account. To avoid delays to students receiving payments, it is preferable that the student’s PhD stipend is not paused during the placement and that, instead, it continues and that NRW reimburse the university for the time the student is not undertaking research. Please note: we do not pay students directly | |
| **Contact – for queries** | |
| **Name:** | Alexander Scorey |
| **Email:** | Alexander.scorey@cyfoethnaturiolcymru.gov.uk |
| **Tel:** | 0300 065 4587 |
| **Application process** | Please submit the equal opportunities form, your CV and a short covering letter, explaining why you are suitable for this placement to Lleoliadau@cyfoethnaturiolcymru.gov.uk.  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 lleoliadau@cyfoethnaturiolcymru.gov.uk as soon as possible to discuss your requirements and any questions you may have. |