Doctoral Training Policy and Evidence Placement

|  |
| --- |
| **Project**  |
| **Title:** Fish tracking in the Usk: Improving our understanding of salmon smolt to direct management  |
| **Description (250 words max):** Click or tap here to enter text.***The project***We know the river Usk has salmon stocks at all-time low. In the Usk, through monitoring we know much about the juvenile salmon in the rivers and adult numbers returning. However, we know little about the salmon smolt (juvenile salmon emigrating to sea). Although we (NRW) have limited ability to influence the out at sea life stage we are, along with partners, working to improve conditions for the in-river life stages. We have developed a project to better understand salmon smolt in the Usk which involves trapping 100 smolts per year as they start the migration out of the river (over 3-4 year period). We acoustically tag these salmon smolts (surgically implanted) and track them via circa 45 acoustic receivers as they move down river to the sea.**The objectives of this project are to determine:** * the loss rate within river
* how flow impacts the migration
* if are barriers causing a delay in migration
* where and why fish are being lost
* if fish being predated and by what

The project also aims to **identify potential solutions to protect the smolts** as they move through the river including barrier removal or easement if pinch points are identified.***Your involvement***You would have a vital role in this project by employing scientific rigour to analyse the data collected during the last two years in relation to three main areas: **how many salmon smolts are dying, where they are dying and why**. This will help direct management decisions and improve our understanding of this life stage.  |
| **Details**  |
| **Skills required:** | Good data analysis and statistical analysis skillsStrong scientific communication skills (writing technical reports and lay summaries, oral presentations). Critical thinking skillsAbility to work to deadlines |
| **Anticipated outputs:** | Summary report |
| **Host organisation:**  | Natural Resources Wales  |
| **Duration and format (full time/part time):**  | 3 months, format flexible |
| **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 reason |
| **Start date:** | Flexible, as soon as possible best. |
| **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:**  | Paul Greest |
| **Email:**  | Paul.greest@cyfoethnaturiolcymru.gov.uk |
| **Tel:**  | 07468742376 |
| **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. |