

## Welsh Government Research Fellowship Opportunity

HOST ORGANISATION	
<b>Name</b>	<a href="#">Welsh Government</a>
<b>Department</b>	Strategic Evidence Unit, Environment and Rural Affairs
<b>Contact</b>	<a href="mailto:Caryl.williams041@gov.wales">Caryl.williams041@gov.wales</a>
<b>Research project title</b>	Developing an Outcome and Indicator Framework for Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (SMNR): Mapping and engagement to inform the key outcomes that we should be focusing on in order to deliver SMNR and the measures we should use to show Wales's progress toward them
<b>Working arrangements</b> <i>(location, hours, management and support offered by host)</i>	Current <a href="#">WG Covid-19 Guidance</a> requires the successful candidate to conduct the research remotely. As and when guidance changes and H&S rules permit, periodic attendance at meetings in Welsh Government Offices will be a requirement.  Access to relevant WG advisors, analysts and policy colleagues will be available to support this role, as well as access to wider UK Government and academic science networks.
<b>Partners / Stakeholders</b> <i>(relevant to the project)</i>	The successful candidate will be invited to become a member of the WG/NRW SoNaRR expert group and the Welsh Government Science and Evidence Oversight Group (convened approximately quarterly) for the duration of the role

RESEARCH SPECIFICATION			
<b>Project title</b>	Developing an Outcome and Indicator Framework for SMNR: Mapping and engagement to inform the key outcomes that we should be focusing on in order to deliver Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the measures we should use to show Wales's progress toward them		
<b>Duration</b>	12-18 months, with a minimum of three days/week on average	<b>Proposed start date</b>	January 2023 but there is scope to start the fellowship earlier if the successful candidate's circumstances allow this. There may also be some flexibility around the start date given the right candidate.
<b>Summary of the research area and policy context</b> <i>(500 words)</i>	<p>The Welsh Government, Environment and Rural Affairs Strategic Evidence Unit is seeking to recruit a Senior Research Fellow to work with them and <a href="#">Natural Resources Wales</a> to develop an Outcome and Indicator Framework for measuring Wales progress on Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (SMNR). We are looking for an experienced academic (Senior Research Fellow or similar) with a good track record of working with policy, of applying environmental systems-related work and of working on cross-cutting environmental issues. We would value them being able to bring new and innovative approaches to develop an outcome and indicator framework for measuring Wales' sustainable management of natural resources.</p> <p><b>Policy Context</b> The Sustainable Management of Natural Resources is at the core of Welsh environmental legislation. Under the <a href="#">Environment (Wales) Act 2016</a>, Natural Resources Wales have an obligation to prepare &amp; publish a State of Natural Resources Report (SoNaRR) containing an assessment of, among other things:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the state of natural resources in relation to Wales</li> <li>• the extent to which the sustainable management of natural resources is being achieved</li> </ul>		

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	<p>Statutory guidance adds that the report should provide a baseline and measure how Wales is progressing towards SMNR, including a set of indicators of SMNR</p> <p>NRW have developed the method used to assess SMNR through the publication of the first 2 reports. In December 2020, <a href="#">SoNaRR 2020</a> included the assessment of the 4 aims of SMNR and introduced the Natural Resource Registers. The 4 aims of SMNR are currently defined as follows, and our preference would be to develop an Outcome – Indicator framework which complements and nests within these 4 overarching aims.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1: Stocks of natural resources are safeguarded and enhanced</li> <li>2. Ecosystems are resilient to expected and unforeseen change</li> <li>3. Wales has healthy places for people, protected from environmental risks</li> <li>4. A Regenerative Economy with sustainable levels of production and consumption</li> </ol> <p>It is proposed that an Outcome and Indicator Framework would build on the last two SoNaRR reports and would form part of the overall assessment of SMNR featured in SoNaRR 2025.</p> <p><b>Wider context</b></p> <p>The SMNR Outcome and Indicator Framework should be consistent with and nest within, The <a href="#">Wellbeing of Wales National Indicators</a>, and associated milestones, which provide a means of measuring Wales progress with the Nation’s Well-being and links to the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Milestones have already been set for some national indicators, with more being set by the end of this year.</p> <p>The work will need to align closely with the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework Targets and Wales adoption of these targets. WG are currently in the process of appointing a separate Research Fellow to support on the development of these statutory nature targets for Wales, so it is essential that the two pieces of work are complementary.</p> <p>Consideration of both meaningful outcomes and the indicators, or indices which provide us with the most meaningful measure of the outcome at a system level, will also need to take account of and build on existing and emerging work on outcomes and indicators in place across specific policy areas within Welsh Government, for example the Welsh Government Climate Change indicators.</p>
<p><b>Expected outputs</b> (250 words)</p>	<p>In the first 2 months of the role, the candidate will be expected to develop a programme plan of work and agreed outputs for the contract period. It is expected there will be a certain amount of flexibility in the programme to reflect the skills and expertise of the successful candidate and priority shifts. There is also flexibility for the fellow to work fewer days/week during this scoping phase and to increase the proportion of their time spent on the fellowship during the delivery phase.</p> <p>The key final outputs from this work will be:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A proposed list of critical outcomes that should feature in an overarching, systems-based assessment of Wales’ progress in delivering in-line with the 4 aims of SMNR</li> <li>2. Proposed indexes, indicators or metrics for each of the Critical Outcomes, recognising the need to be able to incorporate new indicators as data and more effective analysis makes these available.</li> <li>3. A short, applied report setting out the rationale for the overall approach and for the inclusion of each of the proposed outcomes, and accompanying metrics.</li> </ol>

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	<p>4. An accompanying slide/pack and presentation setting-out the proposed approach and justification for it.</p> <p>The Fellow will need to undertake a number of activities in order to develop these final outputs and once a workplan (reflecting the strengths and interests of the successful candidate) is agreed we would wish to work with the Fellow to set out some key tasks and delivery milestones (see below).</p>
<p><b>Benefits to host organisation</b> (250 words)</p>	<p>The benefits of these outputs will be realised in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthening the relationship between academic research and government.</li> <li>• Increasing indicator framework development expertise in government.</li> <li>• Brining in new ideas/innovation from an experienced and innovative specialist.</li> <li>• An unprecedented opportunity for Welsh Government to work with academic expertise to shape public policy during a crucial period of multiple issues: the climate and biodiversity crises, managing the socio-economic and health consequences of Covid-19, and the delivery of a new support landscape for land managers following our exit from the EU.</li> <li>• Provision of a sound evidence base to support the development of Welsh Government policy which will help to address how Wales is sustainably managing natural resources for the benefit of future generations.</li> <li>• Opportunity to demonstrate impact of research outside academia on society, public policy and the environment.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Outline of project activities</b> (750 words)</p>	<p>In the first 2 months of the role, the candidate will be expected to develop a work programme and agree delivery milestones for the contract period. It is expected there will be a certain amount of flexibility in the programme to reflect the skills and expertise of the successful candidate and priority shifts.</p> <p>The successful applicant will build on the assessments made in SoNaRR2016 and SoNaRR2020 and, particularly, the use of the 4 aims of SMNR. They will consider the evidence in the context of International, UK and Welsh policy to develop an outcome framework that is consistent with other work already underway across different policy areas in Welsh government (e.g. biodiversity, air quality, water quality etc.)</p> <p>The successful applicant will be required to examine, assess and synthesise the evidence base and to engage widely with users of the framework to develop a framework that has been rigorously tested to ensure useability and that effectively communicates key aspects of Sustainable Management of Natural Resources in Wales.</p> <p>The successful candidate will report and discuss progress to the SoNaRR expert group (comprised of NRW and WG officials) on a monthly basis. Key project activities may include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Clearly define WG and NRW's needs, by reviewing the work done to date, the emerging policy context, and engaging with key users of SoNaRR and of a potential outcome indicator framework.</li> <li>2. Review current 'Outcome and Indicator Frameworks' or similar used internationally (including the conceptual frameworks which underpin them), setting out their relative strengths and limitations, as well as transferability of key features to Welsh context. Examples may include the <i>EEA Summary of past trends, outlook and prospect of meeting future policy objectives</i>, and the <a href="#">Defra 25-year plan monitoring framework</a>.</li> <li>3. Draw on own disciplinary expertise and wider interdisciplinary expertise from convened academic networks to determine, and provide justification for:</li> </ol>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ the critical outcomes that should feature in a high-level outcome indicator framework which assesses progress toward Sustainable Management of Natural Resources;</li> <li>▪ the most meaningful metrics to report on for each of these outcomes, recognising the need to be able to incorporate new indicators as data and more effective analysis makes these available.</li> <li>▪ the best way to communicate this information (e.g. whether entirely quantitative, drawing on RAG ratings etc.)</li> </ul> <p>4. Engagement across WG policy teams, the NRW SoNaRR team and with key stakeholders outside of Government to test and iteratively improve the proposed outcome indicator framework.</p> <p>Throughout the fellowship we would expect the successful candidate to be a key participant in the working group responsible for the development of SoNaRR 2025 and to engage widely with the evidence community within Welsh Government (e.g. via the Science and Evidence Oversight Group) and NRW. Once an individual has been appointed, WG will convene a virtual working group comprised of key individuals responsible for indicator development across teams in WG and NRW. This group will help to shape the project and be able to share up to date information on the indicators currently in use or proposed for the future.</p>
<p><b>Expected benefits to the successful applicant</b> <i>(500 words)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthening understanding of the needs of government and the opportunity to influence how government works.</li> <li>• An unprecedented opportunity to really shape and improve the use of evidence in Welsh Government and NRW to enable better policy making.</li> <li>• An opportunity to publish on considerations of what make for effective outcome-indicator frameworks.</li> <li>• Development of a closer working relationship with WG and NRW</li> <li>• Opportunity for a high-profile Research Excellence Framework (REF) impact case</li> </ul>
<p><b>Host organisation support</b></p>	<p>The successful applicant will be supported throughout the research programme by working within the Environment and Rural Affairs Strategic Evidence Unit. The project will be managed via a dedicated Steering Group comprised of individuals from NRW and Welsh Government. The host can support the individual to find a suitable academic mentor with experience of advising government on similar environmental issues if they feel this would be valuable, however, mentorship would need to be costed into the overall cost of the fellowship. We will agree regular opportunities to review progress to an agreed work plan, determining revisions to it as and when identified by the outcomes of the research, and generally guiding the individual to achieve a successful outcome and rewarding experience.</p>

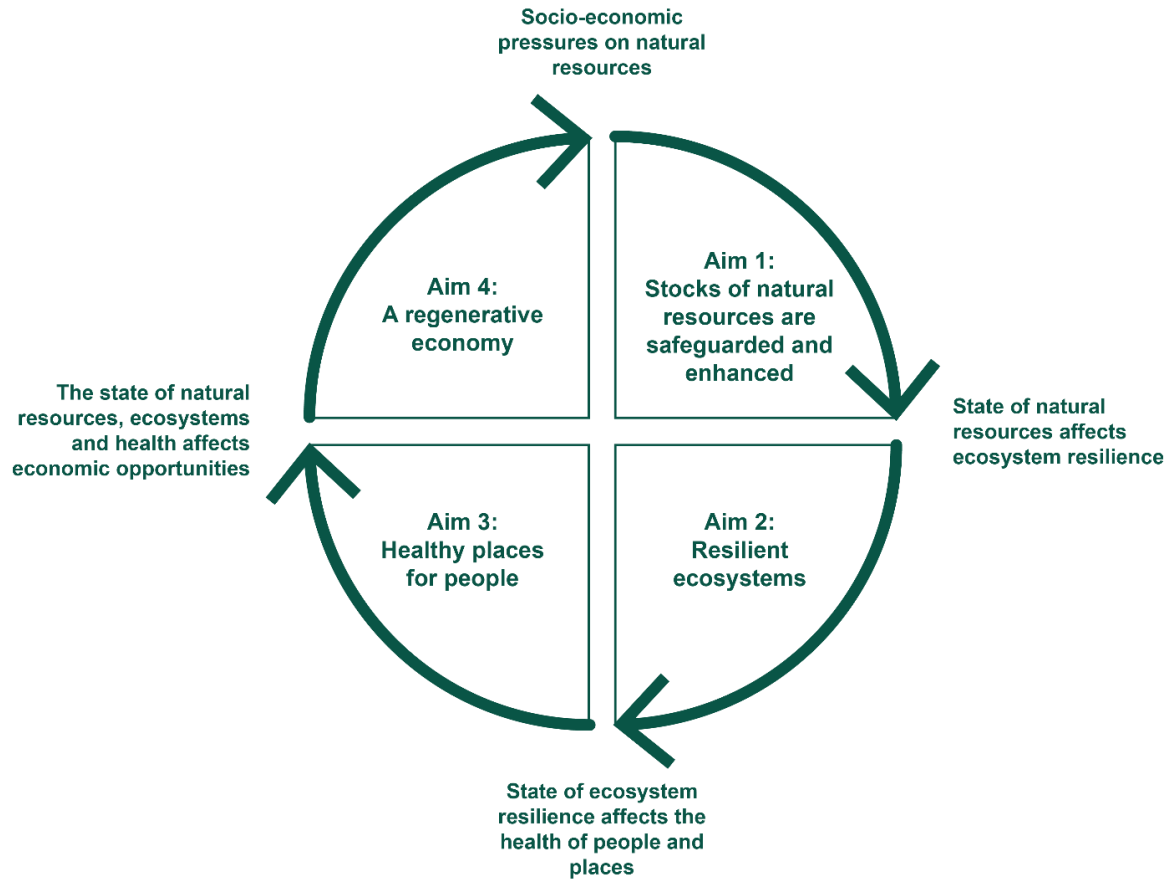
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<p><b>Person Specification</b></p>	<p><i>Education</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mid career/Senior academic</li> </ul> <p><i>Experience</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applied research in a strategic area of environmental or social science which relates to one or more of the 4 Aims of SMNR.</li> <li>• Experience demonstrates complex systems and ability to bring together diverse forms of evidence (social, natural science etc.)</li> <li>• Previous experience of co-production with policy makers, ideally on system level evidence, evaluation, and/or applications of outcome-indicator frameworks.</li> <li>• Wales specific knowledge and experience, or, can demonstrate knowledge of similar contexts.</li> </ul> <p><i>Skills / Abilities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to engage widely and quickly build effective working relationships</li> <li>• Ability to communicate complex information succinctly and in an engaging manner</li> <li>• Ability to work flexibly in an applied evidence environment (i.e. to be able to make considered trade-offs and be pragmatic where necessary)</li> <li>• To think creatively and bring new and innovative approaches to bear.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Funding</b></p>	<p>The post will be funded by Welsh Government and subject to agreement of project costings submitted by the applicant</p>
<p><b>Conflicts of Interest</b></p>	<p>These may include for example, commercial interests that may conflict with proposed area of study and/or applicant's membership of lobbying groups.</p>
<p><b>Application Process</b></p>	<p>The Welsh Government takes the protection of your data seriously. If you contact the Welsh Government then our <b>Privacy Notice</b> explains how we use your information and the ways in which we protect your privacy.</p> <p>We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.</p> <p>If you have an impairment or health condition, or use British Sign Language and need to discuss reasonable adjustments for any part of the fellowship, or wish to discuss how we will support you if you are to be successful, please contact Caroline Fallone (Research &amp; Academic Engagement Manager) as soon as possible to discuss your requirements and any questions you may have</p> <p>This Fellowship appointment process will be managed by Environment Platform Wales on behalf of Welsh Government. Applicants should submit the following documents in response to this research specification to <a href="mailto:andy.schofield@epwales.org.uk">andy.schofield@epwales.org.uk</a></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. CV and cover letter setting out academic experience</li> <li>2. Proposed methodology for development of an Outcome-Indicator Framework for assessing SMNR in Wales (drawing on context outlined above)</li> <li>3. Project costings and pricing</li> <li>4. Letter of support from your academic institution</li> </ol> <p><u>Deadline:</u></p> <p>The deadline for submitting the above documentation is <b>the 19<sup>th</sup> September</b></p>

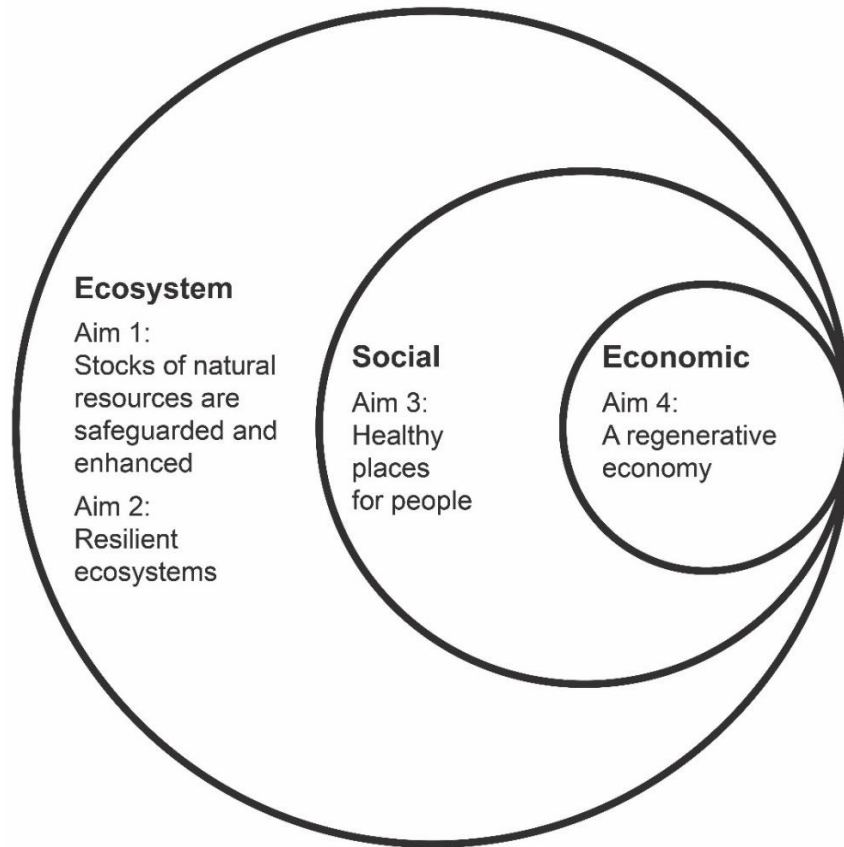
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	<p>Applicants can be at a Mid or Senior Researcher stage of their career or be able to demonstrate equivalent professional experience gained in a stakeholder organisation.</p> <p>Applicants with a permanent academic position (or equivalent in institutions other than universities) are also eligible.</p> <p>The applicant must be the Principal Investigator and may only submit one proposal to this specification. Co-Investigators or other named researchers are not eligible.</p>
<p><b>Interview &amp; Assessment</b></p>	<p><b>Stage One:</b> Applicants may approach Welsh Government or NRW to discuss the specification in advance of their final submission. Please contact either:</p> <p><b>Welsh Government:</b> Caryl Williams (Strategic Evidence Unit, Environment and Rural Affairs) - <a href="mailto:Caryl.Williams041@gov.wales">Caryl.Williams041@gov.wales</a></p> <p><b>Natural Resources Wales:</b> Richard Cardwell (Integrated Evidence) - <a href="mailto:Richard.Cardwell@cyfoethnaturiolcymru.gov.uk">Richard.Cardwell@cyfoethnaturiolcymru.gov.uk</a>&gt;</p> <p>All applications received will be assessed by an Independent Expert Panel of Government researchers and users convened by <a href="#">Environment Platform Wales</a>. The panel will make recommendations on those suitable to progress to stage two of the application process.</p> <p>The assessment criteria to be used are as follows and <b>please note</b> are not weighted:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Understanding of the analytical needs of the host and an ability to grasp and respond to these effectively at pace</li> <li>2. Subject matter or methodological expertise relevant to the requirements of the specific fellowship</li> <li>3. The ability to translate complex information and analysis into meaningful narrative for a non-academic audience, verbally and in writing</li> <li>4. An understanding of the challenges and opportunities of co-production and collaboration including with non-academics and the ability to design and lead activity that supports effective knowledge exchange between research and policy</li> <li>5. Value for money including where relevant for wider institutional mentorship and support</li> </ol> <p>The grading scale used at assessment stage is given at Appendix 1</p> <p>Applicants will be notified of the outcome of Stage One of the application process.</p> <p><b>Stage Two:</b> For applications that progress to Stage Two, applicants will be invited to attend an interview panel and present their proposed approach for further discussion with the panel.</p> <p>All interviews will be undertaken via the Microsoft Teams platform and will be used to further probe against the assessment criteria.</p> <p>All applicants will be notified of the outcome of Stage Two of the application process and provided with feedback on request.</p>

## Appendix 1: The Four Aims of SMNR



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### Appendix 2: Grading Scale for Assessment Criterion



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Score	Description
<b>A score of 7 or above is a recommendation to consider shortlisting a proposal for interview. 10 is the highest score it is possible to give a proposal.</b>	
10	The proposal is <b>exceptional</b> in terms of overall fit to the person specification and assessment criteria. It <b>should definitely be shortlisted</b> on the basis of the applicant's skillset and research expertise.
9	The proposal is <b>outstanding</b> in terms of overall fit to the person specification and assessment criteria. It <b>should definitely be shortlisted</b> on the basis of the applicant's skillset and research expertise.
8	The proposal is <b>excellent</b> in terms of overall fit to the person specification and assessment criteria. It <b>could be shortlisted as a priority</b> but would benefit from some clarifications in interview.
7	The proposal is <b>very good</b> in terms of overall fit to the person specification and assessment criteria. It <b>could be shortlisted but not as a priority</b> and some clarifications in interview would be necessary.
<b>A score of 6 or below is a recommendation <u>not</u> to shortlist a proposal. 1 is the lowest score it is possible to give a proposal.</b>	
6	Overall, the proposal is <b>good</b> in terms of the overall fit to the person specification and assessment criteria but not of a consistently high quality. The proposal is not strong on all essential areas of the person specification, and clarifications in interview would be required to address these gaps. It <b>should not be considered for shortlisting</b> .
5	Overall, the proposal is <b>good</b> in terms of the overall fit to the person specification and assessment criteria but not of a consistently high quality. The proposal is weaker on multiple essential areas of the person specification, and significant clarifications in interview would be required to address this. It <b>should not be considered for shortlisting</b> .
4	The proposal has some strengths in terms of the person specification and assessment criteria. However, there are significant gaps that are not amenable to clarification in interview. The proposal is not of a consistently high quality and should not be considered for shortlisting.
3	The proposal is acceptable in terms of person specification and assessment criteria. However, there are consistent and significant weaknesses, and the proposal is not of a sufficiently high quality to be considered for shortlisting.
2	The proposal is acceptable on some assessment criteria but does not sufficiently fit the person specification and assessment criteria to be considered for shortlisting.
1	The proposal is flawed in its structure and content, does not fit with the person specification and assessment criteria, or is otherwise judged not worth pursuing.