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| **PhD Student Placement Project:** | |
| **“What are the economic impacts of designating water for bathing and recreation?”** | |
| The Environmental Protection Directorate of the Welsh Government (WG) is seeking a PhD student for a placement opportunity to support a priority policy area within in the Water policy team. The team is responsible for developing bespoke policy for Wales to manage its water systems sustainably, 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.  **Background**  There are currently 108 beaches and 1 lake designated as bathing waters in Wales, providing many benefits to people and communities in terms of health, wellbeing and socio-economic opportunities; environmental monitoring, management and amenity; and the value of coastal tourism to the economy of Wales.  Welsh Government’s [Programme for Government](https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2022-01/programme-for-government-update-december-2021.pdf) makes a commitment to ‘*begin to designate Wales’ inland waters for recreation, strengthening water quality monitoring*’ to enable rivers to reach the same high standards achieved by Wales’ beaches. Since the commitment was published there has been a growing awareness and recognition of the rising popularity in outdoor swimming and the recreational use of the water environment across Wales.  Mainstream media coverage of outdoor swimming across the UK has grown substantially, with a 49% increase in the number of publications on the subject between 2019 and 2020. Safe Cymru recently reported a 45% increase in people taking part in open water swimming between 2020 and 2021. High bathing water quality is important for supporting valuable outdoor water recreation opportunities and helps contribute to the objectives set out in the Well-being and Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, such as “A Healthier Wales”.  **Purpose of the Post**  The purpose of the post is to assist with the development of a successful approach to the designation of Inland Bathing Waters in Wales. 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. To this end, the Water policy team are undertaking a range of evaluation activities and, to support the team’s work, the placement post-holder will be required to carry out a study of the economic impacts and benefits to coastal communities where bathing water designation has already been granted. Information derived from this project will help understand the impacts to coastal communities, and, will help inform the approach taken for Inland bathing water designation, along with potentially identifying support measures required to achieve sustainable designated status.  **Key Tasks**  Below is a list of typical tasks that the student will be involved during the placement. The specific tasks will depend on the focus of the team at the time and will endeavour to incorporate the interests and expertise of the student.   * Literature review/analysis of relevant research and data * Engagement with internal and external stakeholders * Drafting of briefing papers for senior policy officials * Identification of research needs and evidence gaps * Summary of findings and recommendations | |
| **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 and the 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** | ASAP |
| **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 delivery of a cross-government programme in an area of policy in which, through its legislative framework, Wales leads the UK. 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 policy area. 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 Welsh Government supervisor, the student will be expected to take responsibility for managing and delivering 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 likely be required to work from home, however, office working may be permissible and individual circumstances can be discussed. This is in-line with working arrangements for all Welsh Government employees.  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 this 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; will match the current minimum UKRI PhD stipend rate; will be payable in one sum at the end of the placement and shall be paid by the University to the Student in the form of an additional stipend payment at the conclusion of their studies. 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:** | [ResearchPlacements@gov.wales](mailto:ResearchPlacements@gov.wales) |
| **Application process** | |
| Please submit CV and covering letter to the above mailbox. **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 the above mailbox as soon as possible to discuss your requirements and any questions you may have. | |