



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

PhD student placement opportunity - Water Policy Branch

Project title: *“How can we assess the impact of highway drainage outfalls on the environment and water quality, and minimise the pollution they cause?”*

Project:

Title: *How can we assess the impact of highway drainage outfalls on the environment and water quality, and minimise the pollution they cause?*

The Team

The Water and Flood Division of Welsh Government (WG) is seeking a PhD student for a placement opportunity within one of its teams. 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.

The team’s remit falls under the portfolio of the Minister for Climate Change which supports delivery objectives identified under primary legislation such as the Environment Act 2016 and Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015. The team works closely with a wide variety of internal and external stakeholders and representatives of the UK Government and the other Devolved Administrations.

Background

There are multiple challenges facing our water environment and the effective functioning of our water systems. Climate change, extreme weather events, increased pollution levels and population growth all present a high risk to the health of our waterbodies.

Highways drainage outfalls pollute surface and groundwater and are considered to be one of the biggest contributors to microplastic pollution found in our oceans. Highways drainage outfalls are numerous and drain independently of either sewage treatment works or Combined Storm Overflows (CSO). Despite their risk to water quality, we lack the understanding of their full impact. With climate change leading to increased periods of wet weather and heavy rainfalls, it is imperative that we assess the pollution risks highways drainage outfalls present and identify their distribution across Wales.

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 a final report
- Development of longer-term policy direction

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



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

PhD student placement opportunity - Water Policy Branch

Project title: *“How can we assess the impact of highway drainage outfalls on the environment and water quality, and minimise the pollution they cause?”*

Outputs:	<p>The postholder will expect to collate all available information on highways drainage outfalls in Wales, gathering data from local authorities, water companies and the highways authority. Part of the work will be identifying gaps in data and knowledge. In addition to the information gathering, the appointed student will need to complete a short literature review on the subject of highways drainage outfalls and water pollution.</p> <p>Collating all available records on highways drainage outfalls in Wales will help determine the extent of the possible impacts, in the context of catchment sizes and vehicle usage. The project will support the establishment of a method of identifying the worst polluting outfalls and who are responsible for them.</p> <p>Improving water quality in Wales is a key objective of the Welsh Government. The post-holder will actively support the development of longer-term policy direction in addressing water pollution issues and assessing the impact of highways drainage outfalls.</p>
Host Organisation:	Welsh Government
Placement Start Date	The start date will be agreed following successful Welsh Government security clearance.
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.
Duration, location, working arrangements and environment:	<p>The role will be full-time and is normally based with the policy team in one of Welsh Government's regional offices. In accordance with the flexible working policy, the post-holder will be able to work from home, and office working will also be an option. This is in-line with working arrangements for all Welsh Government employees.</p> <p>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 endeavour to ensure that the placement is as close to the in-team office-based experience as possible.</p> <p>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. All applicants must seek approval from the academic supervisor before applying.</p>



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

PhD student placement opportunity - Water Policy Branch

Project title: *“How can we assess the impact of highway drainage outfalls on the environment and water quality, and minimise the pollution they cause?”*

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 cannot pay students directly.	
Contact	
Name:	Stephany Aymerich (Research & Academic Engagement Manager) via ResearchPlacements@gov.wales The Welsh Government takes the protection of your data seriously. If you contact the Welsh Government then our Privacy Notice explains how we use your information and the ways in which we protect your privacy.
Application process	
Please submit CV and covering letter to Stephany Aymerich NOTE: All applicants must confirm that they have received authorisation to take an interruption of studies from their academic supervisor	
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	
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 stephany.aymerich@gov.wales as soon as possible to discuss your requirements and any questions you may have.	