

**Project: Student Placement – Welsh Government Water Policy Branch**

**Title: PhD student placement opportunity – “The Economic and Wider Value of Water in Wales”**

The Water and Flood Division of the Welsh Government is seeking a PhD student for a placement opportunity within its Water Policy team. 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 (Wales) Act 2016 and the 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.

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.

**Purpose of the Post**

Water is the most essential of Wales' natural resources and it is vital that we value and protect it. The water environment itself is a public good and it delivers a wide range of goods and services, including the provision of clean and safe drinking water to all citizens of Wales. Other beneficiaries include bathers, anglers, boaters, shellfish-harvesters, walkers, just to highlight a few.

The Programme for Government includes commitments to start designating inland waters for recreational activities and improve water quality monitoring in Wales. The commitments highlight the importance of the water environment and concerns regarding the health of our waterways.

The availability of water is often taken for granted in Wales, even though it is widely recognised that this precious resource is under threat from industrial and agricultural activities, sewage discharges, heavy metal pollution from metal mines and climate change.

The resilience of water supplies and the water environment to climate change and the impacts of drought are areas of high concern for Wales. Increased periods of dry weather, coupled with increased demand for water due to population growth and economic needs could lead to supply-demand deficit in water supply by 2050. Water quality is also impacted by climate change, for example extreme wet conditions can result in pollutants locked in the soil to be washed into surface waters.

Daily water consumption in Wales is higher than the UK average at around 175 litres per person. Changing public perception and habits to preserve water is a necessity to ensure that this finite resource is available for generations to come.

Evidence regarding the value of water and the benefits it provides for Wales is needed to support behavioural change. This piece of work would help improving a government-wide holistic approach towards water management ensuring that water is considered in all aspects of policy development.

Apart from monetised benefits it will be important to consider non-monetised benefits, such as mitigation of droughts and floods, climate change adaptation, enhancement of biodiversity, soil protection, and the aesthetic value of the wider landscape. This project will aim to provide an overarching understanding of the economic importance of water as well as the assessment of the value we, as a society, place on this essential resource.

<p><b><u>Key Tasks</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collation of data and evidence regarding water usage in Wales and the economic importance of water;</li> <li>• Engagement with a range of internal stakeholders, including economists and WG data services;</li> <li>• Engagement with policy officials in areas such as agriculture, forestry, waste management, environmental evidence, people and environment and climate change;</li> <li>• Exploration of behavioural change prompts that could support water saving in Wales;</li> <li>• Consideration the topic in the context of wider Welsh Government policies and agendas;</li> <li>• Analysis of the collated information and data;</li> <li>• Drafting a final report in the subject; and</li> <li>• Supporting of policy recommendations.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Details</b></p>	
<p><b>Skills required:</b></p>	<p><b><u>Key Skills</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent research skills</li> <li>• Excellent interpersonal skills</li> <li>• Ability to analyse complex information and data</li> <li>• Ability to write clearly and concisely</li> <li>• Ability of presenting technical material in an accessible format</li> <li>• Presentation skills</li> <li>• Creative thinking</li> </ul>
<p><b>Outputs:</b></p>	<p>As agreed with line manager and in relation to the above priorities</p>
<p><b>Host Organisation:</b></p>	<p>Welsh Government</p>
<p><b>Placement Start Date</b></p>	<p>TBC</p>
<p><b>Development Opportunities</b></p>	<p>The placement provides an opportunity to gain insight into the functioning of Welsh Government and evidenced 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.</p> <p>The student will join an analytical team managing a diverse evidence-base and delivering technical and advisory support across the Climate Change response agenda. 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 delivery of work commitments during the placement period.</p>
<p><b>Duration, location, working arrangements and environment:</b></p>	<p>The role will be full-time and is normally based with the policy team in one of Welsh Government's regional offices. In line 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 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 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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Start date will be agreed following successful Welsh Government security clearance.</p>
<p><b>Application criteria</b></p>	<p><b>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</b></p>
<p><b>Funding</b></p>	
<p>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). 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 WG reimburse the university for the time the student is not undertaking research. <b>Please note: we do not pay students directly</b></p>	
<p><b>Contact</b></p>	
<p><b>Name:</b></p>	<p>Contact Stephany Aymerich (Research &amp; Academic Engagement Manager) via <a href="mailto:researchplacements@gov.wales">researchplacements@gov.wales</a></p> <p>The Welsh Government takes the protection of your data seriously. If you contact the Welsh Government then our <a href="#">Privacy Notice</a> explains how we use your information and the ways in which we protect your privacy.</p>
<p><b>Application process</b></p>	
<p>Please submit CV and covering letter to Stephany Aymerich. <b>NOTE: All applicants must confirm that they have received authorisation to take an interruption of studies from their academic supervisor</b></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 placement programme, or wish to discuss how we will support you if you are to be successful, please contact Stephany Aymerich as soon as possible to discuss your requirements and any questions you may have.</p>	