

**Project: Adaption to Climate Change, agriculture and land use.**

**Title: PhD student placement opportunity**

*“Analysing the evidence, issues and impacts of future climate change on agricultural systems and land use in Wales to 2050, in support of future policy development.”*

The Agriculture, Sustainable development Division alongside the Strategic Evidence Unit (SEU) of Welsh Government are seeking a PhD student for a placement opportunity within its Future Farming Policy team. The Future Farming Policy team covers livestock, arable, horticulture and organic policy and also agriculture’s wider policies towards reducing emissions while becoming climate resilient, in line with other sectors in Wales aiming for [net zero by 2050](#).

The strategic evidence unit is responsible for the co-ordination of engagement and analysis of evidence with policy leads and external stakeholders from across the Climate Change and Rural Affairs (CCRA) portfolio, in relation to climate change mitigation and the impacts of future climate change.

**Purpose of the Post**

Working within the Future Farming team, with the support of the SEU, the purpose of the placement is to provide support in identifying evidence and collation of data on the impact of climate on agriculture and other land use. This will involve working with Welsh Government policy groups and external stakeholders on a range of future scenarios. These will consider farming systems and changes to land use in response to a warming climate and more frequent extreme weather events.

The work of this post will go towards the Welsh Government response to the Climate Change Committee report on Welsh progress on policies to prepare Wales for the impacts of climate change. [Adapting to climate change - Progress in Wales - Climate Change Committee \(theccc.org.uk\)](#). Within the working land and seas (WLS) section, the report suggests that there are limited policies and plans in place to ensure the agricultural, forestry and commercial fisheries and aquaculture sectors remain productive as the climate changes. As well as the WLS section, agriculture and land use will also impact on the adaption plans in other areas, notably the nature, food security and water sections.

**Key Tasks**

- Evidence co-ordination and quality assurance, working with policy teams to identify evidence needs and ensuring appropriate methodologies, analysis and findings. The CCC report makes reference to the shortage of data for adaption policy development.
- Analysis and modelling – by using a range of data, existing scenario predictions and GIS tools to explain the complex relationships between a changing climate and agricultural systems and land use.
- Desk based research – by using appropriate methods to provide evidence reviews (literature or statistical data) on specific topics within the CCC report.
- Options development – identifying key actions within the agricultural sector in line with available evidence and wider government policy and undertaking analysis of the wider impacts of these actions on areas such as agricultural economy, Welsh language, culture and biodiversity
- Stakeholder engagement – facilitating discussion and collecting evidence and opinions from external stakeholders and academics working in this area. Liaison with officials from England, Scotland and Northern Ireland also working in this area.
- Programme Documentation – ensure the availability of relevant evidence documents and data for future evidence-based policy development.

From these areas specific tasks could include: -

- Analysis of social data, specifically around behaviours to identify implications, opportunities and risks, providing the synthesis of evidence and producing concise reports/evidence updates.
- Support scenario building and modelling, working with the team to consider evidence/data layering and spatial implications.

## Doctoral Training Policy and Evidence Placement

- Managing the teams evidence database; reviewing technical literature and research outputs to identify outcomes and impacts for policy, working with communications to develop effective mechanisms to channel key research findings and impacts using the most appropriate format and ensuring that information is shared widely.
- Provide support for specific data or evidence review for the ongoing projects as necessary – e.g. work with Statistician and Economist leads to analyse data sources, sampling and review findings.

The post-holder will likely have the opportunity to become involved in other work areas where they have a specific interest.

### Details

<b>Skills required:</b>	<u><b>Key Skills</b></u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong research and data analysis skills and experience handling/manipulating data.</li> <li>• The ability to produce concise well written documents presenting technical material in an accessible format.</li> <li>• Good interpersonal skills and ability to develop professional working relationships, using initiative and having a good sense of professionalism, confidentiality and often sensitivity when speaking to different audiences.</li> </ul>
<b>Outputs:</b>	As agreed with line manager and in relation to the above priorities
<b>Host Organisation:</b>	Welsh Government
<b>Placement Start Date</b>	ASAP
<b>Development Opportunities</b>	<p>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 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.</p> <p>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 WG supervisor, the student will be expected to take responsibility for managing and delivery of work commitments during the placement period.</p>
<b>Duration, location, working arrangements and environment:</b>	<p>The role will be full-time and is based with the Future farming team working closely with the Strategic Evidence unit. The post-holder can attend any Welsh Government office or can work from home 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.</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.</p>



## Doctoral Training Policy and Evidence Placement

	<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>
<b>Application criteria</b>	<p><b>Welsh Government can only accept applications to the PhD student placement programme from registered students.</b></p> <p><b>All applicants must seek approval from their academic supervisor before applying.</b></p>
<b>Funding</b>	
<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). 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. 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>	
<b>Contact</b>	
<b>Name:</b>	Stephany Aymerich (Research & Academic Engagement Manager) via <a href="mailto:ResearchPlacements@gov.wales">ResearchPlacements@gov.wales</a>
<b>Application process</b>	
<p>Please submit CV and covering letter to Stephany Aymerich. <b>NOTE: All applicants must confirm that they have received authorisation to undertake a placement from their academic supervisor.</b></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 <a href="mailto:ResearchPlacements@gov.wales">ResearchPlacements@gov.wales</a> as soon as possible to discuss your requirements and any questions you may have.</p>	