

Policy Placement: Government Office for Science-NERC



Closing date: 8th July 2015

Interview date: w/c 27th July 2015

Background

A one-year placement:

- (i) to directly support the Government Chief Scientific Adviser on climate change; and*
- (ii) to develop strategic links between GO-Science and NERC to inform and deliver science and innovation policy.*

The Natural Environment Research Council and the UK Government Office for Science are seeking a senior member of the climate science community to take on a key role advising the Government's Chief Scientific Adviser and linking NERC science and innovation with policymaking at the highest level.

The Government Office for Science (GO-Science) has a wide-ranging brief, working to ensure government policies and decisions are informed by the best scientific evidence and strategic long-term thinking, with responsibility for advising government across the full range of science, engineering and mathematical subjects.

In order to focus efforts and advise the Prime Minister and Cabinet on essential issues, the Government Chief Scientific Adviser has identified six core policy themes:

- Lifecourse and Cities
- Energy and Climate Change
- Trade and Finance
- Innovation and Infrastructure
- Data and Analytics
- Risk and Resilience

The placement will sit under the Energy and Climate Change team which forms part of a wider group within the GO-Science working to promote and sustain science capability within government, whose role is to ensure that Ministers have access to the best possible science advice, engaging with research networks and consolidating the role of science advice and R&D within government. The postholder will have the opportunity to help shape the Government Office's thinking in these wider areas at a critical time following the general election.

The Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) is the leading funder of independent environmental science, investing £330M a year in research, training, capabilities and innovation. NERC's vision is to place environmental science at the heart of the responsible management of our planet. To achieve this, NERC works in partnership with business, government, civil society, the public and the wider research community to shape the environmental research and innovation agenda. Our science provides knowledge, skills and technology that deliver sustainable economic growth and public wellbeing.

Placement objectives and opportunities

This placement offers an opportunity to work at the heart of government science, directly supporting the Government Chief Scientific Adviser and developing the strategic relationship between NERC and GO-Science.

The placement will:

- i. benefit GO-Science by providing crucial climate science and policy advice to the GCSA and across government;
- ii. benefit NERC by identifying key science and innovation policy developments and to ensure NERC has a role in their delivery; and
- iii. forge longer-term, high-level strategic links and a dedicated engagement framework between GO-Science and NERC.

This approach will help ensure that NERC and GO-Science benefit from the development of long term relationships across their communities at the highest level between policymakers and scientists, and a step change in the GO-Science /NERC relationship. This is important both for reporting to BIS and delivering to a commitment on evidence-informed-policy-making.

Specific objectives

Climate change science advice:

- provide analysis and advice to the Government Chief Scientific Adviser on climate change science and policy
- engage with climate change policy teams across government to improve the quality and use of environmental scientific evidence and advice in government
- explore potential project opportunities to pull through relevant science and research into policy
- facilitating continued and lasting connections to sources of evidence across the climate science community
- embed connections between officials and the NERC and wider scientific community

Strategic links and science-innovation policy:

- act as a strategic link between NERC and GO-Science to scope and initiate measures to ensure a longer-term sustainable strategic framework for how NERC and GO-Science will work together; both under relevant scientific/evidence areas and on steering science and innovation policy;
- contribute to strategic initiatives relating to science more generally, including work on a current project being taken forward in collaboration with the Prime Minister's Council for Science and Technology on the "knowledge landscape" – building a richer, more inclusive picture of the infrastructure that underpins science and research in the UK to improve policy making.

The placement will involve close working with colleagues in GO-Science's other thematic teams as well as across government, in particular with teams in DECC, DEFRA and FCO with responsibility for national and international climate change policy. The post-holder will also be expected to spend regular time within NERC Swindon Office and interact on a regular basis with NERC's Policy Innovation Manager and other key NERC staff including Heads of Discipline, other relevant Innovation Managers and NERC scientists.

Key outcomes will be:

- A refreshed strategy for Government Office for Science engagement on climate science and policy a programme of work to support this.
- An agreed strategic framework document outlining the future approach to partnership working, knowledge brokering and evidence provision between NERC and GO-Science.
- Stronger operational links between GO-Science and NERC and the wider climate science community.
- Increased profile of NERC within government and parliamentary spheres.

Requirements

Candidates for the placement should have appropriate knowledge and background and interests, including:

- an ability to communicate effectively at all levels from non-specialist to expert, verbally and in writing, and be comfortable engaging at all levels of seniority within both Government and academia.
- an understanding of climate change causes and impacts;
- an interest in the interface of research and its use in policy and decision-making, and the knowledge exchange processes which enable this.

The Appointment

This senior-level placement will act as a conduit between NERC and GO-Science will be for a 12-month period initially and will be jointly funded by the two organisations.

The Fellow will remain employed by their present employer. The fellowship will cover salary costs (see guidance notes for details) and arrangements will be made to cover reasonable travel and subsistence expenses. The award is managed under the NERC Policy Placement Scheme
<http://www.nerc.ac.uk/funding/available/schemes/placements/>

Eligibility

The applicant must be resident in the UK and be employed by an eligible UK Research Organisation (Higher Education Institution, Research Council Institute or a recognised Independent Research Organisation) as stated in the NERC Research Grants Handbook.

<http://www.nerc.ac.uk/funding/application/researchgrants/grantshandbook.pdf>

Funding

The award will pay:

Salary, NI/Superannuation at 100% cost

Travel and Subsistence costs at 100% cost;

25% of indirect costs at 80% FEC

How to Apply

Applications should be submitted through the [Joint electronic Submission \(Je-S\) system](#). Please read the [Guidance on Submitting Application](#) before completing application in the system. The specific policy placement being applied for should be clearly indicated on the project title section of the application form.

Attachments required:

1. Case for Support- no more than 4 sides of A4 the font size should be no smaller than Times New Roman or Arial point size 10. Please indicate how you would propose to address the opportunities and challenges presented by this position and how your experience and skills will enable you to achieve this.
2. CV of up to two pages A4 – the font size should be no smaller than Times New Roman or Arial point size 10;
3. Details of two nominated referees (preferably one from academia, and one with a user background);
4. A statement of approval from their employer agreeing to their release and accepting the conditions of the scheme;
5. A separate 'Justification of Resources' including Travel and Subsistence on one page of A4 (maximum).

Once you have submitted to Je-S, it is essential that you email innovation@nerc.ac.uk to alert NERC of your application. The closing date for applications is 16:00 on the 8th July 2015. Please ensure that all of the guidance and links to supporting information are read in advance of making the application.

Interview and Assessment Process

An acknowledgement of receipt will normally be sent to the applicant within a week after submission. Applications will be processed within NERC and prepared for a selection panel. Short-listed applicants will be invited for interview.

Applicants will be assessed based on evidence of their experience and competencies, as described in this Announcement of Opportunity, and on their performance at interview.

Timetable

Closing dates for applications: 16.00 on 8th July 2015

Interviews: w/c 27th July 2015

Results: w/c 3rd August 2015

Expected start date of Placement Fellowship: September 2015

Contacts

For further information on the role, or an informal discussion contact Alan Pitt, Deputy Director, GO-Science (alan.pitt@bis.gsi.gov.uk, 020 7215 0435) or Sasha Leigh, Policy Innovation Manager, NERC (email: snbl@nerc.ac.uk, Tel: 01793 442634)

For queries on the Policy Placement Scheme and application process, contact Maricon Alojado, Innovation and Knowledge Exchange Operations Manager (maloj@nerc.ac.uk, Tel 01793 411579)