



## **OPPORTUNITY FOR A HIGH-LEVEL NERC / WELSH GOVERNMENT POLICY PLACEMENT FELLOWSHIP**

**TITLE OF PROJECT: Improving the uptake and impact of NERC science into / and on Welsh Government natural resource policy in Wales.**

Closing date: 8<sup>th</sup> July 2015

Interview date: w/c 27<sup>th</sup> July 2015

### **The Appointment**

The Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) and Welsh Government (WG) are seeking a senior member of the environmental science community to take on a key role linking NERC science with WG policymaking at the highest level.

This part-time senior Fellow will act as a conduit between NERC and the Welsh Government's Department of Natural Resources, working to improve knowledge exchange by developing and implementing processes to identify, translate and feed-in NERC's research to WG policy and evidence teams in a timely and appropriate manner, prioritising areas which will have most impact on policymaking and practice. The Fellowship will be for a 12-month period initially, and the Fellow will be expected to spend most of their fellowship time (approx. 3 days per week) in WG offices in Cardiff, working within the Natural Resource Management Programme which leads delivery of natural resource policy and legislative reform work. The structure of Welsh Government's Department for Natural Resources can be found in Annex A.

This post is being offered as part of the NERC policy placement fellowship scheme aimed at supporting the science-to-policy processes between government departments and NERC. To support this aim, the post-holder will be expected to 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.

Policy placement fellows have proved most valuable, significantly enhancing links between NERC science and evidence and policy teams in government and regulatory bodies, and enabling better evidence-based policymaking in specific areas.

Within WG, this fellowship will support the development of priority natural resource policy work, by focussing on areas where NERC research and capabilities can be utilised to deliver the highest potential impact. This will include informing the development of National Natural Resource Policy.

The placement will be jointly funded by NERC and WG. 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 KE Policy Placement Scheme which aims to promote knowledge exchange between academic organisations and public sector partner organisations and to provide partner organisations with research-informed evidence to develop and review policy.

<http://www.nerc.ac.uk/funding/available/schemes/placements/>

### **Job Purpose and Description**

The main purpose of the role is to strengthen the uptake of science into policy such that existing and emerging scientific knowledge is rapidly and effectively translated for policymakers. It will provide an

important mechanism for Welsh Government policy needs to feed back into NERC strategy and will assist in NERC's strategic planning and scoping of partnership activities within the WG and its agencies.

The successful applicant will need to work with Welsh Government and NERC staff at the highest level to:

- a. benefit Welsh Government by making improved and maintaining connections to sources of evidence across the NERC community, and
- b. benefit NERC by identifying key policy needs to ensure better uptake and impact of its science.

This approach will help ensure that NERC and WG 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 Welsh Government/NERC partnership - putting into practice LWEC principles of co-design, co-production and co-delivery of research, as well as developing together best evidence of impact – narratives that will help both organisations.

This is important both for NERC in its reporting to BIS, and to Welsh Government for its delivering its commitment on evidence-based-policy-making.

The experience will also benefit the post-holder in terms of enabling them to be more effective in their work in future, build on relationships made, and pass on lessons learned throughout NERC.

**Particular duties will include:**

- Providing expert technical support to the Natural Resource Management Programme, and in particular the Natural Resources Policy Branch on the development of the National Natural Resource Policy.
- Identifying topics and themes where evidence generated from NERC-funded science can make the most impact on the WG commitments in relation to natural resource management.
- Advising on the development of the WG's strategic approach, priorities and opportunities.
- Supporting the development of the evidence base: analysing evidence sources used at present by different policy and evidence teams in Welsh Government (and key partners) in relation to natural resources management, and brokering links with NERC-funded scientists and relevant data/evidence sources to inform Welsh Government engagement with wider evidence programmes.
- Acting as a strategic link between NERC and the WG to scope and initiate measures to ensure a longer-term sustainable strategic framework for how NERC and WG (and NRW) will work together.
- Supporting the mainstreaming and implementation of the integrated natural resource management approach (underpinned by the ecosystem approach) through new policy and legislative mechanisms, such as Payment for Ecosystem Services (to support the Welsh Government's focus on green growth) and General Binding Rules (to assist with better and more proportionate regulation of environmental activities)

**The key outcomes will be:**

- A report making recommendations on methods and tools for applying 'systems thinking' across relevant Welsh Government policy and evidence teams, to assist in the identification of synergies and embedding the application of the eco-system approach across Government
- A report to support the development of an evidence programme for the Natural Resource Management division. This will include recommendations
  - on evidence needs across relevant Welsh Government policy teams to implement and embed an eco-systems approach,
  - to support the development of key delivery products and tools. For example, this may include evidence around the effectiveness of innovative policy tools (such as Payments for Ecosystem services), and support for Natural Resources Wales in the development of their 'State of Natural Resources Report' and area based approach to implementation.
  - on where NERC funded evidence sources may best be utilised now and in the future to further those objectives.

- Stronger operational links between relationship managers in WG and NERC
- An agreed strategic framework document outlining the future approach to partnership working, knowledge brokering and evidence provision between NERC and WG.

### Skills required

The successful applicant should ideally have a strong scientific background with good understanding of the policymaking process and excellent inter-personal and communication skills. The following skills are expected:

- Experience / capability of working at a senior level and ability to draw on specialist knowledge to help shape policy approach; and
- Expert knowledge and research experience in the ecosystems services approach, as well as a broad understanding of NERC and UK and Welsh Government remits and responsibilities.
- Excellent communication, networking, influencing, negotiating and facilitation skills.
- Ability to work strategically across policy disciplines and an appreciation of the policy context of research.
- Good understanding of the policymaking process and the different mechanisms for science to feed into policymaking.
- Good written communication skills and experience in communicating orally and in writing to a lay audience.
- An ability to translate science knowledge to policy makers and policy evidence needs into scientific projects.
- Ability to build, maintain and promote effective partnerships.
- Strong analytical skills to recognise what science-policy linkages have the most
- Impact potential, and interpret key policy needs that NERC science can address.

### Reporting and monitoring

The fellow will report to the NERC Director of Science and Innovation and WG's Director for Natural Resources at bilateral meetings twice per year. In addition to this there will be ongoing monitoring by nominated NERC and WG contacts. The fellow will need to provide interim and final reports according to a set template and schedule, which will capture impact and outcomes. The fellow may also be asked to provide information for NERC's needs e.g. publications or be invited to talk about their experiences at NERC events.

### Eligibility

Fellowship will be taken up by those in senior level posts (equivalent to NERC Band 3 level). Only in exceptional circumstances may we appoint a less experienced applicant.

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](mailto:innovation@nerc.ac.uk) to alert NERC of your application. The closing date for applications is 16:00 on the 8<sup>th</sup> 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 8<sup>th</sup> July 2015**

**Interviews: w/c 27<sup>th</sup> July 2015**

**Results: w/c 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2015**

**Expected start date of Placement Fellowship: October 2015**

## Contacts

For further information on the role, contact Andy Fraser, Head of Natural Resource Management Programme, WG (email: [Andy.Fraser@wales.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Andy.Fraser@wales.gsi.gov.uk), Tel: 029 2080 1153) or Sasha Leigh, Policy Innovation Manager, NERC (email: [snbl@nerc.ac.uk](mailto:snbl@nerc.ac.uk), Tel: 01793 442634)

For queries on NERC Policy Placement Scheme and application process: Maricon Alojado, Innovation Operations Manager, NERC. Email: [maloj@nerc.ac.uk](mailto:maloj@nerc.ac.uk), Tel +44 (0)1793 411579.

## **Background**

### **NERC**

The Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) is the leading funder of independent environmental science, investing £330M a year in research, training, capabilities and innovation in the UK universities and research centres.

NERC invests public money in world-leading science, designed to help us sustain and benefit from our natural resources, predict and respond to natural hazards and understand environmental change. 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.

NERC is committed to working in partnership with government departments and devolved administrations to facilitate utilisation of NERC's research, and access to NERC's capabilities, as a robust evidence-base for environmental policy development and regulation.

### **Welsh Government**

Welsh Government is committed to ensuring that we manage Wales' natural resources in a way that will deliver lasting economic and social, as well as environmental benefits. Our aim is to enable a step change in the delivery of integrated natural resource management in Wales, building on the Welsh Government's commitment to sustainable development.

Research and science is not a devolved matter, with the budget shared across the UK and Welsh Governments. Partnership working across the science and evidence networks is therefore key, with NERC being one of those partners.

The Natural Resource Management programme includes:

- natural resource policy, including the setting of national priorities and working with Natural Resources Wales to develop a new approach on State of Natural Resources reporting;
- delivery of Wales' Environment Bill and a long-term programme of legislative reform;
- embedding integrated natural resource management (underpinned by the ecosystem approach), including funding collaborative approaches to deliver practical action through WG's Nature Fund to showcase the benefits this approach can bring, and from which we can learn about how and when the approach can be used.
- communications, engagement and knowledge sharing.

# Annex A: Department for Natural Resources

