



### **ESRC Policy Fellowships 2021: Opportunity description**

**Fellowship Title:** WG Environment and Rural Affairs

**Host:** [Welsh Government](#) – see also additional information section

**Host team:** Agriculture and Land Management reform teams

**Summary:** Apply behavioural science to policy development and implementation and develop a bespoke research programme in climate change and food systems.

**Policy topic:** Net Zero and Agriculture

**Potentially relevant academic disciplines:** Behavioural Science

**Relevant research career stage:** Early career

#### **Practical details**

**Start of 3-month inception phase:** December 2021

**Length of core placement:** 12 months

**FTE for core placement:** 1

**Location requirements:** The post is location neutral as Welsh Government intends to continue with a significant proportion of remote working conditions. Ability to travel to Cardiff on occasion would be beneficial.

**Necessary level of security clearance** [Baseline Personnel Security Standard](#) will be required and may require 4-6 weeks to obtain. See [National security vetting: clearance levels - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

#### **Detailed description**

Welsh Ministers have made commitments in law to reach net zero carbon by 2050<sup>1</sup>. They have also made international commitments to reverse the decline in biodiversity and protect 30% of the land for nature by 2030. Together with new trade deals changing the operating environment, agriculture in the UK and Wales is going to be subject to ongoing and significant change.

To meet these challenges, we need farmers and farm businesses to make substantial changes to their operating practices. Farmers are very varied in their motivations but many in the sector are rooted in tradition and a wait and see approach. Our agriculture policy team need sustained support and guidance in understanding and supporting the people in their sector to achieve these systemic changes at pace.

#### **Project proposal**

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2021/333/introduction/made>

The Fellow would work with the Agriculture and Land Management reform teams to design and initiate a research programme to help understand how Welsh Government policies can effectively drive cultural and business changes within the agriculture industry in Wales.

Wales leads the way in the four nations in modelling land use and land systems, in its ground-breaking [ERAMMP Integrated Modelling platform](#). However, the system lacks behavioural insight into how people in rural Wales may respond to the different policy proposals.

It is expected that activities for the Fellow will include:

- Identification of the evidence gaps related to behavioural science and where behaviour science can be integrated into our modelling capability
- Developing social science research programme to understand cultural barriers to change and to how to improve take-up of interventions in the agricultural sector.
- Advise policy and delivery teams on communication and engagement with the industry to gain buy-in into climate change action.
- Engage with internal and external research programmes to co-ordinate research and share and learn from the different programmes.
- Work closely with the Social Science Fellow within the Strategic Analysis team to co-ordinate and share findings and research programmes.

#### **Opportunity-specific person specification**

Applications will be assessed against the following opportunity-specific requirements in addition to the generic eligibility and call criteria.

#### **Skills/ expertise:**

- track record of devising and undertaking behavioural science research projects.
- deep understanding of behavioural science concepts and principles to enable translation of behaviour science into a modelling system.
- Interest in climate change adaptation and mitigation