



# WALES POLICY GROUP

## BRITISH ECOLOGICAL SOCIETY

### 2022/23 BES Policy Fellowship with Natural Resources Wales

The British Ecological Society is committed to making the best scientific evidence available to decisionmakers and supporting members to build their policy engagement skills and enhance the impact of their work. The BES Policy Fellowship offers an ecologist the chance to conduct a placement embedded within a government department or agency, applying their scientific expertise to a practical policy challenge. The 2022 Fellowship will be hosted by Natural Resources Wales (NRW).

The Fellowship will provide a prestigious opportunity for BES members to gain first-hand experience of working within a statutory conservation agency, improve their policy knowledge and awareness, develop their science - communication skills, and build their professional networks at an exciting and crucial time for environmental policy. The Fellowship will also help to foster wider links between the ecological and policy communities, and support policy development informed by outstanding science.

### Nature of the Fellowship

#### Eligibility

Applications to the BES Policy Fellowship will be open to any BES member who is affiliated with a Welsh institution (university, research organisation or otherwise) with two or more years' research experience post-PhD. The Fellowship is only open to those who have UK Citizenship or an **existing** visa to work in the UK for the duration of the Fellowship.

#### Possible work areas:

The Fellow will work on the application of regenerative agriculture in Wales. They will contribute to some or all of the following tasks:

- Synthesise the evidence base for the benefits and disbenefits of regenerative agriculture of relevance to Wales, particularly focussing on no-till agriculture and its use within and outside of Wales.
- Use a systems approach to map the benefits and disbenefits (and dynamics/feedback loops) of no-till agriculture for different parties, including environmental, social, and economic evidence. Examples include impact on water infiltration, water run-off, nutrient run off, water retention, carbon sequestration, soil erosion, changes to yield, equipment cost, weed control.

- Report on the investment needed to switch from till to no till agriculture (including changes to planting, machinery, fertiliser, pest control, weed control).
- Produce user specific outputs to communicate the evidence to groups including policy makers, landowners, farmers and NGOs.
- Gather a set of case studies of no-till farms that share similarities with the Welsh agricultural environment. These should include situations where the change was successful and not, and lessons learnt.
- Provide a worked example of how organisations like NRW can use the CEEDER database to inform decision making on the topic of the effectiveness of no-till agriculture.

The successful candidate does not need to be an expert in all these areas, and the focus of the Fellowship will depend on prevailing policy needs as well as their interests and experience.

The Fellow will work with specialist policy and operational experts within NRW and Welsh Government to produce the desired outputs. This Fellowship will take place during a crucial period of environmental policy and decision making, during development of the Welsh Government Agricultural Bill and the Sustainable Farming Scheme. The fellow will contribute vital evidence for NRW on issues and topics within sustainable land management.

NRW will provide a named line manager for the Fellow. The Fellow will be expected to work on their own computer and to work from home with potential travel to attend meetings and events in NRW offices in Wales. If needed, the candidate will be able to use a desk in one of NRW's offices. If access to IT resources would be a problem, please get in touch with [mark.sabine@cyfoethnaturiolcymru.gov.uk](mailto:mark.sabine@cyfoethnaturiolcymru.gov.uk)

The Fellow will remain employed by their home institution for the duration of the placement.

### **Duration**

The precise duration of the placement to be agreed between NRW, the Fellow and the Fellow's home institution. The placement can be full-time or part-time.

### **Start Date**

The Fellowship will start in December 2022, with the exact start date to be agreed between NRW, the Fellow, and the Fellow's home institution.

### **Other Requirements**

The Fellow will:

- Complete a defined project for NRW within the agreed deadline.
- Contribute to related work on evidence management, analysis and policy development as a member of NRW.
- Actively share the knowledge and experience gained through the Fellowship with the wider BES membership (e.g. through articles on the BES website or in the Niche).
- Ensure all communications, outputs and products are approved by NRW before publication.

The Fellow may:

- Support external academic engagement activities undertaken by NRW, for example assisting with seminars and workshops with external stakeholders and representing NRW work at external academic meetings.
- Submit a mid-placement progress report to the BES and NRW, outlining progress against agreed objectives.
- With support from the BES and NRW, arrange at least one knowledge exchange event (to be held at NRW/BES/host institution as appropriate) to discuss the outputs and learning from the project with a wider policy and/or scientific audience.

The host organisation (NRW) will:

- Provide a named line manager for the Fellow for the duration of the placement.
- Identify a defined project for the Fellow, with clear objectives and success criteria, and an appropriate scope and timeframe.
- Provide a suitable induction programme for the Fellow and opportunities to engage in policy development.
- Provide feedback at the end of the placement in line with standard practice in the host organisation.
- Where full publication of the work undertaken by the Fellow is not possible, provide an impact report outlining how the results have been used.

The BES will:

- Identify and offer opportunities to engage more widely with the BES's policy work during the Fellowship e.g. through the activities of the BES' Welsh Policy Group.
- Provide funding for the duration of the placement as outlined below.
- Support the Fellow to organise at least one knowledge exchange event to discuss the outputs and learning from the project with a wider policy and/or scientific audience.

### **Conditions of work**

The Fellow must adhere to their employer's and NRW's requirements of independence from political or commercial interest through the placement. The Fellow must sign a placement agreement, a legal agreement and undergo a DBS check before starting the Fellowship. The Fellows will need to give undertakings to respect a confidentiality agreement, specifying that information on policy advice and internal debate will not be disclosed without prior written agreement of the host organisation. Insurance for the Fellow will be covered by the Fellow's institution.

### **Funding**

A maximum of £20,000 is available from the BES to support the Fellowship. Applicants are asked to specify and justify the amount of funding requested and how it would be spent.

Eligible expenditure includes:

- Salary costs for the applicant, including national insurance and superannuation, but not estates or indirect costs.
- Travel and subsistence, including accommodation.
- Other factors

## Application Procedure

**Applications will open on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2022.** Applications will be via the grants portal on the BES website. You will need to register into our online grants system, complete your contact details, and navigate to 'Your Applications'.

<https://bes.flexigrant.com/>

Alongside the application form, candidates will be asked to provide:

- A CV.
- A letter of support from the Head of Department/School at the applicant's home institution indicating that they agree to the applicant taking time away from their normal duties to complete the Fellowship according to the requirements and conditions set out above.
- An equality and diversity monitoring form.

Initial shortlisting will be conducted by a review panel consisting of a representative of the BES' Welsh Policy Group, one representative of NRW, the BES Senior Policy Manager and the BES Policy Officer supporting the BES work in Wales. Shortlisted applicants will be invited to interview, with the interview panel comprising the one representative of the BES, one representative of NRW and one member of the BES Welsh Policy Group

Applicants will be scored against the following criteria:

- Motivation for and interest in the Fellowship.
- Science communication, collaboration and team working skills relevant to policy engagement.
- Scientific expertise relevant to the placement project.
- Skills necessary to widely share the outputs and learning of the Fellowship.
- Strong research record.

## Contact Details

If you have any questions about the Fellowship or application process, please get in touch with Daniela Russi, BES Senior Policy Manager, [daniela@britishecologicalsociety.org](mailto:daniela@britishecologicalsociety.org)