

ESRC Welsh Graduate School for Social Sciences

Research in Practice Placement Opportunity

The following information has been provided by the Host Organisation and outlines the opportunity available. Any queries about this placement should be addressed to the host organisation in the details provided below.

This placement is aimed at Postgraduate Researchers who have funding through the ESRC Doctoral Training Partnership from October 2024 onwards, who must complete a Research in Practice placement as part of their award.

Name of Host Organisation	Rural Wales Local Policy and Innovation Partnership (Cymru Wledig LPIP Rural Wales)
Address	Department of Geography and Earth Sciences, Aberystwyth University, Aberystwyth, SY23 3DB
Website	www.lpip.cymru
Brief description of the Host organisation:	Cymru Wledig LPIP Rural Wales is an initiative funded by UKRI to facilitate knowledge exchange between academic research and policy development and implementation relating to Rural Wales. Our work involves (1) Strengthening the evidence base for policy, through short, targeted, research projects; surveys; data integration and analysis; and knowledge brokering; (2) Finding solutions to policy challenges through Innovation Labs, Dialogues, and Equalities Mainstreaming; (3) Empowering communities to understand and address local issues, through Community-led Action Research and training and capacity building. Our work programme is responsive to the research and innovation needs identified by our partners and stakeholders, within the broad themes of 'Building a Regenerative Economy', 'Empowering Communities for Cultural Resilience', 'Enhancing Wellbeing in Place' and 'Supporting the Net Zero Transition'. The activities are undertaken by a team of academics, research staff, support staff and other experts located across the partnership, which includes Aberystwyth, Bangor and Cardiff Universities, the Countryside and Community Research Institute, and

	several social enterprises, businesses and third sector organisations, most substantially, the Centre for Alternative Technology and Together for Change.
Company registration Number	n/a

PLACEMENT OPPORTUNITY	
Placement role title: <i>e.g Policy officer</i>	Graduate Researcher
Background/expected impact of the project:	<p>As described above, the Cymru Wledig LPIP Rural Wales work programme involves a range of activities across a variety of topics. Six targeted research studies have been complete on growth in the rural economy; women and farm diversification; multi-solving from net zero initiatives; food and community wellbeing; Wales's intangible rural cultural heritage; and the use, management and potential of community spaces. Four innovation labs have explored solutions to challenges around developing low carbon horticulture; recruitment to the construction industry; community food projects; and the Welsh language and grassroots sport. Five community-led action research projects have been completed, with six further projects underway, on topics ranging from community transport to water quality. An equalities mainstreaming panel is investigating public transport; and surveys have been completed on community resilience and on rural crime, with a rural business survey in progress.</p> <p>For the RinP placement, you will primarily work on a discrete project that synergises findings and lessons from across all of the Cymru Wledig LPIP Rural Wales projects and activities around a specific cross-cutting theme. It will involve reviewing data collected through these projects and activities; talking to Cymru Wledig LPIP Rural Wales researchers and partners; and potentially following-up specific issues through additional data collection and analysis.</p>

Up to four cross-cutting projects will run in parallel. Each RinP placement student will be responsible for leading a project but there will be opportunities to collaborate with other RinP placement students in delivering the work. The four projects are:

Project 1: Insights for Wellbeing Plans. How does evidence collected by Cymru Wledig LPIP Rural Wales relate to the seven Wellbeing Goals? How might insights be incorporated into Local Wellbeing Plans and the work of Corporate Joint Committees?

Project 2: Inclusion and Exclusion. What insights are provided by Cymru Wledig LPIP Rural Wales research and innovation activities into experiences of inclusion and exclusion by different groups in rural Wales, including around age, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, language, or physical and mental ability and health. Have specific challenges or instances of exclusion been identified? Have any examples of good practice to promote inclusion been recorded?

Project 3: Co-production and Participation. What does the evidence collected by Cymru Wledig LPIP Rural Wales tell us about process of co-production and participation in research and policy in rural Wales? This includes co-design and participation in research, among communities and stakeholders, including perspectives on research, and co-production of policy and rural development projects. What barriers have been observed and have any examples of good practice been documented?

You will be asked to indicate your preference for the above the projects, in ranked order, when applying.

We are also open to considering student-led proposals for other placement projects that fit with the Cymru Wledig LPIP Rural Wales themes and objectives as well as the objectives and rules of the RinP scheme.

The outcomes from these projects will inform recommendations from Cymru Wledig LPIP Rural Wales

	<p>to Welsh Government, the Office of the Future Generations Commissioner, local authorities, joint corporate committees, and other relevant bodies for changes to policies and procedures. They will also be used in the evaluation of the Cymru Wledig LPIP Rural Wales programme and critical reflection on its experimental methodologies.</p>
<p>Outline of duties/description of opportunity</p>	<p>You will primarily work on your specified project, in which you will be responsible for data collection, data analysis, report writing, and preparation of materials for policy engagement, working alongside a Cymru Wledig LPIP Rural Wales co-investigator and/or post-doctoral researcher.</p> <p>In addition to this primary focus, you will also have the opportunity to contribute to at least one other research or innovation activity within the Cymru Wledig LPIP Rural Wales work programme. Depending on your interests and the timing and location of the placement, this could involve supporting community-led action research; monitoring and evaluation of a test innovation to overcome obstacles to a defined change; survey construction and/or analysis; collation, manipulation, analysis and/or mapping of secondary data; or supporting citizen assembly-type Dialogues on key policy issues. You will additionally contribute to at least one public- or policy-engagement activity, including planning, preparation of materials, and on-day support</p>
<p>Expected output(s)/deliverable(s)</p>	<p>From the main project: a short report and a policy briefing, including recommendations. You will also be asked to write a blog post for the Cymru Wledig LPIP Rural Wales website about your work with us.</p>
<p>Skills and experience required for the role</p>	<p>Training and experience in social science research methods, including semi-structured interviews and analysis of qualitative data (including interview transcripts).</p> <p>Skills and experience in design and analysis of questionnaire surveys; analysis of quantitative data; report-writing; and communicating research are desirable but not essential.</p>

	Applicants should have a good understanding of research ethics and data management.
Please indicate which of the following skills could be developed or applied during the placement, you may select more than one.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research skills <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Communication skills <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Project management <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policy understanding or engagement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Collaboration / teamwork <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Data collection <input type="checkbox"/> Specific methodologies (please specify): <input type="checkbox"/> Software skills (please specify): <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Professional and transferable skills <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify):
Support provided for the Postgraduate Researcher <i>e.g necessary resources, training, support and equipment for the student to undertake their placement</i>	You will be given desk space, email, and access to library and IT resources in the host institution, and have access to pooled resources for fieldwork and engagement activities. You will work closely with a linked post-doctoral researcher and/or co-investigator, and be line-managed by the respective Cymru Wledig LPIP Rural Wales co-director. You will also work and engage with other Cymru Wledig LPIP Rural Wales staff, including the programme manager, policy engagement manager, finance and administrative assistant and engagement officer, who will provide professional and specialist support as appropriate (e.g. with expenses claims, arranging translation, etc.). You will participate in Cymru Wledig LPIP Rural Wales meetings during your placement.

KEY INFORMATION	
Number of placements available:	Up to 3
Location of placement	Placements may be held at any of the following locations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberystwyth University (Department of Geography and Earth Sciences) • Bangor University (College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cardiff University (School of Geography and Planning) • Countryside and Community Research Institute, University of Gloucestershire, Cheltenham. <p>We anticipate that up to 1 placement will be hosted at each site. You may have the opportunity to spend a short period (up to one week) at one of the other locations to facilitate collaboration with members of the Cymru Wledig LPIP Rural Wales team.</p> <p>In line with WGSSS guidance, you cannot undertake your placement in the same department as you are registered in for your PhD, or on a Cymru Wledig LPIP Rural Wales project that your supervisor is involved in.</p>
Placement duration:	Either three months full time or six months part-time.
Full time or part-time <i>attend in a single block or spaced out over period of XXX months</i>	The placements can be undertaken either as single full-time block of three months, or for two-and-a-half days per week over six months.
Working hours or core hours	Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm (4pm on Friday).
In-person, online or hybrid:	In-person or hybrid. You will be expected to regularly work in person at the location, but some remote working will be possible.
Anticipated start date:	Part-time placements of 6 months must start by 1 May 2026 and finish by 31 October 2026. Full-time placements of 3 months may start in either April 2026, May 2026, June 2026, July 2026 or August 2026 but must be completed by 31 October 2026.
Security/health and safety restrictions (if relevant)	N/a
Language requirements (if relevant)	Preference may be given to applicants able to work through the medium of Welsh, but this is not an essential requirement.

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION	
<i>Equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace is about valuing all people equally, fairly and with respect, avoiding all forms of unlawful discrimination irrespective of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.</i>	
Do you agree to uphold the principles of equality, diversity, and inclusion throughout the placement process and experience.	Yes
Does your organisation have an EDI policy?	Yes (All the partner universities that are potential locations for the placement have EDI policies that apply to the work of Cymru Wledig LPIP Rural Wales in that institution).
FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE	
<i>WGSSS Postgraduate Researchers receive their studentship stipend whilst attending their Research in Practice placement/opportunity.</i>	
Please confirm if your organisation would be willing to contribute towards additional expenses (e.g. relocation/travel/accommodation costs). If so, please provide details:	<p>Yes.</p> <p>All travel, accommodation and other costs required for assigned work will be covered by Cymru Wledig LPIP Rural Wales.</p> <p>A contribution of up to £1000 towards accommodation costs if the location of the placement is away from your usual place of residence will be available.</p>

HOW TO APPLY	
Closing date and time for applications	23:59 GMT 8 th March 2026
How to submit an application	<p>Applications must be submitted by email to lpip@aber.ac.uk, and should include an academic CV and a cover letter that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specification of your preferred placement project and location (and second and third preferences if appropriate)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A statement on why you are interested in undertaking a placement with Cymru Wledig LPIP Rural Wales; the skills, competences and experience that you hope to develop through the placement; and how these will benefit your professional development and career options. • A description of how your skills, training and expertise fit the requirements of the placement activities.
<p>Recruitment process</p>	<p>Cymru Wledig LPIP Rural Wales is responsible for processing the applications received for this opportunity and applications will be processed as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All applications will be reviewed by the members of the Cymru Wledig LPIP Executive Committee. This includes a Co-Director from each of the four partner universities and from two non-university partners, Together for Change and Sgema. 2. If necessary (due to application numbers), Exec members will score applications and shortlist applicants on the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevance of academic training and experience. • Fit of skills to the specified activities. • Evidence of capacity to work effectively as part of a time. • Capacity to undertake the work through the medium of Welsh. 3. Shortlisted applicants will be interviewed by a panel drawn from the Cymru Wledig LPIP Rural Wales. Applicants will be ranked and

	<p>placements offered on the basis of their application (CV and cover letter) and interview, assessed on the above criteria plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of the research and policy context of Rural Wales • Understanding of the principles of policy engagement • Clarity and significance of anticipated benefits for professional development and career opportunities • Evidence of inter-personal skills to support engagement with colleagues and wide range of audiences. <p>4. Top ranked candidates will be matched to projects according to their preferences. You may be offered a project other than your first preference if this has been matched to a higher ranked candidate.</p>
<p>Contact name and email for any queries related to the placement:</p>	<p>Michael Woods, m.woods@aber.ac.uk</p>