

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	Learned Society of Wales Cymdeithas Ddysgedig Cymru
Registered Address	The University of Wales Registry, King Edward VII Avenue, Cathays Park, Cardiff CF10 3NS
Website	https://www.learnedsociety.wales/
Brief description of the Host organisation:	The Learned Society of Wales is Wales' National Academy of Sciences, Arts and Humanities. Its mission is advancing education, learning, academic study, and knowledge will contribute to scientific, cultural, social, environmental and economic development within Wales and beyond.
Company registration Number	Registered Charity Number 1168622.

PLACEMENT OPPORTUNITY

Placement role title: <i>e.g. Policy officer</i>	Researcher (Sustaining National Research Capability)
Background/expected impact of the project:	As the National Academy of Wales, the Learned Society of Wales is interested in knowing more about national research capacity – current and future – specifically in the Welsh context. We are interested to understand how public investment in research in Wales creates benefits for Wales beyond the research sector, as well as benefits for the wider UK. We are seeking a postgraduate researcher with expertise in macroeconomics, metascience or public policy to carry out

	a synthesis of existing evidence relating to the following question: <i>What does a resilient research and innovation system require when resources are constrained, policy is becoming more place-conscious, and different jurisdictions have different powers, institutions and strategic choices?</i> There will also be an opportunity to bring in a comparative angle through interaction with the work of the Celtic Academies Alliance. The Celtic Academies Alliance unites the Learned Society of Wales (LSW), the Royal Irish Academy (RIA), and the Royal Society of Edinburgh (RSE) to promote collaboration, and strengthen cross-national understanding within the UK and Ireland. Together, the Celtic Academies Alliance leverages the collective expertise of these national academies to inform public policy, advance multidisciplinary research, and address shared challenges across four nations. This year, the Alliance will be running a year-long programme staged across three key milestones: 1. Flagship event, 17-18 November 2026, Edinburgh A two-day event bringing together around 70 decision makers and sector stakeholders to examine a common set of difficult questions from different institutional and jurisdictional perspectives. 2. Publication of a position paper Following the event, the Alliance will publish an evidence-based position paper outlining propositions for policymakers and funders. 3. Roundtable, March 2027, Edinburgh A smaller roundtable of key stakeholders to address the position paper and explore implementation of its propositions.
Outline of duties/description of opportunity	We are seeking a postgraduate researcher to gather and synthesise existing evidence from published research and policy documents. The research would be focused on the core question outlined above. Parallels may be found in research on national or regional investment strategies, and/or the direct and indirect impacts of public spending. The researcher will have scope to work independently, and shape the project based on their expertise and the evidence they find.

	We anticipate that the researcher's work may contribute to a published report, in which case they will be credited as an author.
Expected output(s)/deliverable(s)	• Literature review / evidence synthesis, written up as a report that is accessible for non-expert readers. • Evidence-led advice and guidance for colleagues developing a set of propositions for policymakers and funders
Skills and experience required for the role	• Academic background in macroeconomics, metascience, or public policy. • Understanding of and interest in how public investment generates public value – directly or indirectly – particularly with regards to Place, devolution, and regions. • Familiarity with research and innovation systems. • Experience in evidence synthesis / literature review. • Experience in writing for non-academic contexts.
Please indicate which of the following skills could be developed or applied during the placement, you may select more than one.	☒ Research skills ☒ Communication skills ☐ Project management ☒ Policy understanding or engagement ☐ Collaboration / teamwork ☐ Data collection ☐ Specific methodologies (please specify): ☐ Software skills (please specify): ☒ Professional and transferable skills ☐ Other (please specify):
What support will be provided for the Postgraduate Researcher <i>e.g necessary resources, training, support and equipment for the student to undertake their placement</i>	The researcher will be supported by a line manager (Head of Public Policy at the Learned Society of Wales). The researcher will have access to members of staff and Fellows of the three academies to support, inform and shape their work. The Learned Society of Wales will cover all travel expenses. The researcher will need to provide their own laptop and working space. It is not anticipated that formal training will be required.

KEY INFORMATION	
Number of placements available:	1
Location of placement	Anywhere in Wales The researcher will be required to travel occasionally to Cardiff (up to three times), and Edinburgh (up to two times). The Learned Society of Wales will cover all travel expenses.
Placement duration:	3 months FTE (up to 6 months if part-time): any working pattern can be accommodated.
Full time or part-time	Any working pattern can be accommodated.
Working hours or core hours	Any working pattern can be accommodated. The researcher will be encouraged to attend an event in Edinburgh on 17-18 November. The Learned Society of Wales will cover all travel expenses.
In-person, online or hybrid:	Mostly online. The researcher will be required to travel occasionally to Cardiff (up to three times), and Edinburgh (up to two times). The Learned Society of Wales will cover all travel expenses.
Anticipated start date:	Between Monday 2 nd November 2026 and Thursday 12 th November
Security/health and safety restrictions (if relevant)	None
Language requirements (if relevant)	None

HOW TO APPLY	
Closing date and time for applications	23:59, Sunday 4 th October
How to submit an application	A CV and one-page statement.
Recruitment process	The Learned Society of Wales CEO and Head of Public Policy will shortlist applications. Shortlisted candidates will be invited to conduct an informal interview via videocall in early October. Candidates will be informed of the outcome by close of business Friday 16 th October.
Contact name and email for any queries related to the placement:	Dr Fiona Dakin, Head of Public Policy fdakin@lsw.wales.ac.uk

