NERC – DECC (CESA) Joint Fellowship Opportunity

Climate Evidence Specialist

The Appointment
The Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) and Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) Climate and Energy, Science and Analysis group (CESA) welcome applications for a temporary specialist **Fellow** to work with DECC in its climate science team, based in London (3 – 8 Whitehall Place) for a period of six months or more (maximum 12 months). The 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. The post-holder will interact on a regular basis with NERC climate science managers and with the knowledge exchange team.

Closing date for applications: Thursday 8th July 2010

An application form and guidance notes can be downloaded at http://www.nerc.ac.uk/using/publicsector/fellowship.asp

For further information contact Dr Nafees Meah, Head of CESA (e-mail nafees.meah@decc.gsi.gov.uk) or Lesley Aspinall, Science to Policy Facilitator at NERC (e-mail laa@nerc.ac.uk Tel :+44 (0)1793 411536)

Such placements have proved most valuable, significantly enhancing links between NERC science and science evidence and policy teams in government, enabling improved science evidence for UK policy. The value to post-holders has also been high. Previous post-holders have benefited from developing a clearer understanding of how government works in delivering evidence-based policy, an understanding of handling the day-to-day pressures of delivering directed science and of communicating with senior officials and ministers, whilst developing strategies for delivering evidence for policymaking in the longer term.

The Fellow will remain employed by their present employer and arrangements will be made to cover travel and subsistence expenses on a case-by-case basis.

Job Purpose and Description
The purpose of the job is to strengthen links between NERC climate science and policy and to provide scientific advice on climate change to inform development of international and domestic climate policy.

Specifically the post involves:

- formal and informal interaction with NERC officials and a wide-range of NERC-funded UK academics to support the transfer of knowledge based on NERC science into DECC policy-making processes,
- through CESA, feeding back DECC's key policy questions that NERC science can address in the longer term through development of its thematic and responsive mode programmes,
- identifying, addressing and overcoming key science-to-policy tensions and knowledge gaps,

- providing advice on climate change science (including observations needs) and climate change impacts.
- working in a small team, helping to improve the evidence base on climate change science used by DECC and other UK government departments, by providing:
- scientific and technical advice to policy colleagues, senior officials and ministers,
- written and oral briefings to officials and ministers on a wide range of relevant scientific issues,
- maintaining parts of DECC's Knowledge Bank on climate science,
- planning, organising and reporting on workshops and meetings with NERC scientists and policy officials,
- ensuring that the research commissioned by DECC meets the department's objectives,
- contributing towards identifying DECC's needs for Earth observation,
- through the NERC Theme Leaders, helping NERC to develop Research Programmes that are informed by DECC's and other government departments (OGDs) policy requirements, and
- identifying policy areas that have used NERC science as part of the evidence, in particular working with the knowledge exchange team at NERC.

Background

Within DECC, Climate and Energy: Science and Analysis (CESA) provides a cadre of specialist scientists responsible for providing scientific evidence to inform UK policy on climate change and energy. Working with a wide range of specialists, policy makers and other stakeholders, CESA contributes significantly to national and international efforts on the scientific, technological and economic aspects of global change, and related impacts, responses and adaptation opportunities. CESA also leads for the UK in International and EU negotiations on the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

NERC funds world-class science in universities and research centres that increases knowledge and understanding of the natural world, through independent research and training in the environmental sciences. NERC's current strategy defines seven themes under which its science will be delivered: climate system, biodiversity, sustainable use of natural resources, earth system science, natural hazards, environment pollution and human health, and technologies. NERC interacts and works regularly with a wide range of stakeholders, including policy-makers, to support the science to policy process and help develop appropriate ways to address environment issues.

Skills required

Building relationships – an ability to liaise effectively with a wide range of stakeholders within DECC, OGDs and NERC to facilitate verifiable outcomes.

Team-working – an ability to work with well-established evidence and policy teams to draw on their work and the willingness to work together in inter-disciplinary teams both within and outside the Department to work on complex topics.

Communication – a first class communicator, able to communicate effectively the results and implications of scientific advances to non-scientists and on policy issues to scientists (bridging the understanding ‘gap’).

Delivering a quality service – having the flexibility and willingness to work on a wide variety of scientific issues related to climate and the ability to prioritise tasks and to cope with competing demands.

Decision making - an ability and willingness to work to tight deadlines, to manage your own work and that of others.

Essential specialist expertise –

- a good understanding of important issues in climate change,
- in depth knowledge understanding of at one or more key areas of climate science,
- some knowledge of one or more closely related fields, for example, earth observation, weather extremes, climate impacts, ecological services, adaptation, vulnerability and risk, or environmental economics,
- work or research experience in one or more of the areas, listed above.