

# Post-Doctoral Research Opportunity: Developing a framework for monitoring and evaluation of a just transition to net zero in Scotland

ClimateXChange (CXC) wishes to offer a 6-month post-doctoral research opportunity to develop a draft framework for the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of a just transition to net zero in Scotland.

## 1. The need for this research

The Scottish Government has committed to delivering a just transition to net zero. This means ensuring Scotland gets to a net zero and climate resilient economy in a way that delivers fairness and tackles inequality and injustice. As this is a relatively new and rapidly evolving policy area, it is particularly important – and particularly challenging – to establish a robust approach for monitoring and evaluating progress. A clear and comprehensive M&E framework is required to provide accountability and enable learning and improvement in the delivery of a just transition for Scotland.

## 2. Background

In response to the recommendations of Scotland's first [Just Transition Commission](#), provided in March 2021, the Scottish Government published a [National Just Transition Planning Framework](#). This framework sets out eight National Just Transition Outcomes and makes a commitment to develop 'Just Transition Plans' (JTPs) for high-emitting sectors of the Scottish economy.

The [draft Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan](#) (ESJTP) was published for consultation in January 2023. Three further sectoral JTPs (Transport; Land Use and Agriculture; Built Environment and Construction) are currently in development. Underpinning these plans will be a set of policies designed to deliver the intended outcomes and, in doing so, contribute to delivering the National JT Outcomes.



Figure 1: Hierarchy of SG just transition activity

It is essential – for both accountability and learning – that the Scottish Government establishes an appropriate approach for monitoring and evaluating its activities. This is particularly important in relatively new and evolving areas of policymaking, such as just transition, where there is limited previous experience or evidence to draw on and therefore a greater degree of uncertainty about what does and doesn't work.

Monitoring and evaluating the effective delivery of a just transition is a challenging and complex task. The breadth of the ambition means that a multi-faceted approach is required. Quantitative and qualitative data from diverse sources will need to be brought together to produce a holistic picture of progress.

The Scottish Government has identified a need to monitor progress towards a just transition at three levels:

- **National Just Transition Outcomes** – It is important to track progress towards the eight 'National Just Transition Outcomes' for Scotland. The Just Transition Commission (JTC) are leading on this workstream and have recently commissioned a research team to develop a Theory of Change (ToC) and indicator set for monitoring Scotland's progress towards these national outcomes. This work is currently ongoing.
- **Just Transition Plans** – All Just Transition Plans will have a set of plan-level outcomes. The Just Transition M&E team within SG is taking the lead on developing indicators to monitor progress towards each of these outcomes. The EJSTP outcome indicators are now fully drafted. Indicators for the Transport, Land Use & Agriculture, and Built Environment & Construction JTPs are currently in development.
- **Just Transition Policies** – National- and Plan- level just transition outcomes will be delivered through a diverse suite of policies. As with all significant government policies and programmes, these JT policies should each have tailored plans for monitoring delivery, measuring success, and identifying potential improvements. Responsibility for the development and implementation of M&E at the policy-level is devolved to the specific SG policy units that own the respective policies.

A key task for the PDRO will be to help bring together all these workstreams into a coherent and complete M&E Framework for just transition.

### 3. Project scope and aim

Through close engagement with key policy leads within Scottish Government, this project will develop a draft framework for the monitoring and evaluation of the just transition planning process. It will focus on the following five key tasks:

- a) **Evidence Review** - review the current state of confident knowledge, key gaps, and areas under active debate with respect to monitoring and evaluation of complex policy challenges similar to just transition.
- b) **Establish a draft Theory of Change (ToC) for each draft JTPs**
  - i) Working with JTP policy leads in Scottish Government, chart the causal pathways for each of the (draft) JTPs. This will articulate the links between the policies and outcomes, highlighting any potential gaps in the policy package.
  - ii) work with the Just Transition Commission secretariat to ensure these JTP ToCs feed into and complement the overarching JT ToC for Scotland. (This work is currently underway and being delivered through a separate research commission. It is

anticipated that draft products will be available for the PDRO on appointment).

- c) **Support ongoing work to establish *quantitative* outcome indicators for the four JTPs**
  - i) Support the JT M&E team in Scottish Government to finalise an initial set of high-level quantitative metrics that can be used to monitor progress towards the outcomes of the Transport, Agriculture & Land Use, and Built Environment & Construction JTPs. (N.B. This work is already underway within Scottish Government and the indicators have already been identified for the ESJTP).
  - ii) Building on existing research (ongoing and completed), identify potential opportunities for improving on the initial list of quantitative metrics and consider opportunities for data development.
- d) **Identify options for *qualitative* evaluation** – work with internal and external stakeholders (particularly the JTC M&E subgroup) to develop proportionate and pragmatic proposals for qualitative evaluation of the delivery of the JTPs, with a focus on how to capture the experiences of those most vulnerable to negative consequences from the transition to net zero.
- e) **Draft a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for Just Transition** – draw together the outputs from the workstreams above to produce a clear and comprehensive draft M&E Framework that sets out a coherent and practical approach to monitoring and evaluation of just transition. Just Transition is a long-term ambition; the Framework should seek to take a long-term perspective to M&E, providing suitably ambitious proposals for assessing progress, whilst ensuring that these proposals remain practical and deliverable.

#### 4. The research question

This research will examine the following question:

How can the Scottish Government deliver a robust and comprehensive approach to monitoring and evaluation of a just transition to net zero in Scotland that is consistent across scales and sectors?

#### 5. Audience

The work is commissioned on behalf of the Scottish Government, and of particular interest to the Office of the Chief Economic Advisor, the Just Transition Unit, and the Just Transition Commission Monitoring and Evaluation sub-group.

The results must be presented in a format and language that can be easily understood by readers across different policy areas and without an academic background. Written outputs must be well presented and written in Plain English.

## 6. Outputs

The primary output will be a final report in the CXC house style. The report will cover:

- 1) A proposed Framework for Monitoring and Evaluation of a Just Transition
- 2) A narrative report to include:
  - a) A glossary of key terms
  - b) A summary of the evidence base, covering the current state of confident knowledge, key gaps and areas under active debate with respect to monitoring and evaluation of complex policy challenges.
  - c) An explanation of the theoretical underpinnings of the proposed M&E Framework and its limitations.
  - d) A clear and coherent articulation of the various components of the proposed M&E Framework, including how quantitative monitoring metrics and qualitative evaluation approaches fit together and complement each other.
  - e) Recommendations for further research and data development where necessary
  - f) References
- 3) Appendices, to include
  - a) Detailed methodology
  - b) Underpinning data

We understand that the successful researcher will want to produce academic outputs (e.g. journal paper(s)). However, the primary output will be the above report to the Scottish Government and will follow the CXC reporting guidelines.

The ownership of the research material including the final report and any data produced as a result of the research lies with ClimateXChange on behalf of Scottish Ministers. The research may be published on the ClimateXChange website, the date and format of which will be determined by the Scottish Government and ClimateXChange. One or more drafts are likely to be required before a final version is agreed.

ClimateXChange supports the Scottish Government Open Research Guidance for RESAS, summarised as “open as possible, closed as necessary.” This means that all products will be placed in the public domain, unless there is a strong argument otherwise (for example to comply with data protection regulations). Descriptions of all projects and related products will be uploaded to the ResearchFish system.

## 7. Project governance

A Steering Group will be established to support delivery of the project. The steering group’s role is to guide and direct the research. It will include representatives from Scottish Government and ClimateXChange, along with the successful academic institution and researcher. It is also likely to include academic expertise in the monitoring and evaluation of climate change action. External members will be considered depending on the methodology/ approach.

It is expected that the researcher will be embedded within the Climate Change Analysis branch in the Office of the Chief Economist. The lead contact will be Dr Emily Creamer (Principal Social Researcher). It is expected that the Scottish Government Just Transition Unit will provide support, advice and guidance to the fellow during the research project. The researcher will be

expected to work directly with policy colleagues in various teams, most notably Climate Change, Agriculture and Rural Economy, and Transport Scotland.

The lead contact for ClimateXChange will be the CXC Climate and Land Use Project Manager, Dr Sarah Govan ([sarah.govan@ed.ac.uk](mailto:sarah.govan@ed.ac.uk)) who will liaise with the successful institution and the lead researcher. Regular update calls will be scheduled between the researcher, the Scottish Government and the CXC Project Manager to discuss progress and address any issues, escalating to the researcher's Principal Investigator (PI) and or steering group for consideration where necessary.

## 8. Project timetable

Milestone	Completed by
Interview panel – if required	6 September
Appoint successful researcher/institution	13 <sup>th</sup> September
Project kick-off meeting, to confirm <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scope</li> <li>• Boundaries</li> <li>• Timeframe</li> <li>• Secondment arrangements with the Scottish Government</li> </ul>	Friday 4 <sup>th</sup> October
CXC / Scottish Government induction	25 <sup>th</sup> October
Regular discussion of progress (researcher, CXC & Scottish Government)	Fortnightly
Discussion of draft theory of change with steering group	29 <sup>th</sup> November
Discussion of analysis of options for qualitative evaluation with steering group	20 <sup>th</sup> January 2025
Submission of draft Framework for review by steering group	14 <sup>th</sup> February
Submission of final report (including all deliverables)	31 <sup>st</sup> March
Presentation to SG stakeholders on the results	31 <sup>st</sup> March

## 9. Application process

Applicants are invited to put forward proposals on how to best meet the research aims within the budget available. A full explanation of your chosen approach meeting the 'award criteria' and key tasks listed below, including any limitations, should be provided.

The research will use a range of action research and engagement methods working with government policy officials and stakeholders (including government agencies, research institutes and non-governmental organisations). Applicants should address the following key tasks in their submission:

- Induction/engaging with core Scottish Government team
- Develop stakeholder engagement plan
- Engagement activities

- Drafting and revision of the framework
- A plan to test delivery options and framework drafts

The assessment panel may wish to interview potential candidates (online) in the week beginning 6<sup>th</sup> September.

## 10. Eligibility

Applicants must demonstrate they meet the following eligibility criteria for the research associate and the hosting organisation.

### i. Organisational

- existing in-house capacity to carry out research that extends and enhances other research happening in the UK
- the capability and skills to independently undertake and lead a research programme

### ii. Individual

- have completed your PhD at a UK research organisation
- have at least 12 months active postdoctoral experience (at full-time rate) measured from passing your viva voce to the competition closing date
- be eligible to work in the UK for the period of the research
- practical experience of the Theory of Change approach

## 11. Submitting a proposal and award criteria

Deadline for submissions – 12 noon on **Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> August 2024**. Submissions should address the following criteria, which will form the basis for assessment

Price 20%

Quality 80%

Quality criteria	Descriptor	Weight
Research expertise	<p>Detail the knowledge, experience, expertise and capability that is required for this research, including as a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The researcher</li> <li>• The individual (proposed Principal Investigator or Supervisor) who will be supporting the researcher</li> <li>• Evidence should be provided of previous research and knowledge exchange work relevant to the research requirement (including working hyperlinks) with an emphasis on policy-focussed research and communication.</li> <li>• A statement demonstrating institutional capacity and CVs of relevant staff should be provided, along with the number of person days proposed.</li> </ul>	25%
Research methodology	Detail your approach to a high quality and workable research methodology that will deliver the outputs in the required	25%

Quality criteria	Descriptor	Weight
	<p>timescale, including as a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How the evidence will be identified, reviewed and assessed</li> <li>• How the proposed analytical steps will address the research objectives</li> <li>• The suitability, robustness and limitations of the methodology</li> <li>• Ethical procedures that will be followed</li> </ul>	
The need for this research	<p>Demonstrate your understanding of the requirements, including as a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The policy environment and the supporting role of research</li> <li>• The cross-sectoral nature of the project</li> <li>• The need for this research</li> <li>• The research aim, and how the proposal will address this need</li> </ul>	15%
Quality assurance	<p>Provide details of quality assurance procedures to demonstrate how the research will be continuously delivered to a high standard, including as a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• issues of quality control at different stages of the project, including initiation, stakeholder engagement, analysis and report writing</li> <li>• Provide a risk assessment matrix detailing any risks identified in relation to the delivery of this contract, and proposed mitigation measures to minimise their probability and impact</li> </ul>	15%

Your submission should be a single document of no more than 8 pages (excluding CVs) in PDF format with the file name in the following format name of submitting organisation – IQ22-2024 PDRO Just transition.

File size should not exceed 5MB.

You should highlight any potential conflicts of interest in your proposal.

The costs of proposals for this project are expected to be no more than £90,000 (excluding VAT). However, ClimateXChange would welcome proposals for less than this amount. We welcome consortium bids.

Proposals need to be submitted to [lee.callaghan@ed.ac.uk](mailto:lee.callaghan@ed.ac.uk) and cc'd to [sarah.govan@ed.ac.uk](mailto:sarah.govan@ed.ac.uk) for evaluation by **noon on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> August 2024**.

Depending on the quality of proposals received, CXC may chose not to appoint any contractor.

## 12. Clarification questions

We will respond to any clarification questions received while the project call is open and publish them on the CXC website on the [Work with us page](#).

## 13. Terms and conditions

The institution/organisation of the successful applicant shall be required to enter into a contract for services/research with the University of Edinburgh whose terms shall govern the post-doctoral research opportunity (the “Contract”).

The payment terms for the Contract will be expressly linked to the Project timetable and will be subject to milestone delivery.

The contract for ClimateXChange (between University of Edinburgh and Scottish Government) is scheduled to end in March 2025.

#### **14. Travel policy**

In line with the [Scottish Government travel strategy](#) and the [University of Edinburgh Sustainable Travel Policy](#), we expect contractors to use low-carbon travel options for any in-person meetings, and to only travel when necessary.