

## Post-Doctoral Research Opportunity: Analysing a complex policy landscape: diet and climate in Scotland

ClimateXChange (CXC) wishes to offer a 6-month post-doctoral research opportunity to explore approaches and barriers to evidence-based policymaking through analysis of a data-constrained context – specifically diet and climate in Scotland.

### 1. The need for this research

Climate and diet pose a challenging area for policymakers: the evidence base is both extensive, yet with critical gaps. And there are conflicting influences on policymakers' and individuals' behaviour – such as from culture, industry, habits, health, the law, and the environment.

This project will analyse these influences and evidence gaps, and suggest approaches that could support an informed policy position on climate and diet in Scotland.

Such a policy position could support SG's emissions reduction work, as well as ensure any dietary recommendations are contributing to a just transition. This policy position could also support work in other sectors, including health and environment.

### 2. Project scope and aim

The project has two primary objectives:

- analyse the evidence base for climate and diet policy formulation in Scotland, through the lens of a PESTLE analysis (political, economic, social, technological, legal and environmental);
- propose options for navigating gaps in the Scottish evidence base, and navigating the policy landscape, to inform the future of policy for Scotland.

The research is expected to include desk based research and stakeholder engagement with SG policy teams to explore:

- a PESTLE analysis:
  - An appraisal of the diverse societal influences on climate and diet policymaking in Scotland, as explored through engagement with the diverse range of stakeholders. This should be framed as a PESTLE analysis on policymaking around diet and climate. This should also consider the societal landscape influencing individuals' dietary practices.
- Mapping evidence gaps: A review of current evidence gaps around climate and diet in Scotland, to encompass:
  - an articulation of known information gaps – as set out in existing research in this

area - which present barriers to policymaking. These gaps include quantitative estimation of dietary change on emissions; Scotland-specific data; food production data; and the relationship between food production and consumption;

- an assessment of the feasibility of approaches (from literature and/or the stakeholder community) to address these information gaps at a Scotland level, in the short to medium term;
- an assessment of the significance (or otherwise) of these gaps for making Scottish policy recommendations.
- Proposed next steps: Combining the results of the PESTLE analysis and evidence gap review, the project should propose actions for SG policy teams that will enable the translation of current available research on climate and diet into policy recommendations.

### 3. The research question

This research will examine the following question:

How best can Scottish Government use the existing evidence base on diet and climate to move forward with policy development, given

- (i) the societal landscape influencing policy-making and dietary practices, and
- (ii) gaps in the evidence base?

### 4. Audience

The work is commissioned on behalf of the Scottish Government, and of particular interest to: the Behaviours, Adaptation and Engagement Unit; Food Standards Scotland; the Good Food Nation policy team; the Tobacco, Gambling, Diet & Healthy Weight Unit; and the Food Security team.

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.

### 5. Outputs

The outputs will be threefold:

- 1) A report capturing the results and giving a narrative analysis of:
  - a) the societal landscape influencing policymaking on climate and diet, through a PESTLE analysis;
  - b) the feasibility and relative necessity of addressing known evidence gaps in the short-medium term; and
  - c) the implications of these findings for policymaking.
- 2) A visual representation (such as an infographic) to communicate the results of the PESTLE analysis.
- 3) Proposals to inform next steps for SG policy development.

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.

## 6. 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 work closely with the Behaviours, Adaptation and Engagement Unit. It is expected that the Scottish Government Climate & Diet Working Group (with a cross-sectoral membership of SG officials working on climate, food, health, environment and agriculture policies) 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.

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.

## 7. Project timetable

Milestone	Completed by
Interview panel – if required	6 <sup>th</sup> September
Appoint successful researcher / institution	9 <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
Submit stakeholder engagement strategy to the steering group	25 <sup>th</sup> October
Regular discussion of progress (researcher, CXC & Scottish Government)	Fortnightly
Steering group meeting to discuss initial results of PESTLE analysis (date to be confirmed at kick off)	Friday 22 <sup>nd</sup> November
Steering group meeting to discuss initial results of evidence gap review (date to be confirmed at kick off)	Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> December
Submission of draft report for review by steering group	21 <sup>st</sup> February 2025
Submission of final report (including all deliverables)	31 March
Presentation to SG stakeholders on results	31 March

## 8. 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 findings
- A plan to test delivery options and report drafts

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

## 9. 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

## 10. 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</li> </ul>	25%

Quality criteria	Descriptor	Weight
	person days proposed.	
Research methodology	<p>Detail your approach to a high quality and workable research methodology that will deliver the outputs in the required 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>	25%
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 – IQ24-2024 PDRO diet and climate.

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.

### **11. 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](#).

### **12. 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.

### **13. 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.