

Candidate Information

Position:	Research Fellow
School/Department:	School of Natural and Built Environment
Reference:	19/107158
Closing Date:	Friday 8 March 2019
Salary:	£33,199 - £39,610 per annum (potential to progress to £43,266 per annum through sustained exceptional contribution)
Duration:	3- years

JOB PURPOSE:

The full-time appointment is for three years (36 months) to be an active member of an international research team working on a three year Open Research Area 5th Call (ESRC, NWO and DFG) funded project Staying in the Rural: Contemporary Life Course related Senses of Belonging, Mobility and Rural Community Participation (STAYin(g)Rural).

The post holder will assist in the planning and delivery of this project. They will be based at Queen's University Belfast (but with periods of up to one month at a time spent with collaborative partners in the Netherlands and Germany). The post holder will have responsibility for data collection (household surveys and interviews), processing and analyses for the Northern Ireland case study (south Tyrone) and for analyses of the family formation life course stage across three case studies.

Staying in the Rural: Contemporary Life Course related Senses of Belonging, Mobility and Rural Community Participation (STAYin(g)Rural).

To date population geography research has focused on migration. Especially in rural areas, those who do not move are seen as a residual category and their motivations for staying receive limited academic or policy attention. STAYin(g)Rural is a three year international collaborative project funded under the Open Research Area 5th Call (ESRC, NWO & DFG). It investigates why and how people stay in rural areas at different stages of their lives. It acknowledges that people elect to (selectively) belong to and participate in rural areas and that different types of mobilities influence their staying processes.

MAJOR DUTIES:

1. Undertake research under supervision on the Staying in the Rural: Contemporary Life Course related Senses of Belonging, Mobility and Rural Community Participation (STAYin(g)Rural) research project.
2. Read and critically review relevant academic and policy materials and keep abreast of developments in the specialism and related disciplines.
3. Source and analyse secondary data (published by government, public and private sector organisations) as appropriate.
4. Design and pilot appropriate data collection methods (quantitative and qualitative) and undertake field research to obtain reliable data (involving household surveys, interviews and focus groups with respondents and representatives from the public and voluntary sectors). Primary data collection will be conducted in County Tyrone (Northern Ireland) which will necessitate spending extensive periods of time in the study area. In undertaking the household survey component you will be supported by a small team of research assistants. As leader of this team you will have responsibility for their training and managing day-to-day schedules in the field.
5. Ensure that research is conducted ethically and complies with relevant research governance procedures.
6. Undertake quantitative (surveys) and qualitative (interviews) data analyses using appropriate computer-aided software.
7. Spend at least 4 weeks working with (and hosting) each of the other national teams (in the Netherlands and Germany) as part of an exchange arrangement.
8. Present regular progress reports (verbal and written) on the project to the international team, members of national Steering Groups, and to external audiences.

9. Maintain and keep up-to-date a project web site.
10. Prepare, in association with the principal investigators and PhD students, research reports (including materials for national Steering Groups, case study seminars, international stakeholder workshop, and funders), articles for publication in national and international journals and at national and international conference presentations.
11. Carry out routine administrative tasks as requested to ensure that the project is completed on time and within budget. This might include organising meetings and supporting documentation (for example, project team meetings, meetings of the national (NI) Steering Group); coordinating NI field work activities; risk assessment of research activities; and financial control.
12. Carry out occasional lecturing, demonstrating or supervision duties under direct guidance of a member of academic staff.
13. Assist grant holder in the preparation of funding proposals and applications to external bodies.
14. Carry out any other duties designated by the line manager which fall within the remit of the research project and post.

Planning and Organising:

1. Plan for and organise specific research activities within agreed timescales.
2. Plan own day-to-day activities within the framework of the agreed research programme.
3. Plan up to six months in advance to meet deadlines for progress reports, end-of-award reports, journal publications, and conference presentations.
4. Coordinate and liaise with other members of the research team over work progress.

Resource Management Responsibilities:

1. Ensure research resources are used in an effective and efficient manner.
2. Manage research assistants helping with the NI household survey and assist with the supervision of PhD students on the project.
3. Provide guidance as required to support staff who may be assisting with the project.

Internal and External Relationships:

1. Liaise regularly with members of the international research team and the national (NI) Steering group.
2. Build internal/external contacts and participate in internal/ external networks for the exchange of information and to form relationships for future collaboration.
3. Contribute to the School's outreach programme by establishing links with local community groups, elected representatives etc.

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA:

1. Have (or be about to obtain) a Ph.D. in Human Geography, Sociology, Planning or other related discipline.
2. - At least 3 years post-undergraduate degree research experience.
 - Research interests in the fields of population and rural community studies.
 - Practical experience of designing and conducting household surveys and/ or qualitative interviews.
 - Proven competence in primary data analyses (statistical analyses of survey data (using descriptive statistics, standard tests of association, tests of difference) and/ or thematic analysis of interview material).
 - Familiarity with computer software packages to aid quantitative and qualitative data analyses (such as, SPSS Statistics, Nvivo, MAXQDA).
3. Ability to supervise post-graduate and final year undergraduate students.
4. Ability to contribute to the management and administrative processes associated with an international collaborative research project.
5. Ability to assess and organise time and resources.
6. Ability to maintain a project web site.
7. Ability to critically review and summarise information, and communicate this information effectively.
8. Good verbal and written communication skills (suitable for academic, practitioner and lay audiences).
9. Ability to build contacts and participate in internal and external networks.
10. Demonstrate intellectual ability.
11. Ability to work under own initiative and cooperatively within a team.
12. Possess good interpersonal skills (including the ability to effectively interact with the international research team, members of the public, and members of national Steering Groups).
13. Willingness to meet the mobility requirements of the post (the post is based in Belfast, the post holder must be willing to spend considerable time in the study area and participate in month-long exchange visits to the Dutch and German partners).
14. Possess a valid driving licence or demonstrate means to fulfil the mobility requirement of this position
15. Willingness to work irregular hours during field work periods, that will require spending periods of time away from home.

DESIRABLE CRITERIA:

1. Research experience specifically in the fields of population studies, rural community change and/or migration decision-making.
2. Breadth and depth of knowledge in a variety of quantitative and qualitative research methods.
3. Knowledge of/ previous experience of using advanced statistics (principal components analysis, regression analyses etc).
4. Proven competence in analysing qualitative texts.
5. Past experience of working on a large collaborative research project.
6. Supervisory experience of postgraduate and final year undergraduate students.
7. Past research experience of interacting with policy-makers, community groups, and general public
8. Authorship of academic publications (journal articles, book chapters) and conference presentations (papers/ posters).
9. Demonstrate leadership ability, including self-motivation and experience of managing a research project (or a sizeable component of a research project) and reporting to project funders.