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UNIVERSITY OF GALWAY



HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

Postdoctoral Researcher - CONNECT

Collective Opportunities iN Nature & Environment for Community Transformations

Applied Ecology Unit, School of Natural Sciences and Ryan Institute

College of Science & Engineering

Ref. No. 011711

JOB ADVERTISEMENT

Applications are invited from suitably qualified candidates for a full-time, fixed term position as a Postdoctoral Researcher with Applied Ecology Unit, Environmental Science, School of Natural Sciences and Ryan Institute at the University of Galway, Ireland.

This position is funded by Environment Protection Agency (EPA) and is available from 1/6/26 to 31/8/29.

Project Title: **Collective Opportunities iN Nature & Environment for Community Transformations**

Information on project

Collective Opportunities iN Nature & Environment for Community Transformations (CONNECT) is a medium scale multidisciplinary project, based at the Ryan Institute, and the School of Natural Sciences at the University of Galway. The project team combine staff from the University of Galway (Academics and Student Counselling and Wellbeing Services and Foróige along with an independent Consultant in Active Hope. The postdoctoral researcher will work closely with Environmental Science and Psychology staff and the Senior Postdoctoral Researcher. The project aims to determine how to motivate community decision-making and collective behavioural transitions for climate and environment; and to support communities to identify their pathways to climate action and transition to sustainable living, with a focus on nature restoration. This project involves youth, and adults.

There are six objectives:

1. Explore youth and adult perceptions, attitudes, beliefs and values in relation to engaging in nature-based pro-environmental behaviour.
2. Identify patterns and processes in decision-making around climate action policy, including wider community engagement for climate action initiatives
3. Investigate methods to increase youth and adult engagement with citizen science in relation to biodiversity
4. Compare the effects of theory-based behavioural and eco-psychological interventions and in increasing youth and adult engagement with nature restoration and citizen science
5. Research effects of engagement with nature restoration and citizen science (nature-based solutions) on youth and adult wellbeing, community-wide civic engagement and eco-system health
6. Validate study of citizen science nature-based initiatives and data collection.



These objectives relate to 6 work packages; two are whole of project and relate to reporting, and dissemination and four are linked to the following studies:

Study 1: To assess the impact of collective action on the natural environment; and compare similarities and differences between youth and adults in the context of collective engagement in environmental action.

Study 2: To identify patterns and processes in decision-making around climate action policy, including wider community engagement for climate action initiatives.

Study 3: To investigate methods to increase youth and adult engagement with citizen science in relation to biodiversity impacts.

Study 4: To investigate effects of engagement with nature restoration and citizen science (nature-based solutions) on youth and adult wellbeing, community-wide civic engagement and eco-system health.

Salary: Postdoctoral Researcher salary scale €46,805 - €59,654 per annum, (subject to the project's funding limitations), and pro rata for shorter and/or part-time contracts.

The default position for all new public sector appointments is the 1st point of the salary scale. This may be reviewed, and consideration afforded to appointment at a higher point on the payscale (subject to the project's funding limitations), where evidence of prior years' equivalent experience is accepted in determining placement on the scale above point 1, subject to the maximum of the scale.

[\(Research Salary Scales - University of Galway\)](#)

NB: Garda vetting is a requirement for this post (as appropriate to Child Protection Policy)

Closing date for receipt of applications is 17:00 (Irish Time) on 30/04/26. It will not be possible to consider applications received after the closing date.

Interviews are planned to be held mid-late May (after May 13th)

***Please review full job description for further details and essential requirement**

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Description:

- The successful candidate will be expected to contribute to all work packages in conjunction with the Senior Postdoctoral Researcher; their primary focus will be to:
- Co-develop a systematic review, and produce a state of knowledge report regarding
- participation in collective climate and nature action;
- Apply innovative and mixed methods to identify patterns and processes in decision-making around climate action policy, and create a systems map of climate action in Ireland
- Evaluate community-based climate action initiatives in Ireland, and identify barriers to participating in climate action;
- Apply innovative and mixed methods to identify patterns and processes in decision-making around climate action policy;



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- Utilise literature surveys and questionnaires to create a database and determine how attitudes, preferences and existing constraints influence decision making regarding the collective environmental action in youths and adults;
- Co-design and evaluation interventions on engagement with climate and nature action;
- Contribute to evaluating Active Hope as an intervention for youth and adults, including its impact on engagement with climate action, climate and nature literacy, and
- Contribute to reporting requirements, and knowledge dissemination opportunities throughout the project as relevant.

The Postdoctoral Researcher will be responsible for advancing the research and innovation outputs, impacts and outcomes of the research project, under the direction of the Principal Investigator, the Senior Post-doctoral Researcher and the project team to ensure that projects goals, milestones and impacts are reached. The Postdoctoral Researcher should be technically strong in social and environmental science research techniques such as citizen engagement, attitudes and perception studies, systems mapping, nature connectedness with a thorough understanding of nature conservation actions. The Postdoctoral Researcher will collect, synthesize and process information to develop high quality databases and extract meaningful results, work with other team members to develop and apply methodologies to address these critical themes, provide rigorous and objective results, communicate results through well-designed figures and tables, publish journal articles and accessible reports, and present results at conferences, workshops, project meetings and other events. The Postdoctoral Researcher will work with the Principal Investigator, Co-Investigators, the Senior Post-doctoral Researcher and the project team. The Postdoctoral Researcher will be based with the Applied Ecology Unit at the University of Galway.

DUTIES

Duties

The successful candidate will

- Determine appropriate methodologies to undertake the planned research under the guidance and direction of the Principal Investigator, Senior Postdoctoral Researcher and project team
- Plan and implement research for CONNECT, targeting high-impact outputs, outcomes and impacts, and assess research findings for the need/scope for further investigations.
- Ensure that all relevant Work Packages and Research activity areas are advanced to reach milestones and targets.
- Meet regularly with the Principal Investigator, the Senior Postdoctoral Researcher and the wider project team, and attend meetings with the funding agency and steering committee.
- Write up results from the project research activity and publish on a regular basis, in conjunction with the Principal Investigator, Senior Postdoctoral Researcher and project team
- Present on research progress and outcomes as agreed with the PI, Senior Postdoctoral Researcher and project team, at conferences, team meetings, steering committee meetings, community meetings and other knowledge sharing events.
- Engage in disseminating the results of the research with the support of and under the supervision of the Principal Investigator, Senior Postdoctoral Researcher and project team.
- Attend and network at relevant conferences and meeting hosted by relevant professional institutions and other universities and agencies as appropriate.



- Complete administrative work to support the programme of research, including drafting interim and final reports for funding agencies.
- Create and maintain project website and social media accounts for the project.
- Create and maintain data and records as directed and in line with Funder/University policy
- Gain experience in grant writing and engage in development of proposals for additional funding to further expand the project.
- Engage in training and professional development opportunities as required by the Principal Investigator.
- Mentor, assist and engage in the research supervision of other researchers working on the project.
- Develop their own career reputation and career development, including acquiring relevant generic and transferrable skills
- Engage in the wider scholarly activities of the project team, School and Institute or any other duties assigned commensurate to this level of post.
- Any other duties assigned commensurate to this level of post.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Essential Requirements:

- PhD degree in a relevant field (environmental science, socio-ecology, environmental psychology)
- Strong quantitative and qualitative research skills that are integrative and interdisciplinary in the field of climate and nature action and citizen science
- Educational and research background that demonstrates critical thinking and capability to conduct high-impact research on collective action for climate and nature.
- Integrative and interdisciplinary capacity for systems thinking and generation of frontier knowledge.
- Excellent communication, organisation and interpersonal skills, including the ability to write concise, readable reports in English, and the ability to interact with other researchers.
- Expertise in engaging in mixed methods research such as semi-structured interviews, surveys, questionnaires, interventions, and other research mechanisms as relevant to the project.
- Skills of relevance to the project e.g. social science skills, GIS skills (ArcGIS, qGIS) data analytics etc.
- Capability for mapping and modelling data collected in the field and using existing datasets.
- Excellent report writing skills including data analytics and data visualisation (e.g. using R, SPSS etc).
- Ability to convert project theories into tangible outputs and impacts.
- Willingness to travel for site visits and community meetings.
- Excellent organisational and administrative skills including a proven ability to work to deadlines.
- Full clean driving licence, valid for Republic of Ireland.

Desirable Requirements:

- Interdisciplinary background on multiple factors relating to climate and nature action.
- Proven record of academic and public communications
- Aptitude for multidisciplinary approaches and ability to work in a multi-disciplinary team
- International experience of research on climate and nature action
- Postdoctoral experience related to nature connectedness, or environmental psychology
- Published high-impact peer-reviewed journal papers on nature connectedness, environmental activism, nature conservation, citizen science, community engagement.



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- Expertise in quantitative and qualitative analysis
- Passion for conducting data-driven and evidence-based research on collective environmental activism, and climate action.
- Familiarity with a wide range of data sources relevant for the project analysis, and the ability to identify emerging topics and data sources and engage experts to conduct research.
- Well-developed problem-solving, quantitative, and critical thinking skills; intellectual curiosity. Able to structure and formulate solutions to complex problems.
- Highly motivated and detail oriented with the ability to work independently and in close collaboration with team members.
- Skilled written and verbal communicator, including the ability to present complex information so that it is understandable to a broad audience.
- Demonstrate awareness of the research environment and the various grant sources and application mechanisms

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Continuing Professional Development/Training:

Researchers at University of Galway are encouraged to avail of a range of training and development opportunities designed to support their personal career development plans. University of Galway provides continuing professional development supports for all researchers seeking to build their own career pathways either within or beyond academia. Researchers are encouraged to engage with our Researcher Development Centre (RDC) upon commencing employment - see [HERE](#) for further information.

FURTHER INFORMATION/LINKS

TO APPLY: [Search Current University of Galway vacancies](#). Applications (covering letter, CV, and the contact details of three referees) must be submitted online.

- [How to apply guide](#)

- For informal enquiries, please contact Caitriona Carlin, Lecturer and Principal Investigator, Ryan Institute and School of Natural Sciences, Email Caitriona.carlin@universityofgalway.ie
- [University's Strategic Plan](#)
- [Working in Research at University of Galway](#)
- [Moving to Ireland \(Euraxess\)](#)
- [Applicant Information](#)
- We reserve the right to re-advertise or extend the closing date for this post.
- University of Galway is an equal opportunities employer.



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- All positions are recruited in line with Open, Transparent, Merit (OTM) and Competency based recruitment.

