

Environment & Public Health

Secondment Opportunities

Closing date 11th July

Role 1: Environment- Health Partnerships

Defra's involvement in the Environmental Monitoring for Health Protection (EMHP) programme has demonstrated benefits from close collaboration with health colleagues across government for the purpose of delivering innovative and large-scale environmental monitoring. We are keen to realise some of the wider benefits to the department from this environment-health partnership. An important step is to ensure there is a central view of existing connections and engagements between Defra Group and DHSC and its agencies. With this in mind, the Environment & Public Health team in the Chief Scientific Advisor's Office wish to map Defra's engagement with health to understanding existing activity and relationships and identify opportunities for better coordination and join up across the environment and health interface in government.

This is an exciting opportunity to gain a broad understanding of Defra's health-related scientific and policy work and to establish a strong network across Defra Group, DHSC, UKHSA and other government organisations.

Specialism: A post doctorate qualification (or equivalent experience) or experienced current PhD student. Understanding of the environment-public health interface would be beneficial, experience with systems thinking and analysis methods would be useful.

Location: Any- some UK travel may be required, especially to Weymouth, Exeter and London.

Time commitment: 3-6 months

Contact for more information: Robin Cutler Robin.Cutler@defra.gov.uk

Role 2: Future Wastewater Monitoring Capability Development

The CSAO's Environment & Public Health team lead on the realisation of benefits to Defra from the partnered delivery of wastewater monitoring as part of the national Covid-19 response. A component of this work involves ensuring policy and central teams remain informed of post-Covid-19 developments and that our activity in CSAO aligns with policy and strategic priorities, particularly as the Public Inquiry commences. Practically, this may involve providing rapid briefings and query responses but also supporting on cross-government coordination and communications related to knowledge sharing and future wastewater monitoring capability development.

This is a unique opportunity to contribute to realising a lasting legacy from investment made during

the last two years which has yielded substantial scientific development and collaboration across government. You will gain a firm understanding of central policy work in Defra and a government perspective on the use of science in decision-making, as well as having the opportunity to establish a large network across government.

Specialism: A post doctorate qualification (or equivalent experience). An experienced current PhD student would be considered. Understanding of environmental or public health policy would be useful.

Location: London (other locations can be considered)

Time commitment: minimum three months, preferred six months

Contact for more information: Robin Cutler Robin.Cutler@defra.gov.uk

Role 3 New Environmental Monitoring Capability Within Defra

Environment and Public Health is a new area of interest for Defra's Chief Scientific Advisor's Office (CSAO). Through the experience of delivering wastewater monitoring as part of the national Covid-19 response through the Environmental Monitoring for Health protection (EMHP) programme, we have developed new capabilities across Defra in environmental molecular monitoring, (including large scale qPCR analysis, genomic sequencing, bioinformatics and statistics) and have strengthened our relationship with health colleagues in government. We are now seeking to realise wider benefits from these developments ensuring there is lasting legacy from the investment made during Covid-19.

This placement will be to support the design and, potentially, build phase of a new environmental monitoring capability within Defra Group that builds on the expertise developed through the delivery of the EMHP programme.

The main activities for the placement will be to:

Provide expert advice to ensure that the design of the capability is scientifically robust

Take a lead on elements of the design process

Provide advice and progress updates to Defra's Chief Scientific Advisor and other senior stakeholders

Engage with stakeholders from across Defra group and other Government departments and agencies, including UKHSA.

This is an exciting role in a newly emerging and fast-paced area that will provide opportunities to engage directly with senior stakeholders, to work on a high-profile government science project and to directly influence the direction of Defra's work in environmental monitoring for public health purposes.

Specialism: A postgraduate qualification (or equivalent experience) in one of the follows areas: public health, epidemiology, environmental molecular-microbiology, environmental science.

Location: Any - although occasional travel may be required to London, Weymouth and Exeter

Time Commitment: Minimum of 3-4 months, but could extend to March 23

Contact for more information: **Robin Cutler** robin.cutler@defra.gov.uk

To apply please fill in the form that can be found here: <https://forms.office.com/r/U2ay5ZdZWZ>

Please direct any queries to: external.advice@defra.gov.uk