

## Welsh Government:

## Exploring the Relationship between Culture and Well-being

## Project Brief

## This project will explore the potential relationship between culture and well-being. The intern will contribute towards the development of the Welsh Government’s (WG) approach to synthesising evidence. They will explore areas where cultural policy making could help to address some key government objectives, contributing towards the wider cultural evidence base, and helping to inform organisational and national indicators.

The intern will be based in the WG’s Sustainable Futures research team, which includes housing, environment, culture and sport policy areas. The intern will work closely with social researchers, statisticians and policy teams, and will focus in particular on the culture portfolio, and specifically, the [Fusion programme](http://gov.wales/topics/culture-tourism-sport/tackling-poverty-through-culture/?lang=en).

The Fusion programme is managed by the WG’s Museums, Archives and Libraries Division (MALD), with support from Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales (Amgueddfa Cymru), and aims to encourage and empower people to take an active part in the arts, culture and heritage at a local community level. The programme supports ‘Fusion Partnerships’, made up of cultural organisations, local community groups and education institutions, to collaborate in developing opportunities for increasing participation in cultural activities; in particular, amongst those individuals, groups and communities who would not normally engage with these types of activities.

To date, an evaluation and a review of the Fusion programme has been undertaken. The [first](http://gov.wales/docs/caecd/research/2016/160303-pioneer-area-programme-pilot-year-en.pdf) evaluation, on the pilot year of the programme, analysed its implementation to date, reviewing its design, delivery and effectiveness, and offered recommendations and improvements for the Programme going forward. The [second](http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/research-fusion-creating-opportunities-through-culture-programme/?lang=en) review, on the second year of the programme, focussed on the views of a wide range of cultural stakeholders participating in Fusion Partnerships. The research highlighted the value of using culture to tackle poverty and disadvantage in communities across Wales. A key finding was that through supporting strategic partnerships, the programme is facilitating greater collaboration and influence locally, as well as providing a clearer picture of outcomes.

There are still however significant gaps in our understanding of cultural impact. The possibility of building a more robust evidence-base around the longer term benefits of cultural participation and engagement in Wales, using data sets such as the National Survey for Wales, has been identified as an area which should also be explored further. This project aims to help address this gap. Its objectives are to explore and interpret the results of the National Survey for Wales to meet key policy and practice requirements. The researcher will:

1. Working in partnership with topic specific leads in the WG and Amgueddfa Cymru to review the data and associated evidence to define potential connections within the survey. The researcher will identify the most appropriate method for analysing the relationships between survey responses.
2. Carry out appropriate analysis to explore the potential relationships on a range of topics. This would involve carrying out regression analyses to identify the key drivers (such as demographics, income, qualifications, wellbeing, experiences and views) of outcomes against the national indicators. The topics would include a subset of the following (the exact set of topics will be discussed and agreed on appointment):

* The potential relationship between exposure to cultural activities, and the potential impact on mental health and subjective well-being
* The potential benefits of engagement with culture (including participation and volunteering) for well-being (including physical and mental health, subjective well-being attributes, and other variables)

1. Draft a short series of topic specific ‘Insights’ reports based on a policy-informed interpretation of the results of the analyses.
2. Present the results of the analyses in a presentation to colleagues from the WG, Amgueddfa Cymru and other key stakeholders.
3. Run a training session with analysts from the WG’s Knowledge and Analytical Services to demonstrate how to replicate the work in future.
4. Consider any potential data or evidence gaps identified and how they might most appropriately be filled in the future
5. Consider the potential for future research to explore in more depth the relationships highlighted by this research project

**Anticipated project outcomes**

* High quality data and analysis to aid an understanding of the potential multi-variable relationships between culture and well-being
* A short series of topic specific ‘Insight Reports’
* A technical report which would include the following:
  + A review of what the data can tell us
  + A discussion of the different types of analysis which could be used on the survey data and recommendations on the best approach to use
  + A summary of the results of the analysis.
* Annotated syntax for carrying out the analysis, including any data preparation work (e.g. recoding of variables)
* A presentation to analytical colleagues and policy officials from both WG and Amgueddfa Cymru on the findings of the report
* A training session with appropriate teams to demonstrate how to replicate the work in future

**Student specification**

## The student must have:

* Strong data analysis skills including of regression analysis and experience of working with quantitative survey data.
* Experience in handling/manipulating data, in Stata or SPSS.
* The ability to produce cross-tabulations, well designed charts and to produce concise, well written documents presenting technical material in an accessible format.

**Further learning and development opportunities**

The internship offers numerous learning and development opportunities, including:

* An insight into the Government Social Research (GSR) profession and the potential to publish GSR reports on the WGs [Statistics and Research webpages](http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/?lang=en).
* Working in collaboration with policy officials and analysts from the WG and with partners on the Fusion programme from Amgueddfa Cymru and the Arts Council Wales.
* Working as part of a team in a dynamic policy environment, gaining an insight into the work of the WG and its relationship with partners.
* Applying what you have studied to see tangible results in an area where there is a clear gap in Wales-specific and wider national and international evidence on the potential relationship between culture and well-being. The findings from this project will contribute to the evidence base, which in turn will inform the WGs policy position on culture and tackling poverty.
* Attending GSR Knowledge Sharing Sessions,
* Developing technical skills such as analysing data from the National Survey Wales to explore ways of measuring progress against the Well-being of Future Generations Act (which places a legal requirement on Ministers to set national indicators), and communicating the results to a lay audience. We also encourage, in principle, interns to submit academic journal publications relating to or arising from PhD internship work.
* Develop and demonstrate softer skills, such as through communication, teamwork and problem solving through leading on a discrete research project (with support from KAS and MALD).

The intern will also have the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the [Secure Anonymised Information Linkage (SAIL) Databank](https://saildatabank.com/) and the [Administrative Data Research Centre (ADRC) for Wales](https://adrn.ac.uk/about/network/Wales/), to help them propose further analysis that might be completed in the future.[[1]](#footnote-1) Thus, the intern will have the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the kinds of emerging technologies and methods in data linking and data science that can be used when analysing securely linked anonymised administrative and survey datasets.

The internship will be based in Cardiff and last for a period of 3 months.

This internship is available on a part time basis over a longer time frame (no less than three days a working week), to be negotiated between the WG and the successful applicant. If you would like to be considered on a part time basis please specify your preferred working hours on the application form.

## Start date of internship

## Summer 2018 (exact date to be negotiated). There may be some flexibility dependant on individual circumstances.

**Queries**

Any queries relating to the project should be directed to:

Kate Mulready: [kathleen.mulready001@wales.gov](mailto:kathleen.mulready001@wales.gov)

1. The WG works with SAIL and the ADRC to promote the analysis of secure, anonymised administrative and survey data through its Programme to Maximise the Use of Existing Data. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)