National Assembly for Wales: internship opportunity

Summary

We are looking to appoint one or two interns for a period of up to three months each to provide additional research capacity for the Assembly’s reform work.

This is an exciting opportunity to work on a high profile project in the National Assembly for Wales. On behalf of the Assembly, the Assembly Commission is leading a project to explore how powers devolved by the Wales Act 2017 over the Assembly’s electoral and internal arrangements might be used to make the legislature more effective, accessible and diverse. The successful applicant(s) will work closely with Assembly officials and stakeholders to research and develop policy and legislative proposals, and support the Llywydd as she leads legislation through the Assembly’s scrutiny processes.

The internship(s) will be for a period of up to three months, starting in January 2019 or a date in spring 2019 to be agreed with the successful candidates.

The organisation

The National Assembly for Wales is the democratically elected body that represents the interests of Wales and its people, makes laws for Wales, agrees Welsh taxes and holds the Welsh Government to account.

The Assembly Commission serves the National Assembly to facilitate its long term success as a strong, accessible, inclusive and forward-looking democratic institution and legislature that delivers effectively for the people of Wales.

Further information about the Assembly, and the Assembly Commission, is available at [www.assembly.wales](http://www.assembly.wales).

The project

The intern(s) will provide research support to the Commission’s Assembly reform programme, which is exploring how powers devolved to the Assembly by the Wales Act 2017 in relation to the institution’s size, name and electoral arrangements might be exercised to make the legislature more effective, accessible and diverse.

In February 2017, the Commission appointed an [Expert Panel on Assembly Electoral Reform](http://www.assembly.wales/electoralreform) to make recommendations on the number of Members the Assembly needs, how Members should be elected, and the minimum voting age for Assembly elections.

The Commission held a [public consultation](http://www.senedd.assembly.wales/mgConsultationDisplay.aspx?ID=292) in spring 2018 on the Expert Panel’s recommendations, and associated electoral and organisational arrangements. It subsequently [announced](http://www.assembly.wales/ministerial%20statements%20documents/the%20commission%E2%80%99s%20assembly%20reform%20priorities%20following%20the%20outcome%20of%20the%20public%20consultation%2C%20) in July 2018 that it would adopt a two-phase approach to Assembly reform:

* Phase 1: legislate to change the name of the Assembly to Welsh Parliament, to lower the minimum voting age for Assembly elections to 16 with effect from 2021, to reform the framework for disqualification from being an Assembly Members, and to implement other electoral and internal reforms.
* Phase 2: to consider an increase in the number of Assembly Members and how they should be elected, in light of cross-party discussions. While the Llywydd is confident that there is sufficient political and public support for an increase in the number of Assembly Members, there is not yet consensus on how Members should be elected. If a consensus is reached, the Commission’s intention is that these elements will form the second phase of the reform programme during this Assembly term.

Further information about the Assembly reform programme is available at [www.assembly.wales/assemblyreform](http://www.assembly.wales/assemblyreform).

The internship(s)

We are looking to appoint one or two interns for a period of up to three months each to provide additional research capacity to the Assembly reform work.

The intern(s) will be part of the team working on the Assembly Commission’s programme of electoral and institutional reform. The internship will require working closely with policy officials, researchers and lawyers, and will provide an opportunity to apply research skills in a policy environment, further develop generic skills (such as report writing or making presentations), and to enhance policy knowledge. It will also provide an exciting opportunity to work at the heart of Welsh democracy, including working with senior officials and elected Members.

The specific work undertaken by the intern(s) will be negotiated with officials leading the Assembly reform work, taking into account the skills and policy background of the successful applicant(s). However, such work may include:

* Policy and legal research, using a range of qualitative and quantitative research methods as appropriate, potentially including gathering primary evidence from stakeholders and comparative analysis with other UK and international legislatures.
* Evidence gathering and research to inform assessment of the impact of legislative proposals—for example on equalities, the Assembly’s official languages, the environment, or the justice system in England and Wales—and identification of potential mitigations as well as the financial implications.
* Evidence gathering, research and analysis to inform estimates of the financial implications of legislative proposals.
* Preparation of papers, briefings and reports on policy or legal matters relating to the reform programme. Such outputs may help to inform policy decisions, or form part of the supporting documentation accompanying any legislative proposals which are introduced.
* Monitoring and analysis of legislative scrutiny process, Assembly proceedings, and media and social media coverage.
* Presentation of research findings, analysis and advice to senior officials or elected Members.

Intern specification

The intern(s) must have the necessary skills to critically assess and analyse available quantitative and qualitative data. Knowledge of elections (including electoral systems and franchise policy), constitutional matters, the legislative process and/or parliamentary work and capacity will be an advantage. The intern will need the ability to produce concise, well-written documents presenting technical material in accessible formats within tight timescales. Experience of working in a bilingual and/or a political environment would be an advantage, but is not necessary.

Start date of internship

Commencing January 2019, or a date in spring 2019 to be negotiated.

Location

The internships are nominally based on the Assembly estate in Cardiff Bay. Remote or home working will be possible, although there may be some occasions requiring attendance at the Assembly. The DTP will ensure that accommodation and travel costs do not present a barrier to any applicant.

Security

Applicants must have resided in the UK for a minimum of three years. The successful candidates will have to undergo security vetting. The security vetting will be to Counter Terrorist Check (CTC) level and will require the candidate to complete an online security questionnaire with United Kingdom Services Vetting (UKSV). Internships are subject to the successful completion of this level of security vetting.

Applications

This internship is open to any ESRC DTP-funded Doctoral student, except those within 3 months of the start or end of their studentship. We are looking for someone who is excited by this opportunity and has good analytical, communication and inter-personal skills.

Those interested should first discuss this opportunity and its timing with their supervisor, whose approval will be necessary. Please send a letter of application (max one side of A4) and a CV (max two sides of A4) by email to enquiries@walesdtp.ac.uk by 10am on 19 November 2018.

Your letter should confirm that you have the agreement of your main supervisor and should specify a suggested start-date. It should also include how you feel the internship would be of benefit to your Doctoral programme. There will be an interview as part of the selection process. The successful applicant(s) will be notified in XXXXXX.

Queries

Any queries relating to the internship opportunities should be directed to:

Helen Finlayson, Constitutional Change Team Leader, or Tom Jackson, Bill Manager, at constitutional.change@assembly.wales or 0300 200 6565.