**Centre for Climate Change and Social Transformations**

**Placement Summary**

This project placement provides the exciting opportunity to be part of international and policy relevant research within the Centre of Climate Change and Social Transformations (CAST). The student will be part of the research team and work across two central projects within the Centre, both focusing on exploring new patterns within datasets from surveys that have already been collected. This set up will offer the unique opportunity to shape and be part of high quality publications (briefing or empirical paper) within the time frame of the placement.

**The Organisation**

The Centre for Climate Change & Social Transformations (CAST) is a £5m investment by ESRC, with a head office at Cardiff University, and core partners University of Bath, Manchester University, University of East Anglia, York University and Climate Outreach. The Centre is a global hub for understanding the profound changes required to address climate change. At its core, is a fundamental question of enormous social significance: how can we as a society live differently – and better – in ways that meet the urgent need for rapid and far-reaching emission reductions? The Centre focuses on people as agents of transformation in areas of everyday life that impact directly on climate change. The Centre work across multiple scales (individual, community, organisational, national and global) to identify and experiment with various routes to achieving lasting change in these challenging areas.

**The Placement**

The placement will be embedded within Theme 1 (visioning), which explores preferred visions of future low-carbon societies, and/or Theme 3 (trialling), which aims to co-design and deliver interventions to achieve emission reductions and wider sustainability benefits in collaboration with partner organisations, such as Welsh Government, Cardiff Council and Anglian Water (see <https://cast.ac.uk/research-themes>).

The annual CAST survey (**Theme 1**) aims to provide insights into public perceptions of climate change and engagement with low carbon lifestyles across the four key areas CAST is exploring (heating, transport, diet, consumption). Up to date the survey has been administered twice with representative samples across the UK, China, Sweden and Brazil. One central aim of this project is to identify factors (e.g. demographics or psychological factors such as environmental identity) explaining public perceptions and engagement with climate change, how these might have changed over time and how they differ between countries.

The Cardiff Travel Survey is conducted as part of **Theme 3,** with the aim to examine the impacts of infrastructure investments on active travel and physical activity in general, as well as on physical health and mental wellbeing. Wave 1 of the survey was conducted in Spring/Summer 2021 as the first of a longitudinal series to be held annually. The survey is designed to be able to act as a baseline for possible future information campaigns and interventions, and to provide high-quality information to inform travel policy in Cardiff. Wave 2 of the survey is planned to take place in Spring/Summer 2022. The surveys contain questions on travel-related attitudes and behaviour, perceptions of infrastructure and environmental quality, and support for travel and transport policies in Cardiff.

**The candidate will:**

* Provide assistance in coding open survey responses and statistically analysing the CAST survey waves 1 & 2
* Support project leads in pulling together country information comparing the UK, China, Brazil, Sweden pulling together existing pieces of work from within CAST
* Undertake a light touch literature review on the potential of infrastructure investments (e.g. cycle highways, low-traffic neighbourhood, pedestrianisation) to promote active travel.
* Work with project leads and other project researchers to statistically analyse the first two waves of the Cardiff Travel Survey
* Help write a CAST briefing based on findings of interest from the above (https://cast.ac.uk/publications/briefings)
* Present the findings to project partners and the Centre more widely

**Anticipated outcomes**

* A brief overview of the role of infrastructure investment in promoting active travel
* A presentation of key findings from the CAST travel survey (and potentially the international survey)
* Co-author of a CAST briefing on findings from the CAST travel survey
* Potential co-author of a publication from the above analysis

**Working arrangements**

The Placement will last for three months, during which time the student’s PhD project will be paused by their home institution. The student will be paid the equivalent of their stipend during their internship. Over and above leave policies, time for existing PhD commitments can be arranged on discussion with line managers. E.g. research groups meetings and conference presentations. Applications are encouraged from part-time students.

It is anticipated that the successful applicant will be working in a hybrid pattern with some home working and some office time, however this is flexible to suit the student’s need (some office time is preferred but full home working is also possible). The Cardiff CAST team is based at the new flagship [SPARK building](https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/news/view/2609556-sbarcspark-opens-new-doors). This arrangement is based on our current understanding of the situation and what is possible in terms of research work. This may change as the Covid-19 situation develops.

The internship will last for a period of three months full-time or the part-time equivalent. For students registered on a part-time studentship, this internship is available on a part-time basis over a longer time frame; this would be negotiated between CAST 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.

**Student Specification**

The student must have;

* Strong literature review skills including the ability to effectively synthesise evidence from a range of academic and non-academic sources.
* Expertise in generating, analysing and interpreting quantitative social science data, with an ability to conduct high-quality statistical analyses.
* Ability to communicate social science research to non-specialist audiences.
* Knowledge of research an area that has relevance to health and/or pro-environmental behaviour.
* Awareness of research ethics.

Applications are welcome from current ESRC Wales DTP studentship holders on any Pathway. CAST and the DTP encourage applications from students of all backgrounds, including part-time students.

Any queries relating to the project should be directed to Katherine Steentjes (SteentjesK@cardiff.ac.uk)

**Anticipated start date**

September/October 2022