**How do Free Trade Agreements impact the UK and Wales’s ability to regulate?**

**Summary**

This is an exciting opportunity to do a paid work placement on a project for the Welsh Government. The project will involve analysing Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) that have been recently secured by the UK government following EU Exit, in order to ascertain how they will impact on the UK and Welsh governments’ ability to regulate freely.

The successful applicant will work closely with Welsh Government officials and stakeholders to research and develop a varied range of research outputs and support the Welsh Government in their research process. The applicant will have the opportunity to apply research skills in a policy environment, further develop generic skills (such as report writing or making presentations), and to enhance their knowledge of research outside academia.

**Background**

The Welsh Government is the Devolved Government for Wales with responsibility for the economy, trade, education, health and the Welsh NHS, public services, agriculture and the environment of Wales. The Welsh Government is responsible for making representations to UK government during the negotiation of trade deals, and for implementing elements of those trade deals once agreed.

Specifically, the internship will be based within the trade policy team, which is embedded within the International Relations and Trade directorate of the Welsh Government. The trade policy team is responsible for producing trade policy positions for Wales that will be used to support the wider international and FTA trade agenda being delivered by UK government.

**The Internship**

The intern will be part of the team working on evidence and analysis to support the formation of Welsh Government’s trade policy positions. The internship will provide an exciting opportunity to work at the heart of Welsh Government. The internship will require working closely with policy officials, economists and researchers, 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.

The successful candidate will benefit from development opportunities offered centrally by the Welsh Government, potentially including mentoring, shadowing, peer support and training.

Interns will benefit from the experience of working closely with the Welsh Government:

* Gaining a better understanding of the world outside of academia and increasing employability, using their knowledge and skills to contribute to the work of the Welsh Government.
* The intern’s colleagues at the Welsh Government can offer an insight into the intern’s PhD project that can contribute to the success of their thesis’, as well as networking opportunities within the policy arena linked to their research area
* Transferable skills and knowledge
* Time management skills
* Report writing skills

**The Project**

This project is intended to help Welsh Government understand the impact of FTAs, specifically on how legal provisions and obligations agreed in FTAs with international partners (countries) will affect Welsh Government’s right to regulate in devolved competence areas. In addition, a wider look at how FTAs will affect the UK government’s right to regulate should also be incorporated as part of the research, given the impact that reserved UK policy can have on Wales, Welsh Government and Welsh citizens.

To do this, a range of sources should be explored, and a critical assessment provided of the evidence incorporated. Where possible, the student should seek to identify and form links with academics and experts within the field.

The outputs from this project will include an evidence synthesis report. A verbal presentation with policy officials (across Welsh Government) and analysts may also be required.

These outputs will be used to help Welsh Government to understand how their regulatory and legislative space will be hindered by FTAs, and if so, how different policy areas will need to start assessing how they go about developing policies and regulations in the future. The outputs will be used to potentially assess the risk that FTAs may have on the Welsh Government when looking to regulate in the areas to do with health and safety, and environmental protection, especially where FTAs may cause inadvertent obligations that causes restrictions. Furthermore, it will also be used to look at how differing FTA obligations could make it difficult for future governments to take different approaches or stances on our relationship with the EU.

The outputs will also help to shape Welsh Government’s trade policy positions for FTAs.

If time permits, there might be opportunities to get involved with some other aspects of the trade policy team’s work alongside the completion of this project.

Anticipated project outcomes:

An evidence synthesis, including;

* A legal review of the FTAs (UK-EU, UK-Australia, UK-New Zealand, CPTPP) on the potential impact they have on the Welsh and UK Government’s right to regulate, including on whether they impact on the regulatory approaches being currently used (e.g., precautionary principle).
* The work should include assessing changes to the UK’s domestic policies and regulations post EU Exit, to ascertain whether changes being made domestically helps or hinders trade with our FTA partners.
* A report paper summarising the key findings.
* A presentation to analytical colleagues and policy officials on the findings of the report.

**Internship responsibilities and requirements**

The internship will last for three months, with the option of extension of no more than an additional three months, during which time the students 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 work in a hybrid way between home and a Welsh Government office during their internship. This may change depending on Welsh Government policy. Any changes to working arrangements will be discussed with successful applicants.

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 (no fewer than three days a working week), this would 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.

*Student specification*

The student must have:

* Experience of identifying and analysing high quality qualitative evidence from a range of sources.
* A positive approach to working both independently and with policy and analytical colleagues.
* Experience of analysing large volumes of complex technical information in an efficient way.
* The ability to produce concise, well written documents; presenting technical material in an accessible format.

**Start date of internship**

April 2023 (exact date to be negotiated). There may be some flexibility dependent on individual circumstances.

**Funding and costs**

Reasonable travel and accommodation costs for students not normally based in Cardiff can be met. Requests should be consistent with Wales DTP guidelines. Applications from students requiring additional funding for travel and accommodation will not be treated less favourably. For any queries on this please contact Carole Baker at the Wales DTP on: enquiries@walesdtp.ac.uk

**Security**

The Welsh Government’s vetting procedures (which apply to temporary as well as permanent staff) involve the completion of a Baseline Personnel Security Standard (BPSS) application form and a Security Questionnaire for the purpose of security vetting.

This process requires the applicant to produce in person three original forms of identification documents, one of which should be photographic (passport, new driving license), one document should show their current address, plus one of: a utility bill, birth certificate, P45 or P60.

**Queries**

Any queries relating to the post or application process should be directed to Llinos Jenkins (Economic Adviser, Trade Policy), Llinos.jenkins005@gov.wales.