

## **SAGES Innovation Programme**

**Job Title:** SEFARI Gateway – SAGES Policy Placement

**Organisation:** Scottish Environment, Food and Agriculture Research Institutions (SEFARI) Gateway

**Duration:** 3-6 months, part-time (flexible to fit around academic commitments)

**Start date:** June 2022

**Remuneration:** £ 4,000-8,000 (dependent on duration)

**Travel costs:** supported by SAGES (receipted travel and necessary overnight stays)

### **Risk-Based Regulation of Biochar for Durable Carbon Removal and Soil Amendment in Agriculture and other Land-Use: Creating a proto-standard for the emerging sector in Scotland**

#### **Summary**

SAGES are offering a unique opportunity for a short-term policy placement with the SEFARI Gateway team. The Gateway team is the main portal between the Scottish Government funded research programmes within the Scottish research institutes working on environment, food and agriculture, and the various policy customers, including notably the Scottish Government (SG). Given SG's commitments to Net Zero by 2045 and its ambitions regarding environment, agriculture, land-use, soils, biochar is an increasingly relevant technology. There are potential hazards associated with biochar production, transport and use in soils or as a constituent of aggregates for land application. Risk assessment is required to ensure that potential hazards are recognised and processes managed to mitigate against them, drawing upon state-of-the-art thinking in environmental risk and regulation. An earlier attempt to do this was started 10 years ago, culminating in the Biochar Quality Mandate (BQM 1). Given rapid advances in the science and technology, together with growing industrial interest, an updated version of the BQM is required. This will require substantial re-writing of key sections along with inclusion of new sections and consultation with a range of UK-based experts across the supply-chain. The placement will work with the principals in the review and rewriting process as well as driving the dialogue with key experts.

#### **Job Description**

The BQM 1 requires an overhaul, which might mean fine-tuning and updating some sections, while others will need to be extensively re-drafted and there is likely to be a requirement for an entirely new section (or two) to be added. Given the wide range of topics that are covered in the BQM, from biomass cultivation, manufacturing and technology, material characteristics and properties, risk-assessment methodologies, regulatory practices and legislative frameworks, it is necessary to seek the input of key experts and stakeholders in Scotland and ROUK who can contribute to topics as relevant. These experts are in SEFARI institutions such as SRUC and The James Hutton Institute, but also across Universities, in the private sector and, crucially, in the regulatory agencies. Maintaining communications with the experts so as to gain input as and when required will be important. Meetings will also be a productive way of gaining expert and stakeholder input and feedback on the draft and these could be in-person as well as online. Given the breadth of topics, the skill in undertaking the

role effectively will be in rapidly identifying what is necessary to update the BQM within the time horizon and in seeking the relevant inputs. Support will be provided by a Steering Group which will oversee the work and to which the appointee will report. Members of the Steering Group will help in identifying topics, other key experts and stakeholders, reviewing sections and providing other feedback.

### **Aims and Outputs**

The policy placement researcher will work with Drs Simon Shackley, Ondrej Masek and Saran Sohi at University of Edinburgh, all of whom were involved in the BQM 1 and have relevant expertise and experience. The output is a BQM 2 which can be presented to the wider community for a period of consultation. An open consultation is important in ensuring that a sufficient range of other experts from public and private sectors, as well as relevant stakeholders, have the opportunity to have an input. It will also be desirable to actively seek input from some external organisations and individuals and this will likely be built into the design of the consultation process. Active engagement will be necessary in 'chasing-up' some of the consultees. SEFARI Gateway team will assist the policy-policy placement researcher with access to Scotland's policy, industry and third sector networks as well as SEFARI research expertise across land, agriculture, soils and environment.

### **Person specifications**

We are looking for an Early Career Researcher or SAGES Graduate student:

- Either working towards, or has recently completed, a PhD
- Knowledge and/or experience of working in a multi and/or interdisciplinary research environment
- Skills and capabilities at, and commitment to, interacting with a range of experts and stakeholders from public and private sectors as well as civil society
- Strong motivation in application of RD&D to effect change in government and regulatory policy
- Good problem-solving skills, including creative responses to potential barriers.
- Strong communication skills (written and verbal)
- Independent worker who can plan their own workload and is confident in their ability to deliver a well written document.

### **How to apply**

To apply, please provide a one-page cover letter detailing why you are the right person for this Policy Placement as well as a CV (2 pages maximum) to Kristin Hopfe at the Edinburgh Climate Change Institute, email: [Kristin.Hopfe@ed.ac.uk](mailto:Kristin.Hopfe@ed.ac.uk)

Please include one reference that you are happy for us to contact, should you be successful.

Deadline for applications is **Friday 27<sup>th</sup> May 17.00hrs.**

By applying you are confirming that you are available for an interview on **Friday 10<sup>th</sup> June**