

# Knowledge Exchange Opportunities with Scottish Research Establishments

*Please be aware that we have recently re-badged and revised one of the major schemes within the Knowledge Scotland initiative and for which the Macaulay Land Use Research Institute (MLURI) has lead responsibility. This scheme, previously known as the “secondment scheme” but now called Knowledge Exchange Opportunities scheme, is primarily about strengthening relationships between the Scottish Government funded research and stakeholder communities. The following provides a general outline of the scheme and if you would like any further information and/or have a specific idea that you would like to follow-up please do not hesitate to get back to Dr Richard Birnie ([r.birnie@macaulay.ac.uk](mailto:r.birnie@macaulay.ac.uk))*

## **Aim**

This scheme is intended to raise awareness and increase knowledge exchange between the Scottish Government funded research community in Scotland and the relevant stakeholder communities in Scottish Government organisations and agencies. It will achieve this through creating opportunities for staff in these organisations to work with staff in the research institutes. The scheme is designed to be as flexible as possible and these opportunities will be tailored to suit individual circumstances and needs, and opportunities could range from a single day to a month or more. The scheme is being piloted in 2009/10 with the aim of establishing the potential for a longer term initiative.

## **Host Research Institutes**

The host research institutes are the Scottish Agricultural College (SAC), Moredun Research Institute (MRI), Rowett Institute of Nutrition and Health (RINH) at the University of Aberdeen, Scottish Crop Research Institute (SCRI), the Macaulay Land Use Research Institute (MLURI), Biomathematics and Statistics Scotland (BioSS) and the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE). Together these comprise the Main Research Providers (MRPs) to the Rural Affairs and Environment Directorate (RERAD) of the Scottish Government. The scheme is managed by MLURI.

## **Eligible Organisations**

The scheme is open to staff from Scottish Government organisations and agencies operating in the food, health and environmental sectors. These include organisations within Scotland’s Environmental and Rural (Delivery) Services (SEARS), and others including the Food Standards Agency (Scotland) and NHS (Health) Scotland. Please note that the scheme is intended to complement both the Scottish Government’s secondment scheme for its own staff, and also a “work shadowing” programme for MRP employees which is included within the “knowledgescotland” initiative.

## **Objectives**

1. To provide the opportunity to work outside of a regulatory environment to learn more about the research and capability of the MRPs.
2. To improve understanding of the operational environment within which strategic and applied research is undertaken.
3. To provide individualised professional development opportunities including skill development in specialist fields e.g. analysis, methodologies, modelling etc.

4. To provide individuals with clear professional development outcomes by offering Associate status at the MRP where the secondment takes place. Professional society CPD endorsement could be sought in some instances.

### **Funding**

The costs covered under the scheme are negotiable. In all cases they will include related travel and subsistence (T&S) and Chemicals and Materials (C&M) costs. In a few cases they may include the salary of the applicant. Because the available funding is limited, the guide on maximum cost per applicant is £5,000. Whilst cost will not be the primary criterion on which applications are judged it will be included. The aim during the pilot phase in 2009 is to fund a minimum of 5 applicants across the MRPs.

### **Applications**

There is an open call for applications to the secondment scheme during the 2009/10 financial year but KE opportunities funded under this pilot scheme must be completed by the end of March 2010.

The timing of the KE opportunities is flexible. Time spent at the host institution will vary according to specific needs and circumstances (e.g. one day per week or blocks of days/weeks).

Applications to this scheme should be made on the form which is available from Dr Richard Birnie ([r.birnie@macaulay.ac.uk](mailto:r.birnie@macaulay.ac.uk)).

Each opportunity should provide outcomes specific to the needs and expertise of both the applicant and the host MRP. It is essential therefore that the form is completed through discussion with the relevant staff in the host organisation and that they confirm their agreement to host the applicant.

Where necessary, applications will be reviewed and approved by a panel that includes the RERAD Knowledge Exchange Coordinator, a RERAD scientific adviser and/or a relevant policy advisor. Where relevant (i.e. where there is a direct link to a policy area), applicants to the scheme would be required to specifically address how their secondment would contribute to the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework's 'Strategic Objectives' and 'National Outcomes'; how they would quantify and assess the impacts of the secondment; and how the secondment would support policy Divisions in taking forward short to medium term initiatives. Specific and time-lined deliverables should be identified in relation to each secondment.