

MISTRAL

Multi-sectoral approaches to Innovative Skills Training for Renewable energy & social acceptance



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions grant agreement MISTRAL No 813837

ESR3 Cumulative Impacts on People-place Relations

Candidate Information

Position:	Marie Skłodowska-Curie Researcher, Early Stage (MISTRAL, ESR3)
Hosting Institution	Institute for Future Energy and Material Flow Systems (IZES gGmbH)
School/Department:	Environmental Psychology
Closing Date:	26/02/19
Salary:	From €3870 a month (subject to taxation and country specific adjustment)

JOB PURPOSE:

As an Early Stage Researcher (ESR), to be an active member of a research project team assisting in the delivery of research and training activities of the MISTRAL Network, working on the specific topic of 'Social acceptance, path dependency and the low carbon transition' and required to work towards the expected results of this project (see Additional information below).

The Early Stage Researcher will undertake research in the framework of the project "MISTRAL: Multi-sectoral approaches to Innovative Skills Training for Renewable energy & social acceptance". The Early Stage Researcher will be funded for 36 months through the prestigious Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) Innovative Training Network (ITN) programme; an initiative by the European Commission to train creative, entrepreneurial, innovative researchers, who are able to face current and future societal challenges, and will convert knowledge and ideas into products and services for the economic and social benefit of Europe.

MISTRAL is an interdisciplinary network which will work to understand the complex challenges in improving the acceptance of renewable energy infrastructure investment, and provide innovative solutions to break down barriers to the transition to a low carbon economy in Europe.

MAJOR DUTIES:

1. Carry out the research and training activities specified by a personal career development plan (PCDP).
2. Conduct research in interdisciplinary aspects of the social acceptance of renewable energy, as set out in the additional information below.
3. Undertake mandatory training programs and secondments as required at the facilities of other consortium members (see <http://www.qub.ac.uk/sites/MISTRAL/>).
4. Actively participate in training activities and submit reports in fulfilment of the project requirements.
5. Participate in outreach and dissemination activities promoting the MISTRAL Network project and the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) programme including the use of social media, video-diaries, newsletters, etc.
6. Prepare regular progress reports on the performed research and training activities and present the research outcomes at meetings, project workshops, and to external audiences to disseminate and publicise research findings.
7. Work closely with academic and industrial collaborators and facilitate knowledge transfer between the MISTRAL consortium members.
8. Carry out undergraduate supervision/demonstrating/teaching duties under supervisor direction and according to university regulations.
9. Study and follow the technical literature including academic papers, journals and textbooks to keep abreast with the state-of-the-art in the project topical area.
10. Record, analyse and write up results of research work and contribute to the production of research reports and publications.
11. Carry out routine administrative duties as requested, e.g. arranging research programme group meetings, contribute to research programme website, contributing to organisation of MISTRAL project training workshops and events.

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Planning and Organising:

1. Contribute to the drafting of the PCDP and provide regular updates of this plan.
2. Manage own time and meet agreed deadlines.
3. Plan own day-to-day activity within the framework of the agreed research and training programme.
4. Contribute to the planning of research and training activities, reports and publications.
5. Actively contribute to organisation of outreach activities events such as MISTRAL workshops.

Resource Management Responsibilities:

1. Ensure research resources are used in an effective and efficient manner.
2. Provide guidance as required to support staff and any students involved with research and training.

Internal and External Relationships:

1. Liaise with research colleagues and support staff on routine matters.
2. Make internal and external contacts to develop knowledge and understanding and form relationships for future collaboration.
3. Attend and contribute to relevant meetings and training events.
4. As a MSCA ITN Ambassador contribute to the project outreach programmes by establishing links with local community groups, industries etc.

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA:

1. Have or about to obtain a Masters (MSc) in psychology, environmental/ social psychology, sociology, social science, human geography, environmental studies with a focus on social science.
2. Relevant experience and expertise in qualitative and quantitative methods, experience in empirical work.
3. Sufficient breadth or depth of specialist knowledge in available techniques for investigation of social acceptance of renewable energy in an inter-disciplinary context.
4. Willingness to contribute to the School and project outreach activities.
5. Strong analytical and problem solving skills.
6. Ability to logically conceptualise and summarise the research findings.
7. Advanced analytical skills.
8. Ability to participate in knowledge transfer and demonstration.
9. Excellent verbal and writing communication skills.
10. Ability to interact with colleagues and staff.
11. Demonstrable intellectual ability.
12. Ability to communicate complex information clearly.
13. Ability to organise resources, manage time and meet deadlines.
14. Be willing and able to perform secondments or participate in training programs at the facilities of other European consortium members (see <http://www.qub.ac.uk/sites/MISTRAL/>).
15. Be in the first 4 years (full-time equivalent) of their research careers and not yet have been awarded a doctorate. This 4 year period is measured from the date of obtaining the degree which would formally entitle to embark on a doctorate.
16. Must not have resided or carried out their main activity in the Germany for more than 12 months in the 3 years immediately prior to their selection for this post.
17. Willingness to occasionally work outside core hours, for example during data collection.
18. Be eligible and qualified for enrolment in the PhD programme at IZES.

DESIRABLE CRITERIA:

1. Masters Qualification in an energy or infrastructure related topic.

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2. Specialisation in energy policy or related field.
3. Employment or other practical experience of policy, development or other aspect of renewable energy.
4. Placements or work experience in an academic/commercial research environment relevant to consumer research.
5. Practical experience of applying specialist skills and techniques required for the project.
6. Willingness to assist in undergraduate supervision and teaching.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

MISTRAL (*Multi-sectoral approaches to Innovative Skills Training for Renewable energy & social acceptance*) is a four year European Training Network funded by Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) Innovative Training Network (ITN). The MISTRAL Network is made up of 7 beneficiaries from the UK, Ireland, Germany, Portugal, and Switzerland. 15 Early stage researchers will be employed to conduct research on the changing attitudes towards renewable energy generation investment, and how these attitudes can influence the life cycle of wind energy installations.

MISTRAL will also draw on the knowledge and resources of 15 academic and non-academic partners in the UK, Ireland, Germany, France, Denmark, Portugal, and Switzerland. These partners will host ESRs for secondments, provide training, and promote and support the work of MISTRAL.

ESR3 Project Title: Cumulative impacts on People-place relations

This project will belong to the work stream of Work Package 3: Community dimensions to social acceptance

Objectives: This project will aim to investigate the roles played by place attachment and related identities at multiple scales (local, national and global) in influencing social acceptance of wind energy. The project will go beyond current understandings of how local attachments and identities are associated with community acceptance and objections, and will extend these analyses by assessing the roles played by place related identities at regional, national and global scales in influencing community acceptance. Potential cumulative effects of technological infrastructures like wind on- and offshore, biogas plants, large pv ground-installed systems or transmission lines, on social perceptions will be examined in a systemic approach. Research questions will be how social perceptions and regional identities as a result of a social construction process are influenced by different infrastructural projects, how is the self-perception of a region affected by technological artefacts and where are thresholds of feeling overdosed? The project will conduct analyses of 3 case studies of wind energy development in different European countries (e.g. UK, Germany, France), with an emphasis on the potential cumulative effects of these technological infrastructures. Data collection will comprise surveys distributed to samples of residents in each affected community, focus groups, interviews and analyses of secondary data surrounding each wind farm (e.g. developer reports, media communications).

Expected Results: The study will deliver: 1) An understanding of the impacts of cumulative effects of multiple energy projects on local and non-local place relations and consequences for managing broader social acceptance relations. 2) Insights into the ways that scalar conflicts (e.g. global vs. local) underpin community objections related to wind farm cases. 3) Recommendations for innovation in the engagement narratives employed by wind developers with relation to scale, place and identities; 4) Best practice guide/recommendations for project developers and policy makers for addressing interdependencies between infrastructures.

Planned secondment(s): The candidate will be expected to take advantage of two 3-month secondment opportunities during their research, with details to be agreed between the successful candidate, supervisors and project partners, in order to gain skills in wind energy project development and gain insights into how cumulative impacts are measured and taken into account during site selection and design.

Supervision: Schweizer-Ries (IZES), Hildebrand (IZES), Le Renard (EDF), Devine-Wright (Exeter);

Inter-disciplinary features: Env. Psychology/ Geography