

Working for ClimateXChange

Frequently asked questions

? **What benefits will I get from working with CXC?**

You will get to work on issues that are on the public agenda, and so hopefully seem important and motivating. You will also practice communicating outside of academia and communicating complex science to non-specialist audiences. As impact becomes more important in research funding, CXC work provides a great way to demonstrate the demand for and value of your research.

? **Can I speak to someone in CXC about my work?**

Yes. Both Secretariat and other academic staff will be happy to discuss any aspect of your work. We want to have regular contact throughout all our projects.

? **How can I practice communicating with non-academic audiences?**

The obvious answer is talk to people outside your work about your work. The more you do it, the easier it will get. When you know a lot about something it often becomes hard to remember what it was like not to know; You speak in specialised academic language rather than using everyday words. Speaking to non-specialist you need to step back and present the big picture, and in so doing putting details into a context that is accessible and relevant for the audience. Try writing a short paragraph at the end of each day about what you have

done that day for an imaginary person next to you on the bus home asking 'what do you do?'. Tweeting or blogging are great ways to practice communicating succinctly.

? **How often will I meet Scottish Government officials?**

It depends on your project, and should be discussed at the outset. It is essential in all our work that we 'check in' with our Government colleagues at regular intervals to both update them on the work and to make sure the project is delivering according to the expectations.

? **Will I be asked to present my research to the Minister or other politicians?**

CXC researchers are occasionally asked to give evidence to parliamentary committees but we are rarely asked to specifically present anything to a minister. Politicians from the Scottish Parliament and the Scottish Government may of course be at events where you present your work.

? **I think what the Scottish Government is doing is wrong – how can I voice that opinion?**

In our role as expert advisor CXC representatives are often asked to be part of discussions during policy development, for example taking part in a round tables or being on an advisory group.

continued 

FAQs continued 

We only have an opinion based on what research has found. When representing CXC, e.g. at a conference, we ask that you stick to what scientific evidence suggests. This does of course not stop you from voicing opinions in a private capacity. However, the trust we develop with our Scottish Government policy colleagues is important in establishing an open and frank discussion about their research needs, and someone with a high profile of public criticism of the Government will likely find it impossible to gain that trust.

How can I get my research known to others outside of the Government who may be interested?

We send out a monthly newsletter where we feature new publications. We also have a blog where you are welcome to write about an on-going piece of work. We use twitter to publicise research outputs, events and blogs. Keep an eye out for conferences where you can talk about your work – as a presenter or by networking with other delegates.

How can I get my CXC work published in a journal?

We are very supportive of our researchers publishing CXC funded research in peer-reviewed journals after the CXC specification has been fulfilled, i.e. the Scottish Government are satisfied the research question has been answered. However, the format of a CXC report may not be the same as a peer-reviewed journal is looking for so you may need to re-write some of the content.

Why was my advice not included in the final policy?

We provide analysis and recommendations for those who develop policies. We believe that decisions taken with more evidence available are better decisions. That doesn't mean that science trumps all other considerations. The recommendation may be too expensive, not acceptable to those affected, difficult for moral or philosophical reasons etc. When we look for impact from our work we include framing of debates, that recommendations were considered etc.

Funding

ClimateXChange research is funded in three ways:

- Post-Doctoral Research Fellows (PDRFs) who work in Universities and have individual work plans agreed with the relevant Scottish Government policy division.
- Dedicated CXC resource through SEFARI – Scotland's environment, food and agriculture research institutes, which are independent research organisations funded to do applied and strategic research for the Scottish Government's rural affairs, food and environment portfolio
- A commissioning budget, used for projects where we do not already have expertise through the above funding streams

climateXchange

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