



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

CANDIDATE BRIEF

Research Fellow in Regenerative Agriculture, Faculty of Environment



Salary: Grade 7 (£39,105 – £46,485 p.a. depending on experience)

Reporting to: Professor Pippa Chapman

Reference: ENVGE1254

Fixed term for 14 months to complete specific time limited work

Location: University of Leeds (with scope for hybrid working)

We are open to discussing flexible working arrangements

Research Fellow in Regenerative Agriculture, School of Geography, Faculty of Environment

Overview of the Role

Are you an ambitious researcher looking for your next challenge? Do you have an established background in farming systems research? Do you want to further your career in one of the UKs leading research intensive Universities?

You will work as part of a team on the UKRI Strategic Priorities Fund (SPF) project '[Transformations towards a Regenerative Food System](#)' (FixOurFood). FixOurFood is a multi-disciplinary, multi-institution collaborative project that has a vision to transform food systems across the UK towards being 'regenerative'. It features multiple simultaneous work packages that explore interventions in food retailing and farming to address issues such as childhood obesity, sustainability in agriculture and global warming.

The University of Leeds is leading on the Regenerative Farming work package and has set up a field trial at the University of Leeds research farm to demonstrate and measure the impacts of different transition strategies to regenerative agriculture. We have also built up a network of engaged farmers, agribusinesses and allied organisations who are returning each year to see how the trial develops and are keen to interact with the project and understand the results.

We need a Research Fellow to continue to run this trial – tracking farm operations and environmental variables such as soil health, greenhouse gas emissions, crop growth and yield, water quality, biodiversity and farm economics. You will also be responsible for analysing the data and dissemination of the results in a range of written formats and orally at farm events, workshops and conferences.

You will collaborate with our project partners at NIAB, who carry out the agricultural management of the trial, and Cranfield University to calculate the impacts of regenerative practices on whole-life cycle greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and to guide farming practices for long-term profitability and environmental sustainability. The results will enable the research team to identify Regenerative Farming practices that are most effective at reducing global warming whilst enhancing environmental and business value.



You will have a first degree in one of the following subjects; biological sciences, environmental science, ecology, geography, soil science or agriculture, and a PhD in sustainable agriculture, agri-environment or closely allied discipline.

You will work under the guidance of Professor Pippa Chapman, Dr Richard Grayson (School of Geography), Dr Ruth Wade (School of Biology) and Professor Lisa Collins (University of Surrey) to quantify the regenerative benefits of different farming practices. We will support you to develop your independence as a researcher through training and mentoring, whilst also providing opportunities to develop your grant writing skills.

Main duties and responsibilities

- Maintaining the field trial by working with NIAB;
- Collecting and analysis of soil & water samples, GHG emissions and crop growth and yield data from field trials;
- Generating independent and original research ideas and methods to assess different approaches to regenerative agriculture practices;
- Making a significant contribution to the dissemination of research results by publication in leading peer-reviewed journals, preparation of policy briefs, and by organising demonstration and training events for stakeholders as appropriate;
- Evaluating methods and techniques used and results obtained by other researchers and to relate such evaluations appropriately to your own work;
- Working independently and as part of a larger team of researchers, both internally and externally to develop new research links and collaborations and engage in knowledge transfer activities where appropriate;
- Contributing, as part of a wider team, to the design, planning and application for future funding;
- Contributing to the supervision of junior researchers and PhD students and acting as a mentor to less experienced colleagues;
- Contributing to, and encouraging, a safe working environment;
- Working with and leading a small team of technicians;
- Evaluating methods and techniques used and results obtained by other researchers and to relate such evaluations appropriately to your own work;
- Maintaining your own continuing professional development and acting as a mentor to less experienced colleagues as appropriate.



These duties provide a framework for the role and should not be regarded as a definitive list. Other reasonable duties may be required consistent with the grade of the post.

Qualifications and skills

Essential

- A PhD or near completion - i.e. the initial thesis needs to have been handed in at the point of application in sustainable agriculture, agri-environment or a closely allied discipline such as (but not limited to) biology, geography or environmental science or a closely allied discipline;
- Experience in the design, development, conduct and analysis of field trials for environmental monitoring and/or crop yield;
- Understanding of agricultural systems and practices, including Regenerative and Conventional farming systems;
- Experience of soil and/or plant sampling and analysis for a range of physical, chemical and biological properties;
- Experience of working closely and/or co-designing trials with farmers and farmer networks;
- Strong analytical skills, with the ability to work accurately and carefully, designing, executing and writing up research independently and with a team;
- Developing track record of peer reviewed publications;
- Strong initiative and a pro-active approach, with excellent organisational, planning and self-management skills, including the ability to prioritise workloads and deliver high quality research to deadlines;
- Excellent communication skills, both written and verbal and the ability to communicate your research at national and international conferences to wide range of stakeholders including farmers, NGO's, policymakers and agribusinesses;
- A proven ability to work well both individually and in a team;
- A strong commitment to your own continuous professional development.

Desirable

- Experience of measuring GHG emissions using either EC flux towers or static chambers;



- Working knowledge of coding languages (e.g. Matlab, R, Python, etc.) and data analysis techniques;
- Experience of successfully conducting complex systems based research;
- Experience of working in a multi-disciplinary research environment;
- Experience of managing others;
- Experience of public engagement and/or outreach;
- Experience working with livestock or mixed agricultural systems;
- Evidence of pursuing external funding to support research;
- Experience in survey design and running focal groups.

Additional information

Please note: If you are not a British or Irish citizen, from 1 January 2021 you will require permission to work in the UK. This will normally be in the form of a visa but, if you are an EEA/Swiss citizen and resident in the UK before 31 December 2020, this may be your passport or status under the EU Settlement Scheme.

Please note that due to Home Office visa requirements, this role may only be suitable for first-time Skilled Worker visa applicants if they are eligible for salary concessions. For more information please visit: www.gov.uk/skilled-worker-visa

For research and academic posts, we will consider eligibility under the Global Talent visa. For more information please visit: <https://www.gov.uk/global-talent>

Find out more about the [Faculty of Environment](#)

Find out more about the [School of Geography](#) and [School of Biology](#)

Find out more about our [Regenerative Agricultural trial](#)

Find out more about our [Research and associated facilities](#)

Find out more about [equality](#) in the Faculty

Our University

As an international research-intensive university, we welcome students and staff from all walks of life and from across the world. We foster an inclusive environment where



all can flourish and prosper, and we are proud of our strong commitment to student education. Within the Faculty of Environment we are dedicated to diversifying our community and we welcome the unique contributions that individuals can bring, and particularly encourage applications from, but not limited to Black, Asian and ethnically diverse people; people who identify as LGBT+; and people with disabilities. Candidates will always be selected based on merit and ability.

The Faculty of Environment has received a prestigious Athena SWAN silver award from [Advance HE](#), the national body that promotes equality in the higher education sector. This award represents the combined efforts of all schools in the Faculty and shows the positive actions we have taken to ensure that our policies, processes and ethos all promote an equal and inclusive environment for work and study.

Working at Leeds

We are a campus based community and regular interaction with campus is an expectation of all roles in line with academic and service needs and the requirements of the role. We are also open to discussing flexible working arrangements. To find out more about the benefits of working at the University and what it is like to live and work in the Leeds area visit our [Working at Leeds](#) information page.

Candidates with disabilities

Information for candidates with disabilities, impairments or health conditions, including requesting alternative formats, can be found on our [Accessibility](#) information page or by getting in touch with us at disclosure@leeds.ac.uk.

Criminal record information

A criminal record check is not required for this position, however, all applicants will be required to declare if they have any 'unspent' criminal offences, including those pending.

Any offer of appointment will be, in accordance with our Criminal Records policy. You can find out more about required checks and declarations in our [Criminal Records](#) information.

