



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

CANDIDATE BRIEF

Research Fellowship in Global Methane Politics (Solid Waste), School of Politics and International Studies



Salary: Grade 7 (£41,064 - £48,822 p.a. depending on experience)

Reporting to: Professor Jan Selby, School of Politics and International Studies

Reference: ESLPO1112

Location: Social Sciences Building, University of Leeds (with a scope for hybrid working)

1FTE, 37.5 hours per week

Available on a fixed term basis for 36 months from 1 October 2026 to complete specific time limited work

We are open to discussing flexible working arrangements

Research Fellowship in Global Methane Politics (Solid Waste), School of Politics and International Studies

Overview of the Role

Are you an ambitious researcher looking for your next challenge? Do you have interests or background in environmental politics, political ecology or related areas? Do you want to further your career in one of the UK's leading research intensive Universities?

The Global Methane Politics project (METH-POL) is a five-year European Research Council-funded project led by Professor Jan Selby in the School of Politics and International Studies at Leeds. The overall objectives of this project are to contribute to global climate change research and practice by exploring 1) the distinctive political dynamics and challenges associated with methane emissions and methane emission reduction efforts; and 2) why methane emissions are proving so hard to control, despite their acknowledged importance as a short-term climate forcer and the abundance of low-cost technical mitigation solutions. The project will involve research across five major methane emitting sectors – livestock, oil and gas, solid waste, coal, and wastewater – and in more than a dozen countries spanning global North and South, and every continent. The project adopts a broadly political ecology theoretical approach, and will involve research at many different scales, from international policy arenas right down to the level of individual mines, farms and treatment plants where methane is emitted and governed in practice. The project will principally make use of qualitative methods, especially documentary analysis, interviews and observations.

The 3 Research Fellows will join the project for three years from October 2026, focusing respectively on 1) **livestock**, 2) **oil and gas**, and 3) **solid waste**. For each of these fellowships, the core objectives will be to generate original research findings on their specific sector; to work with other members of the project team (the PI, project administrator, two PhD researchers, and other research fellows) to compare across sites, scales and sectors; and to explore the broader implications of these sectoral and comparative findings for methane and climate research and practice.



We are looking for experienced researchers who would be happy to work with the project's broadly political ecology framework, but would also enrich it by contributing their own specific theoretical, methodological and substantive insights and expertise.

Anthropogenic methane emissions are both a hugely important aspect of the climate crisis, and under-studied. These fellowships represent a fantastic opportunity to do cutting-edge research on them, as part of a collective endeavour that could have very significant research and policy implications.

Main duties and responsibilities

For each of the Research Fellowships, the main duties will include:

- Designing and planning a programme of investigation, in line with the overall aims and methods of the Global Methane Politics project, and in consultation with the project PI Jan Selby and other members of the project team (this will be the focus of year 1 of the fellowships);
- Implementing this programme of investigation, through extended multi-scalar qualitative research (documentary analysis, interviews and observations) in selected case study countries (the focus of year 2 of the fellowships);
- Analysing and synthesising the findings from this investigation, and generating original research findings on methane and climate politics, in collaboration with the PI and other members of the project team;
- Disseminating research findings through conference presentations, sole and co-authored publications, and extensive non-academic engagement (analysis and dissemination being the focus of year 3 of the fellowships);
- Working both independently and together with other members of the Global Methane Politics team, including by leading on specific cross-cutting tasks and by contributing to decisions over the strategic direction of the project; and
- Contributing to, and encouraging, a safe, supportive and productive working environment.

In addition:

- The Research Fellowship focused on **solid waste** will involve primary research in Ghana, Bangladesh, Greece and the United Kingdom (or alternative sites agreed amongst the project team).



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 (completed or close to completion) in Politics, International Relations, Geography, Environmental Studies or a cognate discipline;
- A developing track record of peer-reviewed journal publications;
- A good understanding of theoretical and methodological debates relevant to the study of climate, environmental and methane politics, including an ability to engage with the broadly political ecology approach around which the project is framed;
- Experience of undertaking qualitative primary research, including documentary analysis, interviews, and observational research;
- The ability to engage with complex technical issues relating to methane, in order to be able to explore and interrogate their politics;
- A good broad knowledge of key issues in environmental and climate policy and politics;
- The ability to design, execute, synthesise and write up research independently;
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills;
- Good time management and planning skills;
- The ability to work well both independently and as part of a team, including by contributing to collective learning, planning and decision-making; and
- A strong commitment to your own continuous professional development.

Desirable

- A sophisticated understanding of any specific theoretical approaches and/or debates that might complement the project's overall political ecology approach;
- Specific qualitative research skills and experiences, especially in documentary analysis, interviewing and observation, as well as in any other (qualitative or quantitative) methods that might complement the project's core methods;
- Some knowledge of core issues surrounding methane emissions and methane mitigation, including in relation to the specific sectors on which the three fellowships will focus;
- Experience of undertaking research in a range of international contexts;



- Prior experience and language and cultural competences appropriate to the specific fieldwork countries named above; or alternatively, experiences and competences appropriate to other countries, which could serve as alternative fieldwork sites.

How to apply

You can apply for this role online; more guidance can be found on our [How to Apply](#) information page. Applications should be submitted by **23.59** (UK time) on the advertised closing date.

While this advert is specifically for the Global Methane Politics fellowship on Solid Waste, **those interested in this position are asked to apply via the link for all 3 positions ([here](#))**. Those interested in more than one of the Global Methane Politics fellowship positions are requested to only make one application: multiple applications are not required.

Applications should be accompanied by a **cover letter**, which should set out 1) which of the 3 research fellow positions you wish to be considered for (or whether you wish to be considered for all 3 positions); and 2) how you would be interested in approaching the study of global methane politics (including how your proposed approach would build upon your own interests, skills and/or experiences).

Contact information

To explore the post further or for any queries you may have, **please contact the METH-POL project team at: methpol@leeds.ac.uk**

Additional information

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.



Our University

As an international research-intensive university, we welcome staff and students from all walks of life and from across the world. We foster an inclusive environment where all can flourish and prosper. Within the School of Politics and International Studies we are dedicated to diversifying our community and we welcome the unique contributions that individuals can bring. We particularly encourage applications from, amongst others, global South scholars; members of Black, Asian and other minoritised groups; people who identify as LGBT+; and people with disabilities. Candidates will always be selected based on merit and ability.

Information for disabled candidates

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

Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

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 page.

