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HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

EcoFoodSystems PostDoctoral Researcher

Agriculture & Bioeconomy Research Centre, Ryan Institute

College of Science & Engineering

Ref. No. University of Galway 283-22

Applications are invited from suitably qualified candidates for a full-time fixed-term position as a **PostDoctoral** Researcher for the EU/IFAD-funded EcoFoodSystems project in the research group of Prof. Charles Spillane at the Agriculture & Bioeconomy Research Centre, Ryan Institute at the National University of Ireland Galway (University of Galway).

This position is funded by the **European Union (EU)** and the **International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)** and is available immediately for 2 years until 30/09/2024.

Project Title: Climate-resilient agroecological transitions of food systems (EcoFoodSystems).

Objectives of the project: The research and innovation goal of the EcoFoodSystems project is to develop a systems-based approach for agroecological transitions of urban and peri-urban food systems for improved health and climate resilience, with corresponding decision-support tools and multi-stakeholder platforms to facilitate coordinated, landscape-scale transitions to navigate associated benefits and trade-offs for both rural and urban communities within city region food systems. The EcoFoodSystems project will engage in development and co-creation of sub-national decision-support dashboards and decision-support tools in collaboration with city regional stakeholders, end-users and beneficiaries in the food systems of selected city regions in Ethiopia, Vietnam and Colombia. See: www.ecofoodsystems.org

Job Description: The EU/IFAD funded EcoFoodSystems project is seeking a dynamic Postdoctoral Researcher who will work closely with the Lead Principal Investigator and Co-Investigators to generate research and innovation impacts from the project. By 2050, more than two thirds of the world population will be living in urban areas, the majority living in cities. Food systems serve diverse farmer and consumer constituencies with differentiated impacts on sustainability, economic growth, social inclusion and nutrition. A rural-urban food systems transition focus is critical to ensuring sustainable rural development in concert with transitioning of food systems in city regions towards more sustainable, resilient, and healthy dietary outcomes. The EcoFoodSystems project places particular emphasis on linking national to subnational food systems (including data systems for decision-support) in each of the three countries to generate data and knowledge for more effective decision-making that enables climate-resilient agroecological transitions of food systems.

Led by the University of Galway, with global partners including CIAT-Bioversity Alliance, Wageningen University and Research (WUR) and RIKOLTO, the EcoFoodSystems project builds from previous food systems activities and processes in Ethiopia, Vietnam and Colombia. EcoFoodSystems will: (1) Develop a systems and evidence-based approach for priority-setting and targeting of landscape, value chain, community and farm scale agroecological intensification interventions/innovations that enable socially-inclusive food system and nutrition transformations; and (2) Co-create scaling strategies for



agroecological innovations to enable City-Regional food systems transitions that improve sustainability, nutritional security and climate resilience in each country with relevant stakeholders.

The **EcoFoodSystems Postdoctoral Researcher** will be responsible for advancing the research and innovation outputs, impacts and outcomes of the research project, under the direction of the Principal Investigator and Co-Investigators, to ensure that the projects goals, milestones and impact are reached.

The Postdoctoral Researcher should be technically strong in the areas of data analysis, life cycle assessment and business/social marketing skills and will be able to identify, quantify and systematically map productivity challenges limiting the scaling of agroecological practices, both from perspective of business and innovation and environment.

The Postdoctoral Researcher will collect, synthesizes, and processes information to develop high-quality databases and extract meaningful results, work with other team members to develop and applies methodologies to address critical analytical issues, provide rigorous and objective results, communicates results through well-designed figures and tables, publish journal articles and reports, and present results at conferences, workshops, and project meetings.

The Postdoctoral Researcher will work with Principal Investigator, Senior Research Fellow, PhD researchers and other team members, as well as with Co-Investigators teams.

The Postdoctoral Researcher will be based in Prof. Spillane's research team at the University of Galway, with intermittent international travel to research sites and for research activities.

Duties:

- To determine appropriate methodologies for EcoFood research, under the guidance and direction of the Principal Investigator and Co-Investigators.
- To plan and implement research For the Ecofood System, targeting high-impact outputs, outcomes and impacts.
- To ensure that all Work Packages and Research Activity Areas of the EcoFoodSystems are advanced to reach milestones and targets.
- To ensure that all research and innovation activities across the EcoFoodSystems project are aligned with the Theory of Change, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning framework and that project indicators are used to measure research progress.
- To conduct innovative high-impact research across the four Research Activity areas in EcoFoodSystems for targeting agroecological transitions of food systems towards the furthest behind nutritionally.
- To conduct innovative high-impact research across the three Research Activity areas in EcoFoodSystems for Overcoming of labour productivity barriers to agroecological scaling for socially-inclusive decent jobs in climate-resilient value chains and food systems.
- To conduct innovative high-impact research across the five Research Activity areas in EcoFoodSystems for environmental footprinting of agroecological transition pathways for climate-resilient food systems to address malnutrition.
- To conduct innovative high-impact research across the four Research Activity areas in EcoFoodSystems for fostering ownership and iterative learning for sustaining agroecological transitions of food systems
- To assist and engage in the research supervision of other researchers working on the EcoFoodSystems project.



- To be familiar with the publication process and to be engaged in and assisting with drafting and submission of research papers, reports and other forms of EcoFoodSystems project outputs.
- Draft reports for funding agencies, and engage in development of proposals for additional funding to further expand and sustain the EcoFoodSystems project.
- Keeping appropriate records as directed and in line with Funder/University policy
- Working closely with Professor Spillane and other members of EcoFoodSystems research team on an on-going basis to support the efficient functioning of the EcoFoodSystems project
- To carry out any additional duties as may reasonably be required.

Essential Requirements:

- PhD degree in food systems analytics or equivalent relating to food systems transitions and transformations. Strong quantitative and qualitative research skills that are integrative, interdisciplinary, systems thinking based and participatory (i.e. co-creation, multi-stakeholder platforms etc) in relation to sustainable food systems transitions in developing countries are required.
- Educational and research background that demonstrates capability to conduct high-impact research on food systems that displays critical thinking and generation of frontier knowledge.
- Systems thinking, integrative and interdisciplinary capacity for conducting high-impact research on food systems.
- Interdisciplinary background on food systems, spanning as many of following areas as possible (economics, geography, environmental sciences, environmental footprinting, big data, data analytics, political science, life cycle analysis, international development).
- Expertise in quantitative and qualitative analysis and modelling related to sustainability, economic growth, social inclusion and nutrition components.
- Modelling skills of relevance to food systems analysis e.g. RODOS, ECOFOOD, DSSAT, STELLA), GIS skills (ArcGIS, qGIS) etc.
- Data analytics capability for mapping, modelling and visualising food systems flows from global, national, regional, city region, district, household and individual levels.
- Excellent scientific/report writing skills and proficiency in data analytics and data visualisation (e.g. using R, SPSS, Tableau).
- Strong understanding of international agricultural research and innovation food systems activities, needs and priorities, particularly of donors, multilateral orgs (e.g. IFAD), national systems, CGIAR system, value chains, stakeholder groups and beneficiaries.
- Ability to convert project theories of change into tangible outputs and impacts.
- Willingness to travel to and conduct research in partner countries.

Desirable Requirements:

- Published high-impact peer-reviewed journal papers on food systems (e.g. modelling of sustainable development in concert with transitioning of food systems towards more sustainable, resilient, and healthy dietary outcomes).
- Critical perspective on food systems with passion for conducting data-driven and evidence-based research to unpack assumptions regarding food systems transitions and transformations.
- Desire to work as a part of a global team in a highly collaborative environment.



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- Familiarity with a wide range of data sources relevant for the project analysis, and the ability to identify emerging topics and data sources and engage experts to conduct research.
- Well-developed problem-solving, quantitative, and critical thinking skills; intellectual curiosity. Able to structure and formulate solutions to complex problems.
- Highly motivated and detail oriented with the ability to work independently and in close collaboration with team members.
- Skilled written and verbal communicator, including the ability to present complex information so that it is understandable to a broad audience.
- Experience in international agricultural or agrifood systems development arena, with critical understanding of co-benefits and tradeoffs associated with different agrifood systems transition and transformation pathways.
- Significant experience in big data, smart cities and use of large datasets for enabling decision making by governments, companies, consumers and all stakeholders along food systems value and supply chains, particularly in context of developing countries.
- Excellent written and oral communication, editing, and reporting skills in English. Working knowledge of Spanish, Vietnamese or Amharic or another major language is an advantage.
- Ability and willingness to work in and promote diverse multi-cultural and multi-disciplinary environments.

Salary: €39,523-€43,127 per annum pro rata for shorter and/or part-time contracts (public sector pay policy rules pertaining to new entrants will apply).

Start date: Position is available immediately.

Continuing Professional Development/Training:

Researchers at University of Galway are encouraged to avail of a range of training and development opportunities designed to support their personal career development plans.

Further information: www.ryaninstitute.ie

For information on moving to Ireland please see www.euraxess.ie

To Apply:

Applications to include a covering letter, CV, and the contact details of three referees should be sent, via e-mail (**in word or PDF only**) to Prof. Charles Spillane Charles.spillane@universityofgalway.ie
Please put reference number **University of Galway 283-22** in the subject line of e-mail application.

Closing date for receipt of applications is 5.00 pm 11th January 2023

We reserve the right to re-advertise or extend the closing date for this post.

University of Galway is an equal opportunities employer.

All positions are recruited in line with Open, Transparent, Merit (OTM) and Competency based recruitment



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University of Galway provides continuing professional development supports for all researchers seeking to build their own career pathways either within or beyond academia. Researchers are encouraged to engage with our Researcher Development Centre (RDC) upon commencing employment - see www.universityofgalway.ie/rdc for further information.

