INVITATION TO QUOTE: Research Assistance - Supporting and Communicating Impact.

Submission date: 20th December 2017
Deadline for Expressions of Interest: 12.00 noon 7th January 2018
Contract will start on 10th January 2018

Format for submission of interest:

- Covering letter indicating why you are suitable to deliver this role
- Submit full CV with track record of achievements in this field
- Submit examples of relevant written material
- Confirm start date and any constraints in delivering this contract
- Confirm daily rate (inc reference to VAT applicability)

Background

Research into Results Limited1 provides, along with other parties, the Ecosystem Services for Poverty Alleviation Programme (ESPA), aiming to deliver world-class research through innovative partnerships that cross disciplinary boundaries, are international, and have full involvement of talented developing country researchers. The Natural Environment Research Council (“NERC”) manages the overall ESPA Programme on behalf of a partnership comprising of NERC, the UK Department for International Development (“DFID”), and the Economic and Social Research Council (“ESRC”). DFID, ESRC and NERC co-fund the ESPA Directorate which is responsible for co-ordinating and implementing all ESPA activities as well as any general activities which add value to the programme.

The ESPA programme, a £43.9 million global interdisciplinary research programme, has funded more than 100 projects examining how ecosystems function and how the services that they provide support or undermine efforts to alleviate poverty and/or enhance well-being for poor people in developing countries.

In its final year of programme delivery, the ESPA Directorate intends to deliver a range of legacy-focused products for a range of audiences: academics, researchers, policy-makers, practitioners, global and UK funders. Specifically, we are seeking a Research Assistant to analyse ESPA’s research results and activities, and to draft case studies on how ESPA’s investments have changed development policy and practice and/or research methods and practice. Case studies should demonstrate changes that are aligned with the programme’s 2016 Theory of Change, see Impact Strategy.

These impact case studies will be published in different formats, some formally as Impact Stories (see website), others as blogs, or more informally as briefing notes for particular individuals or groups. The Research Assistant will work directly with ESPA’s Director, Evidence and Learning Advisor and Communications Lead to identify and draft the most promising case studies.

We require support to gather raw materials, and to identify a consistent ‘story’ running from the research findings to demonstrable impact. As the case of many of our projects have shown, there are always different angles to a story, and different stakeholders may have different views on this.

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1 A company registered in Scotland under registration number SC382100 and having its registered office at University of Edinburgh, Old College, South Bridge Edinburgh, EH8 9YL. RIR’s operational address is Argyle House, 3 Lady Lawson Street Edinburgh, EH3 9DR.
The most ‘visible’ impact may not necessarily come from the most clearly demonstrated findings. In this respect we specially need support to identify ‘which’ story to tell, and also to verify whether there is enough evidence to support that specific story. Specifically, we require the support of an experienced consultant to provide 25 days full-time to support analysis of research information to create impact case studies – starting on 10th January 2018. See Annex 1 for examples of the projects under consideration and existing information about them.

Requirements

General

- To support the compilation of background materials for the case studies;
- To help filling data and knowledge gaps in the stories, through targeted research and interaction with project teams, interviews with for example Principal Investigators etc.;
- To support the drafting of impact case studies as directed;
- To support the write-up of ‘text boxes’ on specific projects as illustrations for the programmatic learning working paper and/or slides and other presentational material, as requested by the ESPA team.

Specific phases and timelines:

- Scoping Phase (up to 17th January): Map relevant impact case studies across the Theory of Change and provide verbal recommendations to the Directorate on the likely suitability of these for developing case studies;
- Analysis Phase (up to 24th January): Analysis of ESPA relevant information – providing a comprehensive summary of the selected case-studies – which are representative of the programme as a whole;
- Delivery Phase (up to 7th February): Liaison with relevant Principal Investigators or other relevant research team members, writing case studies: for hard copy; website; funders and relevant other audiences as directed by the ESPA Directorate;
- Verification/editing Phase (up to 14th February): Final production of material as required.

Expertise required

The contractor(s) appointed to deliver this assignment must have:

- An academic understanding of ESPA related science in an interdisciplinary context;
- An understanding of the development and environment issues relevant to our audiences;
- Desirable experience of assessing impact of a development programme and/or research programme.
- Experience of analysing complex information and writing case studies for different audiences in different formats;
- Some relevant experience of working with communications specialists;
- Proven and ability to meet deadlines.

Financial Resources

This budget is framed around the amount of time required to deliver the activities and also associated costs related to logistics. Our requirements can be delivered at our UK Office in Edinburgh or off site but the contractor will be required to offer flexibility. We believe that this is a competitive market and ask that contractors provide their best price.

How to respond to this Invitation to Quote.
• All queries on required deliverables to: Valeria Izzì and Mairi Dupar: evidence@espa.ac.uk ; communications@espa.ac.uk
• All contract and financial queries to: Eliane Reid: manager@espa.ac.uk

**Deadline:** 12.00 noon 7th January 2018.
Annex 1 – Examples of Case-Studies from ESPA Projects

Swahili Seas

Country case-study: Kenya (project also covered Tanzania)

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<tr>
<th>Lead PI</th>
<th>Professor Mark Huxham</th>
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<tr>
<td>Institution</td>
<td>Edinburgh Napier University</td>
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Locally known in Kenya as ‘Mikoko Pamoja’ (Swahili for ‘mangroves together’), this project is chosen as an example of linking science to community development, which had a tangible impact on reversing the degradation of mangroves, with positive effects on both sustainable livelihoods and climate. There are also concrete examples of impact coming from demonstration activities (education/water/ecotourism).

Background materials:

- [http://www.espa.ac.uk/projects/37173/swahili-seas-case-study](http://www.espa.ac.uk/projects/37173/swahili-seas-case-study)
- [REF 2014 Impact Case-study](#)
  - ESPA’s Swahili Seas project was recently featured in the UKCDS collection of the top 20 most impressive examples of UK research contributing to development. These were selected from the 6,975 case studies submitted to the Research Excellence Framework 2014, the system used to assess the research quality of all UK universities.
- Mikoko Pamoja won the 2017 Equator Prize: [https://www.equatorinitiative.org/2017/06/28/mikoko-pamoja/](https://www.equatorinitiative.org/2017/06/28/mikoko-pamoja/)
- Featured in ESPA 2015-2016 Annual report
MOUNTAIN-EVO: Adaptive governance of mountain ecosystem services for poverty alleviation enabled by environmental virtual observatories

NE/K010239-1

Country case-study: Peru (project also covered Ethiopia, Kyrgyzstan and Nepal)

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<tr>
<th>Lead PI</th>
<th>Dr Wouter Buytaert</th>
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<tr>
<td>Institution</td>
<td>Imperial College London</td>
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<td>Start/End Date</td>
<td>30 June, 2013 / 31 May, 2017</td>
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The project pioneered new methods of collecting and analysing data to inform decision-making, with the use of local volunteers. The introduction of participatory data collection enabled communities to look at different scenarios and take informed decision regarding the ideal balance between cattle-grazing and steamflow.

Background materials:

- Profiled in the ESPA Annual Report.
- Video on Mamanteo: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NHiGilWMhoo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NHiGilWMhoo)
- WeAdapt case-study:
  - [https://www.weadapt.org/placemarks/maps/view/1241](https://www.weadapt.org/placemarks/maps/view/1241)
ESPA DELTAS: Assessing health, livelihoods, ecosystem services and poverty alleviation in populous deltas
(NE/J002755-1)

Country case-study: Bangladesh

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<tr>
<th>Lead PI</th>
<th>Professor Robert Nicholls</th>
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<tr>
<td>Institution</td>
<td>University of Southampton</td>
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<td>Start/End Date</td>
<td>31 March, 2012 / 30 September, 2016</td>
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The DELTAS project has developed a model to influence policy-makers and help them understanding how human interventions can change the derivation and flow of ecosystem services and what this means for poverty reduction. The model is now being used by the Government of Bangladesh to assess its development priorities and scenarios in the Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100.

- Profiled in the ESPA Annual Report.
- Video: [http://espadelta.geodata.soton.ac.uk/](http://espadelta.geodata.soton.ac.uk/)
- Policy note 2015: [http://www.espa.ac.uk/files/espa/Policy%20Note%20September%202015.pdf](http://www.espa.ac.uk/files/espa/Policy%20Note%20September%202015.pdf)
- Policy note 2016: [http://www.espa.ac.uk/files/espa/Policy%20Note%20-%20ESPA%20Deltas%20Overview%20April%202016.pdf](http://www.espa.ac.uk/files/espa/Policy%20Note%20-%20ESPA%20Deltas%20Overview%20April%202016.pdf)
Watershared

What types of investment can most cost-effectively ensure ecosystem service provision? A randomized program evaluation

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<tr>
<th>Lead PI</th>
<th>Dr Nigel Asquith</th>
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<td>Institution</td>
<td>Bolivian Natura Foundation, Socioeconomic and Policy Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>Start/End Date</td>
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<td>Project Code</td>
<td>NE/I00436X/1</td>
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Under what conditions can Payments for Environmental Services deliver sustainable improvements in welfare? Learning from a Randomized Control Trial

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<tr>
<td>Institution</td>
<td>Bolivia Natura Foundation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Start/End Date</td>
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<td>Project Code</td>
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Watershared: exchanging ESPA lessons with Bolivia, Madagascar and Mozambique

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<tr>
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<td>Natura Bolivia Foundation</td>
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<td>Start/End Dates</td>
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<td>Project Code</td>
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Watershared is a system of reciprocal water agreements between upstream and downstream users, by which downstream users compensate upstream users in-kind for implementing conservation activities. While the system in Bolivia pre-dated ESPA-funded research, the various ESPA-funded projects supported the Watershared system by tracking its growth and assessing how its expansion could be effectively managed, thus facilitating the scheme’s expansion in Bolivia and beyond.

- Profiled in the ESPA Annual Report.
The Political Economy of Water Security, Ecosystem Services and Livelihoods in the Western Himalayas

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<tr>
<th>Lead PI</th>
<th>Dr Bhaskar Vira</th>
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<tr>
<td>Institution</td>
<td>University of Cambridge</td>
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<tr>
<td>Start/End Date</td>
<td>1 October, 2013 / 10 January 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>India (Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand states), Nepal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key partners</td>
<td>India: <a href="http://gtr.rcuk.ac.uk/projects?ref=NE%2FL001365%2F1">CEDAR (Centre for Ecology Development and Research)</a></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Nepal: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oD_u5EfGrkY">South Asia Institute of Advanced Studies</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>ESPA website link</td>
<td><a href="https://theconversation.com/how-the-uk-and-india-can-lead-the-development-of-ecologically-smart-cities-68361">GrantNE/L001365/1</a></td>
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The project has been instrumental in the introduction of the concept of ‘Critical Recharge Zones’, which is now widely popular in the region, and extensively used in both policy document and media.

The colonial hill stations of Nainital and Mussoorie in Uttarakhand state offer examples of how this concept has been used to mobilise public engagement and ultimately influence policy.

- Short impact story was prepared for DFID
- Photographic exhibition [http://gtr.rcuk.ac.uk/projects?ref=NE%2FL001365%2F1](http://gtr.rcuk.ac.uk/projects?ref=NE%2FL001365%2F1)
- Video of inception meeting: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oD_u5EfGrkY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oD_u5EfGrkY)
- The politics of negotiation and implementation: a reciprocal water access agreement in the Himalayan foothills, India