



PhD position energy transition f/m

For 1.0 fte

Vacancy number 1.2010.00195

The applicant will be based in the Department of Environmental Policy Analysis at the Institute for Environmental Studies (IVM), VU University Amsterdam. This is a vibrant international group of about thirty researchers, faculty members and PhD students. The group leads the institute's effort in the analysis of policies, institutions and governance mechanisms in the field of sustainable development. We study existing systems of governance, but also explore new forms of governance that may better secure a transition to sustainable production and consumption. Overall, the department aims to be one of the leading international research teams working on sustainability governance. In the 2007 national research evaluation 'Environmental Sciences', the EPA department was evaluated as the top research department in the Netherlands, and 'internationally at the forefront'.

Topic of the PhD project

The PhD project is entitled *A quasi-experimental design for joint fact finding and decision making*. It is part of the program *Overcoming System-level transitional inertia: accelerating the Dutch energy transition*, which will be coordinated by and carried out in close collaboration with research groups at the TU Delft under a grant from the NWO research program Energy Transitions. The program is motivated by the observation that the adoption of innovative concepts and technologies in the Netherlands' energy system is much slower than required given the urgency of the foreseeable problems and the substantive system delays. We assume that there are two major causes for system delay: (1) a gap between regime and niche players in the energy transition, which prevents adoption of innovations and (2) the lack of an adequate framework for policy instrumentation to speed-up the adoption of innovations. The PhD project is aimed at elaborating and testing a new policy instrument for implementing innovative energy solutions for the built environment in the Netherlands. This policy instrument, that we have labeled Joint Social Procurement, must facilitate those who make decisions on actual investments in buildings to identify and select options with the highest environmental benefits against lowest cost. The project will identify and mobilize (new) actors on the *demand side*, such as housing associations, private house owners, local governments, farmers, water- and waste companies, as well as actors on the *supply side*, including technological niche players who are currently operating at the margin of the Dutch energy transition network. Pivotal is the formation of coalitions on the demand and supply side that are committed to realize zero emission neighborhoods and buildings through an open and competitive bidding process. The methodology used will be a so-called quasi-experiment, i.e. an experiment in an uncontrolled (real-life) setting. The project will be carried out under supervision and will be supported by a student assistant.

Tasks

The PhD research will include the following tasks and responsibilities,

- to carry out a study into the instrumentation of environmental and innovation policies, including theory and practice of transitions, which will result into a conceptual framework for the program;
- to elaborate Joint Social Procurement and design a stepwise procedure for its implementation;
- to identify actors at the demand and the supply side and engage them in a quasi experiment;
- to carry out the quasi-experiment in collaboration with the TUD projects;
- to report on the project findings through a PhD dissertation and several scientific articles;
- to consult on a regular basis with the project supervisor(s) and the program research team.

Requirements

- A completed Masters degree with relevance for the field of transition governance,;
- a research attitude geared at improving the relevance of (social) science methodology for the practices of global environmental change;
- familiarity with the literature on the effectiveness of policy instruments (public administration, economics), or an apparent interest to acquire this knowledge;
- knowledge of or an apparent interest in energy technologies and technological innovation;
- fluent in Dutch (speaking, reading and writing) or willing to acquire these skills on short notice;
- excellent communication and organization skills, team work capabilities and initiative.

Further details

The initial appointment will be for a period of 1 year. After satisfactory evaluation of the initial appointment, it can be extended for a total duration of 4 years. You can find information about our excellent fringe benefits of employment at www.workingatvu.nl

Salary

The salary will be in accordance with university regulations for academic personnel, and range from €2.042,- gross per month in the first year up to €2.612,- gross per month in the fourth year, based on a fulltime employment.

Information

Those who consider to send in an application are advised to read the program description.

For further information please contact Dr. M. Hisschemöller (project leader).

Phone number + 31 20 59 89523

E-mail: matthijs.hisschemoller@ivm.vu.nl

For the program description, please contact Tineke Reus (tineke.reus@ivm.vu.nl):
phone 312059 89595.

More information about the Department of Environmental Policy Analysis can be found at www.ivm.vu.nl.

Application

Applicants are requested to write a letter in which they describe their abilities and motivation, accompanied by a curriculum vitae and at least two references. Written applications should be sent before October 1st, 2010 to: the VU University Amsterdam, Faculty of Earth and Life Sciences, attn. Dr. J.M.R.M. Neutelings, managing director, De Boelelaan 1085, 1081 HV Amsterdam, The Netherlands. It is also possible to apply by e-mail to: falw-vacatures@falw.vu.nl.

Please mention the vacancy number in the e-mail header or at the top of your letter and on the **envelope**.

Any other correspondence in response to this advertisement will not be dealt with.