

## DPhil (PhD) Research Studentship

### SPRU (Science & Technology Policy Research), University of Sussex

#### Civil society in sustainability transitions

How do people organise and act collectively when they wish to transform the systems of provision that underpin their daily lives? This doctoral position will involve the student in developing and applying a novel 'socio-technical transitions' framework for analysing the different roles that civil society organisations play in path-breaking transitions to more sustainable energy and/or food systems in the UK. The project will **start in October 2010** and run for three years.

Sustainability transitions involve the co-evolution of social and technological innovations, and result in a radical restructuring of the human, institutional and technological basis of systems of provision. Where, when and why do civil society activities matter in transition processes? How do grassroots innovations, green consumption initiatives, consumer boycotts, protest and lobbying, and civic regulation affect the emergence of sustainable food or energy systems? How and why do they help or hinder sustainability transition processes? On what basis, and in what ways, might policy engage more effectively with civil society when seeking to transform socio-technical systems?

Candidates for this doctoral position will be highly motivated and have an excellent social science degree and, ideally, masters degree in a subject suited to this project, such as in political science, sociology or innovation studies, with a particular interest in the study of civil society. They must be comfortable working in an interdisciplinary and policy engaged research environment. Candidates will also be expected to have good knowledge about energy and/or food systems in the UK and sustainability issues relating to them.

The successful candidate will be based with the environment and energy team at SPRU at the University of Sussex. Our vibrant team of researchers and doctoral students has a world-class reputation in the study of sustainability transitions and policies to promote sustainable innovation. The doctoral student will also be a full participant in a new, multi-university Sustainable Lifestyles Research Group, led by Prof. Tim Jackson at the University of Surrey. The student will be supervised by Dr Adrian Smith and Prof. Andy Stirling at Sussex, who are internationally-respected figures in the field of sustainability transitions research and grassroots innovation for sustainable development. The work will involve working with policy-makers as well as engaging widely with civil society organisations interested in the sustainable transformation of energy and/or food socio-technical systems.

Funding is for full-time enrolment for up to three years and available from 1 October, 2010. The studentship will pay the tuition fees and a maintenance allowance, currently **£13,509** per annum, is available to UK applicants. EU students are also eligible to apply. However, for EU applicants, funding-council rules stipulate that only the fees will be paid. Initial enquiries about the proposal process should be addressed to Janet French: [j.french@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:j.french@sussex.ac.uk); 01273 678169. For further information about the project contact Dr Adrian Smith [a.g.smith@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:a.g.smith@sussex.ac.uk); 01273 877065. Further information about SPRU can be found at <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/spru/>

Applicants should elaborate how they would research this topic in the research plan section of their proposal. To apply, go to <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/pgapplication> and create an online application for a place on the DPhil in Science & Technology Policy Studies. Please state in the Academic Interests section that you are applying for the "PhD Studentship in Civil Society in Sustainability Transitions." Include a CV, certificates and transcripts of marks from your degree(s), a research outline and the names of two referees. The research outline should detail why the candidate wishes to participate in this project. It should also provide a description of the research that the student would like to undertake on the topic of civil society in sustainability transitions in terms of theories, methods, and focus. The deadline for applications is **Friday 16<sup>th</sup> July**.