

Making science for policy more transparent, rigorous and useable

The [Egesta Lab](#) is seeking graduate students and postdocs who are enthusiastic about integrating scientific expertise and policy. Our group welcomes applicants from a variety of backgrounds — law, science studies, and political science, for example — who want to join a team of scholars in examining the production and use of science in the regulation of chemicals of emerging concern, a field in which scientific consensus is often not possible. The Egesta Lab is specifically targeting the regulation of micropollutants, such as PFAS, that are increasingly being detected in drinking water. How to determine healthy levels of such substances remains a contested area. It is crucial to find ways to move forward when there is a struggle for epistemic authority, which is intensified due to the expectation that expert advisors will produce a consensus opinion. The Egesta Lab invites colleagues who can help strengthen the ability to handle a diversity of perspectives in science advising. In fact, the inclusion of differing perspectives can make decision making more robust, actionable, rigorous, and democratic, not least because of an increased ability to understand and mitigate risks.

The successful candidates are likely to interact with scientific experts involved as policy-advisors, regulators and other decision-makers. They may also interact with traditional knowledge holders, science communicators, scientists who have an interest in providing policy-advice, and members of the public who have an interest in the contested topic in question. The candidate will be supervised by [Dr. Gunilla Öberg](#) and, therefore, be part of the incredibly interdisciplinary team at [IRES \(UBC Institute for Resources, Environment and Sustainability\)](#).

Desired Qualifications:

- We seek accomplished **team players** with outstanding **communication skills** (written and oral), a solid appreciation of **rigorous research**, and a **strong academic record**.
- A **mixed educational background** is an asset (e.g. major in sociology and a minor in environmental chemistry), as is the experience of research, **interdisciplinary collaboration**, and **environmental decision-making**.
- Candidates of **diverse backgrounds**, both Canadian and international, are encouraged to apply.

Applications and Proposals:

- Candidates are welcome to submit proposals on any topic under the **science-for-policy** umbrella, **provided that it deals with the management of micropollutants of emerging concern** in one way or another.
- Competitive funding for postdocs and students is available. For inquiries, please email goberg@ires.ubc.ca along with the proposal mentioned above.
- Interested students should apply to the [RES Ph.D. program](#) by **January of the current academic year**. Students wishing to indicate and assess interest before applying can send a cover letter, CV, and a statement of grades (including a TOEFL score for international applicants) by email to goberg@ires.ubc.ca. The anticipated start date will be the September following application, assuming UBC entrance requirements are met.