

## Transformative change through communication?

### Exploring pathways to research impact via science communication

Department: Copernicus Institute of Sustainable Development

Research group: Department-wide, with an academic link to Environmental Governance

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### Project description

This Bright Minds Assistantship presents an opportunity for a creative and critically-minded student who enjoys writing for different target audiences to strengthen the impact strategy of the Copernicus Institute.

The Copernicus Institute and its researchers have a strong commitment to the development of trans-, multi- and interdisciplinary knowledge that facilitates transformations to a sustainable and equitable society for humans and nature. However, time is running out to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement and transition to a nature-positive carbon neutral economy. More research is not always the answer. A gap can often be found in transferring, implementing, or communicating existing research.

In this research-focused communications position, the student will identify pathways to and leverage points for impact within the communication landscape. According to the eight research themes of the institute (see [here](#)), they will develop a theory of change regarding research impact through communications. Where should we be focusing our efforts to be active partners in the green transition? And how will this lead to change?

Their findings will be used by the institute's impact officer to help guide science communication and impact activities. Based on their findings, the student will have the opportunity to produce engaging science communication content for the Utrecht University website and other outlets they have identified.

NOTE: Sustainability researchers today are increasingly expected to consider how their research will create impact, meaning science communication skills (beyond academic writing) are increasingly valued. This Bright Minds Studentship would be valuable both for students wishing to stay in academia, as well as those who aim to work in 'boundary organisations' that bridge the gap between research and practice.

Should we see the return of corona virus restrictions we will maintain weekly contact via Teams. The studentship can be carried out at home and hours adapted according to pandemic-related constraints.

### Job requirements

- Interest in a wide range of sustainability issues
- Strong written English and ability to fluently read Dutch (writing not necessary)
- Experience with popular science writing is desirable, but further training can be given