The RECIRCULATE project

RECIRCULATE (Driving eco-innovation in Africa: capacity-building for a safe circular water economy) is a £6.8M project funded by Research Councils UK through the Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) (http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/funding/gcrf/growingcapability/).

GCRF funding over 4 years will support new partnership-based approaches to enable West African researchers to grow transformational impact through (i) working with, in and for their communities and (ii) developing robust, durable and equitable partnerships with UK researchers. The project has a particular focus on delivering innovative solutions to pressing problems with water use and safety. RECIRCULATE will “join up” the different ways in which water sustains communities, from sewage disposal to energy generation and water used in food production. Recent reports show 50 percent of Africans live in areas without adequate water – 800 million people by 2025. Urban water pollution is on the rise and 96 percent of African agriculture is dependent on rainfall. Solving these problems demands new approaches to research, and how research is translated to meet the needs of local communities across Africa.

RECIRCULATE will bring together leading researchers in the UK, Ghana and Nigeria with African change makers - the entrepreneurs, policy makers and community leaders who are best-placed to deliver the innovative approaches needed to integrate the different uses of water, and which support sustainable, equitable development. The project is broad-based: it combines excellence in scientific research (environmental science, crop science, engineering, microbiology), social science and management research in entrepreneurial learning and knowledge exchange. Working together across partners and across disciplines the project aims to deliver appropriate solutions for Africa, building on cutting-edge solutions to addressing the global challenges around safe and sustainable water use.

Given GCRF’s focus on capacity building, as well as world-class research RECIRCULATE will include a very substantial training element, including focussed training events at LU_Ghana (Accra) and 6-8 week “residences” at Lancaster. The logistics of these training activities, the diversity of the research activities and the involvement of initially three, and ultimately seven, partner institutions across countries all demand that RECIRCULATE is supported by an exceptionally high-quality project management and administrative team. The team will be based in Lancaster but with the expectation that teams members will undertake short visits to our partner institutions.

Lancaster University

Lancaster is a world-class university with an international reputation for excellence in teaching, scholarship and research. Lancaster is ranked top ten in the Guardian League table and is consistently highly placed in all major league tables. Established in 1964, Lancaster currently has over 12,000 students and has seen around half a billion pounds being invested in our campus since 2002. The University boasts an idyllic campus that combines city, coast and countryside all into one. The campus setting conveys a tranquil ambiance whilst offering
such a range of facilities it can almost be called a small town in its own right. The main Bailrigg campus is home to a range of amenities, and even its own cultural hub including a theatre, art gallery and concert series. More recently, Lancaster University has developed a portfolio of teaching partnerships overseas, as part of its global outreach internationalisation strategy.

RECIRCULATE transcends disciplinary boundaries and at Lancaster draws on expertise from four departments (the Lancaster Environment Centre (LEC: http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/lec/), Lancaster University Management School (LUMS: http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/lums/), Engineering (http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/engineering/) and Biomedical and Life Sciences (http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/bls/)).

**Project partners**

RECIRCULATE is an international collaboration, initially (Phase 1) between researchers in the UK, Ghana and Nigeria but then expanding to include partners in Malawi, Zambia, Botswana and Kenya (Phase 2). The project’s Phase 1 partners are Lancaster University (http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/), the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (Ghana: http://www.csir.org.gh/), University of Benin (Nigeria: https://www.uniben.edu/) and LU GHANA (http://www.lancaster.edu.gh/). The project’s Phase 2 partners are Botswana International University of Science and Technology, African Technology Policy Studies Network (Kenya), the National Commission for Science and Technology (Malawi) and Copperbelt University (Zambia).

**Further information**

Informal enquiries can be addressed to any of the following:

Professor Nigel Paul:  tel. 01524 501208  n.paul@lancaster.ac.uk
Professor Kirk Semple  tel. 01524 510554  k.semple@lancaster.ac.uk
Dr Ruth Alcock     tel. 01524 510285  r.alcock@lancaster.ac.uk