**Josh Vande Hey, Centre for Environmental Health and Sustainability (31.05.22)**

I’m Josh Vande Hey, I am Associate Professor of Environment and Health at both the Earth Observation Science Group at the School of Physics and Astronomy, and part of the cross-University Centre for Environmental Health and Sustainability, and I am based at our new Space Park Leicester building.

My work is, broadly speaking, policy-related air quality research, supported by, let’s say technology development, to better understand air pollution. We work with local authorities, we work with government departments, we work internationally to solve problems broadly related to air quality, air pollution and health, and so, you can’t do this just as, you know, let’s say as an environmental scientist or a physical scientist, you have to work with public health people, you have to work with health researchers, and then you also need to often have partnerships that are not just across disciplines but across different kinds of organisations.

I really like interdisciplinary working, but it’s also essential for addressing the complex challenges at the interface of environment and human health. Some of the best questions I have gotten about the let’s say environmental side have come from collaborators in social sciences, arts, humanities, they say ‘well, what’s the story here?’, ‘what’s the important thing? What are you saying, is this a generalisation? – why is this important, is it only about this one city we’re studying, why would anybody care?’, and you’re like OK! You’re asking all these really important questions – yes, we need to answer those. So, I think – so, while it’s a challenge, sometimes the questions that come out while you’re trying to understand can actually be quite deep profound questions that the research needs to address.

I think one of the things I’m proudest of is not an output, but it’s a working partnership we’ve built with the City Council in Leicester, and that has been a developing partnership over a number of years where we bring environmental and environmental public health expertise from the University to collaborate with the City Council to understand, for example, what kinds of policy or public information campaigns could help improve air quality in the city.

My favourite place to walk around the University is right next to our new building here at Space Park. There’s a beautiful, nature preserve area with paths through it, it’s called Ellis Meadows, and that’s right between us and the waterway, and it’s a really nice natural capital asset to have right next to the place you work.