



Poverty Lab Title: Post-Doctoral Fellow
Location: Chicago, IL
Desired Start Date: July 2018
Reporting to: Scientific Director

Our Focus

Concentrated poverty remains an endemic feature of American cities. Residents of low-income communities suffer higher rates of crime victimization and greater exposure to environmental contaminants. Their children experience worse schooling outcomes and limited access to healthy food. Many struggle with irregular employment and unstable housing. The path to social mobility is foreclosed by limited opportunities to gain new skills, and limited availability of affordable financial products. While social enterprises work hard to address these challenges with innovative solutions, policymakers and practitioners struggle to make sustained progress due to a lack of evidence about what works.

We launched the University of Chicago Poverty Lab in 2015 to test innovative approaches to addressing the intersecting challenges faced by low-income residents of our cities. We bring the best science and “big data” analysis possible to bear on the problem of policy design, leveraging government administrative data to guide local policy and to generate high-quality evidence about what works. We believe that carrying out this work in very close collaboration with policymakers helps keep us focused on the most important real-world problems, and increases the chances that our findings translate into real-world impact.

Who We Are

The Poverty Lab is led by Marianne Bertrand, the Chris P. Dialynas Distinguished Service Professor of Economics at the University of Chicago Booth School of Business, Co-Director of Social Enterprise Initiative at Booth, and Director of the University of Chicago Poverty Lab. Her research, which covers labor economics, corporate finance, and development economics, has been published widely. She is a member of the board of directors for the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Our team currently consists of an Executive Director, Scientific Director and 15 full-time staff, including data analysts and program managers at our main office in downtown Chicago. Our constantly evolving portfolio of projects spans workforce development, housing and homelessness, post-secondary education, and income support policies. Our work includes several projects focused on the application of machine learning algorithms to improve the design and targeting of interventions.

Job Summary

The University of Chicago Poverty Lab is seeking a full-time Post-Doctoral Fellow to build and lead a portfolio of applied research projects in association with faculty members and research teams focused on housing instability and workforce development in urban areas. The Post-Doctoral Fellow will be responsible for contributing to the scientific content of research proposals and will have the opportunity to author or co-author scientific articles. The Post-Doctoral Fellow will assist the Executive Director and other staff in dissemination and policymaker outreach activities, and will oversee the work of other research staff.

The Post-Doctoral Fellow will report to Poverty Lab Scientific Director Kelly Hallberg and work collaboratively with Marianne Bertrand, other researchers, staff and partner agencies. The term of this position is 12 months, with the possibility of renewal for up to 24 additional months.

Responsibilities:

- Design rigorous research projects that answer policy-relevant questions, and develop long-range plans for research projects.
- Engage external partners, including policymakers and non-profit providers, to identify and develop new research projects.

- Oversee activities related to data collection and analysis.
- Prepare grant/funding applications.
- Supervise staff or researchers.
- Ensure compliance of research activities with institutional, state and federal regulatory policies, procedures, directives and mandates.
- Author or co-author scientific articles, reports and manuscripts. Present research findings at meetings and conferences.

Education and Experience

- Doctoral degree in public policy, economics, statistics or other relevant field with substantial policy and research experience required. Applicants in the final stages of dissertation review will be considered.
- A minimum of four years of relevant research experience or the equivalent required.

Technical Skills

- Expertise in research design, methods, and evaluation of research projects in the area of social policy required.
- Ability to write and review code in Stata and/or R required.
- Familiarity with machine learning algorithms preferred.
- Ability to write and review code in Python preferred.

Competencies

- Strong project management skills with exceptional attention to detail required.
- Ability to work independently in a fast-paced environment required.
- Outstanding interpersonal skills and ability to maintain positive relationships with various stakeholders required.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, with the ability to present data in a simple and straightforward way for non-technical audiences required.
- Demonstrated ability to exercise sound judgment required.
- Strong time management skills with a proven ability to multitask and to prioritize activities to successfully complete projects on tight deadlines with little supervision. Knowledge and understanding of social policy and literature required.

To Apply:

Submit resume, cover letter, writing sample, and transcripts to <https://uchicago.wd5.myworkdayjobs.com/External>, requisition **JR00178**. Finalists for this position may be required to present on a research project as part of the interview process.

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