

# RESEARCH SCIENTIST

## OVERVIEW

The American Dream – the aspiration that all children should have opportunities to climb the economic ladder – is at risk. In the 1950s, more than 90% of American children grew up to earn more than their parents did. Today, only 50% of children do so.

The mission of [Opportunity Insights](#) (OI) is to restore the American dream. We seek to develop scalable policy solutions that will empower families to rise out of poverty and achieve better life outcomes. We do this by harnessing the power of big data through high quality research to learn from areas where the American Dream is still thriving. We study economic mobility through lenses such as education, neighborhood environments, and health to understand the drivers of economic opportunity in the country and give local policy-makers customized data and insights to help them craft effective policy solutions. More recently, we have turned our efforts to [tracking](#) in real-time the unequal impact of COVID-19 across the economy.

The project's work to date has shaped policy discussions at the national and local level, with nearly a dozen of its studies covered on the front pages of major media outlets, such as the [New York Times](#) and [Wall Street Journal](#) and cited in congressional testimony and the President's State of the Union addresses. This work has led to direct impacts on a broad range of decisions by local policy makers, ranging from school districts to housing authorities.

Our team, led by [Raj Chetty](#), [John Friedman](#), and [Nathan Hendren](#), consists of leaders from academia, policy, and management, supported by a staff who share a passion to revive the American Dream. We are now seeking a Research Scientist who will work with the senior leadership team of OI and to conduct rigorous, high-quality public policy research on the condition and drivers of economic mobility in the US. As a member of the OI team, the Research Scientist will help us set the standard for high quality empirical analyses using large-administrative data sets to help develop research we hope ultimately improves economic mobility.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

- Conducts in-depth high-quality research under the direction of Drs. Chetty, Hendren, and Friedman, leveraging large-scale administrative datasets.
- Develops research methods to answer academic questions of interest.
- Develops paper and slide material for disseminating research results to stakeholders.
- Develops and implements efficient coding and data handling processes.
- Meets with and briefs relevant external contacts on research.
- Collaborates with OI policy efforts to help develop analyses for research translation.
- Authors or co-authors policy reports, blogs, op-eds, and other commentary.
- Supports junior staff and fellow.

## REQUIREMENTS

### BACKGROUND/EXPERIENCE

- Masters or Ph.D. experience in computer science, economics, or related field with considerable data analysis background.

### SPECIFIC JOB SKILLS

- Able to lead independent statistical and economic research
- Ability to work collegially with staff at all levels and in all job profiles

### COMPETENCIES

- Initiative and enthusiasm
- Strong technical skills in statistics and quantitative methods
- Results oriented
- Personal obligation to uphold organization's expectations
- Strong sense of purpose in holding difficult conversations
- Personal accountability for consistent application of processes and policies

## REPORTING LINES

- Reports directly to Raj Chetty, Nathaniel Hendren, and John Friedman

## LOCATION

- Cambridge, MA

## COMMITMENT TO EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND BELONGING

Harvard University views equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging as the pathway to achieving inclusive excellence and fostering a campus culture where everyone can thrive. We strive to create a community that draws upon the widest possible pool of talent to unify excellence and diversity while fully embracing individuals from varied backgrounds, cultures, races, identities, life experiences, perspectives, beliefs, and values.

## HOW TO APPLY

Please apply through [Harvard's online portal](#).

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