

# Research Scientist

## Overview

Harvard University's [Opportunity Insights](#) (OI), is seeking applicants for a **Research Scientist** who will work with the senior leadership team of Opportunity Insights (OI) to conduct rigorous, high-quality 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 rigorous, policy-relevant analyses using large administrative datasets to develop research that improves economic mobility.

Opportunity Insights (OI) is a nonpartisan research and policy institute focused on improving economic opportunity. Founded in 2018, Opportunity Insight has become a nationally- and internationally- recognized leader in the science of economic mobility and in the use of large administrative data to understand and address inequality. Opportunity Insights has published seminal work on national trends in [upward mobility](#); [racial disparities](#); the role of [neighborhoods](#), [social capital](#), and [higher education](#) in upward mobility; and the use of private-sector data to understand disparate impacts in the [recent economic recession and recovery](#). To complement this research, Opportunity Insights has developed data resources including the [Opportunity Atlas](#), the [Social Capital Atlas](#), and the [Economic Tracker](#) to support evidence-based policy and practice. To date, OI's work 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](#), [The Economist](#), the [Wall Street Journal](#), and have been widely cited in policy discussions, including the President's State of the Union address.

The Research Scientist will serve as a key member of OI's research team, working closely with OI co-Directors and other Research Principals. The Research Scientist will lead OI's growing research on workforce training programs, both to analyze long-term impacts and inform best practices as well as to advance methodologies in applied econometrics. This work will build on OI's existing data collaboration with [Year Up](#) and will lead new data partnerships with [MDRC's WorkAdvance](#) program, [Social Finance Institute](#), and others. They will work closely with [Raj Chetty](#), [Larry Katz](#), and other OI researchers; they will be granted Special Sworn Status (SSS) under OI's project agreement with Census to use non-public Census-tax microdata for this work.

The Research Scientist will work on conceptual and research design, project management, data management, analytics, and other areas. The role includes opportunities for co-authorship and to expand research into new directions. The Research Scientist will also support junior fellows as well as OI community activities such as the mobility seminar series and annual mobility conference.

Applicants are expected to have strong analytical skills, have demonstrated interest in OI's research agenda, and be skilled at working in team settings. We especially encourage applications from backgrounds under-represented in economics and related fields.

The Research Scientist is a two-year initial appointment to begin July 1, 2024\*, renewable based on mutual agreement. This is a career-level position, with opportunities for growth and advancement within the field. The salary and benefits are competitive with other academic positions in economics. The position reports directly to Raj Chetty and is located in Cambridge, MA.

## Responsibilities

- Conducts in-depth high quality research under the direction of Opportunity Insights Co-Directors (Profs. Chetty, Friedman, and Hendren) 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 impact efforts to help develop analyses that are useful to support research translation.
- Authors or co-authors policy reports, blogs, op-eds, and other commentary.
- Supports junior staff and fellows.

## Requirements

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### BACKGROUND/EXPERIENCE

- Ph.D. or equivalent combination of education and experience in economics or related field.
- To be eligible for Census data access, applicants must be US citizens or have resided in the United States (for college or work) for at least 3 of the past 5 years.

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### SPECIFIC JOB SKILLS

- Able to lead independent statistical and economic research on topics that align with OI's research agenda.
- Ability to work collegially with staff at all levels and in all job profiles.
- Interest in or experience with mentoring junior staff.

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### COMPETENCIES

- Strong technical skills in statistics, economics, and quantitative methods.
- Orientation and familiarity with research and questions that align with OI's research agenda and mission.

- Results-oriented, flexible, and enthusiastic about working within a fast-paced setting.
- Personal obligation to uphold organization's expectations.
- Personal accountability for consistent application of processes and policies.

### **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**

Applicants are required to submit CV, cover letter, a research statement, a writing sample, and the names and contact information for three references through the [Harvard application portal](#).

The application is complete only when three letters have been submitted. We encourage candidates to apply by **January 15, 2024**, but will continue to review applications until the position is filled.

\*Please note there is some flexibility in the start date of the position.

*We are an equal opportunity employer and all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability status, protected veteran status, gender identity, sexual orientation, pregnancy and pregnancy-related conditions, or any other characteristic protected by law.*