



Pre-Doctoral Fellow

POSITION SUMMARY

Professor Bruce D. Meyer, the McCormick Foundation Professor at the University of Chicago's Harris School, is seeking to hire one or more full-time Pre-Doctoral Fellows to join the Comprehensive Income Dataset (CID) Project in Summer 2021. The CID links major government surveys with an unprecedented set of tax records and administrative program data, with the ultimate goal of being the most comprehensive and accurate income-related dataset ever created for the United States. The CID Project's research has been published in leading peer-reviewed journals and featured in media outlets such as the [Economist](#), [Los Angeles Times](#), [New York Times](#), [Bloomberg](#), [Wall Street Journal](#), [Washington Post](#), [Vox](#), and [Slate](#).

Pre-doctoral fellows will collaborate on a series of research projects that further build the CID and use it to transform our understanding of economic well-being in the United States. Ongoing and planned projects include the following:

- Linking novel administrative and survey data sources and developing statistical approaches to incorporate them into CID-based income measures
- Using the CID to identify sources of error in government surveys and developing new methods to address them
- Identifying the most deprived segments of the population using an unprecedented set of material hardship measures and uncovering the underlying factors that lead to poverty
- Examining the short- and long-term effects of government programs on accurately measured income, poverty and economic well-being
- Assessing the targeting and redistributive effects of government programs and remaining holes in the safety net
- Estimating trends in poverty and the distribution of income over multiple decades using the highly accurate CID
- Studying the material well-being of the U.S. homeless population using the CID and other data sources rarely used to study this population

Pre-Doctoral Fellows work closely with Professor Meyer and the small team of researchers at the CID Project in all stages of the research process. As a fellow, you will link large and novel datasets to the CID; use cutting edge statistical techniques and "big data" approaches to create more accurate measures of income and material deprivation; conduct sophisticated empirical analyses that have the potential to transform our understanding of economic well-being, poverty and highly vulnerable populations; prepare presentations and manuscripts; interact with outside academic experts and policy leaders involved with CID projects; and ultimately, coauthor papers submitted for publication in peer-reviewed journals.

The Pre-Doctoral Fellow position is ideal preparation for top Ph.D. programs in economics and related fields. Previous fellows have gone on to attend Ph.D. programs at Harvard, Yale and Columbia.

QUALIFICATIONS

We seek Pre-Doctoral Fellow candidates who not only have exceptional technical skills and a proven ability to creatively tackle difficult empirical problems, but who are also passionate about advancing our understanding of some of the most deprived segments of the U.S. population and the programs that serve them. Furthermore, because our work is both highly challenging and necessarily collaborative, it is imperative that Pre-Doctoral Fellows be able to thrive in a team-based environment.

Specific qualifications for Pre-Doctoral Fellows include the following:

Education and experience

- Bachelor's Degree in Economics, Statistics or related disciplines required
- Previous research experience strongly preferred
- Proficiency in Stata required; ability to use other statistical software packages (e.g., SAS, R, or Python) strongly preferred
- Significant coursework or experience in programming strongly preferred
- Willingness and ability to obtain Special Sworn Status (requires 3 years of US residence within past 5 years) from the U.S. Census Bureau required

Competencies and skills

- Strong interest in understanding poverty and issues affecting vulnerable populations
- Proven ability to work effectively in small teams, demonstrating a strong desire to both learn from and mentor other team members
- Drive and ability to develop a detailed understanding of areas ranging from cutting-edge econometric techniques to institutional details related to marginalized populations
- Excellent oral and written communication skills
- High attention to detail and quality in data analysis and written material
- Significant knowledge of statistics and/or empirical economics research
- Demonstrated ability to review and prioritize work independently and effectively
- Demonstrated ability to be resourceful and creative in problem-solving

The location of Pre-Doctoral Fellow positions is currently flexible within the United States. To apply, please upload your resume, cover letter, transcripts, and a writing sample [here](#).