

RECRUITMENT PACK

This document includes the following information:

- Job Description
- Person Specification
- Additional information

Making an application:

Please complete the short on-line application form and attach the following 4 documents:

- a) A covering letter setting out how you meet the requirements of the role as set out in the person specification.
- b) Full curriculum vitae (CV) including any publications. You should specify your 4 most significant papers published within the past 5 years (or an equivalent number appropriate to being an early career researcher). Applicants from within the UK should indicate which publications have been submitted to the REF 2014 and any assessment of the rating for each piece of work; For more information about the REF visit www.ref.ac.uk
- c) For posts at salary grade 9-11, a research statement of no more than two sides of A4 providing details of your research plans for the next three years. This should include details of books, chapters or papers in progress together with planned publication dates. For journal articles please provide details of target journals and planned submission dates. If you have papers that are currently under review please detail the stage these have reached and the timescale you expect those papers to be accepted for publication. If you have papers that have been accepted for publication but not yet published please provide the date the paper was accepted for publication.
- d) For posts at salary grade 9-11, please include a document of no more than two sides of A4 setting out your three year plan for generating external funding to support your research.

Shortlisting is undertaken by a panel after the closing date on the basis of information provided and failure to upload the requested documents will result in an application being rejected.

The University of Essex is proud to be part of the Disability Confident scheme and is committed to supporting diversity and equality, representative of our inclusive community. As part of our commitment to this scheme any candidate who has a disability and meets all the essential criteria for the role will be offered an interview. We also work in partnership with national disability organisation DisabledGo who provide detailed online access guides to many of our campus buildings and facilities which you may find useful.

Please note: We are only accepting on-line applications for this post. However, if you have a disability that makes it difficult for you to provide us with information in this way, please contact the Resourcing Team (01206-874588/873521) for help.

Closing Date: 1 September 2017

Interviews are planned for: 19 September 2017



JOB DESCRIPTION – Job ref (REQ00841)

Job Title and Grade:	Senior Research Officer (Grade 8)
Contract:	Full-time, fixed term for 18 months (or until 31 March 2019, the date on which the 18-month research grant ends). This post is fixed-term as there is uncertainty about its continued funding in the foreseeable future. Part-time working will be considered at a minimum of 0.8 FTE.
Hours:	A notional minimum of 36 hours per week, or pro-rata for part-time
Salary:	£32,004 – 38,183 per annum (pro-rata for part-time)
Department/Section:	Institute for Social and Economic Research (ISER)
Responsible to:	Director of ISER
Reports on a day to day basis to:	Director of Innovations for <i>Understanding Society</i>
Purpose of job:	To provide support for a research project testing ways of using mobile technologies to measure household finances in a panel survey.

Background and purpose of the job

The Institute for Social and Economic Research (ISER) at the University of Essex wishes to appoint a talented and ambitious survey methods researcher to work on a research project related to *Understanding Society*: the UK Household Longitudinal Study. *Understanding Society* is a major longitudinal survey initially covering 40,000 households across the UK and includes an Innovation Panel that is used for methodological development and testing (<http://www.understandingsociety.org.uk>).

The post is based in the survey methods research group at ISER and is part of a research project funded by the National Centre for Research Methods, with the overall aim of using mobile technologies to improve financial data collected in household surveys. The strands of research that the successful candidate will be involved in include (1) testing ways of increasing participation in mobile data collection, (2), examining whether offering respondents feedback on their data increases willingness to participate, and whether feedback leads to panel conditioning, and (3) working towards developing a framework of Total Error in Social Science data collected using different technologies.

The project is led by Professor Annette Jäckle, with other collaborators within ISER (Professor Mike Brewer, Dr Jonathan Burton, Dr Paul Fisher), in the economics department (Professor Thomas Crossley), in other UK universities (Ms Carli Lessof), and internationally (Professors Mick Couper and Joachim Winter). The successful candidate will collaborate with leading experts in survey methodology and economics, to produce and disseminate high quality research. The candidate will contribute to data analysis and writing of manuscripts for publication in academic journals. They will also contribute to the development work for experiments, to monitoring fieldwork, and to preparing and documenting data collected for the project.

The post is open to researchers with strong quantitative skills and a keen research interest in survey data collection methods. A combination of technical aptitude and good interpersonal skills is required, as is an ability to negotiate and co-ordinate activities with collaborators involved in the project.

Computer literacy, excellent written and verbal communication and organisational skills, the ability to work effectively in a team and to deadlines, accuracy and an eye for detail, as well as self-motivation and initiative are all essential qualities required of applicants. The post is fixed-term for 18 months.

Duties of the Post:

The main duties of the post are to provide support for a research project testing new ways of measuring finances in a household survey. The successful applicant will:

1. Write manuscripts for publication in academic journals as agreed with the line manager.
2. Contribute to data analysis.
3. Support the development work for an app study to measure expenditure, including planning qualitative interviews and translating findings into the design of the app study.
4. Support the development and implementation of experiments to test ways of increasing participation in mobile data collection.
5. Test CAPI and Web questionnaires for the project.
6. Support communications with the fieldwork agency during data collection, monitor and check early data, and provide regular updates to the project team.
7. Prepare data from the app study for analysis, and prepare documentation for submission of the data to the UK Data Service.
8. Organise communications with the project Advisory Board, for example through an online blog, and participate in other dissemination activities as appropriate.
9. Participate in departmental and faculty seminars aimed at sharing research outcomes.
10. Maintain own continuing professional development.
11. Participate, like all ISER staff members, in various institute-level activities appropriate to seniority.

Any other duties as may be assigned from time to time by the Head of Department of ISER or their nominee.

These duties are a guide to the work that the post holder will initially be required to undertake. They may be changed from time to time to meet changing circumstances.

Terms of Appointment:

For a full description of the terms of appointment for this post please visit:

<http://www.essex.ac.uk/hr/current-staff/terms.aspx#>

ISER is ISO27001:2005 certified. All ISER employees have a responsibility to adhere to the Institute's information security policies and procedures. This post may hold specific duties with regards to information security and may therefore be subject to a Baseline Personnel Security Standard (BPSS) check, including verification of identity; nationality and immigration status; employment history (past 3 years); and criminal record.

August 2017

PERSON SPECIFICATION

JOB TITLE: Senior Research Officer

Qualifications /Training

	Essential	Desirable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A PhD in survey methodology or quantitative social science (or be close to completion), or a Master's degree with a track record of academic publications in survey methodology or quantitative social science 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Experience/Knowledge

	Essential	Desirable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Experience writing manuscripts for publication in academic journals 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Survey methodology publications in peer review journals 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Research interests in survey methodology 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Experience of quantitative analysis using large-scale survey data 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Experience using Stata or similar software packages beyond beginner level for data management and statistical analysis 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Experience with questionnaire design 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Knowledge of experimental designs 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Experience working in a multi-disciplinary team 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Skills/Abilities

	Essential	Desirable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Proven ability to write clearly and concisely 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A good standard of written and spoken English 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Excellent quantitative analysis skills, including the ability to analyse large complex data sets using advanced statistical methods 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Good interpersonal, communication and general management skills 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Proficiency with advanced statistical packages, such as Stata, R or a similar statistical software package 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ IT skills and familiarity with Windows-based software 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Proven ability to produce high quality work within deadlines 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Self-motivation and proven ability to work independently 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An aptitude for team and collaborative working 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A flexible approach and ability to manage a diverse workload and competing priorities 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other

	Essential	Desirable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ability to meet the requirements of UK 'right to work' legislation* 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



▪ Can fulfil the staff vetting procedure for Government contracts (see general information for more details)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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* The University has a responsibility under the Asylum, Immigration and Nationality Act 2006 to ensure that all employees are eligible to work in the UK. Prior to commencing employment, the successful candidate will be asked to provide documentary evidence to this effect. The University may be able to offer Tier 2 Sponsorship for this role. For further information about UK immigration requirements please follow this link <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-visas-and-immigration>

Please note that the University may not be able to issue a Tier 2 Certificate of Sponsorship for part-time working hours

August 2017

Additional Information

Institute for Social and Economic Research

The Institute for Social and Economic Research (ISER)

ISER, founded over 25 years ago, is a research department in the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Essex. It has a worldwide reputation as a multidisciplinary centre of quantitative social science research and as a producer of household panel data of the highest quality (*'Understanding Society'* the UK Household Longitudinal Study and its predecessor the British Household Panel Survey (BHPS)). ISER is also home to the long-running ESRC Research Centre on Micro-Social Change (MiSoC) and EUROMOD, the tax-benefit micro-simulation model for the European Union. ISER's research excellence is demonstrated by its outstanding publication record and substantial research funding. ISER employs scholars of international prominence publishing in the top journals in their fields.

An excellent record of high-quality research

ISER's research currently addresses topics including: income distribution and poverty; employment and self-employment dynamics; the family and intergenerational transmission processes; health and ageing across the lifecourse; social behaviour, beliefs and values; education, labour markets, and skill formation; social policy; social stratification and disadvantage; risky behaviour; ethnicity and migration; neighbourhood influences on individual outcomes; cross-national comparative research; the measurement and use of data on individuals' expectations; analysis methods; and survey methodology.

ISER has a strong publication record, with regular contributions to top-five journals in Economics and to leading journals in Sociology such as *European Sociological Review* and *American Journal of Sociology*. We have strong links with the University's departments of Economics and Sociology, both of which are recognised as being among the strongest in the country. ISER contributes to these two Units of Assessment in the REF, and in future is likely to support two more. ISER has its own seminar series and also runs joint seminars with Economics and Sociology and for health researchers across the University. It operates an active Working Paper Series providing an outlet for papers prior to publication: <http://www.iser.essex.ac.uk/publications>.

Substantial research funding

ISER is currently one of the largest single recipients of research and resource funding from the ESRC, with quinquennial core funding currently supporting our two primary activities: the Research Centre on Micro-Social Change (MiSoC) for substantive research, and the UK Household Longitudinal Study. With its unique combination of research and resource functions, and a core focus on the use of advanced quantitative techniques applied to micro-data usually on individuals, families or households, ISER offers quantitative social scientists an ideal research environment.

The MiSoC research centre (<https://www.iser.essex.ac.uk/misoc/>) has enjoyed continuous ESRC funding from its inception in 1989. The 2014-2019 research programme, "Understanding individual and family behaviours in a new era of uncertainty and change", is organised in three main strands:

- Vulnerability, social insurance, and the dynamics of family finances, employment and health;
- New members of society: the formation of capabilities in children and young adults, and social mobility and integration amongst immigrants;
- Values, preferences and expectations.

A cross-cutting strand will focus on advancing statistical methods to improve our ability to obtain robust empirical evidence from data analyses with statistical and econometric methods. It is directed by Professor Mike Brewer, with co-Directors of Professors Sonia Bhalotra, Paul Clarke, Emilia Del Bono, Adeline Delavande, Steve Pudney and David Voas.

'*Understanding Society*' <https://www.understandingsociety.ac.uk/> is a flagship ESRC initiative, which started with a sample of 40,000 households across the four countries of the UK and includes the former BHPS sample. The BHPS is one of the most heavily used social science data sets in the UK, and recognized as one of the world's highest quality longitudinal surveys. Unique features of *Understanding Society* are the *Innovation Panel* which is reserved for experimentation, immigrant and ethnic minority boost samples and the collection of objective health measures including biomarkers, direct physical measures and genetic data. The Study is underpinned by survey methodological research which is world leading. There is an extensive programme of data linkage to a wide range of administrative records. The Study also has its own Policy Unit which works directly with government departments to undertake research and share findings.

The EUROMOD micro-simulation project (<https://www.euromod.ac.uk/>), funded by the European Union, provides a major resource for European comparative tax-benefit policy research. As well as calculating the effects of actual policies it is also used to evaluate the effects of tax-benefit policy reforms and other changes on poverty, inequality, incentives and government budgets. EUROMOD is a unique resource for cross-national research, designed to produce results that are comparable across countries and meaningful when aggregated to the EU level.

In addition to our substantial funding from the ESRC, ISER has a strong track record of success in securing funding from other sources including the European Union, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, the Leverhulme Trust, the Nuffield Foundation, government departments such as the Department for Work and Pensions, the Department for Education, and the Home Office, and organisations such as the Equality and Human Rights Commission, the Low Pay Commission, the Financial Services Authority, and the Equal Opportunities Commission.

Research with impact

ISER has a very good record at communicating and disseminating its research, and our key audiences include policy-makers, government departments, opinion formers, data providers, the third and private sectors, national and international organisations, the media and funding bodies. Its research also has impact at the highest level (research from ISER underpinned 7 Impact Case studies submitted to the 2014 REF, for example). This is all achieved through a professional communications and web team, the *Understanding Society* Policy Unit, and activities that are part of the MiSoC and EUROMOD research programmes, working alongside University and Faculty staff.

A top research environment in a leading university

ISER is a flagship social science department within the University of Essex, internationally recognised as a centre of excellence and expertise in the analysis of longitudinal data and providing a stimulating and innovative research environment. The University of Essex is one of the leading universities in Europe for social science research: the results of the 2014 Research Excellence Framework (REF) put it in the top 5 in the UK for social science, and the University is ranked 7th in the UK for economics. ISER makes a major contribution to the University's success. The University also appeared in the top 100 of The Times's World Social Science University Rankings ([World University Rankings in the Social Sciences](#)).

ISER contributes to three masters degrees run jointly with the departments of Economics and Sociology. Each has ESRC '1+3' recognition status.

ISER occupies a modern purpose-built building on the University campus. The building provides spacious office accommodation for all ISER staff and PhD students, meeting and seminar rooms, a common room, and a specialist research library. There are excellent IT facilities in ISER and throughout the university. The University's Albert Sloman Library is widely acknowledged to have excellent holdings in the social sciences. ISER's two weekly multidisciplinary seminar series are regularly attended by some 30-40 researchers from ISER and other departments, and researchers from ISER also regularly engage in departmental seminars in other departments in the Faculty.

ISER has about 80 staff in total, including researchers from several disciplines (mainly economics, sociology, health sciences and survey methods), survey specialists, and computing and support staff. There are over 30 part- and full-time PhD students and ISER hosts a large number of visitors from around the world. Forty external Research Associates are actively engaged in collaborative research with ISER staff.

The ISER senior management team consists of the ISER Director (Nick Buck), the Director of MiSoC (Mike Brewer), the Research Director (Adeline Delavande), the Director of EUROMOD (Holly Sutherland) and the Director of *Understanding Society* (Michaela Benzeval).

Strategic planning and management are organised by senior staff. There are six Research Groups with a strategic role of promoting collaboration in our main areas of research interest: Work; Family and education; Policy, incomes and welfare; Ethnicity and migration; Health; and Methods. These groups also have a strategic role in planning research funding initiatives.

Further information about ISER, its staff, and its activities, is available from our website: <http://www.iser.essex.ac.uk>. Information about the University of Essex is available from <http://www.essex.ac.uk>.

People Supporting Strategy

Please find a link to the People Supporting Strategy.

<http://www.essex.ac.uk/hr/policies/docs/people-oct15.pdf>

General information

Informal enquiries may be made to Professor Annette Jäckle (e-mail: aejack@essex.ac.uk). However, all applications must be made online.

Removal and Relocation

ISER aims to make a contribution towards the relocation costs of new staff members. (Automatic contribution by the University is not always standard.) We are willing to offer a contribution of up to £1,000 (maximum), subject to production of appropriate receipts. Subject to negotiation, an additional £500 (maximum) may be available for staff relocating from outside the UK.

Staff Vetting Procedures for Government Contracts

The University of Essex has Government contracts, some of which require it to access UK government systems, information or data. We have a duty to protect these assets and this obligation extends to our employees.

Due to the nature of the work in the Institute for Social and Economic Research, some job roles require a Baseline Personnel Security Standard (BPSS) check before appointment is confirmed. Applicants who are offered employment to qualifying roles will be subject to a vetting procedure to enable the University to verify the following for the successful candidate:

- Identity
- Employment history (for a minimum of the past 3 years)
- Nationality and immigration status
- Criminal Record (unspent convictions only)

Information Security

Information is the lifeblood of ISER. All ISER staff and students are responsible for its security to the organisations and individuals who provide it. ISER is ISO27001:2013 certified and all ISER staff and students have a responsibility to adhere to the Institute's information security policies and procedures.

Benefits

Our staff and students are members of the University for life. We believe a person's potential is not simply defined by grades or backgrounds, but by willingness to question, to collaborate and to push at the edges of knowledge and their own potential.

As an employer we offer a range of benefits and a commitment to career development and equal opportunities in an environment that both reflects and creates a rich interaction of people, disciplines and ideas.

- Pension scheme
- Generous holiday entitlement
- Competitive salaries
- Training and development Family Friendly policies
- On campus childcare facilities, for more information visit www.wivenhoeparkdaynursery.co.uk
- Childcare vouchers
- Relocation package for qualifying staff
- Interest free season ticket loan
- Range of optional salary exchange tax benefits (pension, childcare and bicycle schemes)

No smoking policy

The University has a no smoking policy.

This document is produced by:

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