

RECRUITMENT PACK

This document includes the following information:

- Job Description
 - Person Specification
 - Additional information
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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) A 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.

We recommend that you take a copy of this recruitment pack to help with your preparation.

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 876559) for help.

Closing Date: 18 August 2019

Interviews are planned for: 10 September 2019

Expected start date: As soon as possible, to be discussed at interview



UNIVERSITY OF ESSEX
 JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title and Grade:	Senior Research Officer (ASR); Grade 8
Contract:	This appointment is full-time, fixed-term until 16 May 2021, which is the end date of the research project. This post is fixed-term as there is uncertainty about its continued funding.
Hours:	A notional minimum of 36 hours per week
Salary:	£33,199 – £39,609 per annum
Department/Section:	Institute for Social and Economic Research (ISER)
Reports on a day-to-day to:	EUROMOD Director (Matteo Richiardi)
Responsible to:	ISER Director
Purpose of role:	To contribute to the ISER EUROMOD team's research programme centred around the development and use of both tax-benefit and dynamic microsimulation models for policy analysis and evaluation. This also includes empirical analysis of individual transitions between different socio-demographic states.

CONTEXT

The Institute for Social and Economic Research (ISER) wishes to appoint a Senior Research Officer to support and expand its microsimulation unit, centred around its tax-benefit microsimulation model, EUROMOD (www.euromod.ac.uk), and JAS-mine, a Java platform for dynamic microsimulation modelling (www.jas-mine.net). These tools are developed and maintained by an experienced and supportive team that includes economists, sociologists and political scientists, as well as a software developer.

A major focus of the role will be to contribute to an expanding library of dynamic microsimulation models, and in particular work on the integration of tax-benefit calculators within dynamic microsimulation models. This will allow the simulation of complete life-course trajectories for individuals and their families, accounting for population changes (including ageing and migration), and the effects of policies.

In developing these models, the successful candidate will also undertake empirical work - with the potential to publish at the highest level - analysing individual life-course trajectories, including educational choices, transition to adulthood, entry in the labour market, household formation and dissolution, fertility, health status, labour market transitions, and retirement.

The post is partially funded by a project aimed at measuring and characterising economic insecurity and its barriers, namely job security, wage security and social security.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE POST

- To undertake research and infrastructure development activities to support the microsimulation team.
- To engage in individual and/or collaborative research activity resulting in internationally excellent publications that is in keeping with [Research Excellence Framework](#) (REF) criteria.
- To contribute to applications for external research funding appropriate in scale to career stage and subject area norms where appropriate.

- To enhance the scholarly reputation of the Department and the University by contact with the wider academic community and supporting knowledge exchange activity.
- To undertake leadership duties related to research appropriate to career stage and as allocated by the Head of Department.
- To contribute expertise and knowledge to departmental and/or institutional initiatives as directed by their Head of Department.

MAIN DUTIES OF THE POST

Research

- To work collaboratively with colleagues to deliver the research and infrastructure development objectives as defined by the EUROMOD Director.
- To take responsibility for the development of dynamic microsimulation models as required by the research and development objectives above.
- To contribute as a key member to an ongoing project aimed at measuring and characterising economic insecurity and its barriers, which exploits both the EUROMOD and JAS-mine tools.
- In doing so, the post-holder will be expected to:
 - become proficient in the use of EUROMOD and the methods, micro-data and software used by it;
 - become proficient in the Java programming language and the JAS-mine modelling protocols and conventions;
 - develop the analytical skills necessary to assess the quality and comparability of simulation results;
 - work closely with the experienced team of EUROMOD researchers in ISER
- To produce research outputs for publication at acceptable levels of volume and academic excellence and disseminate the result of research and scholarship through appropriate Knowledge Exchange activities (such as at relevant national and international conferences and scholarly publications not intended for the REF).
- To make a significant contribution to knowledge exchange activities within the wider academic community and other activities designed to ensure that appropriate impact of the research (outside academia) is achieved.
- To contribute to the development and maintenance of research resources (examples of which include household surveys, databases, specialist equipment and infrastructure, software packages and computer models) used within the Department or wider user community external to the Department.
- To supervise and/or mentor postgraduate research students into relevant communities of research at Essex as appropriate to the departmental context to generate meaningful connections between research and education at Essex. - *(A University of Essex standard expectation at this level, however not necessarily for this particular role within ISER).*

Leadership and Citizenship

- To play an active role in the microsimulation team, engaging in activities beyond own role to promote the work of the team as required by the EUROMOD Director.

- To play an active and constructive role in the Department and engage in activities beyond your own research team, (e.g. open days, staff meetings and relevant committees), as may be reasonably required by the Head of Department.
- To proactively participate in and develop internal and external networks and establish links with relevant academic and professional bodies, contacts and employers, and identify sources of funding, income and future consultancy opportunities.
- To support knowledge exchange activities, for example, by contributing to research projects funded by commerce, industry or public sector organisations.
- To engage in continuing professional development in relevant subjects/disciplines, incorporating the outcomes from research and scholarship, ensuring skills are up-to-date and applied in education and research.

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:

<https://www.essex.ac.uk/staff/employment-policies-procedures/my-contract>

ISER is ISO27001:20013 certified. All ISER employees have a responsibility to adhere to the Institute's information security policies and procedures.

UNIVERSITY OF ESSEX
PERSON SPECIFICATION

JOB TITLE: (ASR) Senior Research Officer (SRO), Grade 8	POST REF: REQ02803
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QUALIFICATIONS / PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION	Essential	Desirable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Masters or Doctoral level degree in a relevant social science or quantitative discipline, or equivalent professional experience or practice. 	X	
EXPERIENCE/KNOWLEDGE	Essential	Desirable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Evidence of a developing research agenda, engagement in high-quality research activity and a developing research profile. 	X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A developing record of publications in internationally recognised, reputable journals (and other media of similar standing) appropriate to career stage and discipline norms, or evidence of research outputs such as reports and briefings. 	X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Experience of, or the ability to, generate income to support research and/or knowledge exchange appropriate to career stage and discipline norms. 	X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Experience of working with developing and/or maintaining research resources used within a Department or wider user community external to the Department (examples include household surveys, databases, specialist equipment and infrastructure, software packages and computer models). 	X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Experience of contributing to small research programmes or defined areas of larger projects, and of developing research objectives and proposals. 	X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Experience of working with micro-data. 	X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Experience of complex data management, statistical analysis and programming in Stata, R or similar software package. 	X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Programming skills (Java, Python, C++, etc.) 		X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ An understanding of the principles of building and using tax-benefit microsimulation models, and of microsimulation modelling more in general. 		X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Experience of using EUROMOD. 		X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Experience of developing dynamic microsimulation models. 		X



SKILLS/ABILITIES	Essential	Desirable
■ The ability and willingness to engage in knowledge exchange and outreach activities.	X	
■ The ability and willingness to complement and enhance the research project/department/school's education and research strengths and areas of planned development.	X	
■ Strong communication skills, both written and verbal.	X	
■ An appreciation of the value of appropriate technologies in research and an ability and/or willingness to deploy these when relevant.	X	
■ Proven ability to produce high quality work within deadlines.	X	
■ Self-motivation and proven ability to work independently.	X	
■ An aptitude for team and collaborative working.	X	
■ A flexible approach and ability to manage a diverse workload and competing priorities.	X	
■ A good standard of written and spoken English.	X	
■ Good inter-personal, communication and general management skills.	X	
PROFESSIONAL VALUES	Essential	Desirable
■ A commitment to helping develop dynamic communities of research and education at the University.	X	
■ A strong and well-articulated commitment to the University's values and mission to deliver excellence in both education and research (integrated academic practice).	X	
■ A commitment to respect individual learners and diverse learning communities and to promote participation in higher education and equality of opportunity for all learners via student-centred practice.	X	
■ A commitment to using evidence-informed approaches and the outcomes from research, scholarship and continuing professional development in their academic practice.	X	
■ An acknowledgement of the wider context in which higher education operate.	X	
■ A willingness to participate in extra curricula departmental activities (e.g. supporting recruitment, welcome and employability).	X	
ELIGIBILITY	Essential	Desirable
■ The ability to meet UK 'right to work' requirements.*	X	
■ Can fulfil the staff vetting requirements for Government contracts (see general information for more details).	X	



* 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>

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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 90 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 (Emily Grundy), the ISER Deputy Director (Paul Clarke), the Research Director (Emilia Del Bono), the Director of MiSoC (Mike Brewer), the Director of EUROMOD (Matteo Richiardi) 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: Family & Work; Diversity & Intersectionality; Policy, income and welfare; Health; Methods; and Social Demography. 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>.

General Information

Informal enquiries may be made to Matteo Richiardi (matteo.richiardi@essex.ac.uk). However, applications for the post must be made online.

At the University of Essex we use consistent language and terminology that articulates more clearly the responsibilities for education, research and leadership/citizenship associated with each academic role. This will help new colleagues to understand the University values from the moment they engage either as an applicant or new colleague, and help them to understand the future career pathways available to them as they become more established in their role.

We advertise our salaries on a range to indicate the trajectory of progression that can be made. Appointments are usually made at the start of the salary range. The university salary structure includes automatic pay progression within the published grades, subject to service and performance. In addition to this, there are performance related annual pay review schemes in place.

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)

We encourage applicants to provide details of all warnings, reprimands, cautions or criminal offences at an early stage in the application process. Should you wish to declare such information, please email the Resourcing Team in confidence, (resourcing@essex.ac.uk) attaching brief details. We guarantee that this information is shared only with the recruiting manager.

A copy of the University of Essex policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders is available on the University website: <https://www.essex.ac.uk/staff/recruiting-staff/recruitment-of-ex-offenders-and-disclosure-and-barring-service>

Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you from working with us – this will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background to your offence.

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.

People Supporting Strategy

Please find a link to the People Supporting Strategy.

<https://www.essex.ac.uk/-/media/documents/directories/human-resources/people-supporting-strategy.pdf>

Benefits

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
- Relocation package for qualifying staff
- Interest free season ticket loan
- Range of optional salary exchange tax benefits (pension and bicycle schemes)

This document is produced by:

Resourcing Team
Human Resources
University of Essex
Wivenhoe Park
Colchester CO4 3SQ
United Kingdom
Tel: +44 (0)1206 876559
Email: resourcing@essex.ac.uk

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