Data Research Assistant

Who We Are:
In cities across the country, people face high rates of gun violence, under-resourced schools, and social harms associated with the criminal justice system -- all of which disproportionately impact people of color. These inequalities have profound consequences on public safety and opportunity. As a society we have failed to address these challenges, in part, because of our lack of understanding of the most effective and cost-effective solutions that can have a real impact on people’s lives. We believe that rigorous research can help.

The University of Chicago Crime Lab and Education Lab partner with cities and communities to use data and rigorous research to design, test, and scale programs and policies that enhance public safety, improve educational outcomes, and advance justice. Our mission is to combine world-class data science and research, in partnership with government agencies, to substantially improve the effectiveness of the public sector and achieve impact at scale.

To learn more about the Crime Lab and Education Lab, visit https://urbanlabs.uchicago.edu/labs/crime.

The Project:
Situational Decision Making (Sit-D) is a new police training that provides cognitive tools for police officers to improve their thinking skills in high-stakes, ambiguous and fluid situations. The training aims to help officers in the Chicago Police Department (CPD) more actively and accurately diagnose the situations they encounter while under stress, so they can decide on a safe and appropriate response, sometimes in a matter of moments. The University of Chicago Crime Lab and CPD rolled out the Sit-D training in a manner that enables the Crime Lab to directly measure its effectiveness — which makes Sit-D one of the largest, most comprehensive studies of a training ever undertaken by a large-city police department.

Using a lottery, approximately 1,000 officers were randomly selected from a pool of 2,000 eligible officers. This randomized comparison, or Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT), represents the gold standard for scientifically determining if the training is effective. Insights from this study will be relevant for policing nationally. Outcomes will be measured through administrative data on citizen complaints, use of force, officer and subject injuries, and arrests made. In addition, we will employ pre- and post-assessments to gauge if the training improves decision-making differentially in the training group compared to the comparison group.

The Role:
The University of Chicago Crime Lab is seeking summer Research Assistants to consistently and accurately code open-ended survey responses to enable quantitative analysis and to extract insight from the skills and behavioral post-assessment of the Sit-D training program. Research Assistants may also assist with a range of activities including policy research and analysis, data entry, reviewing and cleaning datasets, statistical analysis, and administrative tasks.
This is a great opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of policy research and to develop research skills. The position will be part-time for approximately 15-20 hours per week. This will be a remote internship.

**Responsibilities**

- Contribute to development of coding scheme.
- Follow coding scheme to systematically code survey data.
- Data cleaning and organization.
- Additional responsibilities as assigned.

**Experience and Qualifications:**

- Significant progress towards a degree in a social science discipline such as economics, public policy, etc., with coursework in basic research concepts and methods required.
- Basic data analysis skills, with the ability to use Excel, SAS, STATA, or SPSS are strongly preferred.
- Background in survey research and/or qualitative research methods is preferred.
- Proficiency with Microsoft Office Suite is required.
- Strong initiative and a resourceful approach to problem-solving and learning are required.
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team are required.
- Sound critical thinking skills are required.
- Strong attention to detail with superb organization skills are required.
- Keen analytic skills and attention to detail are required.
- Knowledge of the criminal justice reform and an interest in police training strongly preferred.

**To Apply:**

Please submit a cover letter and resume to Ashley Motta, Research Manager, at amotta@uchicago.edu.

Please use email Subject Line “Research Assistant” when submitting your application. We will be reviewing applications on a rolling basis starting on June 11th.