

Researcher



About the California Policy Lab

The California Policy Lab (CPL) generates research insights for government impact. Through hands-on partnerships with government agencies, CPL performs rigorous research across issue silos and builds the data infrastructure necessary to improve programs and policies that millions of Californians rely on every day. We work on California's most urgent issues, including homelessness, poverty, criminal justice reform, and education inequality. At its Berkeley site, CPL resides as a center within the Institute for Research on Labor and Employment (IRLE).

CPL recognizes the value of having a diverse staff at all levels of the organization. We are looking for equity-minded applicants who represent and understand the diverse racial and ethnic, gender identity, sexual orientation, educational, socioeconomic, cultural, and disability backgrounds present in California. When you join our team, you can expect to be part of an inclusive and equity-focused community.

The Position

The Researcher (campus title will be "Specialist" or "Associate Specialist," based on experience and qualifications) joins our team at an exciting moment. CPL has built one of the country's most detailed and important datasets covering the financial status of Californians and Americans. The [University of California Consumer Credit Panel \(UC-CCP\)](#) was launched in 2020 and now hosts dozens of active projects. The Researcher will be our first researcher dedicated to working with these data. The Researcher will manage and implement CPL's work on the UC-CCP, including leading CPL's research using the UC-CCP, consulting with data users about project feasibility and how best to use the data, curating the data, improving the data and its documentation, monitoring data linkages, and overseeing the UC-CCP application process. They will also work with other researchers at CPL to contribute to applied research projects that aim to improve programs and policies in California. The Researcher will report to CPL-Berkeley's Research Director and will work closely with CPL-Berkeley's Executive Director, who created the UC-CCP.

The Researcher will conduct independent quantitative research using the UC-CCP, sometimes linked to other data held by CPL (e.g., to safety-net program participation information). The Researcher will publish multiple reports and policy briefs based on this research each year. The Researcher will work with minimal supervision to conceptualize research questions and design; request, receive, and clean data files; create and implement analysis plans; conduct quality assurance reviews; summarize results in documents for both academic and policy audiences; and generate replicability documentation. The Researcher

can implement multiple research designs and analysis techniques, including but not limited to randomized control trials, quasi-experimental designs using natural experiments or other such variation, and difference-in-difference and event-study analyses. Further, a successful candidate can lead research projects with small teams, write proposals to support research projects, and ensure timely and high-quality completion of research tasks. The Researcher will mentor other research staff and may supervise other staff over time, though they will start without any direct reports.

The Researcher should have a strong working knowledge of at least one statistical programming language, which may include SQL, Stata, R, Python, or SAS; multiple languages are preferred. Ideally, they would also have a strong understanding of consumer financial markets, credit-reporting practices, or the credit-bureau data itself. The position will work directly with leading social policy researchers at UC and beyond, state and local government agency staff, as well as the leadership team at CPL, and it is important that the candidate be able to translate their research findings for different audiences.

This position is based in Berkeley, CA with an expectation of 3 days a week in the office. We will consider remote candidates but prefer candidates that will be on site.

Principal Responsibilities:

- Conduct independent quantitative research, including conceptualizing research questions and design; requesting, receiving, and cleaning data files; creating and implementing analysis plans; conducting quality assurance reviews; summarizing results in documents for both academic and policy audiences; and generating replicability documentation.
- Annually publish multiple reports and policy briefs based on research.
- Implement multiple research designs and analysis techniques, including but not limited to randomized control trials, quasi-experimental designs using natural experiments or other such variation, and difference-in-difference and event study analyses.
- Lead research projects with small teams, write proposals to support research projects, and ensure timely and high-quality completion of research tasks.
- Mentor other research staff, provide feedback on performance.
- Partner effectively with state and local agency staff to build a joint research agenda.

Required Qualifications

- Minimum requirement of a Master's degree in economics, sociology, political science, public policy, public health, business, education, or other social science or vocational fields or equivalent experience/training.
- Three or more years of professional experience, including two or more years of relevant post-baccalaureate research experience.
- Extensive experience in computer programming for statistical analysis, including fluency in data-analysis packages from at least one commonly used programming language like Stata, R, Python, SAS, or SQL.

- Experience working with large and complex datasets, including how to optimize analysis for efficiency.
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills.
- Knowledge of data management systems, practices, and standards.
- Strong organizational skills and attention to detail.
- Ability to multi-task with demanding timeframes.
- Ability to work both independently and as a team member.
- Ability to work discreetly with sensitive and confidential data.

Preferred Qualifications

- Doctorate degree in public policy, economics, statistics, or a related field.
- Five or more years of professional experience, including three or more years of relevant post-baccalaureate research experience.
- Knowledge of credit-bureau data, the credit reporting system, or consumer financial markets.
- Record of independent research and publication, including leading research design and analysis and writing for both academic and policy audiences.
- Experience writing grant proposals, communicating with funders, and managing grant reporting.
- Experience managing research projects in an academic or think-tank environment.
- A commitment to advancing racial equity and inclusion through research and through CPL's internal and external relationships.
- Experience collaborating with government agency partners.
- Knowledge of social science research methods.
- Experience writing research results for both academic and non-academic audiences, including translating data into compelling data visualization, including maps, interactive figures, and dashboards.

Salary & Benefits

This position is full-time, and will start as a two-year contract.

The UC academic salary scales set the minimum pay determined by rank and step at appointment. See the following table for the current salary scale for this position https://www.ucop.edu/academic-personnel-programs/_files/2024-25/july-2024-scales/t24-b.pdf. A reasonable estimate for this position is \$73,000 to \$124,000. Salary is commensurate with experience.

For information on the comprehensive benefits package offered by the University visit: <http://ucnet.universityofcalifornia.edu/compensation-and-benefits/index.html>

How to Apply

Go to <https://aprecruit.berkeley.edu/JPF04707>

This recruitment will remain open until filled. Specific questions regarding the recruitment can be directed to Chris Runde at chris_runde@berkeley.edu.

UC Berkeley is committed to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging. The excellence of the institution requires an environment in which the diverse community of faculty, students, and staff are welcome and included. Successful candidates will demonstrate knowledge and skill related to ensuring equity and inclusion in the activities of their academic position (e.g., teaching, research, and service, as applicable).

The University of California, Berkeley is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability, age, or protected veteran status.

Please refer to the [University of California's Affirmative Action Policy](#) and the [University of California's Anti-Discrimination Policy](#).

In searches when letters of reference are required all letters will be treated as confidential per University of California policy and California state law. Please refer potential referees, including when letters are provided via a third party (i.e., dossier service or career center), to the [UC Berkeley statement of confidentiality](#) prior to submitting their letter.

As a University employee, you will be required to comply with all applicable University policies and/or collective bargaining agreements, as may be amended from time to time. Federal, state, or local government directives may impose additional requirements.