

Application guide

Senior Researcher



September 2019



Message from our Executive Director and Head of Research



Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in joining us as a Senior Researcher.

It's been three years since we formed the Education Policy Institute. In that time, we have established ourselves as one of the country's leading public policy research organisations. Our authoritative, impartial reports have proven both timely and influential, reaching a large and diverse audience including parliament, government, practitioners and the general public. Our high-quality programme of data-led research generates powerful evidence that is able to shape policy.

That success has been made possible by our diverse, dedicated, and talented team of statisticians, economists, social researchers, and communication specialists. They have grasped the opportunity to help shape the organisation, to carry out innovative data analysis, and see their work reach national and international media and the highest levels of government.

But we want to go further. Our success means that we are now looking to expand and recruit new Senior Researchers who will help take us to the next level by broadening the skills and experience we have, allowing us to delve even deeper into some of the biggest challenges facing our country, and ultimately improve the life chances of young people in England.

In this pack you will find further information about the Education Policy Institute, what working as a Senior Researcher is like, the benefits we offer, and how to apply for these roles.

We very much look forward to receiving your application.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Natalie Perera".

Natalie Perera,
Executive Director, and Head of Research

About the Education Policy Institute

Education can have a transformative effect on the life chances of young people, enabling them to fulfil their potential, have successful careers, and grasp opportunities. As well as having a positive impact on the individual, good quality education and child wellbeing also promotes economic productivity and a cohesive society

Too many children, presently, don't get the education and support they need to make the most of their lives. The evidence of the gaps that exist is set out each year in our research on education in England.

Identifying and promoting good education policy is therefore crucial. But the policy debate is often occupied by contradictory views, which can be based on personal experience, anecdote, and political instinct. There is an urgent need for objective, impartial, and independent research that can influence and inform the education debate – rigorous research which is grounded in evidence.

The Education Policy Institute's aim is to help fill this space. Our data-driven research and analysis sheds light on whether current policy is delivering a high quality, equitable, education system, and identifies issues where further policy development is needed. Through research and analysis, our aim is to hold government, policy-makers, and education providers to account for their performance, and help identify the policies which can improve educational outcomes for all, particularly for the most disadvantaged and vulnerable young people in our society.

An independent and influential organisation needs a team of experienced, talented and motivated staff to achieve this ambition. The Education Policy Institute is fortunate to have assembled a strong and diverse team to lead our research effort and help us achieve our goals to:

Advance education: Promoting the study and discussion of, and the exchange and dissemination of information and knowledge concerning education policy and outcomes in England and elsewhere in the world.

Communicate our findings: Ensuring a wide range of audiences access our research (based on rigorous analysis, empirical evidence and detailed knowledge) – to maximise their impact on policy and inform the public debate.

Promote high quality educational outcomes for all: Meeting world class standards in education, regardless of social backgrounds, through our rigorous analysis and research.

Achieve significant impact and shape the policy agenda: Informing policy making by working collaboratively with government, parliamentarians, other researchers and those who deliver support for education and young people's wellbeing.

Life as a Senior Researcher in the Education Policy Institute

There is no doubt that the role of a Senior Researcher in the Education Policy Institute can be demanding. One day you might be using your technical skills to draw out messages from massive administrative datasets, the next day you might be on afternoon radio explaining your findings to a non-technical audience, or perhaps writing a policy paper making recommendations to government.

But it is also a fantastic opportunity.

It is an opportunity for you to shape your own research priorities, establish yourself as a leading expert in your field (particularly amongst the media and relevant sector), produce policy-relevant research that has a real impact on the ground, and support and contribute to the growth of the organisation.

And you will be supported.

Like you, your colleagues are excited by the power of data and analysis. Like you, they are passionate about using their findings to improve the life chances of young people. So, when you're grappling with a problem – whether that's how to write a new script in R, or what your line to take in your first ever media interview is – they will be there to help. Just as you will be with them.

That means that while you will focus on one area, you'll be picking up knowledge across all of the Education Policy Institute's priorities, spanning the early years, schools, further and higher education, apprenticeships, and young people's mental health. Your work at the

Education Policy Institute will build on the experience you already have. We need you to have at least two to three years' experience in a relevant field, plus a strong numerate degree. You will:

- Be a quantitative analyst, economist or statistician who is ready to lead research projects that result in clear policy recommendations.
- Be able to exploit quantitative analytical skills across a range of statistical and/or econometric techniques, and preferably have experience of using large administrative datasets.
- Be an enthusiastic team player who is keen to help build a small but growing research institute.
- Be a confident communicator who wants to get out and explain the research to educators, policy-makers, and journalists.

Your life outside of work is also important to us. So, you'll have the opportunity to work flexibly, including part-time, on secondment or in addition to academic roles within universities.



Benefits

- We offer a salary of £30,000 - £40,000 depending on experience, plus 8 per cent employer pension contributions.
- We offer flexible working hours because it's the outputs that matter, not the hours you spend sitting at a desk, and we know you have a life outside of work.
- You'll get 30 days annual leave in addition to bank holidays. EPI also shuts between Christmas and New Year, and that won't count towards your 30 days.
- A central London office location, less than five minutes from London Victoria station.

How to apply

If this sounds like you, **please apply by sending a covering letter (no more than a side of A4) and CV to info@epi.org.uk by Friday 15th November 2019**. Your covering letter should explain why you think your skills and experience make you a good fit for the role.

Our selection process is fairly short and quick: **we'll interview a shortlist of candidates within two weeks of the closing date**, though we can be flexible with timing for the right candidate. The interview will ask the usual questions about your skills and experience.

We will then invite candidates who do well in the interview to **a second interview with our Head of Research and Deputy Head of Research**, after which we'll decide whether to make an offer.

If you have any questions about the post, please do contact **info@epi.org.uk** before applying and we'll be happy to discuss it. We look forward to receiving your application.