Research Training Programme 2024

Up to 12 weeks | London Living Wage | London SW1

The Resolution Foundation is an independent think-tank focused on improving living standards for those on low-to-middle incomes. Our reputation for rigorous analytical work that results in effective policy solutions places us at the forefront of the UK debate on economic and social policy.

Applications are invited from the following groups:

- *Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic graduates*

As part of our commitment to increasing diversity within both our own workforce and the economic policy making sector, the Resolution Foundation is offering two paid training placements for recent graduates. This is an excellent opportunity to learn from our experts, produce research outputs for publication on the Foundation's website, and acquire the skills and experience needed for research roles within the sector. In order to meet eligibility requirements, you must have a degree-level qualification and be from a Black, Asian or other Minority Ethnic group.

The 12-week programme is focused on individuals with an interest but little experience in economic or public policy analysis. Trainees are fully integrated into the Foundation's research process, and will benefit from peer supervision, in-house training, involvement in the wider work of the Foundation, and specific guidance tailored to the needs of the individual. The aim is to ensure that trainees contribute to outputs that they can reference on their CVs.

Candidates should be reliable and hold:

- A solid understanding of UK economics or public policy;
- Strong quantitative analysis skills;
- A relevant BA/BSc qualification, or equivalent skills gained in another environment including the ability to write confidently and cogently; and
- A commitment to the Foundation's focus on improving outcomes for people on low-to-middle incomes.

The training placement will take place predominantly in our Westminster office between September – December, with the exact dates to be confirmed dependent on individual availability.

This training scheme is fully funded to ensure socio-economic circumstances do not preclude participation. Trainees will receive payment in line with London Living Wage rates in order to cover accommodation, travel and subsistence costs for the duration of the programme. No additional funds are available and we are unable to help with sourcing accommodation.

Closing date: 08:59 on Tuesday 10 September 2024

Applications must be made using the Foundation's application platform. Applications received at any other time will not be considered. Shortlisted candidates will be invited to attend an interview via videocall (Microsoft Teams) on Friday 20 September 2024.

The Resolution Foundation's Research Training Scheme for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic candidates is a positive action initiative targeted at students and recent graduates from minority ethnic groups as these groups are currently under-represented, regionally and nationally, in economics and policy making.

Programme summary

The 12-week programme is focused on individuals with an interest but little experience in economic or public policy analysis. The trainee will be embedded into the Foundation's research team, provided with a series of formal training and development sessions, and tasked with (co) authoring a small number of short-form outputs (e.g. 'spotlight' articles) to ensure they develop a broad understanding of core living standards issues. There may also be opportunity to act as co-author/co-researcher for a longer briefing note, so that trainees experience working on a project from start to finish. The aim is for trainees to contribute to outputs that they can reference on their CV.

Trainees also benefit from taking part in day-to-day tasks across the full range of research activity, such as helping to produce the Foundation's monthly labour market statistics reaction, quality-assuring outputs, and building a wider network of contacts in the think tank and policy making sector.

Objectives

We aim to provide trainees with the skills and competencies that are typically required in policy or economic researcher roles, and help build their familiarity with the policy-making arena. By the end of the programme, trainees should be familiar – and increasingly confident – with core researcher responsibilities. These will include: undertaking and presenting research; quantitative analysis of data; drafting blog posts; and engaging with external stakeholders, including government officials and policy makers. Trainees will also leave the placement with a greater ability to acquire future employment within the sector. In addition to acquiring skills and experience they can reference on CVs, they will benefit from tailored advice and guidance from relevant members of our team.

Training elements

1)   *Data handling and analysis:* trainees will be involved in both short- and long-form analytical work. By working on short-form outputs, such as various statistics reactions, they will download, sense-check, quickly analyse, and visually present economic and social figures.

Working on longer-term outputs, such as briefing notes and spotlight articles, trainees will clean, reshape and analyse data - using statistical packages like STATA or R. They will perform descriptive statistical analysis and, depending on their research question, more advanced econometric techniques.

Trainees will also take part in the quality assurance process, learning to systematically sense-check and audit others' work.

2)   *Communicating research:*

a.   Written communication: trainees will have the opportunity to draft both short outputs, such as blogs/spotlights and longer outputs, like briefing notes. In both formats, they will gain experience in transforming their research findings into a clear narrative structure underpinned by crisp drafting.

b.   Visualising research: trainees will gain experience in transforming quantitative findings into clear and striking charts.

c.   Formal presentations: trainees will present their findings to the research team, building both confidence in presenting and an understanding of how to structure a clear story that keeps the audience engaged.

d.   Communicating with the media: through media training and taking part in statistical reactions (e.g. labour market statistics, prices/inflation figures), trainees will get a sense of how to transform complex results into a clear, interesting story.

3)   *Policy reviews and analysis:* trainees will review and critically analyse relevant policies. This may be tasked with drafting brief literature reviews and policy briefs, in order to understand where there are gaps in the evidence and whether or where public policy has been effective in addressing the specific research topic at hand.

4)   *Network development:* trainees will also get a sense of how to build networks in think tanks and policy making circles, including through engaging with friendly Foundation contacts and accomanying the team to formal meetings and roundtables.

Specific training sessions include:

- Statistical software (STATA) training: A member of the research team will provide the trainee with three to four STATA sessions, teaching them to interpret and write their own code.

- Econometrics: depending on the trainee's experience/interest, they will be provided with session(s) allowing them to understand and put into practice concepts ranging from statistical significance testing to more advanced forms of regression analysis.

- Excel tips and chart-building: a session focused on Excel shortcuts and how to create clear but visually striking charts and tables.

- Drafting and narrative building: a minimum of two sessions wherein the trainee learns to transform research findings into a short article/longer report structure using crisp, clear prose. This includes practice sessions, where the trainee writes and receives detailed feedback on a number of mock-blog posts.

- Media training: the Foundation's Communications team will run trainees through a media training session – teaching them the basics of how print, online and broadcast journalists tend to use our research and how to prepare for media interviews. Trainees will also be able to observe media interviews.

Wider learning opportunities:

- Careers advice, including help with job searches, CV-building, cover-letter writing and job interview techniques.

- Access to RF's Masterclass series, where members of staff and external guests run informational sessions on a number of research topics.

About you

The 12-week programme is focused on individuals with an interest but little experience in economic and/or public policy analysis.

Candidates should be reliable and hold:

  – A solid understanding of UK economics or public policy;

  – Strong quantitative analysis skills;

  – A relevant BA/BSc qualification, or equivalent skills gained in another environment including the ability to write confidently and cogently; and

  – A commitment to the Foundation's focus on improving outcomes for people on low-to-middle incomes.

The successful trainee will be paid the London Living Wage for the duration of the placement. The training lasts for 12 weeks and runs from 9am – 5.30pm each week day. It will take place predominantly in our Westminster office.

How to apply

Resolution Foundation uses an online application platform for all our roles. Developed by the Behavioural Insights Team, Be Applied is designed to eliminate unconscious bias in the recruitment process. If you would like to apply, please visit https://app.beapplied.com/apply/gxawepl60u.

The application process has two stages.

I.   About you: The platform will ask you for some personal details and to upload your CV. The work-based scenario questions are first assessed blind by multiple reviewers so your personal details and CV will only become visible to the Foundation if you are shortlisted.

II.   Work-place-scenario-based questions: You will be asked to complete three work-place scenario-based questions which are relevant to the role and will be marked against the following criteria:

- A solid understanding of UK economics or public policy;

- Strong quantitative analysis skills;

- A relevant BA/BSc qualification, or equivalent skills gained in another environment including the ability to write confidently and cogently; and

- A commitment to the Foundation's focus on improving outcomes for people on low-to-middle incomes.

Each question has a 250-word limit and you will have the opportunity to amend these sections before submitting your application.

N.B. Each of your answers will be reviewed separately and anonymously by different people. This means the person reviewing your answer to question 2 will not have access to your answer to question 1, and so on. Therefore, do not refer in one answer to what you have written in another (e.g. avoid using phrases like "as explained above"). If it is relevant, explain again in full.

Use of AI in the application process

Please refrain from using AI software to help answer the application questions. While we appreciate AI software can be a useful work tool, the Applied system requires all candidates to certify that the answers they provide are their own original work and not plagiarised nor automatically generated.

Applied provides an AI generated answer for reviewers to refer to when sifting and asks them to flag responses they suspect may be AI generated. Using AI to help construct your answers may therefore be detrimental to your application.

Equal Opportunities Monitoring

In line with our determination to attract a diverse workforce, we constantly review our recruitment procedures. To help with this, we would be grateful if you would complete the equal opportunities monitoring form provided on the application platform. Any information you provide is collated anonymously and used solely to track the effectiveness of our recruitment campaign.

Closing Date

To be considered for this opportunity, please ensure you submit your application by 08:59am on Tuesday 10 September 2024.

Interviews

Shortlisted applicants will be contacted as soon as possible after the closing date, and we expect to hold interviews by video conference on Friday 20 September 2024. Please indicate your availability and let us know if you have any specific requirements so we can make any necessary reasonable adjustments in advance.

Feedback

All unsuccessful applicants will be sent feedback about their application through the Applied platform. Candidates who have attended an interview will be offered in-depth feedback in order for the experience to assist in preparing for future interviews. We also welcome any feedback candidates have about the application process.

International Students/Applicants

Those with a pre-existing right to work in the UK are welcome to apply. We are unable to sponsor visa applications.

Office-Based and Remote Working

The training programme will take place predominantly in our Westminster office. If you have any health concerns that may impact your working arrangements or queries about caring responsibilities, please contact sharmina.khanam@resolutionfoundation.org.

Privacy notice for applicants

For full details on how we process your personal data, please see our privacy notice for applicants which can be found on our Opportunities page on our website.