



THE LONDON SCHOOL
OF ECONOMICS AND
POLITICAL SCIENCE ■

130
years
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Undergraduate Research Fellowship (URF) Opportunities

2025/26

About the Undergraduate Research Fellowships

The Department of Geography and Environment Undergraduate Research Fellowships (URFs) seek to engage students with the research of our Department's academic staff.

We are excited to offer this scheme for its seventh year, with up to 16 paid Fellowships available. As an Undergraduate Research Fellow, you will gain invaluable insight into the work of an academic in conducting and disseminating research. During (up to) 70 hours of paid work you will also contribute a great deal to the research project, enabling our academic staff to improve their research and its impact.

We are excited to present a diverse range of Fellowship opportunities, which include a variety of tasks such as conducting literature reviews, planning events and interviews, and analysing datasets.

This year, students will be expected to produce a short reflection report on their experience as a URF, which will be part of the paid hours. Successful fellows will be sent further instructions on this.

If you have any queries, please email Zia Simpson at geog.research@lse.ac.uk or Dr Thomas Smith at t.e.l.smith@lse.ac.uk.

The Opportunities

Enclosed are descriptions of the various 'work packages' that faculty, fellows, and PhD students in our Department have requested Undergraduate Research Fellows to undertake. Each opportunity is displayed on a separate page.

The 'Key tasks and expected outputs' are illustrative, as the actual duties required may change as the research projects develop.

Pay and Hours

All Fellows are hired for up to 70 hours of paid work, at a rate of £21.37 per hour (equivalent to Salary Band 4, Step 13.5 and inclusive of holiday pay).

If your application is successful, you will decide your work schedule through discussion with your project lead(s). A rough indication is given in the opportunity details enclosed, but most academic staff will endeavour to be flexible where possible.

You will record your hours via a 'work log', which is also meant to serve as a reflexive exercise where you can note down more qualitative information, such as skills acquired/developed. More information will be provided to successful applicants.

How to Apply

Please apply using the application form sent to you.

You may apply for up to 2 URF opportunities each academic year. Keep in mind that project leads are looking for enthusiastic Fellows, as opposed to simply those with prior research experience.

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1 Economic Geography Cluster Projects

1.1 Experimentation and Transport Mode Choice: Evidence from London Underground Strikes

Project Lead: Dr Sara Bagagli (with Dr Felipe Carozzi and Dr Giorgio Pietrabissa)

Project Summary

We will investigate how temporary disruptions to public transport networks influence individuals' experimentation with alternative travel modes and subsequent commuting behaviour. Leveraging quasi-experimental variation from London Underground strikes, we examine whether forced mode experimentation generates persistent changes in choice, with a focus on cycling as a substitute. Combining travel flow data with detailed strike information, we explore whether commuters permanently adjust their routes or switch to different transport modes after experiencing strike-induced disruptions. The analysis highlights the role of learning and experimentation in shaping travel decisions, potentially with implications for the design of

transport policies aimed at promoting flexible and sustainable mobility.

Skills Required

- Data analysis and visual communication skills
- Critical reading and synthesis of academic works
- Organization and documentation
- Analytical thinking

Key Tasks / Expected Outputs

- Download cycling data for London
- Produce descriptive graphs and preliminary analyses
- Literature review

Timeline for Delivery

To be completed in no more than 4 to 5 months.

1.2 The Fastest Route to Specialization? Evidence from the Expansion of the Italian Highway System

Project Lead: Dr Sara Bagagli

Project Summary

This project studies how large-scale transport infrastructure alters the sectoral composition and spatial integration of local economies. We will exploit the staggered rollout of Italy's highway network between 1955 and 1975, linked to industrial census data from 1951–2001. Using a difference-in-differences design, we will find that municipalities connected to the highway system experienced a persistent decline in industrial specialization. As a next step, we will delve into the mechanisms: What channel are at work? We are particularly interested in understanding cross-municipality and cross-sector linkages, heterogeneous effects, the role of population and income growth as opposed to transport costs, as well as spatial relocation of activity. Our findings will reveal how transport infrastructure affects both the internal structure and

external linkages of local economies, and its links to economic development.

Skills Required

- Data analysis and visual communication skills
- Organizational skills and documentation
- Analytical thinking
- Critical reading and ability to synthesize academic works

Key Tasks / Expected Outputs

- Literature review (agglomeration, regional specialization)
- Analyses and descriptive visualisations

Timeline for Delivery

To be completed within 4 to 5 months

1.3 Institutions and Circular Economy: A systematic Literature Review and Research Agenda

Project Lead: Dr Duygu Buyukyazici

Project Summary

This project systematically reviews the growing literature at the intersection of institutions and the circular economy (CE), highlighting how formal and informal institutions shape, enable, or hinder circular transitions across countries and regions. Despite the CE's prominence as a framework for sustainable transformation, most research has focused on firm- and network-level dynamics, leaving theoretical institutional processes comparatively underexplored. This project aims to conduct a systematic literature review to provide a concise discussion of the literature and develops a research agenda by considering the important confounding factors such as regional lock-ins, path dependency, inertia, local collaboration, and adaptive governance. By integrating insights from sustainability, economic geography and institutional theory, the project outlines a conceptual framework for understanding how institutions co-evolve with circular transition and regional development trajectories. It concludes by proposing a future research agenda emphasizing potential theoretical and empirical strategies to evaluate the causal impact of institutions on

circular economy performance. Therefore, the project will provide valuable experience in sustainability research and help connect theory with real-world challenges in environmental, circular, and regional development.

Skills Required

- Background or interest in economics, geography, sustainability, circular/green economy or a related social science field.
- Good analytical skills with attention to detail and accuracy.
- Ability to read and summarize academic journal articles clearly and concisely.
- Familiarity with academic databases (e.g., Scopus, Web of Science).
- Ability to work independently and meet agreed deadlines.

Key Tasks / Expected Outputs

- Conduct structured searches on academic databases (e.g., Scopus, Web of Science).
- Screen abstracts and full texts according to predefined inclusion/exclusion criteria.

- Organize and categorize articles using reference management tools (e.g., Zotero, Mendeley) and spreadsheets.
- Extract key information such as study focus, methodology, geographic scope, and institutional dimensions.
- Help summarize findings and create tables and figures of the literature.
- Support drafting short summaries or descriptive sections for the review report or publication.

Timeline for Delivery

Project will start in early December and finish at the end of April, approximating 14 hours of research assistance per month.

1.4 Linking inventor data to public records

Project Lead: Dr Gabriele Cristelli

Project Summary

This project validates algorithmically generated links between patent inventors and public information sources (e.g., business registers, professional profiles, obituaries, and university records). We have built a computational routine that proposes candidate matches; the fellow will review side-by-side records and label each link as correct or incorrect, creating a high-quality “gold” dataset. These labels are essential for evaluating linkage accuracy, training/improving models used in record linkage, and ensuring the integrity of downstream research on innovation and inventor careers. The role combines careful document comparison with structured data entry and light quality assurance. It offers an excellent introduction to how patent data are organized and why gold standards are critical in ML/AI evaluation. The project includes clear protocols and examples to carry out the task. No programming is required, though basic computing fluency and meticulous attention to detail are essential.

Skills Required

- Excellent attention to detail and accuracy in repetitive tasks.
- Strong organization and record-keeping; ability to follow precise protocols.
- Basic computing skills (browser, Google Sheets/Excel).
- Clear written communication for notes and justifications.
- Curiosity about data, innovation/patent systems, or economic research (desirable).
- Bonus: experience with data cleaning or programming languages is a plus.

Key Tasks / Expected Outputs

- Review candidate inventor–record links using a web interface and spreadsheets.
- Compare names, affiliations, locations, dates, technology fields, and biography details.
- Assign match labels (match / non-match / uncertain) following written protocols.

- Add brief justifications or flags for edge cases and uncertain matches.
- Record time/workflow metrics; keep an organized audit trail.

Timeline for Delivery

Project will be approximately 12 weeks long with the following benchmarks:

Week 1: Onboarding, protocol training, tool access, and calibration exercise.

Weeks 2–5: Labelling phase: first data source.

Week 6: Disagreement resolution and focused review of edge cases: first data source.

Weeks 7–10: Labelling phase: second data source.

Week 11: Disagreement resolution and focused review of edge cases: second data source.

Week 12: Handover: clean gold dataset, documentation, and brief summary memo.

1.5 Regulating the Skyline: Evidence from London's Protected Vistas (Historical Data)

Project Lead: Andrea Herrera

Project Summary

This project studies how urban regulation shapes cities' skylines and economic outcomes. It focuses on London's Protected Vistas—a set of height restrictions created to preserve views of landmarks like St Paul's Cathedral and the Palace of Westminster from viewpoints across London. The project quantifies how these regulations affect building heights, residential prices, and local welfare using detailed spatial and 3D data (LiDAR, Ordnance Survey maps, property transactions, and planning archives).

The Fellow will gain hands-on experience with geospatial data and archival material, turning historical plans and regulatory maps into quantitative. This role develops key skills in data collection, organisation, and analysis—valuable preparation for postgraduate study or a research career—and provides experience relevant to policy, consulting, and data-driven roles across the public and private sectors.

This project builds on an ongoing working paper by the project lead. **It is a 35-hour project with the possibility of extension to 70 hours.**

Skills Required

- Archival work (searching for historic documents on protected vistas).
- GIS skills (digitising historic maps, cleaning shapefiles).
- Basic proficiency in Stata/R/Python should suffice (variable cleaning/creation).

Key Tasks / Expected Outputs

- Find and digitise historic inputs (plans, coordinates, regulations) for earlier versions of the Protected Vistas.
- Clean and complete administrative shapefiles and prepare geospatial layers for analysis.
- Assist with documenting sources and assembling metadata for replication files.

Timeline for Delivery

Depending on the Fellow's schedule and availability, ideally starting now and finishing by April 2026. The tasks have different intensities, allowing flexibility to match the URF's timeline for outputs and deliverables.

1.6 Regulating the Skyline: Evidence from London's Protected Vistas (Real Estate Data)

Project Lead: Andrea Herrera

Project Summary

"This project studies how urban regulation shapes cities' skylines and economic outcomes. It focuses on London's Protected Vistas—a set of height restrictions created to preserve views of landmarks like St Paul's Cathedral and the Palace of Westminster from viewpoints across London. The project quantifies how these regulations affect building heights, residential prices, and local welfare using detailed spatial and 3D data (LiDAR, Ordnance Survey maps, property transactions, and planning archives).

The Fellow will gain hands-on experience with geospatial data and a unique real estate dataset. This role develops key skills in data collection, organisation, and analysis—valuable preparation for postgraduate study or a research career—and provides experience relevant to policy, consulting, and data-driven roles across the public and private sectors.

This project builds on an ongoing working paper by the project lead. **It is a 35-hour project with the possibility of extension to 70 hours.**

Skills Required

- GIS skills (digitising historic maps, cleaning shapefiles).
- Data collection (CoStar data).
- Basic proficiency in Stata/R/Python should suffice (variable cleaning/creation).

Key Tasks / Expected Outputs

- Download datasets from CoStar and clean key variables.
- Clean and complete administrative shapefiles and prepare geospatial layers for analysis.
- Assist with documenting sources and assembling metadata for replication files.

Timeline for Delivery

Depending on the Fellow's schedule and availability, ideally starting now and finishing by April 2026. The tasks have different intensities, allowing flexibility to match the URF's timeline for outputs and deliverables.

1.7 Cross-Country Evidence on Housing Consumption and its Determinants

Project Lead: Prof Christian Hilber

Project Summary

This project forms part of a broader international research initiative on the economic effects of land-use regulation, undertaken jointly with Professors Olivier Schöni (University of Lausanne) and Xiaolun Yu (University of Reading). The specific focus of this sub-project is on understanding the determinants of housing consumption—that is, how much housing space individuals and households occupy—and how these vary across space and institutional settings as well as over time. While the UK stands out for its particularly restrictive planning system and unusually small average dwelling sizes, the comparative evidence across countries remains limited. By examining patterns of housing consumption internationally, this project seeks to identify how economic and geographic factors and institutional features shape the amount of housing people consume. The project will contribute to building a unique international dataset on housing consumption per person and average unit sizes and will synthesize existing empirical and theoretical work from economics and economic geography. The ultimate aim is to help explain why British households consume significantly less housing

space than their counterparts in other advanced economies, and what this implies for welfare and housing policy.

Skills Required

- Required: Strong attention to detail and ability to work independently. Interest in applied economic or geographic research. Basic familiarity with data compilation and Microsoft Excel.
- Desirable: Knowledge of statistical software (e.g. Stata or R). Experience with literature searches using platforms such as Google Scholar, Scopus, or EconLit. Coursework in urban, housing, or environmental economics. This project is especially suitable for students interested in pursuing postgraduate research in economics, geography, or public policy.

Key Tasks / Expected Outputs

The Undergraduate Research Fellow will assist in two main areas:

- Data Collection and Compilation:

- Identify and collect publicly available data from national and international statistical agencies (e.g., Eurostat, OECD, national housing surveys, and census sources) on: Average dwelling sizes and rooms per person; Floor space per capita and per household; Housing tenure structure and type of dwelling.
- Document data sources and provide descriptive summaries (tables and visualizations) that highlight cross-country differences and trends over time.
- Literature Review:
 - Conduct a focused review of the economics and economic geography literature on the determinants of housing consumption.
 - Summarize findings in a concise annotated bibliography and short narrative synthesis identifying open research gaps relevant to the UK case.

Both tasks are designed to give the fellow practical research experience in economic data collection and synthesis, and the opportunity to contribute to a project with direct policy relevance.

Timeline for Delivery

Ideally the UG student can start during WT and do most of work during ST.

Winter Term 2025: Introductory briefing with Prof. Hilber and familiarization with existing UK datasets. Identification and collection of international housing consumption data sources.

Summer Term 2025: Completion of data compilation and initial summary statistics. Conduct literature review and write short synthesis (5– max. 10 pages).

Optional: preliminary data visualization or short comparative note for inclusion in working paper drafts.

1.8 The long-term political impact of economic shocks: Evidence from shipyards

Project Lead: Prof Neil Lee

Project Summary

In the 1990s, European state aid rules and market competition led to large scale shipyard closures. Has this had long-term political consequences in these communities? This project would develop a new dataset of shipyard closures to identify long-term political impacts in these places.

Skills Required

I need someone very well organised willing to approach a task systematically and rigorously.

Key Tasks / Expected Outputs

- Literature review: shipyard closures and state aid rules
- Development of new database: identify, research, and collate information about shipyard closures across Europe from 1980 - present

Timeline for Delivery

Before May 2026.

1.9 The Political Aftermath of Industrial Decline: Mass Layoffs and Violence Against Local Politicians

Project Lead: Dr Elena Renzullo

Project Summary

Globalisation and automation have profoundly reshaped manufacturing labour markets over the past decades. This industrial downturn has generated a vast body of research examining its wider social and economic repercussions, including the shrinking of the middle class and increased labour-market polarisation (Autor and Dorn, 2013), growing wage inequality (Gould, 2019), and the rises in drug use and mortality (Pierce and Schott, 2020). Yet, despite the strong geographical concentration of manufacturing activities, little is known about the political aftermath of mass layoffs, particularly their effects on local electoral outcomes and government spending decisions. Another overlooked dimension concerns their potential to fuel violence—especially against politicians. Although political science has extensively examined the causes of violence targeting elected officials (see Jahnke et al., 2022; Bosi et al., 2015), most studies remain qualitative and tend to neglect the role of economic shocks such as mass layoffs. This project seeks to fill these gaps by analysing how large-scale layoffs shape political behaviour and violence at the local level. Italy offers an ideal setting for

this investigation. It ranks among the world's top industrialised economies, with manufacturing accounting for one of the highest shares of value added among advanced countries (Global Economy). Moreover, Italy provides exceptionally rich administrative data on local governments, including detailed records on spending decisions and publicly available reports documenting all incidents of violence—verbal, physical, and threats—against local officials. The findings of this study will deliver novel evidence on the political consequences of economic dislocation, shedding light on how job losses reverberate through local democratic institutions.

Skills Required

Students must be familiar with tracking and summarizing academic literature, have strong skills in drafting documents and reports, and possess basic abilities in data cleaning, statistical software (Stata preferred), and econometrics. A basic understanding of Italian is helpful, but students can rely on translation tools if needed to summarize information. Lastly, basic knowledge of web scraping and natural language

processing would be beneficial, though not required.

Key Tasks / Expected Outputs

- Data Collection: The student will be responsible for reading and summarizing information on violent attacks against local government members, which are recorded in the "Rapporto Amministratori Sotto Tiro" (PDF files). Half of this data collection has already been completed.
- Literature Reviews: The literature on the political consequences of mass layoffs is rapidly expanding. The student will be expected to monitor new working papers in this field and contribute to the conceptualisation of the mechanisms through which mass layoffs may lead to violence against politicians. A key objective will be to connect this literature with research on the political effects of territorial inequalities. To this end, the student will be required to produce analytical reports and written summaries that synthesise emerging evidence and theoretical developments.
- Data Management: The student will assist with data cleaning. They will be responsible for merging several datasets (almost ready for descriptive analysis) and, if necessary, collecting additional information from various administrative sources.

Timeline for Delivery

December 2025 to May/June 2026

2 Environment Cluster Projects

2.1 Research Support on Climate Innovation, Technology, and Policy

Project Lead: Dr Eugenie Dugoua

Project Summary

This project will support ongoing research on clean innovation, technological change, and industrial policy. The fellow will help identify, download, and systematically name relevant papers and reports, check factual claims or quantitative statements against source documents, and conduct light data collection (e.g., descriptive statistics or institutional mapping). The work will strengthen the empirical and conceptual foundations for ongoing research on industrial climate policy and technology transitions.

Skills Required

- Strong interest in clean technologies, innovation, and environmental issues, including biodiversity.
- Strong organisational and attention-to-detail skills.

- Ability to perform systematic literature searches and verify sources.
- Reliable communication and documentation habits.

Key Tasks / Expected Outputs

- Identify and download academic and policy papers (PDFs) from structured literature searches.
- Name and organise files systematically using a shared directory structure.
- Verify factual or numerical claims from selected reports or articles.
- Collect and compile basic data.
- Summarise key findings or sources in brief notes using Markdown.

Timeline for Delivery

Flexible.

2.2 Landowner Windfalls: studying who benefits from the deployment of wind power

Project Lead: Dr Stephen Jarvis

Project Summary

The clean energy transition has been a boon for many rural landowners who have had renewable energy projects sited on their land. However, research on these landowners and the windfalls they have received remains very limited. Using land title records for Scotland I find that 90% of wind power capacity is located on land owned by less than two hundred landowners. While there are some public bodies and a small amount of direct ownership by developers, most capacity is on land leased by private individuals, companies and trusts. As part of this project you will conduct investigative research and collect data on this small number of landowners. This will include looking through online records and financial statements available in Companies House, online searches of various trust and company websites, and investigative research to figure out subsidiary relationships or ultimate owners of different landholdings.

Skills Required

- Investigative research skills
- Capable using Excel for storing and managing data
- File management skills
- Writing and drafting skills
- Some finance knowledge may be a plus
- Interest in environmental and clean energy topics

Key Tasks / Expected Outputs

- Searching Records and Extracting Key Information
- Data Collection and Cleaning
- Data and File Management
- Background Research
- Drafting Summaries

Timeline for Delivery

Work will be spread over the first half of 2026 in a manner consistent with the course/thesis workload of the undergraduate student. Start date is January at the earliest.

2.3 Additionality and Leakage in Tropical Conservation and Restoration: Building an Evidence Base to Support Nature Finance

Project Lead: Agata Makowska-Curran

Project Summary

How can we tell whether conservation and restoration efforts truly make a difference - or simply shift environmental pressures elsewhere? And how can such evidence guide smarter investments in nature-based solutions? This project examines additionality and leakage: the extent to which interventions generate environmental benefits beyond those expected under business-as-usual conditions, and the extent to which such benefits are offset by displaced land-use pressures. Focusing on tropical coastal and terrestrial ecosystems in Southeast Asia, it develops an integrated framework combining high-resolution remote sensing data and machine learning to model land-cover dynamics and associated carbon and biodiversity outcomes. By predicting spatial patterns of ecosystem change (with and without intervention), the study identifies where conservation and restoration deliver genuine net gains and where leakage may erode their impact.

Skills Required

- Excellent research and literature review skills.

- Basic understanding of conservation, restoration, or nature finance and environmental economics/policy.
- Good written communication and attention to detail.
- Familiarity with reference management tools (e.g. Zotero).

Key Tasks / Expected Outputs

- Review literature on how additionality and leakage are defined and measured in conservation, restoration, and carbon offset contexts.
- Compile and summarise studies evaluating ecosystem conservation and restoration outcomes in tropical regions, particularly Southeast Asia, highlighting key factors behind successes and failures.
- Explore how additionality and leakage are discussed in relation to the credibility and financing of nature-based projects, including carbon and biodiversity credit schemes.

Timeline for Delivery

6-8 weeks

2.4 Paying Nature: Mobilising financial resources from private sector for biodiversity

Project Lead: Agata Makowska-Curran

Project Summary

Nature supports everything we depend on - food, water, health, and a stable climate - yet funding to protect it falls far short. Most of this funding comes from governments, while private companies that benefit from nature often contribute little or nothing.

This project explores how the private sector can play a bigger role in financing nature. Building on our team's involvement in shaping the new Cali Fund agreed at the UN's COP16 biodiversity summit, we'll examine how international funds can attract and use private investment more effectively and fairly.

The URF will support the research team by helping gather key information on organisations, literature, and events related to biodiversity finance. The work will suit someone curious about how environmental economics connects with real-world policy and global sustainability efforts, and who enjoys digging into new topics and organising information clearly.

Skills Required

- Support literature review: compile relevant academic and policy publications on

biodiversity finance and private sector incentives.

- Map stakeholders and organisations: create a list of key institutions, companies, and experts in biodiversity and nature finance.
- Track engagement opportunities: identify upcoming events, conferences, and consultations related to biodiversity and blue finance.
- Assist with project coordination: help with stakeholder outreach, maintaining contact lists, and preparing background materials.

Key Tasks / Expected Outputs

- Interest in environmental policy, biodiversity, and sustainability finance.
- Strong attention to detail and ability to organise information clearly.
- Reliable online research skills and ability to identify credible sources.
- Basic proficiency in Excel or Google Sheets.

- Clear and professional written communication.

Timeline for Delivery

Start as soon as possible, with

availability until the end of the 2025/26 academic year. Most of the work will take place over the next 1–2 months, with only limited support expected later on, making the project well suited to a student schedule.

2.5 Measuring and Reducing Real-Time Air Pollution Exposure and Inequalities: Evidence from a Field Experiment in London

Project Lead: Dr Sefi Roth

Project Summary

This project will equip a representative sample of London residents with portable pollution sensors that continuously record both their location and exposure levels. The study will assess the extent to which providing individuals with real-time pollution information can help them reduce their exposure in everyday settings and, potentially, improve their health.

Skills Required

- Excellent organisational skills and strong attention to detail.
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills for engaging with participants and external partners.
- Ability to manage multiple tasks and track project progress efficiently.
- Familiarity with issues related to air pollution, environmental monitoring, or public health (desirable - not essential).
- Ability to work both independently and collaboratively within a research team.

Key Tasks / Expected Outputs

- Support the implementation of the field experiment by coordinating day-to-day logistics.
- Liaise with participating residents to schedule sensor delivery, collection, and troubleshooting.
- Monitor equipment performance to ensure that all sensors are functioning correctly and transmitting data as intended.
- Work closely with the senior Research Assistant and the PI to track participation rates and data quality.
- Manage and organize incoming data streams, ensuring completeness and accuracy of uploads.
- Document field activities, issues, and resolutions to support transparent project reporting.

Timeline for Delivery

The main experimental phase is scheduled to begin in January 2026, with preliminary work and project preparations already in progress.

2.6 Defining the 'trash' season in Bali, Indonesia

Project Lead: Dr Thomas Smith

Project Summary

"Seasons of the Anthropocene" are anthropogenic seasonal patterns from interactions between human activities and Earth systems. The supervision team have studied Southeast Asia's "haze season" (Liu et al., 2023) and now aim to examine Bali's marine pollution season. From December to March, heavy rain flushes plastics to sea and monsoonal winds drive floating waste onto Bali's southern beaches. This predictable "trash season," widely covered by local and international media, harms community reputations and the tourism economy, prompting large clean-up operations by seasonal workers and volunteers and sparking interprovincial disputes over waste origins.

The aim of this URF project will be to address questions about the "trash season". When did narratives of seasonality begin? When is the season perceived to start and end? Is there a consensus as to the season's root causes and responsibility? What is the seasonal nature of public discourse of the trash season? And whether and/or how does society mitigate, plan, or adapt to the season?

The URF will address these questions through a range of methodologies, including traditional news and social media analysis, academic and grey literature reviews, and seeking out data sources on marine pollution monitoring. These will be used to identify temporal definitions for the trash season and its associated narratives.

Skills Required

- Familiarity with the necessary methods for media analysis listed above (desired)
- Curiosity and interest in the topic and the analytical techniques (essential)
- Language skills (desired, not essential): Bahasa Indonesia, Balinese

Key Tasks / Expected Outputs

- A short literature review of any existing literature that directly tackles the notion of a 'trash season' and the wider marine pollution issue in the region.
- Generating new datasets via the media analysis and monitoring data scoping that show the prevalence and timing of the pollution

- episodes and the use of 'trash season' in the media.
- Analysis of these datasets to establish narratives and words associated with the trash season (e.g. using SketchEngine, Structural Topic Modelling, and/or other language processing models).
- Contribution a journal article on this topic and the opportunity to be a co-author.

Timeline for Delivery

To begin work on the literature review ASAP, although there will be some flexibility to accommodate the URF's needs. Gathering media/monitoring data sources to be completed in early 2026 - Project completion flexible, but ideally by the end of July 2026.

2.7 Climate Change, Labour Market, and Inequality

Project Lead: Romano Tarsia

Project Summary

This project examines how climate change affects firms' labour decisions and how these effects propagate to workers' wages and income inequality within countries. While much of the existing literature focuses on aggregate or cross-country estimates, this research investigates how weather shocks impact firms and individuals differently, depending on their productivity and income levels. Using detailed administrative microdata from France, which tracks workers and firms over time, the project will estimate the causal impact of temperature shocks on wages and employment.

Beyond empirical analysis, the project incorporates a structural model that quantifies how heterogeneous climate damages across firms and workers shape aggregate productivity, GDP, and inequality. This integrated approach bridges microeconomic evidence with macroeconomic implications, advancing our understanding of the mechanisms through which climate

change affects economic performance and social welfare. The findings will contribute to the literatures on climate economics, labour markets, and income inequality, and provide evidence to inform adaptation and climate justice policies aimed at mitigating unequal exposure to environmental risks.

Skills Required

- Critical thinking
- Knowledge of statistical software (R or STATA)
- Knowledge of Latex
- Ideally, knowledge of structural modelling

Key Tasks / Expected Outputs

- Literature Review
- Data analysis
- Manuscript proofreading and editing
- Slides preparation

Timeline for Delivery

Flexible; academic year 2025/2026.

3 Urbanisation, Planning, and Development Cluster Projects

3.1 Valparaiso is vacant: the impacts of the 2019 social unrest in retail vacancy.

Project Lead: Dr Ignacio Aravena-Gonzalez

Project Summary

This project examines how Chile's 2019 social unrest and the subsequent looting affected retail vacancy and physical deterioration in Valparaíso. I need to build a spatial panel of approximately 2,000 storefronts by combining a 2022 in-person geocoded inventory with retrospective audits using Google Street View to observe pre- and post-unrest conditions.

For each unit, I need to record the open/closed status, facade condition, presence of street vending on the block, and immediate urban context, among others. The causal identification leverages variation in exposure to protest corridors, complemented by previously collected surveys and focus groups to triangulate mechanisms.

The assistant will help complete the cadaster panel data, systematize the dataset, review comparative literature on unrest, crime, and retail dynamics, and implement basic spatial/descriptive analysis.

Protocols, a data dictionary, and supervision are provided; the aim is a clean, analysis-ready panel and a

short results brief suitable for conference presentation and future publication.

Skills Required

- Strong attention to detail; ability to follow structured protocols.
- Basic Excel knowledge to work on spreadsheets.
- Basic GIS skills (QGIS/ArcGIS) or willingness to learn quickly to geocode the observations.
- Ability to read/summarize academic literature.
- Good documentation habits.

Key Tasks / Expected Outputs

- Code storefronts in Google Street View following the coding protocol on the georeferenced dataset.
- Clean, standardize, and consolidate records; merge with GIS layers (protest routes, buffers, covariates).
- Produce descriptive statistics, maps, and figures.

- Conduct literature searches/reviews; build a matrix of findings (methods, identification, results, links).

Timeline for Delivery

The following is a proposed timeline only, as it can be adapted to term dates and weekly availability:

Weeks 1-2: Onboarding, protocol training, 20–30-case pilot; refine codebook.

Weeks 2–10: Main cadaster (~2,000

units x 4 periods) with progress tracking.

Weeks 2-10 (parallel): Data cleaning and GIS merges.

Weeks 11–15: Descriptive/spatial analysis; maps/tables; create regression-ready dataset

Weeks 16–20: Literature matrix (summaries, methods, findings, references).

Week 20: Deliverables.

3.2 Exploring Art-Based Methodologies in Social Sciences: Conflict, Violence, and Social Justice

Project Lead: Dr Ivana Bevilacqua

Project Summary

The project examines the use of art-based methodologies in social sciences research on conflict, violence, and social justice. The URF will assist in organising a series of public-facing outputs, including a workshop (March 2026), and a launch event with an exhibition (May 2026) in central London. The Fellowship will contribute to both the logistical planning and the academic output of the project. The student will support the development of a collective academic article, focusing on literature review and synthesis of art-based approaches in social science research. In addition, the Fellow will assist in producing practical resources, such as zines and a toolkit, to disseminate insights from the research and workshop activities. This project provides a unique opportunity for undergraduate students to gain experience in research, publication, public engagement, and event organisation in an interdisciplinary and creative context.

Skills Required

- "Knowledge of academic approaches, epistemologies, and practices in radical

feminist, critical, and non-Western research traditions

- Interest in art-based methodologies and social science research
- Ability to conduct literature searches and review academic sources
- Strong organisational and administrative skills
- Excellent written and verbal communication
- Attention to detail for editing and proofreading
- Basic graphic design or layout skills (for zines and toolkit materials)
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team
- Event planning or coordination experience (desirable but not essential)
- Familiarity with social media or digital dissemination tools (desirable)

Key Tasks / Expected Outputs

- Conduct literature searches and reviews on art-based methodologies in social sciences, with focus on

conflict, violence, and social justice	<i>Timeline for Delivery</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Assist in preparing and editing a collective academic article▪ Support organisation and planning of the March 2026 workshop▪ Support organisation and planning of the May 2026 launch event and exhibition in central London▪ Design and produce zines and a practical toolkit for participants and attendees▪ Support dissemination of project outputs via social media, newsletters, or other channels▪ General administrative support for the project as needed	November – December 2025: Literature searches, initial drafting of the literature review, preliminary planning for workshop and launch event
	January – February 2026: Workshop preparation, toolkit and zine development, draft sections of academic article
	March 2026: Support workshop execution, collect feedback and materials for toolkit and article
	April 2026: Consolidate workshop outputs, continue academic article drafting and editing
	May 2026: Support launch event and exhibition, finalise toolkit and zine materials
	June 2026: Final edits on collective article, completion of project outputs

3.3 Portland Cartographies: Mapping Cultural, Social & Environmental Representations of the City

Project Lead: Dr Ryan Centner

Project Summary

This project uses different sets of mappable data about Portland to generate distinct cartographic representations of the city, from key sites of racialised struggle and resistance, to landmarks of environmental crisis and sustainability, to popular-cultural depictions of the city in the show *Portlandia*. The aim is to generate at least 3 maps that will serve as the basis for both an article manuscript (aiming at Geohumanities) and some of the writing for a collaborative book project ("A People's Guide to Portland") and potentially a separate project on "Portland Geographies" -- similar to the book "Seattle Geographies" (Brown & Morrill 2011), which used the varied geographical expertise of the University of Washington's Department of Geography to generate a multilayered rendition of the metropolis' geographies.

Skills Required

- Ability to make maps using GIS

- Familiarity with other cartographic software to sketch basic urban and regional maps

Key Tasks / Expected Outputs

- Using a spreadsheet of data collected across all episodes of the 8-season show *"Portlandia,"* put these onto a GIS map with coloured and shaped indications of which season and what kind of topic is being covered in sites depicted in the show.
- Following guidance from the project lead, generate basic maps of the Portland map, indicating neighbourhoods and/or regions, for use in a book manuscript about Portland

Timeline for Delivery

Most research will take place in the first half of WT26, but can continue into early Summer 2026. An initial orientating meeting will take place before Christmas Break 2025.

3.4 Managing Policy Change and Implementation: The Role of Local Authority Planners in Local Housing Delivery

Project Lead: Qingyuan Guo

Project Summary

This project investigates how local authority planners in London boroughs manage policy change and implementation to enhance local housing delivery, particularly in contexts where delivery depends on private developers. It focuses on understanding planners' roles in initiating policy change, selecting strategic directions, and managing implementation. The study will use qualitative case analysis of three London boroughs (Southwark, Waltham Forest, and Westminster, but with flexibility) based on document review, archival research, and interview data. The findings aim to shed light on how planners navigate institutional constraints and collaborate with developers to address urban housing delivery challenges.

Skills Required

- Strong attention to detail and ability to handle multiple documents.
- Basic research skills in searching and organising information.
- Familiarity with archive analysis.

- Confidence in conducting or supporting interviews.
- GIS techniques (QGIS, R, or ArcGIS, preferable but not essential).
- Interest in property development, public policy, and management.
- Ability to work independently and communicate progress clearly.

Key Tasks / Expected Outputs

- Collect and organise planning documents, committee minutes, and policy materials from council websites.
- Assist in building case chronologies of housing policy events (2018–present).
- Extract and code key decisions, policy actions, and implementation activities.
- Support preparation of data summaries and figures for analysis.
- Conduct preliminary mapping of housing delivery indicators using open data sources.
- Assist in preparing and conducting interviews with

planners, developers, and other stakeholders, including transcription and note organisation.

Timeline for Delivery

December 2025:

Project onboarding and briefing sessions.

Training on document retrieval, data organisation, and interview preparation.

Initial collection of planning documents, committee minutes, and policy materials from council websites.

January – February 2026:

Continue archival and document analysis.

Build chronologies of housing policy events (2018–present).

Begin coding of key decisions, policy actions, and implementation activities.

March – April 2026:

Support interviews with planners, developers, and other stakeholders (including transcription and organisation of notes).

Conduct preliminary mapping of housing delivery indicators using open data sources.

Prepare summary materials and figures for analysis.

3.5 Floating Cities: Extraction and Exclusion in the Neoliberal Postcolonial City

Project Lead: Caterina Hopkins

Project Summary

This project will be focused on supporting my PhD project that looks at urban development in Lagos, Nigeria. Specifically, it examines how a dependence on global capital flows for development and a lack of state investment in public infrastructure leads to a perpetuation of colonial structures of elite classes extracting value from the city while insulating them from social responsibility and collectivism. The research assistant would help with a variety of tasks including qualitative data organising and analysis as well as preparing journal articles to publish. In particular, I have a master's thesis on gentrification of beach space in Lagos that I would like to cut and edit to prepare for journal submission.

Skills Required

- Clear and concise writing
- Familiarity with conducting a literature review
- Interest in urban studies, ethnography, and African urbanism

- Critical approach

Key Tasks / Expected Outputs

- Updating and editing and article on beach gentrification in Lagos, Nigeria for publication
- Analysing data (ethnographic field notes)
- Assisting with materials responding to present at the Lagos Studies Association conference

Timeline for Delivery

The top priority for the research assistant would be to help me edit and prepare my master's thesis for publication. There is no deadline for this, so I would be happy for the URF to work on it according to a schedule that works for them. If this project is completed with hours still remaining on the contract, I would ask them to assist with the coding of field note data as and when it becomes available. As I am currently in the fieldwork portion of my PhD, there is not a strict deadline for this material either.

3.6 Social Life of Climate Change

Project Lead: Dr Kasia Paprocki

Project Summary

The Social Life of Climate Change (SLCC) is an interdisciplinary seminar series hosted by the Department of Geography and Environment with the support of the Global School of Sustainability. In addition to this series of seminars, it also hosts collaborative research among academics at LSE and beyond. We are currently in the process of finalizing an edited volume bringing together several scholars who have contributed to the series. The URF project will involve supporting the series, final work on the book manuscript, and other research support as agreed depending on the student's particular interests.

Skills Required

- Understanding of literature in the field(s) related to the series, for example in political ecology, environmental anthropology, global history, sociology, and/or critical agrarian studies.
- Attention to detail and organizational skills
- Critical reading
- Personal research interest in related topics

Key Tasks / Expected Outputs

- Proofreading all chapters of SLCC edited volume.
- Other necessary editorial tasks (e.g. combining footnotes and bibliography depending on the press's house style)
- Managing SLCC website (slcc.online), for example adding abstracts of past talks to the current listings, and potentially highlighting relevant recent publications of contributors.
- Pitching and writing brief pieces on seminars of particular interest for relevant LSE blogs.
- Other research support as agreed.

Timeline for Delivery

The SLCC seminar series is already ongoing, so attendance at and support of the series can start right away. The book manuscript is currently out for review and we anticipate that we will have it back hopefully sometime in early Winter Term, so editorial support on the book would start then.

3.7 Organising the UK Shelter Forum 2026

Project Lead: Dr Romola Sanyal

Project Summary

The project involves supporting the organisation of the UK Shelter Forum, 2026. The UK Shelter Forum is part of a larger global community of practice which convenes yearly to share knowledge regarding humanitarian shelter and settlement across academia and practice. The undergraduate research fellow will assist with a number of tasks that are essential to the success of the forum including helping organise the meeting, coordinating with speakers and attendees, supporting the event itself including recording and transcribing the event, assisting with online elements of it and assisting with its publicity. The URF provides a useful opportunity for the student to gain experience in running a conference, learning project management skills and gaining insights into the world of policy-making around humanitarian shelter.

Skills Required

- Strong organisation and communication skills are a must
- Ability to manage and prioritise multiple tasks simultaneously

- Ability to work with online platforms such as Google forms, etc
- Ability to manage IT, especially Zoom etc to help with online participants gain smooth access to the forum
- Ability to manage AV equipment especially video recording of event and photographing event
- An interest in housing and/or humanitarian aid would be useful

Key Tasks / Expected Outputs

- Coordinate with speakers regarding their presentations and travel
- Update Google form (or any other platform) for paper submissions/agenda
- Maintain updates on website and on forum agenda
- Assist with room bookings and catering
- Assist with social event the day before the forum
- Record event/ support with transcription
- Photograph event

- Assist organisers with online participants
- Support with publicity of event
- It is essential that the URF is present during the Forum.

Timeline for Delivery

Conference planning begins in January and the work will carry on until May when the conference takes place.

3.8 Analysing geographies of housing displacement through life narratives of homelessness in the United Kingdom

Project Lead: Dr Jessie Speer

Project Summary

This project aims to compile first-person accounts of the experience of housing displacement using the unique methodology of life narrative analysis. Over the past several decades, new oral history archives have emerged alongside the crisis of UK homelessness. Altogether, these archives contain hundreds of oral histories of homelessness collected in four locations across England. I have obtained transcripts of 43 oral histories from the London School of Economics Archive that were recorded in London in 2009, all of which consisted of in-depth, one to two-hour interviews in which participants were asked broad questions about their experiences and memories. These materials provide insight into the experience of displacement at the beginning of the last decade, which will be complemented by analysis of more recent oral histories and memoirs.

The undergraduate researcher working on this project will engage a geographic analysis of life narratives alongside each other. They will read

each life narrative individually to identify critiques or future visions for housing law and policy, and will place them in conversation with each other to identify themes across the collection. This research will connect a diverse set of accounts of the intimate, lived experience of displacement in multiple sites across the UK.

Skills Required

- Reading, literary analysis, thematic analysis

Key Tasks / Expected Outputs

- Reading memoirs and oral histories and providing summaries
- Finding and identifying themes between and across the memoirs
- Flagging and copying out any passages relating to housing, domesticity, or migration policy

Timeline for Delivery

Summer 2026.

4 General Department Opportunities

4.1 Student Sub-Editor for LSE Journal of Geography & Environment

Project Lead: Dr Thomas Smith

Project Summary

We are looking to fill the position of a sub-editor for the LSE Journal of Geography & Environment published by Houghton Street Press. The main responsibilities will include soliciting new articles from current and past students in the Department. Articles may take the form of extended original research pieces (e.g. first-class dissertations) as well as review articles (e.g. excellent examples of student courseworks). The sub-editor may be responsible for sending articles out for review/editing/proof-reading and making decisions on what to send to the Chief Editor for final approval. The sub-editor might also be responsible for promoting the journal via blog posts and/or podcasts.

Skills Required

- Excellent communication and organisational skills.
- Some experience in student newspaper/journal production.

Key Tasks / Expected Outputs

- Soliciting articles for the journal
- Arranging the review process, editing, and proofing final versions of journal articles
- Promoting the journal via blog posts and/or podcasts.

Timeline for Delivery

We do not expect work to begin until later on in the Academic Year and may involve work over Summer 2026.

5 Global School of Sustainability Opportunities

5.1 TPI Global Climate Transition Centre (TPI Centre)

Project Lead: Alisha Tauro

Project Summary

The TPI Centre is an independent and authoritative source of research and data into the progress being made by corporate and sovereign entities in the transition to a low carbon economy. Part of the Global School of Sustainability at LSE, the undergraduate(s) will be working on our Net Zero Standards (NZS) project. The undergraduate(s) should have or be studying a relevant undergraduate degree in environmental economics/finance, corporate sustainability, environmental policy or a related field.

Skills Required

- Strong analytical skills, with the ability to produce high-quality research and analysis in a timely manner, including analysing complex ideas and applying appropriate methods.
- Strong IT and quantitative skills, including proficiency with spreadsheets, spreadsheet-based models and developing and maintaining databases.
- Ability to perform well under deadlines.

- High attention to detail.
- Knowledge of applied research and policy analysis.
- Communication skills both written and oral, with the ability to communicate complex ideas and technical issues to a range of different non-technical audiences.
- Capable of working independently and as part of a team.
- Ability to self-learn, work and keep pace in a complex, dynamic and fast-moving area.

Key Tasks / Expected Outputs

- Processing data and conducting assessments independently and accurately.
- Performing quality checks.
- Inputting into large-scale databases.
- Generating visual outputs in the form of graphs and charts.
- Producing written outputs to convey complex conceptual information in an easy-to-understand manner for external audiences.

- Conducting literature reviews.
- Working with team members to reach common goals.

Timeline for Delivery

3 months with scope to possibly extend up to 6 months depending on the availability of the undergraduate(s) and project requirements.



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