Undergraduate Research Fellowship (URF) Opportunities 2022/23

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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 exciting to offer this scheme for its fourth year, with up to 20 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.

If you have any queries, please email Tom Jones 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 academic staff 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 £18.35 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 acquire/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.

LSE **Department of Geography and Environment**

Singapore's tech sector: mapping firm trajectories

Neil Lee

Project summary

Singapore has developed one of the world's leading tech sectors. I would like an RA to research and present the growth of various high-tech firms. This would include a variety of secondary research, including some use of financial databases, policy documents, and financial media.

Skills required

A knowledge of Singapore and, hopefully, some data visualisation.

Key benefits

They will gain an ability to understand how firm growth is influenced by government policy and firm strategy

Key tasks/expected outputs:

Identify key Singaporean tech firms
Use financial databases to identify their growth
Investigate key determinants of their growth, using secondary analysis
Present the above in a clear, accessible format and relate back to academic literature

Expected timeline for delivery

I'd like the project completed by April, if possible.

Camden Household Air Monitoring Project (CHAMP)

Sefi Roth

Project summary

Through a partnership between the London School of Economics (LSE), Camden Council, and the University of Southern California, this study will observe the scale of indoor air pollution in homes throughout Camden and examine possible behavioural and technological strategies to reduce exposure and improve the health and wellbeing of Camden residents. For more details please visit our website: https://www.lse.ac.uk/geography-and-environment/news/indoor-air-pollution-in-camden

Skills required

Research skills will be acquired throughout the fellowship but we do not require any special research skills prior to application. We are looking for students that are keen to take part of this project and help us to learn more about indoor air pollution.

Key benefits

This role is a great development opportunity and will be very suitable for candidates considering a career in research (of all sorts) and/or pursuing a postgraduate degree as it will develop their research skills.

Key tasks/expected outputs:

The main activities of the fellow would be to help managing the logistics of the field experiment. More specifically, the fellows will help send the invitation letters, mail the measuring equipment, ensure adequate installation, and provide technical support if needed. The fellow will also be responsible for monitoring the automatic data collection and ensuring the safe return of the measuring devices. Depends on experience and skills, the fellows will also help in conducting literature reviews, prepare the data for analysis and analyse the data, all under the supervision of Sefi Roth. As such, this role will also be a great development opportunity and will be very suitable for candidates considering a career in research and/or pursuing a PhD.

Expected timeline for delivery

Vey flexible in terms of timing but ideally we would like to start as soon as possible.

LSE | Department of Geography and Environment

Mapping Surface Water Changes in Iraq 1984-2015

Michael Mason

Project summary

This assignment is part of a broader project mapping out changing surface water patterns in the Euphrates-Tigris Basin between 1984-2015 and their implications for water governance in Iraq.

Skills required

Collection and graphic presentation from existing open-source GIS database (Global Surface Water App) of various surface water changes in Iraq between 1984-2015

Key benefits

Experience of being part of a UK Government-funded (FCDO) project;
Knowledge in use application of presentation of GIS data;
Opportunity to work for the LSE Middle East Centre

Key tasks/expected outputs:

Note: all outputs (maps and histograms) can be generated from the open-source database without quantitative skills training:
1. changes in intensity of surface water occurrence 1984-1999 and 2000-2015 for Iraq
2. water recurrence changes in Iraq between 1984-2015
2. water seasonality changes in Iraq between 1984-2015

Expected timeline for delivery

March 2023

Managerial Input and Firm Digitalisation. Evidence from a Policy Experiment

Davide Rigo

Project summary

This project will study the effects of an Italian subsidy program designed to support small and medium enterprises in hiring a professional manager able to guide them in the uptake of digital technologies. The UG Research Fellow will help me to lay the foundations for the administration of a survey on a sample of (200-300) Italian firms. The Fellow will have to create a novel firm-level database by combining unique information from different sources. If the collaboration will be successful, the Fellow could be hired (as a part of my Leverhulme Early Career Fellowship) for the administration of the survey in collaboration with the Italian Ministry of Economic Development.

Skills required

- Communication and organisational skills (essential);
- Experience in the use of Stata (preferable).

Key benefits

- First-hand experience in doing applied research from early stages;
- Learn new quantitative research methods;
- Possibility to participate in the next stages of the project (survey administration, data collection);
- Flexibility in adjusting the tasks to the Fellow's schedule.

Key tasks/expected outputs:

- Prepare a novel firm-level dataset by combining information from different data sources;
- Conduct research on selected firms to learn about their digitalisation strategies.

Expected timeline for delivery

Ideally, by the end of the MT.

Preparing book manuscript for publication

Austin Zeiderman

Project summary

I am in the final stages of preparing a book manuscript for publication and would like some support with some of the final tasks: proofreading, fact checking, citation checking, copyright permissions, etc.

Skills required

Attention to detail, willingness to learn scholarly practices, good communication skills

Key benefits

Learning the ins and outs of academic publishing, learning proper citation practices and other scholarly conventions.

Key tasks/expected outputs:

Proofread manuscript, check all citations and bibliography, attain permission for use of all images.

Expected timeline for delivery

Sometime during LT

Displaced by Law: Migration Policy and Housing Loss in the United Kingdom

Jessie Speer

Project summary

This research analyses the legal geographies of housing displacement and migration law in the UK over the last decade. During that period, the number of people sleeping rough in England has increased by 169 percent, while the number of families living in temporary accommodation has increased by more than 300 percent. Many people have been displaced from their homes as a result of new immigration laws that require legal residency for employment, housing, and benefit entitlements—these changes being referred to generally as the hostile environment strategy towards irregular migration. In particular the "right to rent," according to which landlords are required to check immigration status, has placed thousands at greater risk of homelessness and unable to apply for benefits simply because of their status as undocumented migrants. In the UK, Immigration Officers were also empowered to arrest, detain, deport and ban EEA nationals sleeping rough without a warrant. No other country in Europe has implemented a similar policy. To better understand the legal landscape of the past decade, this research examines policy texts, legislative histories, landmark cases, and court transcripts, seeking to answer the following questions: In the climate leading up to and following Brexit, how have immigration laws and policies impacted the experience of housing displacement and homelessness in the UK? What does the intermingling of migration and homelessness policy reveal about the changing nature of citizenship, nationalism, race, and property in the UK?

Skills required

Searching legal databases, reading, writing, and analysing case law

Key benefits

Legal research and anlaysis, legal geographic analysis

Key tasks/expected outputs:

1) Familiarizing yourself with legal databases and searching for case law relevant to the right to rent in the UK

2) Learning how to read and summarise a legal case

3) Preparing a final document synthesising the current state of the law in the UK regarding the right to rent

Expected timeline for delivery

To be completed by end of August 2023

The economic value of land mine clearance

Giles Atkinson and Elisabetta Pietrostefani

Project summary

The URF will assist with scoping and preparatory work for a research collaboration being planned with the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS). Currently, land mines affect the lives of people in many countries around the world, with some of these classified as "heavily-impacted". The starting point for the research is that mine clearance – de-mining – is important not only on humanitarian grounds but it is also good economic development. As such this research is hoping to provide evidence on the economic value of the benefits of de-mining in two ways: (a) a "top-down" approach which focuses on accounting for the boost that de-mining provides to the national economy and (b) a "bottom-up" approach which looks to establish robust causal economic evidence, within local economies, on the relationship between de-mining and development outcomes.

Skills required

The ambitions of the research are quite broad and there is some flexibility on specific skills. Ideally the URF will have familiarity with spatial data/ economic geography (e.g. GY245) and environmental valuation, sustainability economics/ wealth accounting etc. (e.g. GY222/ GY121).

Key benefits

While there seems to be a small literature, the economic value of de-mining is a relatively underexplored topic. Given its likely significance, this is an opportunity for the URF to work with Dept. researchers (GA/ EP) in thinking through how evaluation/

Key tasks/expected outputs:

The key task is to assist with preparing a scoping report for UNMAS on the feasibility of this empirical research in "heavily impacted" countries, notably Afghanistan. Specific tasks will involve a literature search of any existing studies of the connection between economic development and de-mining, and also related contexts. It might also entail initial (guided) scoping of data sources and valuation methods.

Expected timeline for delivery

Ideally this research work would be completed at some point before the end of Michaelmas Term, although there is a bit of flexibility on this.

UG curriculum diversity review

Julia Corwin

Project summary

Under my supervision (and ideally one other staff member), student(s) will undertake a curriculum review of the department's UG curriculum, focusing on diversity and inclusion. The first half of the project will be to determine how to tackle this: students may decide to survey fellow students to get a sense of concerns about the curriculum in order to direct priorities. The second half of the project will be reviewing the curriculum itself, which may entail looking at distribution of readings, topics focused on, topics ignored, etc. The research design will be done along with the student(s).

Skills required

Students must be familiar with broad aspects of UG curriculum, so this is best for a 3rd year or possibly a 2nd year. Any familiarity with research design and qualitative research skills is welcome, including field research courses. Students should be comfortable skimming academic articles and parsing out scholarly approaches.

Key benefits

They will practice research design and qualitative methods. Also, they will be able to support changes to the UG curriculum.

Key tasks/expected outputs:

Tasks will include surveying course materials as well as the student body to determine which aspects of the curriculum to focus on for a closer review, and (time permitting) research to put forward suggested changes to the UG curriculum.

Expected timeline for delivery

Research will take place over the course of the academic year.

Visibility of research

John Vernon Henderson

Project summary

I have been meaning for some years to put together material for a Wikipedia entry. That usually involves finding a good (commercial) person/firm to do the entry and then pulling material together for the entry. Having an RA would get this done. It would be mostly done in LT. It could also involve improving and updating my webpage.

Skills required

Communication and initiative

Key benefits

Media experience

Key tasks/expected outputs:

A Wikipedia entry; better webpage

Expected timeline for delivery

March 2023

Department of
Geography and
Environment

Urbanisation of Asian Capital and the Rise of Enclave Urbanism in Vietnam

Hyun Bang Shin

Project summary

Inter-referencing within the global South has become an important development strategy for cities in the region: Singapore, Shanghai, Shenzhen and Seoul emerge as a source of inspiration by other cities in the global South, despite questions about the replicability of their development models. Against this backdrop, this project scrutinises the practices of South Korean and Singaporean real estate developers who have made a marked presence in Vietnam by building commercial housing estates and new towns targeting Vietnam's middle or upper classes, affluent migrants and overseas buyers. By doing so, the project examines the extent to which such foreign developers' participation in Vietnam's urban and housing development process reflects their own visions of urbanism accumulated through their participation in urban and housing development in their countries of origin, and what such participation resulting in the rise of enclave urbanism means for the social justice in Vietnam.

The URF is expected to help with the review of the relevant literature, and in particular, the collection and translation of Vietnamese written sources.

Skills required

Candidates should be fluent in Vietnamese to be able to read and translate Vietnamese written materials, and have excellent written and oral communication skills and attention to detail while planning and organising their workload and prioritising multiple tasks.

Key benefits

The URF will gain/improve skills in digesting and organising a wide-ranging set of information for presentation to the project leader; practice academic writing and clear communication work; develop/enhance communication skills; gain mentoring opportuniti

Key tasks/expected outputs:

The URF is expected to produce a summary of the references they have collected and reviewed, while producing a database on the work included.

Expected timeline for delivery

Between October 2022 and March 2023

Department of Geography and Environment (LSE)

Knowledge Exchange and Impact of Research on Urbanisation, Planning and Development

Hyun Bang Shin

Project summary

The project is looking for an undergraduate research fellow (URF) who can help promote academic activities and research outputs produced by the members of the department's Urbanisation, Planning and Development research cluster. The work would involve, but is not limited to, maintaining the cluster website (e.g., https://citiesgeographylse.net) and social media (e.g., Twitter @LSEGeogUPD) and creatively devising initiatives to maximise the outreach of the UPD research cluster's research expertise. The URF would work closely with the project leader (Professor Hyun Bang Shin, Head of the UPR research cluster) while having opportunities to interact closely with the cluster members as part of their duties.

Skills required

Candidates should have excellent written and oral communication skills and attention to detail while planning and organising their workload and prioritising multiple tasks. Experience in managing websites or blogs and using social media platforms for professional and/or promotional purposes would be desirable.
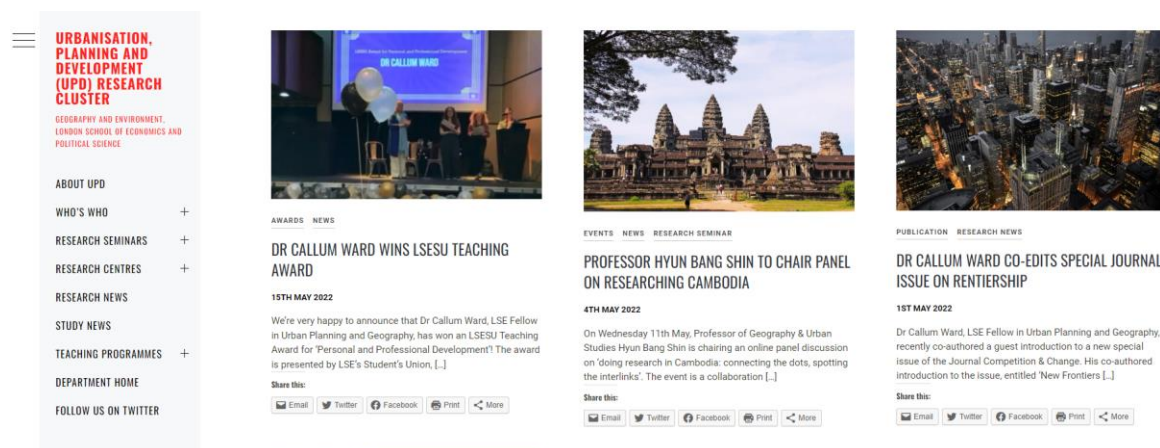
Key benefits

The URF will gain/improve skills in digesting and organising a wide-ranging set of information for clear communication to an external audience; gain an in-depth understanding of the work of the staff in the UPD research cluster; develop the ability to work collaboratively with colleagues at various seniorities as well as working independently; develop/enhance communication skills; gain mentoring opportunities.

Key tasks/expected outputs:

The URF is expected to regularly maintain the UPD research cluster's website and social media platforms while producing a database on the work of the research cluster members.

Expected timeline for delivery

Flexible working between October 2022 and May 2023

Department of
Geography and
Environment

Investigating domestic gardeners' environmental activities and their relationship with wellbeing

Camilla Royle

Project summary

Part of ongoing self-funded research into the perceived relationship between contact with "nature" and wellbeing by looking specifically at gardens. Previous outputs include conference talks, public engagement and a forthcoming article. I'm looking to develop this project by doing some online surveys into the measures domestic gardeners take to be more environmentally friendly (feeding birds, conserving water, peat free compost etc) and the extent to which taking these actions plays a role in coping with eco-anxiety. The surveys will be followed up by semi-structured and place based interviews with willing participants.

Skills required

Good communication skills, basic survey analysis skills and some familiarity with social media all preferable. General interest in environmental geography required.

Key benefits

Experience of using online surveys and conducting interviews. They would also benefit by being named as an author in any publications, dependent on the success of the research.

Key tasks/expected outputs:

Assisting with brainstorming and coming up with survey questions, assisting with putting together and trialling a survey, contacting potential participants and using social media to recruit participants, assisting with interpreting survey results, assisting with contacting respondents and arranging interviews and potentially with carrying out interviews.

Expected timeline for delivery

Part time over about 4 months

Net Zero Banking Project

Tess Sokol-Sachs

Project summary

The banking sector has a critical role to play in the low-carbon transition, incentivising emissions reductions in the real economy through climate-aware financing. The TPI Centre in partnership with the Institutional Investor Group on Climate Change (IIGCC), developed an investor-led pilot framework of indicators to assess the preparedness of banks for the low-carbon transition. Our framework sets an action-focused roadmap for banks to align their financing activities with the goals of the Paris Agreement. From January-March 2023, we will be assessing 27 global banks on their decarbonization performance against our net zero banking framework.

Skills required

Attention to detail; Strong analytical skills, with the ability to produce high-quality research and analysis in a timely manner, including the ability to analyse and research complex ideas; Strong quantitative skills, including proficiency with spreadsheets and spreadsheet-based models; Interest or understanding of issues in sustainable finance

Key benefits

Exposure to key issues in sustainable finance, including a gained understanding of levers for decarbonizing the banking sector; Analytical and data management experience; Contributing to an investor-led, multi-stakeholder project with published outcomes;

Key tasks/expected outputs:

Data collection from assessing banks' sustainability reporting; documentation of banks' sustainability practices across key areas (e.g., governance, target-setting, etc.); Analysing the data, including trends in data and generating graphs, charts, and preparing reports

Expected timeline for delivery

17.5h/week for 4 weeks beginning in January

Department of
Geography and
Environment

Examining the Positive Spillovers of Large-Scale Renewable Generation

J Cristobal Ruiz-Tagle

Project summary

The power sector accounts for the largest share of GHG emissions. Decarbonization of this sector is key for addressing climate change mitigation.

This research project seeks to empirically estimate the positive spillover effects of rapid adoption of large-scale solar generation. This, in terms of fewer emissions of local air pollutants (such as PM2.5, SO2, and NOx), improved air quality in key urban centers, and even potential lives saved as consequence of cleaner air.

This research project seeks to empirically estimate these effects in a case of rapid solar investment in one the regions with most solar generation potential in the globe. Moreover, in this region, this adoption has been further accelerated by: (1) rapid decline in the price of solar panel; (2) new policy mandates that require large share of renewable energy; and, (3) expansion of the power grid through the interconnection of previously independent grids.

Skills required

Stata/R coding and data management

Key benefits

URF will gain key experiential skills in empirically analyzing promising avenues to reduce carbon emissions and mitigate climate change

Key tasks/expected outputs:

Update existing dataset on renewable generation adding latest years
compile dataset on mortality for specific urban centers
merge these two datasets with a dataset of local air pollution

Expected timeline for delivery

Oct/Nov 2022 through July 2023.

Department of Geography and Environment (LSE)

Informal institutions, tenure security and demand for title deeds in urban Africa

Martina Manara

Project summary

Urbanisation in sub-Saharan Africa is progressing rapidly with little land formalisation. Even where governments coordinate formalisation schemes, the uptake of land titles can be very low. In theory, there are private and public benefits to land title deeds, but these might be minimal or not perceived by landholders. To understand how landholders value and choose between alternative forms of property rights (informal versus formal tenure) we propose examining their multiple and evolving functions of tenure security. We study demand for title deeds in two communities of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, using a unique setting that
is ideal for studying these questions. We elicit individual willingness-to-pay for title deeds using the Becker-DeGroot-Marschak method and then conduct a survey questionnaire and in-depth interviews. Dissecting informal tenure into multiple and evolving functions of tenure security is vital to examine their strengths and weaknesses, identifying where people demand institutional change, and what type of policy responses can address these local demands. This study advances research on land formalisation, tenure security and land conflict in rapidly urbanizing cities, which are central to urban studies.
The project is in its last phase; therefore, the URF will assist the PIs to complete an academic paper and a social media output (blog outline)

Skills required

Interest in issues of urban development, urban planning and/or development in general (demonstrated by curriculum, choice of modules)
Interest in mixed-method research (demonstrated by curriculum, choice of modules)
Reading critically and synthetizing main points effectively.
Excellent writing skills (English)
Basic knowledge of statistical software (e.g. STATA) is preferred, but not required.

Key benefits

The student will get an experience of academic research work, developing analytic, communication and organizational skills. Most importantly, the student will learn how to i) review a draft paper; ii) finalise literature review and interview analysis; iii) pitch research findings to different audiences (academic paper versus blog entry). This will support the student in their independent research and their career.

Key tasks/expected outputs:

The project is in its last phase; therefore, the URF will assist the PIs to complete an academic paper and a social media output (blog outline).
Completing literature review: cross-checking references in text and bibliography. Reviewing and synthetizing few readings to integrate to existing literature review.
Analyzing interview scripts and writing vignettes focusing on respondents' lived experiences, which need to be added to the paper.
Proof reading and editing of current draft, implementing editorial requirements by the journal.
Assisting in the preparation of a blog post synthetizing findings from this paper (and its companion quantitative paper) for a wider audience.

Expected timeline for delivery

ASAP. Ideally, work would commence either during or just after reading week. It should be completed within MT 2022, but the URF will have a six months contract, allowing for some work spilling over the next term if needed (e.g. to refine blog).

Fenced in: Challenges of integrating urban parks into active, sustainable travel

Meredith Whitten

Project summary

This research explores the impact that railings and similar structures built to enclose parks and green spaces have on urban sustainability objectives delineated in Active Travel strategies adopted by UK local governments.

Active travel (AT) – also called healthy or green travel – is a shift to more physically active and environmentally sustainable modes, particularly walking and cycling (PHE, 2016). This is meant to address climate and public health crises by reducing carbon-emitting journeys and providing an urban environment that facilitates physical movement and exposure to nature (Alattar et al., 2021). Incorporating parks into travel routes is fundamental to AT objectives. This involves moving from conceptualising parks as stand-alone destinations to interconnected, essential components of wider journeys.

Yet, park design and management, grounded in traditional approaches, prioritise enclosing these spaces. Entangled with British cultural heritage, railings and walls featured prominently in the Victorian-era establishment of the public park concept (Brück, 2013). Landscape designers used railings to control how people experienced a park, and to regulate access. The presence of railings has been central to protests in public parks (Awcock, 2019). Removal of park iron railings to help with the 1940s war effort further embedded these structures into British culture (LGT, 2015). Today, many park railings are protected as heritage assets with "listed" status. This potentially limits how effectively parks can be integrated into present-day journeys, thus conflicting with contemporary urban sustainability and health policies (Whitten, 2020).

This research examines the impact railings and similar structures have on integrating parks into AT routes in three UK cities: Glasgow, Manchester and London. Each city has been progressive in adopting AT strategies and each has a legacy of traditional parks they expect to incorporate into enhanced walking-and-cycling infrastructure.

An Undergraduate Research Fellow would assist with reviewing literature and creating a database of active travel policies/strategies in the UK. The URF would also work with an ORA on the AT database (ORA funded for 40 hours through the GY Department's SEED fund).

Skills required

Ability to conduct a literature review; ability to identify relevant local authority documents

Key benefits

The URF would gain expertise on a topic that is increasingly being invoked by policymakers. Skills gained include policy analysis, understanding of local government structure and processes, document analysis and database management. The URF also will gain experience working as part of a team.

Key tasks/expected outputs:

Preliminary literature review; database identifying active travel strategies; and (time permitting) identifying specific green spaces with railings in the case study cities that are planned to be included in AT routes.

Expected timeline for delivery

Literature review by 15 December 2022; AT database by 1 March 2023

Department of
Geography and
Environment

The role of simplified information in market learning: A study on energy-efficiency labels

Rodolfo Sejas-Portillo

Project summary

Main aims/objectives

We aim to study whether the provision of simplified energy-efficiency (EE) information, in addition to the detailed information it is based on, has a significant effect on: a) The speed (number of purchases) at which individuals form their EE valuation expectations; and b) the homogeneity of the formed EE valuation expectations across individuals. In order to analyse behaviour, an online experiment with multiple trials will be conducted. This study builds on the results obtained in Sejas-Portillo et al. (2021).

Background

Consumers rely on the information available about a product in order to decide how much they are willing to pay for it. Complex or obscure information can lead to inconsistent expectations about the value of a product (e.g. Chetty et al 2010, Gabaix and Laibson 2006) and thus its final sale price. Recent research provides evidence that people can exhibit limited attention biases when making purchasing decisions (e.g. Englmaier et al. 2018, Lacetera et al. 2012), with simplified and salient information diverting attention from more detailed information (Sejas-Portillo et al. 2020). There is also evidence (e.g. List 2003, List 2004) showing that if consumers have enough experience in the market, for example acquired by buying everyday consumables, they will learn to optimise their purchasing decisions over time and reduce non-optimal biases (thus preventing opportunities for arbitrage). In this study we investigate whether simplified and salient information can help individuals gain market experience faster. We focus our research in the housing market since it is a high-value market, with most individuals making only a few purchases during their lifetime, and therefore having very limited opportunities for learning. Specifically, we analyse if simple and salient energy-efficiency (EE) information can help consumers learn to optimise their EE valuation faster by reducing the cognitive effort required to asses energy-running costs (continuing the work of Sejas-Portillo et al. 2020).

Skills required

Statistical/econometric methods (for example GY245) and high attention to detail. Any additional training can be provided by the project researchers.

Key benefits

This is an opportunity for undergraduate students, who are interested in social-sciences experimental methods, to learn and gain first-hand experience into the process from design to execution (including research design, ethics review, pre-registration, data collection, analysis). They will also gain an important insight into the challenges policy-makers face when designing EE policies.

Key tasks/expected outputs:

The research fellow will assist with building the experiment survey (in the Qualtrics platform) and running the pilot study. They will also participate in the experiment pre-registration

process (e.g. sample size estimation/statistical power analysis) and initial analysis of results (based on the pre-registration statement).

Expected timeline for delivery

Flexible, aiming to complete the first round of data collection by early 2023.

Social Media and the Crisis of Urban Inequality: Transnational analyses of Humanitarian Responses across the Middle East, South Asia and Africa.

Romola Sanyal

Project summary

This project examines how social media is used to navigate the terrain between humanitarianism and inequality in the Global South. We argue that inequality should not only be studied in humanitarian crisis settings, but itself be seen as a humanitarian crisis, especially in cities. The urban poor, migrants and refugees can all be seen as surplus populations collectively marginalised by capitalistic production and regimes of value (Rajaram 2018), and are only separated through legal categories. The inequality of their social and legal conditions also spill into their spatial and infrastructural configurations limiting their access to jobs and housing. We study how social and communications media play a key role in alleviating and exacerbating inequalities. We study this through a transnational project across India, Lebanon and Uganda.

Skills required

Good time management and organisational skills. Must be able to engage in correspondence with multiple actors and be good at notetaking.

Key benefits

Learning how to organise a professional workshop, learning how to take notes from project meetings. Students will learn how KEI projects are done between academics and non-academic partners. They will also get an inside look at the work of NGOs involved in development/humanitarian work in other parts of the world and the challenges they face.

Key tasks/expected outputs:

We need support with taking minutes from our project meetings. We will need further support with organising a workshop in Lent or Summer of 2023.

Expected timeline for delivery

End of summer term 2023

Department of Geography and Environment (LSE logo)

Student sub-editors for the new LSE Journal of Geography & Environment [two positions]

Thomas Smith

Project summary

We are looking to fill the position of two sub-editors for a new student journal to be published by Houghton Street Press. The student Fellows will work with the Chief Editor and the Houghton Street Press office to set up the new journal. The Fellows will be responsible for naming the new journal (ideally involving a consultation with other students). 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-editors 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-editors 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 benefits

Experience of working with professional journal/publishing management software
Opportunity to be one of the founding team members of the journal

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

Expected timeline for delivery

We do not expect work to begin until later on in the Academic Year and may involve work over Summer 2023. We expect the first issue of the journal to be published in Michaelmas Term 2021.

Transition Pathway Initiative

Beata Bienkowska

Project summary

The fellow will work with the Transition Pathway Initiative (TPI) research team. The GRI is the academic partner to the TPI. TPI is an investor-led initiative to ensure the world's largest corporate greenhouse gas emitters take necessary action on climate change. To this end TPI evaluates and tracks the quality of companies' management of their greenhouse gas emissions and of risks and opportunities related to the low-carbon transition as well as how companies' future carbon performance would align with the Paris Agreement goals. TPI is assessing a universe of over 400 global companies across 16 sectors.

Skills required

- Strong analytical skills, with the ability to produce high-quality research and analysis in a timely manner
- Strong quantitative skills, including proficiency with spreadsheets
- IT skills, including advanced Excel skills, as well as Word, PowerPoint, etc.
- Overall understanding of issues in sustainable finance
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills, both written and oral, with the ability to communicate with internal colleagues
- Ability work as part of a team

Key benefits

- Good understanding of the TPI tool, created by asset owners and supported by 110 investors
- Good understanding of TPI methodologies: Management Quality and Carbon Performance
- Opportunity to assess company targets against sectoral benchmarks based on the IEA scenarios.
- Opportunity to contribute to the TPI research projects, spanning across different asset classes (equities, corporate and sovereign bonds)
- Opportunity to learn from senior colleagues - researchers in the TPI team who will serve as mentors to undergraduate fellows
- Opportunity to advance skills in working with big data sets and spreadsheets
- Opportunity to join the TPI weekly meetings and wellbeing sessions

Key tasks/expected outputs:

- Learning TPI methodologies
- Screening of company disclosure
- Assessment of company emissions reduction targets across TPI sectors under guidance and supervision of senior colleagues from the TPI team
- Supporting the TPI team on other relevant tasks
- Working with big data sets and spreadsheets

Expected timeline for delivery

February - August 2022

Government narratives of the seasonality of haze in Southeast Asia

Thomas Smith

Project summary

The fellow will review thousands of media articles from Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia that mention the term 'haze' or 'haze season'. The focus of the work will be for the fellow to identify quotes in the media from various groups of people, including the public, NGOs, charities, and government representatives at all levels. These quotes will be used to assess whether establishing narratives of seasonality might lead to changes in environmental policy and/or collective behaviour, and the nature of those changes (i.e. does seasonality lead to acceptance of the problem and less policy action, or the opposite?).

Skills required

Qualitative analytical skills including secondary resource analysis/thematic coding. Ideally, the Fellow should be able to read Bahasa Melayu and/or Indonesia, but familiarity with online translation tools should suffice

Key benefits

- Opportunity to be involved with an innovative media project that addresses a very topical environmental problem from a unique perspective - The research is relevant to environmental governance, management, sustainable development in the Global South, and social resilience in the Anthropocene. The Fellow will have the opportunity to develop advanced thematic coding skills.

Key tasks/expected outputs:

- Thorough media analysis for quotes (the research team will provide the media corpus), expected outputs include a database of quotes along with thematic coding of those quotes

Expected timeline for delivery

- The Fellow will work with Thomas Smith, Felicia Liu (Oxford) and the Southeast Asia Centre Visiting Fellow Helena Varkkey (UM). Helena's visit will take place in Lent Term and it is expected that the majority of the work for this project will be completed in Lent Term/Easter.