

PRE-DOCTORAL PROGRAMS

This document contains a list of institutions and programs that offer pre-doctoral positions (pre-docs) or research assistantships (RAships), which are typically full-time jobs supporting faculty research that lasts one to two years. These positions are particularly helpful for people who are considering a PhD but are not completely sure they're ready or that a PhD is what they want. This is not a comprehensive list but rather can serve as a starting point in your search for these positions.

ACROSS REGIONS

The [National Bureau of Economics Research](#) has two pages posting full-time job listings. The [Research Assistant Positions – not at the NBER](#) page lists full-time jobs associated with research projects led by NBER-affiliated researchers, but which do not involve employment through NBER. The [Research Assistant Positions – at NBER](#) page lists similar positions that do involve NBER employment. The positions listed may be suitable for bachelor's degree candidates, graduate students, or post-docs. Positions typically have an expected duration of one to three years, and often give priority to candidates who are planning to continue to the next stage of their academic career upon completion of the position. The non-NBER positions are more likely to be open to international applicants.

[Econ RA Listings](#) is a Twitter account that retweets research assistant (RA) openings for economists at various institutions in the nonprofit sector, academic institutions, and parastatals from all over the globe. They also retweet individual professors looking for RAs.

[The Sadie Collective](#) aims to address the pipeline and pathway problem for Black women in economics and related fields through bringing together Black women at different career stages to share resources, network, receive mentorship, professional development, and advocate for broader visibility in the field.

NORTH AMERICA

[Pathways to Research and Doctoral Careers](#) (PREDOC) is a consortium of universities and research institutions whose mission is to foster a talented and diverse population of researchers in the quantitative social sciences, with a particular focus on pre-doctoral programs in business and economics. PREDOC posts pre-docs and RAships at institutions across the United States.

[The Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University](#) offers a limited number of research fellow opportunities. These are full-time staff positions that last either one or two years, during which the Fellows gain exposure to current academic research at Kellogg as well as hands-on experience assisting those projects. These are excellent opportunities for anyone who is considering applying to a PhD in a discipline related to business research. They are interested in attracting pre-doctoral candidates from all parts of the world and can sponsor J-1 visas if necessary.

[The Pre-Doctoral Research in Economics Program](#) at the Becker Friedman Institute for Economics at the University of Chicago is intended to serve as a bridge between undergraduate and graduate school for students interested in empirical economics. The program offers unique research and professional training opportunities. The program is very interested in attracting African candidates, provides visa support, and has a well-developed infrastructure to support applicants who need work authorization.

[The Tobin Center Economics Pre-Doctoral Fellows Program](#) at Yale University supports policy-relevant economics research by providing a high quality education and training experience for individuals with bachelor's or master's degrees who are considering pursuing a PhD in economics or closely related discipline. An important part of the mission of this program is to increase diversity, equity, and inclusion in economics. They encourage prospective applicants from Africa to apply and can sponsor pre-docs on J-1 visas.

[The Economics Pre-Doctoral Research Fellowship Program](#) at the Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Research is a full-time, one- to two-year post-baccalaureate program designed to prepare individuals wishing to gain valuable training toward a career in academic research in economics or public policy. Fellows are appointed as non-matriculated graduate students and have the opportunity to fully engage in the intellectual life at Stanford University. The fellowship offers tuition, health insurance, and a living stipend. The Program is able to sponsor J-1 visas for fellows who may need one. The [King Center](#), which is part of SIEPR, has a new pre-doctoral program and they can sponsor J-1 visas as well.

[Pre-doctoral research assistant positions](#) at the Princeton University International Economics Section are one-year term positions with the possibility of renewal for a second year, contingent upon continued funding and satisfactory performance. Successful candidates will gain experience working with some of the world's leading researchers in international economics. Pre-doctoral research assistants are expected to assemble and manage data sets, to program and simulate non-linear models, and to assist faculty members in all aspects of their research.

[The Pre-Doctoral Training Program](#) at the Population Studies and Training Center of Brown University provides a demography training program for pre-doctoral graduate students in

affiliated departments, including anthropology, economics, sociology, and public health. This is made available through the International Fellowship for international trainees.

[The Kabir Banerjee Pre-Doctoral Fellowship](#) seeks to expand the representation of researchers from low- and lower-middle-income countries in leading pre-doctoral programs. Successful candidates will receive Weiss Fund endorsement in applying to pre-approved two-year pre-doctoral research positions at leading universities. The fellowship supports candidates with substantial interest and potential for success in an academic career in development economics who otherwise may have limited access to mentorship and training from leading economists.

[Opportunity Insights](#) is a non-partisan, not-for-profit organization based at Harvard University. It conducts scientific research using “big data” on how to improve upward mobility and works collaboratively with local stakeholders to translate these research findings into policy change. They also train the next generation of social scientists and practitioners to improve opportunity for all. They are [recruiting](#) full time pre-doctoral fellows to join their research team.

EUROPE

[Inomics](#) is a site that collates various career opportunities in the European Union (EU) for economists at all levels of training from internships, consultancy positions, research assistantships, PhD candidates, post-docs and professors. Most of the RA positions are at universities in EU member states.

[Predoctoral Research Fellows in Economics](#) at the University of Oxford’s Global Priorities Institute (GPI) conduct economics research within guidelines provided by the Assistant Director of GPI, as well as contributing to the planning of the GPI’s economics research and the organizational development of their research group. They also provide research assistance to GPI researchers and faculty in the Department of Economics. For research assistance, they will try to match pre-doctoral research fellows with a faculty member at the Department of Economics at Oxford with related research interests, or with another economist affiliated with GPI.

The [University of Zurich’s Pre-Doc Program](#) at the Department of Economics is a great opportunity for students to see if a career in economics and academic research is right for them and to prepare them for a PhD in economics. The program targets individuals with a bachelor’s or master’s degree in economics, social sciences, public policy, mathematics, statistics, or a related field. Applicants should have a strong quantitative background, be considering pursuing a PhD in economics, and have an interest in learning cutting-edge research methods.

POSITIONS AT NON-UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONS

[American Institute for Economic Research \(AIER\)'s graduate fellowships](#) are twelve-week programs for graduate students who are working in areas that advance AIER's mission: to affirm free enterprise, economic liberty, property rights, sound money, and legal institutions that shore up the rights of individuals to be free to the extent that their actions do not impinge on the rights of others. Each graduate fellow is expected to make substantive headway on a project, such as a dissertation or thesis, that will directly advance their academic studies.

[The Busara Center for Behavioral Economics](#) is a leading behavioral science organization headquartered in Kenya that believes in a world where evidence-based and context-specific solutions are routinely implemented to address the world's most pressing problems. You can find opportunities [here](#). Experience with Busara is an asset when applying to an economics PhD program, especially if you are interested in behavioral economics.

[Innovations for Poverty Action](#) is a global research and policy nonprofit that discovers and promotes effective solutions to global poverty problems by bringing together researchers and decision-makers. Their work relies heavily on researchers conducting randomized evaluations and so often requires research assistants and associates to help with this work. The experience gained here has proven valuable in making former researcher assistants' PhD applications stand out.

[The Robert S. McNamara PhD Research Fellowship](#) is aimed at pre-docs from developing countries who are World Bank members. Applicants are required to have a master's or be enrolled in a PhD in economics, public policy, political science, data science, statistics, international development, sociology, or mathematics. The program will sponsor a US G-4 visa for successful applicants.

GENERAL INFORMATION ON PRE-DOCTORAL PROGRAMS

[The Economics Pre-Doctoral Fellowship: What is it, and should you apply for one?](#) This article on Medium (published in the Renaissance Economist) explores what exactly pre-doctoral fellowships are, what to consider before applying for one, why they were established, the current landscape in the economics research field, what the data on successful candidates looks like, and links to other research on the efficacy of research assistant positions in preparing students for a PhD in economics.

[Women in Economics and Policy Pre-doc and RA positions guide](#) describes in detail how to put together a strong application for a pre-doctoral position including a CV guide, the type of data test applicants need to take, and interview tips. It also tackles several frequently asked questions.