



THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

CROWN FAMILY SCHOOL OF
SOCIAL WORK, POLICY, AND PRACTICE

Advancing a More Just and Humane Society



THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

DATA SCIENCE
INSTITUTE

Internet Equity
Initiative

Postdoctoral Scholar in Policy Implementation University of Chicago Internet Equity Initiative

About the Unit:

The University of Chicago's Crown Family School of Social Work, Policy, and Practice is dedicated to working toward a more just and humane society through research, teaching, and service to the community. As one of the oldest and most highly regarded graduate schools of social work, The Crown Family School prepares professionals to handle society's most difficult problems by developing new knowledge, promoting a deeper understanding of the causes and human costs of social inequities, and building bridges between rigorous research and the practice of helping individuals, families, and communities to achieve a better quality of life.

About the Internet Equity Initiative:

The Internet Equity Initiative (IEI) is a research partnership between the Data Science Institute, the Department of Computer Science, and the Crown Family School of Social Work, Policy, and Practice at the University of Chicago. We aim to realize equitable, resilient, and sustainable Internet solutions that benefit all communities. By focusing on problem-driven measurement, diverse connectivity options, and social effects, the IEI works to create a more equitable Internet landscape.

Position Summary:

We invite applications for a Postdoctoral Scholar position in the area of public policy implementation, with a specialization in ethnographic and/or other qualitative methods. The initial appointment will be one year with anticipated renewal for a second year.

The Postdoctoral Scholar will contribute to the design and execution of a policy implementation research agenda connected to the University of Chicago Internet Equity Initiative. In collaboration with the PIs and a range of community partners, the Postdoctoral Scholar will define research questions, design methodology, and engage in significant primary data collection, with the goal of creating a research process that has clear value for a diverse set of policy stakeholders at the local, state, and federal levels. The position will work collaboratively with a multidisciplinary research team composed of faculty, staff, students, and community partners focused on digital equity. Successful candidates should be experienced in ethnographic and/or other qualitative research methods and be comfortable working in a mixed-methods research environment. The Postdoctoral Scholar will work as part of the Internet Equity Initiative team under the guidance of principal investigators Professor Nicole Marwell (Crown Family School) and Professor Nick Feamster (Department of Computer Science).

The ideal candidate will have expertise in the study of public policy, particularly the area of policy implementation (as opposed to policy analysis), and be trained in a social scientific or humanistic discipline, including but not limited to Sociology, Anthropology, Political Science, Social Work, Communication, or Public Administration. It is a plus, but not required, for the candidate to be familiar with key issues in digital equity or Internet policy in the United States. While substantively

focused on Internet policy, the position is designed to cultivate research knowledge and skills that are transferable to other areas of policy implementation.

Essential Job Duties:

- Execute on and contribute to the research agendas established by the principal investigators.
- Elaborate research design for study of how Internet policy stakeholders respond to, understand, utilize, or resist the availability of new data designed to assist in policy implementation.
- Develop an understanding of key policy, social, and political issues in the six communities where research will be conducted, including Chicago, Detroit, and four smaller communities in Illinois and Michigan.
- Identify research participants and conduct qualitative research in six targeted communities, including but not limited to participant-observation and qualitative interviews.
- Collaborate with IEI staff on research activities and project coordination.
- Participate in weekly IEI team meetings, including leading on sharing research findings while taking direction from principal investigators on further action.
- Contribute to scholarly publications, research presentations, and future grant proposal opportunities.

QUALIFICATIONS - Qualifications are deemed required or preferred and represent what is needed to effectively perform job.

- Must have completed a PhD in a relevant social science or humanistic discipline (including, but not limited to, Sociology, Anthropology, Political Science, Social Work, Communication, or Public Administration) prior to October 1, 2023
- Must have academic research experience in policy implementation, ethnographic methods, other qualitative methods, or related approaches
- Experience working with a research team and collaborating with diverse populations is a plus
- Experience in research related to and/or people directly impacted by policy issues is a plus

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES - May be representative, but not all-inclusive, of those knowledge, skills, and abilities commonly associated with the job.

- Demonstrated experience with ethnographic and/or other qualitative research methods
- Shows flexibility and problem-solving abilities in the pursuit of research aims
- Ability to collaboratively design and implement a large qualitative study
- Comfortable with independent travel for research activities in urban, suburban and rural communities in Illinois and Michigan
- Ability to prioritize attention among various projects happening simultaneously
- Ability to alternate between autonomy and taking specific direction
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills
- Attention to detail

COMPENSATION

Starting salary for this position will be \$80,000 annually. This is an initial one-year appointment with anticipated renewal for a second year.

This position is primarily a hybrid role with mandatory days in the office as needed. The hybrid arrangement will be made upon hire. Candidates must reside within a reasonable commuting distance of the University of Chicago campus in order to ensure operational effectiveness.

To apply, please submit a cover letter, current CV, writing sample, and list of three references to Professor Nicole Marwell (nmarwell@uchicago.edu). Application review will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled. If you have any questions about the job or the application process, please reach out to Nicole Marwell.

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