



Further Particulars: Research Officer in Inequalities

The Post

Applications are invited from outstanding researchers for a twenty four month research officer post as part of a programme of research on “Politics of Inequality” at the LSE’s International Inequalities Institute. The post will start on 1 October 2020, or as soon as practicable afterwards.

The ILL supports several major research themes. The post holder will work in the Politics of Inequality theme and coordinate closely with the other themes as well as with the AFSEE Atlantic Fellows Programme. The theme descriptions are below

Theme 1: Wealth, Elites and Tax Justice (convenor, Mike Savage)

Until recently, concerns with inequality concentrated on the nature and extent of income inequality, which has been growing in many nations since the 1980s. This field is extensively studied by economists (see for instance Atkinson 2015; Milanovic 2016), though important recent research recognises considerable variability across the globe and that by some metrics income inequality is not rising at the global level (Anand and Segal 2016). Whilst we are cognisant of this work, we will take up a key dimension which has been pioneered by Thomas Piketty’s *Capital in the 21st Century* regarding the significance of wealth inequality. The focus on wealth cross fertilises with that of many ILL researchers (e.g. Hills 2014; Savage 2015) who have seen the accentuation of economic, social and cultural capital as a major feature of recent decades.

The starting point for this theme is therefore that wealth inequality is a major global challenge – with Oxfam’s startling statistic that 8 people own as much wealth as the bottom 50% of the world’s population attracting much critical concern. Our theme focuses on the global dynamics of wealth accumulation – including how offshoring and the strategies of wealthy individuals to avoid paying tax is a powerful driver of global inequality. We also consider how wealth accumulation is implicated in the rise of plutocratic, and sometimes anti-democratic elites, and explore the ways in which such groups may becoming more powerful political agents. Our theme is pathbreaking because of our global coverage, our use of newly available taxation data, the range of qualitative research we are conducting on elites, and our skills in conceptualising and measuring wealth inequality.

The theme will run from April 2019 till September 2022

Theme 2: Inequalities in the Knowledge Economy (convenor, David Soskice)

The information technology revolution has led to huge changes in society. There are great potential benefits including rising productivity, shorter working weeks and rising living standards, but we are a long way from understanding how to harness them inclusively, for the shared benefit of all. This research theme will explore potential responses to the inequalities that have arisen in the labour market, where skills-biased technological change has led to a decline in mid-skill jobs and a polarisation between high and low quality employment. Looking forward, there is concern about future occupational redundancy associated with the development of artificial intelligence; and a corresponding concern over the consequences of



the interplay between technology and globalisation. A key aspect of the research will be investigating the institutional responses to technological changes, including the failure of education systems to meet the increased demand for high skilled labour and sub-optimal investment in research and development. As concentrations of skilled workers and high-wage industries in prosperous cities are increasingly the driver of national economic prosperity, geographic divides in education, employment opportunities, political attitudes and cultural values have been thrown into sharp relief. Discontent with this uneven geography of opportunity is manifest in the rise of populist politics across Europe, the United States and Latin America, challenging the stability of democratic societies. We will develop an internationally comparative, interdisciplinary approach to exploring policy solutions to these fundamental issues, which may include addressing the problems of the quality and availability of education, training and retraining at all levels, geographic and social mobility, as well as the creation of quality employment and careers.

Theme 3: Global Economies of Care (convenor, Beverley Skeggs)

As yet there does not exist a global picture of the global care economy. We do have European studies, studies of forced migration and care work, use of technology in care practices, some financialisation analysis (eg CRESC) and significant health economics analysis (eg NIHR School for Social Care Research, LSE). We also have excellent research on the legal employment issues associated with care (eg Hayes). Compiling and synthesizing this research together is a crucial first stage for building the global picture in order to identify and visualise the infrastructures of care which are varyingly understood as economic, spatial, human, material and institutional mechanisms of support and agency, as well as of control and restriction. It is important to recognize and draw on the research that has been previously undertaken in key areas, to build with and upon it and identify significant gaps.

An economic remodelling will require the quantitative mapping of different scenarios to explore the cost of care within different international spaces. The financialization element will require the financial tracking of the global companies that provide a substantial proportions of care provision. The geo-political aspect will require the collection of qualitative case studies to support the quantitative and gap analysis. The analysis of the social relations and lived experience of care will require a strong theoretical grasp and sensitive qualitative analysis, dependent on the areas and issues identified in the gap analysis. It will be a multi-method, theoretically informed global analysis which will connect with diverse research.

Theme 4: The Politics of Inequality (co-convenors, Armine Ishkanian and Ellen Helsper)

The aim of this theme is to develop research on the forms of resistance to and contestation of inequalities from a global perspective. It will examine a range of civil society actors and forms of activism and campaigning that have emerged from the bottom up to challenge different types of inequalities around the globe, seeking to identify common themes, narratives, practices, and outcomes. It will consider the narratives (and counter- narratives) emerging around inequalities in political discourse, traditional and new media, and citizen interactions and the ways in which resistance to and reproduction of these takes place. The theme will examine the repertoires of action employed by organised movements and by 'ordinary' citizens: focusing on how these develop, change, and travel across regions, the coalitions and alliances which emerge, and the wider social, political, and policy impacts of new and traditional forms of political and civic



action.

The Politics of Inequality theme is committed to -

- Exploring the practices of resistance, mobilisation, and contestation within and across countries for a range of economic and socio-cultural inequalities from a **bottom-up perspective**.
- Adopting an **intersectional lens**, since we acknowledge that people's lived experiences of inequalities are shaped by different vectors of identity and structural patterns of inequality.
- Embracing an **international and comparative** focus.

This theme will draw on the expertise of LSE academics from different Departments and is committed to working in a cross-disciplinary approach. We also aim to work with international partners, including those in the global south.

This theme is linked to the Atlantic Fellows for Social and Economic Equity (AFSEE) programme, which is based in the International Inequalities Institute (III). Given that the AFSEE programme is committed to building a community of people who are "committed to using collective leadership to work towards social and economic justice for all", it is intended that research within this theme will inform the teaching on AFSEE modules, the AFSEE Fellows' projects and MSc dissertations, and that it will seek to engage with and to include the expertise of Fellows.

The precise role of the post-holder within this theme will be negotiated upon appointment. It will include a mixture of independent research projects on some aspect of research relevant to the concerns of the theme, and the ability to collaborate with other theme members on collective projects. The Research Officer/ Fellow will also play a key role in fostering collaboration between the theme and the AFSEE programme. Care will be taken not to overload the post-holder with inappropriate demands and they will only be expected to work on a small number of projects leading to high quality outputs during their tenure.

A more detailed description of the requirements of the post and qualities and background of potential applicants for it are given in the associated Person Specification and Job Description. The Research Officer will be physically located within the Institute.

The LSE International Inequalities Institute

This appointment offers an exciting opportunity to join a multi-disciplinary institute working with some of the leading academics researching and teaching on the key questions raised by different dimensions of inequality.

The Institute was established in 2015 by the LSE in response both to the growing international concern about inequality and its consequences and to the high level of interest across all of the School's departments and disciplines in inequality. The Institute is intended to bring together existing scholars working on different aspects of inequality, to encourage and support new research in the area, to help younger scholars build their careers within the field, to provide a contact and dissemination point for relevant research across the School, and to support cross-disciplinary teaching. This includes an MSc in Inequalities and Social Science and a PhD programme, both of which started in September 2015. It runs a variety of different types of events and has a significant web presence in order to make research public.



The Institute is also home to the Atlantic Fellows for Social and Economic Equity programme designed to harness the LSE's distinctive academic excellence to lead an ambitious global leadership programme addressing inequalities. The collaboration between the III and the AFSEE programme, with Atlantic's global partners will be a beacon of the Atlantic Philanthropies legacy for understanding and addressing international social, cultural and economic inequalities. The AFSEE programme comprises one of seven ground-breaking Atlantic Fellowship programmes which focus on racial, health and social equity through a range of engagements around the world. AFSEE Fellows work together across disciplines and borders to understand the complex causes, nature, and consequences of inequalities and develop solutions for some of the most pressing issues of our time. The programme exposes Fellows to diverse ideas and perspectives, facilitates their participation in outcome-oriented projects, and helps them better understand others and themselves through active engagement in a sustained peer-led community and exposure to critical scholarship. Atlantic Fellows with specific interests and expertise in the theme topics will contribute to the research of the theme, with a particular emphasis on fostering links between research and practical action. They will inform the development of themes, contribute to research projects, and apply the findings generated by the theme to influence policy and practice towards the generation of genuine, systemic solutions to inequalities.

Institute staffing and associates

The Institute's outgoing Director is Professor Mike Savage (Department of Sociology). He works closely with Armine Ishkanian, Executive Director of the Atlantic Fellows for Social and Economic Equity programme.

The III is supported by a Research Committee including

Prof Beverley Skeggs – Convenor of III Research theme 'Global Economies of Care. (Prof Skeggs was the academic director of the AFSEE programme and retains an interest in its research development

Prof David Soskice – Convenor of III Research theme on 'Inequalities in the Knowledge Economy'

Prof Gareth Jones – Geography and Environment, and Director of Latin American and Caribbean Centre

Neil Lee – Associate Professor, Geography and Environment

Insa Koch – Associate Professor, Law

Anna Plomien - Assistant Professor, Gender Studies

Sam Friedman – Associate Professor, Sociology

Jonathan Hopkin – Associate Professor, Government

Prof Ellen Helsper – Professor, Media and communications, Co-Convenor of the III Research Theme the Politics of Inequality

Alpa Shah – Associate Professor, Anthropology

Andy Summers – Assistant Professor, Law

Armine Ishkanian – Associate Professor in Social Policy and Executive Director Atlantic Fellows Programme, Co-Convenor of the III Research Theme the Politics of Inequality

Prof Nicola Lacey - Law

Chana Teeger – Assistant Professor, Methodology

Neil Cummins - Associate Professor, Economic History

Prof Naila Kabeer – International Development

Prof Camille Landais – Economics

Prof Tim Allen – International Development/ Africa Centre

Prof Lucinda Platt – Social Policy.



Other departments and research centres with members affiliated to the Institute include the Departments of International History, Methodology, and Statistics, LSE Cities, the Centre for Economic Performance, and the Grantham Institute.

We organise regular seminars and our own conferences, involving academics, policy-makers and practitioners in relevant fields, in which its research staff are active participants. The Institute aims to engage actively with national and international policy-makers and other users of its research.

The London School of Economics and Political Science

The London School of Economics and Political Science is one of the world's leading centres for research and teaching in the social sciences.

At present it has twenty-one academic departments, five interdisciplinary institutes, and numerous research centres. The subjects taught and researched are all in the sphere of the social sciences, broadly conceived. The School also houses the British Library of Political and Economic Science, one of the finest collections in the world of social science materials. The LSE is an active participant in the nation's public life. Located in central London, the School enjoys a high level of interaction with Westminster, Whitehall, the City, and London's legal and media centres.

The School has an outstanding reputation in all the social sciences. The 2014 Research Excellent Framework assessment of UK universities, carried out by the Higher Education Funding Council for England, judged that it has the highest percentage of world-leading research of any university in the country, topping or coming close to the top of a number other rankings of research excellence.