

INSTITUTE FOR
SOCIAL RESEARCH & DATA INNOVATION



EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

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POST DOCTORAL ASSOCIATE

JOB OPENING ID 346461

JOB DESCRIPTION

The successful candidate for this position will work under the supervision of Dr. [John Robert Warren](#) on projects using 1980-2022 survey, biomarker, and administrative data from the [High School & Beyond](#) (HSB) project.

HSB began in 1980 as a nationally representative probability sample of 30,030 sophomores and 28,240 seniors from 1,015 randomly selected U.S. public and private high schools. HSB was initially designed and funded by the U.S. Department of Education. From the initial sample of 58,270 students, a random subset of 14,825 sophomores and 11,995 seniors has been re-interviewed on multiple occasions. Panelists were born between 1962 and 1965 (and thus were between 56 and 60 in 2021/22). The panel includes random oversamples of racial/ethnic minorities (e.g., ~4,500 Latinx and ~5,000 African Americans). The 1980 student, school, parent, and teacher surveys gathered extensive information on students' backgrounds and their educational contexts, opportunities, and outcomes. Both sophomores and seniors completed standardized multiple-choice assessments of reading, vocabulary, and math. Sophomores also completed assessments in writing, science, and civics, and seniors completed a paired associate test of short-term memory, mosaic recognition assessments of general cognitive ability, and a spatial relations assessment.

All panel members were re-surveyed in 1982, 1984, and 1986; sophomores were re-surveyed in 1992 and 2013; and seniors were re-surveyed in 2015. Follow-ups conducted in the 1980s and in 1992 gathered information about cohort members' educational, employment, and family activities and transitions. The 2013 and 2015 surveys gathered midlife data on health, work, family, and educational outcomes.

We are re-contacting all surviving members of the HSB cohort in 2021-2022 to complete a 40-minute telephone or web survey that measures cognitive functioning and impairment, health, education, and labor force activities. We are also fielding abbreviated proxy surveys for sample members who cannot respond themselves. Sample members who complete surveys are asked to participate in a home health visit to obtain anthropomorphic measures and blood and saliva samples (the latter via an Oragene kit); panelists who do not consent to a home health visit are

sent a mail-back Oragene saliva kit. Fieldwork will end in June 2022. **The successful candidate would have early access to 2021-2022 HSB survey, anthropometric, biomarker, and administrative data and would be part of a team using the data to study the social and biological pathways through which early life factors (especially education and racism) impact cognitive, health, and other outcomes at age ~70.**

The University of Minnesota components of HSB are housed within the [Minnesota Population Center](#) (MPC), which has more than 200 faculty, research staff, and student affiliates from two dozen academic units. Established in 2000 and funded by the National Institutes of Health, MPC cultivates innovative population research by providing a stimulating environment for interdisciplinary exchange, a growing population training program, and research support services designed to develop and nurture promising areas of new population research. Affiliates of the MPC benefit from co-location with the renowned [IPUMS](#) data infrastructure projects, the University of Minnesota's [Life Course Center](#), and the [Minnesota Research Data Center](#) (which is part of the Federal Statistical Research Data Center Network).

Diversity and inclusion are core values of MPC. We aspire to create a team that represents the diversity of our city, our region, and our world, and to create a space that encourages and embraces inclusiveness, equal opportunity, and respect. We strongly encourage women and members of underrepresented groups to apply. This position is H-1B (or J-1) eligible and we are willing to provide visa sponsorship if needed.

This 100% appointment has an annual starting salary of \$57,000+, depending on experience. The successful candidate would devote 80% of their effort to collaborative and independent research related using HSB and 20% of their time to other independent research (e.g., publishing dissertation articles, other ongoing projects). The candidate would ideally begin in Fall 2022 with the initial appointment through June 18, 2023, with continuation up to one more year based on performance.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The postdoctoral associate will collaborate with Dr. Warren and the HSB team to conduct empirical analyses and to develop, write, present, and publish research articles that describe those analyses. The specific topics of the analyses and research will be decided in collaboration with Dr. Warren and the HSB team, but will generally focus on the social and biological pathways through which early life factors (especially education and racism) impact cognitive and health outcomes in later life. As part of these efforts, the postdoctoral associate will meet with Dr. Warren and the HSB team at least once per week.

The successful candidate will also engage more generally in MPC's rich interdisciplinary intellectual environment. This may include attending research seminars and workshops; participating in MPC's research development programming; developing professional connections with other projects based at MPC; and other activities.

QUALIFICATIONS

Required Qualifications

- Doctoral degree in a field relevant to the study of the biological and social pathways through which early life factors (especially education and racism) impact later-life cognition, health, and mortality
- Strong record of scholarly publication on topics of relevance to the above
- Strong quantitative analysis skills, with a minimum of 3 years of programming experience with R, Python, Stata, or similar
- Excellent English skills for academic writing
- Ability to advance science independently and also as part of collaborative teams
- Interest in fostering an inclusive environment and appreciation of differences in the workplace

Preferred Qualifications

- Experience analyzing data from High School and Beyond, the Health and Retirement Surveys, or other cohort studies of aging and the life course
- Interest in the long-term effects of educational contexts, experiences, and outcomes on later-life life cognition, health, and mortality
- Interest in the ways in which racism impacts socioeconomic, health, and cognitive outcomes
- Experience working with a variety of kinds of data (e.g., survey data, spatial data, biomarker data)
- Experience working in highly interdisciplinary working groups

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Applications must be submitted by March 25, 2022, to be included in the Search Committee's initial application review. Applications submitted after this date will be reviewed on a rolling basis. This position will remain open until filled. External candidates can apply directly using the following link: <https://hr.myu.umn.edu/jobs/ext/346461>. Internal candidates can apply directly using the following link: <https://hr.myu.umn.edu/jobs/int/346461>. Or search job opening ID 346461 on the U of MN's job search homepage: <https://humanresources.umn.edu/content/find-job>. Application requirements include a CV and a cover letter describing your interest and qualifications. Questions concerning the application process may be addressed to Alex Lunde, HR & Operations Manager, at isrdi-jobs@umn.edu.

Any offer of employment is contingent upon the successful completion of a background check. Our presumption is that prospective employees are eligible to work here. Criminal convictions do not automatically disqualify finalists from employment.