

MIT Job Description

Job Title: Research Policy Associate I	Position Title: AI Policy Associate
Reports to: Senior AI Policy Manager	% Effort or Wkly Hrs: 100%
Department: Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab	Prepared by: Human Resources

Position Overview:

The [Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab \(J-PAL\)](#) is a global research center working to reduce poverty by ensuring that policy is informed by scientific evidence. J-PAL-affiliated researchers and offices conduct randomized impact evaluations to answer critical questions in the fight against poverty. We collaborate with NGO, the government, and private sector partners to translate research into action, informing scale-ups of programs and policies that have reached more than 850 million people since 2003. Headquartered in the [Economics Department](#) at MIT, J-PAL has seven regional offices worldwide and staff based in almost a dozen countries. Our affiliated researchers include five Nobel laureates in economics, and a number of Clark Medalists and MacArthur fellows. Our host university MIT is itself world-renowned for both its education and cutting-edge research. MIT welcomes people from all walks of life to bring their talent, ideas, and experience to our community. What is less well known is that MIT is also ranked among the [best places to work](#).

J-PAL has launched an initiative at the intersection of Global Development and Artificial Intelligence, called [Project AI Evidence](#) (PAIE), focused on evaluating and scaling transformative applications of AI in development programs. J-PAL is recruiting a Policy Associate under this initiative to play a key role in facilitating AI-related research by J-PAL affiliates and transforming relevant research into actionable poverty alleviation policies around the world. Staff will connect the dots between economics, AI, and policy and must be passionate about working with organizations to form partnerships for evidence-informed AI-based development policy.

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The position will be based in Cambridge, MA, at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology with two in-person work days per week. Visa sponsorship is not available for this position. Only applications following all instructions at the bottom of this page will be considered.

Responsibilities:

Your work requires a breadth of knowledge and a depth of understanding to support J-PAL's growing AI policy efforts. As a Policy Associate, your primary tasks will involve supporting the J-PAL AI co-chairs and the team to implement J-PAL's strategy for expanding our work in AI through analysis, communication, and internal process management and improvement.

Sector Specialization and Initiative Project Management (45%): Develop in-depth knowledge of using AI to solve complex global development problems across J-PAL's sectors (Agriculture, Crime, Violence, & Conflict, Education, Environment, Energy, & Climate Change, Finance, Firms, Gender, Health, Labor Markets, Social Protection, and Political Economy & Governance) and provide evidence support to policymakers. The AI Policy Associate will also have the opportunity to support and manage the administration of an AI-specific, ongoing competitive research fund by hosting specific rounds of funding competitions, processing grant proposals, coordinating proposal review with researchers, and supporting partnership development between implementing groups and research affiliates to spark new research projects.

Evidence Communication and Dissemination (30%): Write publications that "translate" economic research into lessons for policymakers around the world. Create materials for AI firms to learn how to evaluate their products and to learn about interventions that prove effective. Associates will have the opportunity to support senior staff to create materials for policy outreach, including publications, presentations, grant proposals, donor reporting, policy memos, blogs, social media content and newsletters, and website content among other sector-specific work. Associates have the opportunity to help organize events and further their communication skills by presenting at conferences and participating in meetings with policymakers and partner organizations. Associates will also write, publish, and disseminate evaluation summaries.

Other (25%): Have the opportunity to support J-PAL's overall mission in a number of ways. These can include supporting the work of a functional team (policy writing, cost-effectiveness analysis), supporting a particular policy partnership, and performing internal tasks such as knowledge management, supporting recruitment and hiring, or internal training and onboarding

Supervision Received:

AI Policy Associate will report to the AI Policy Lead.

Supervision Exercised:

None.

Benefits

As a member of the MIT community, you benefit from more than just your salary. J-PAL hires highly qualified staff and rewards them accordingly. Total compensation packages are competitive for the non-profit international development field with excellent MIT

benefits, including comprehensive health insurance, a 401(k) match and pension-based retirement plan, tuition assistance, commuter benefits, MIT community discounts, a generous vacation policy, and more. We like working at MIT and think you will too. J-PAL also values work-life balance and offers flexible work days throughout the year; Cambridge-based staff are required to work in-person at least two days per week.

Qualifications & Skills:

Your technical expertise, strong communication and organizational skills, passion for translating research into action, and interest in international development make you an ideal candidate for the AI Policy Associate.

Education:

You hold at least a bachelor's degree (for example, a major in Economics, or a major in Computer Science with a minor in Economics). You must have significant training in economics, including intermediate-level economics and econometrics. You must also have a basic understanding of how Machine Learning works, ideally with coursework in Machine Learning, Algorithms, Natural Language Processing, or related topics. Do you have a demonstrated academic interest in international development and public policy and/or international experience? Even better.

Experience: 0-2 years of relevant full- or part-time work experience. Full-time work experience includes a relevant job or a master's degree. Part-time experience includes related internships in research and/or policy work. You may be a recent or soon-to-be graduate with related internships, or you may have previous experience in research and/or development work. J-PAL strongly prefers candidates who have some experience using AI tools in their academic or professional work.

Skills: You are comfortable with intermediate-level economics and econometrics, especially randomized evaluation methodology. You understand the basics of Machine Learning, and you are comfortable discussing key AI-related concepts (e.g., supervised versus unsupervised learning, metrics related to evaluating the robustness of specific AI models, AI ethics) with a range of technical and non-technical audiences. Additionally, you are comfortable working in or learning computer applications, including Google Suite, and Salesforce. English language fluency is required. Knowledge of Arabic, Bahasa Indonesia, French, Portuguese, Spanish, or other languages spoken in our regions of work are a plus.

Communication: You are detail-oriented and have advanced writing skills. You understand how to communicate policy lessons from technical academic research in ways that policymakers and practitioners understand. You are precise, clear, and creative.

Organization: You are a strategic thinker. You can handle multiple projects at once, meet deadlines, and effectively manage your time.

Cultural competencies: You are comfortable and adept at working in a diverse and multicultural work environment, with colleagues, partners and policymakers from around the world. You display sensitivity, adaptability, and inclusivity in your engagement with people from diverse backgrounds including age, ability, culture, gender, nationality, race and

ethnicity, religion, sexuality, socioeconomic status, and other identities.

Attitude: You love learning. You are passionate about international development policy and the rigorous research that informs it. You are agile, adaptable, self-motivated, hardworking, and collaborative.

Location: This position is based in Cambridge, MA and will require coming to the office in-person at least two days every week (currently those days are Tuesdays and Wednesdays for all staff). The other 3 days staff can opt to work from anywhere. Hybrid policies are subject to change annually. We greatly value in-office presence and therefore this position, similar to others at J-PAL Global, is not eligible for full-time remote work.

Travel: Some travel required (~10% of time)

Compensation: Salaries for most new employees are set at the starting point / lower end of this range.

Pay Range Minimum: \$69,294

Pay Range Maximum: \$74,624