

University of Maine
Job Description

TITLE: Research Associate – Regional Economic Development
DEPARTMENT: Center for Research on Sustainable Forests
DATE: February 2025
REPORTS TO: Associate Professor

Purpose: The Research Associate will contribute to impactful research that supports the development of evidence-based policies and strategies for economic growth across the state.

Essential Duties & Responsibilities:

- **Economic Research & Analysis:** Conduct applied economic research and quantitative analysis on regional economic trends, labor markets, industry sectors, and policy impacts across Maine. Use a variety of tools, including IMPLAN, Lightcast, and bibliometric analysis, to develop insights on economic performance and growth.
- **Data Management & Reporting:** Collect, clean, and analyze large datasets from both public and proprietary sources to create actionable economic models. Present findings through detailed reports, presentations, and data visualizations.
- **Regional Economic Modeling:** Utilize IMPLAN and other regional economic modeling tools to assess the impact of investments, policy changes, and other economic variables on local economies. Develop regional input-output models to understand inter-industry relationships and employment effects.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Collaborate with government agencies, economic development organizations, and private-sector stakeholders to provide data-driven recommendations on regional economic development strategies.
- **Policy Analysis:** Evaluate the potential effects of proposed policies on regional economic conditions, workforce development, and industry sectors. Produce reports and policy briefs summarizing key findings and recommending actionable solutions.
- **Data Visualization & Communication:** Develop compelling visualizations using tools such as Python (matplotlib, seaborn) and Tableau to communicate complex economic concepts and data insights to both technical and non-technical audiences.
- **Continuous Learning & Development:** Stay updated on the latest trends in regional economic development, economic modeling tools, and data analysis methodologies. Contribute to internal knowledge sharing and capacity building.

Knowledge & Skill Qualifications:

Required:

- Minimum of a Master's degree in Economics.
- At least 2-3 years of professional experience in economic research, regional economic development, or a related field.
- Extensive working knowledge and hands-on experience with Lightcast, IMPLAN, Tableau and economic modeling techniques.
- Strong proficiency in Stata and Python for data analysis.
- Practical experience conducting bibliometric analysis and utilizing econometric techniques to analyze economic trends and impacts.

- Deep understanding of the Maine economy, including its key industries (e.g., tourism, manufacturing, natural resources, healthcare, etc.), demographic trends, and regional economic disparities.
- Familiarity with regional labor market analysis, and policy impact assessments.
- Excellent data visualization skills, with the ability to translate complex economic data into clear, digestible reports and visualizations.
- Experience of behavioral economic experiments.
- Knowledge of AI research areas.
- Strong communication skills, including the ability to present research findings to diverse audiences (including policymakers, stakeholders, and the general public).

Preferred:

- Experience working with economic development agencies or regional planning organizations.
- Knowledge of other software such as GIS packages.
- Familiarity with Maine-specific economic development initiatives, resources, and organizations.

Supervisory Responsibility: None

Work Environment: Work may be performed in a typical office setting.

Work Year: This is a full-time, fiscal-year position.

Work Schedule: Normal University of Maine business hours are Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Due to the nature of the position, work beyond regular hours (to include evenings and weekends) will be necessary to meet the requirements of the position. The employee shall establish regular office hours and in consultation with the supervisor, adjust the work schedule as appropriate.

Position Type: Soft-money funded, contingent on external funding and satisfactory performance.

Schedule for Evaluation: In accordance with the UMPSA agreement.

Job Family/Salary Grade: 15/04.

Appropriate background checks are required.

All UMS employees are required to comply with applicable policies and procedures, as well as to complete applicable workplace related screenings, and required employee trainings, such as Information Security, Safety Training, Workplace Violence, and Sexual Harassment.