

Job Description

Research Associate / Senior Research Associate

Data Science

Organisation Profile:

Dvara Research is an independent, non-partisan, not-for-profit policy research institution based in India. Its mission is to ensure that every low-income household and small enterprise has access to suitable financial services and social security through a range of channels that enable them to use these services securely and confidently.

Since 2008, Dvara Research has worked extensively on financial inclusion and social protection in India, engaging with these issues from policy, regulatory, market and practitioner perspectives. Our work combines rigorous empirical research with policy analysis to generate evidence that informs institutions, regulators, and policymakers.

About the Position:

We are looking to hire a Research Associate / Senior Research Associate to strengthen Dvara Research's capacity to use data and quantitative methods across its research portfolio. The position will report to the Practice Head, Financial Systems Design, and work closely with researchers across the organisation to translate research questions into appropriate empirical strategies, work with diverse datasets, generate robust quantitative evidence, and communicate findings effectively to both technical and non-technical audiences.

The role will involve working with a wide range of data, including large-scale household surveys, administrative and transactional datasets, geospatial data, satellite/night-time lights data, and other publicly available and proprietary datasets.

Position Details:

Designation: Research Associate / Senior Research Associate

Appointment Type: Fixed-term, 2-year contract

Extendibility: Extendable, depending on project requirements and performance

Start Date: As soon as possible, but no later than 4th January 2027

Location: Remote, within India [With a preference for Bangalore or Chennai based candidates]

Roles and Responsibilities

1. Translate research questions into empirical strategies

- A. Work with researchers and project teams to translate substantive research questions into well-defined analytical and empirical problems.
- B. Identify the data, variables and analytical approaches required to answer specific research questions.
- C. Assess the suitability, limitations and quality of different data sources and clearly document assumptions and methodological choices.
- D. Where appropriate, combine multiple datasets and data sources to construct new analytical datasets and indicators.

2. Conduct quantitative analysis

- A. Undertake quantitative analysis using appropriate methods ranging from descriptive statistics and exploratory data analysis to multivariate regression, causal inference, panel and time-series analysis, and other econometric techniques.
- B. Apply statistical and machine-learning methods, including supervised and unsupervised learning, where they are appropriate to the research question.
- C. Work with diverse forms of data, including household and individual-level surveys, administrative data, transactional data, geospatial data and satellite/night-time lights data.
- D. Conduct robustness checks, sensitivity analyses and other diagnostics necessary to assess the reliability of findings.
- E. Develop reproducible analytical workflows and maintain clear documentation of data processing and analytical procedures.

3. Generate and communicate evidence

- A. Identify patterns, relationships and trends in data and translate them into meaningful research findings.
- B. Develop clear and effective data visualisations to communicate results to technical and non-technical audiences.
- C. Contribute quantitative analysis, figures, tables and methodological inputs to research reports, policy briefs, presentations and academic outputs.
- D. Present analytical findings clearly, including explaining methodological choices, limitations and implications for the broader research question.

The Distinction between Research Associate and Senior Research Associate

The Research Associate will primarily contribute to quantitative research under the direction of project leads and senior researchers. The role will involve executing analytical tasks, preparing and managing datasets, applying established analytical methodologies, producing visualisations and contributing to research outputs. The Research Associate is expected to develop increasing independence in selecting methods, interpreting results and contributing to research design.

The Senior Research Associate (SRA) is expected to take substantially greater ownership of the quantitative components of research projects. In addition to undertaking complex analysis, the SRA will independently frame analytical approaches, assess methodological trade-offs, guide researchers on quantitative research design, review analytical outputs, and lead quantitative workstreams where appropriate. The SRA may also mentor junior colleagues and help strengthen Dvara Research's organisation-wide quantitative capabilities and data infrastructure.

Expected Skills and Competencies

Quantitative and technical skills

- Strong foundations in mathematics, statistics and econometrics, with formal coursework or professional experience in quantitative methods.
- Proficiency in at least one statistical programming language or package such as R, Stata, Python, or SPSS, and proficiency in data visualisation using tools such as Tableau, Power BI, or equivalent tools is desirable.

- Experience working with large, complex and/or heterogeneous datasets and undertaking data cleaning, transformation and analysis.
- Strong analytical and critical-thinking abilities, with the capacity to approach problems from first principles and develop theoretically sound and practically implementable solutions.
- Strong attention to detail and a commitment to analytical rigour, data quality and reproducibility. Familiarity with version control and documentation practices.
- Ability to interpret quantitative findings in the context of broader economic, institutional and policy questions.
- Ability to communicate quantitative analysis clearly and precisely, both orally and in writing. Ability to adapt the presentation of analytical findings to different audiences, ranging from technical researchers to policymakers and other non-technical stakeholders.
- Ability to work effectively in multidisciplinary teams and contribute constructively to collective problem-solving.
- Exposure to machine-learning methods is desirable, particularly for candidates applying for the SRA role.
- Ability to independently identify appropriate methodologies and recognise the limitations of different analytical approaches, especially for candidates applying for the SRA role.\
- Experience in areas relevant to Dvara Research's research portfolio is a plus.

Minimum Qualifications and Experience

Education: Master's degree in economics, mathematics, statistics, public policy, data science or a related quantitative discipline.

Research Associate: Minimum 2 years of relevant professional experience.

Senior Research Associate: Minimum 5 years of relevant professional experience, with demonstrated ability to independently lead quantitative research or analytical workstreams.

Remuneration and Location: We will offer competitive remuneration commensurate with qualifications and experience. This is a remote position open to candidates based in India through with a preference for candidates (willing to be) based out of Bangalore or Chennai for more regular interactions. The role will require periodic travel for internal and external meetings, typically once every couple of months.

Application Instructions

Interested candidates may send their CV and cover letter to jobs.research@dvara.com, with the subject line:

"Data Scientist – [Your Name]"

Please indicate in your application whether you are applying for the Research Associate or Senior Research Associate position.

We will update all candidates within 15 working days of receiving their application and on subsequent stages. However, we won't provide personalised feedback unless a candidate reaches the interview stage.