PREDOC

PATHWAYS TO RESEARCH AND DOCTORAL CAREERS

@predoc_org
PREDOC works to broaden and diversify the academic pipeline in the quantitative social sciences

Pre-docs, also called full-time RAs, work closely with faculty in the quantitative social sciences on faculty research

Positions last one to two years before pre-docs move, most often, into a PhD program in the social sciences

PREDOC was founded Summer of 2020 when the largest pre-doc employers began discussing best practices for managing pre-docs

Over 39 universities and research institutions are part of PREDOC

More than 150 ads (for over 400 positions) were posted to PREDOC.org, with its 73,000 visitors, in AY2020

PREDOC organizes the only conference for pre-docs working in the quantitative social sciences
PREDOC EXECUTIVE TEAM

MARIONETTE HOLMES, SPELMAN COLLEGE
Chair of Economics and Associate Professor

GITA JOHAR, COLUMBIA BUSINESS SCHOOL
Vice Dean for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and Meyer Feldberg Professor of Business

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Director of Diversity and Inclusion Programs

RAY REAGANS, MIT SLOAN SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT
Associate Dean for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and Alfred P. Sloan Professor of Management

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PREDOC MEMBERS

- J-PAL
- The Brookings Institution
- Carnegie Mellon University
- Columbia University
- Cornell University
- The Federal Reserve System
- Harvard University
- Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- National Bureau of Economic Research
- New York University
- Northwestern University
- Princeton University
- Stanford University
- University of California Berkeley
- University of California, Los Angeles
- University of Chicago
- University of Florida
- University of Houston
- University of Michigan
- University of Pennsylvania
- University of Texas at Austin
- University of Southern California
- Yale University
Addressing the pipeline problem

Three transformative programs

**PREDOC education** provides free-of-charge courses, stipends, and the hardware and software required for courses and will eliminate the preparatory gap between candidates.

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**Research assistantship and mentorship** identifies, trains, and provides mentorship to high-quality Research Assistants by matching them with PREDOC faculty members.

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**P-squared program** hires graduates from colleges and universities with large URM populations as pre-docs at PREDOC institutions, cohorting students each year to foster community and a sense of belonging while working with PREDOC faculty.
An emerging pathway

The PREDOC consortium has identified a recent and fundamental shift in the arc of the academic career that further challenges the ability of students with backgrounds under-represented in the social sciences to successfully start an academic career. This shift, however, also provides an opportunity to expand the talent pipeline to PhD programs to include under-represented populations. PREDOC will make this expansion possible.
WORK TO DATE

PHASE 1, ELIMINATING
INFORMATIONAL GAPS
Phase 1 aimed to eliminate the informational gaps between students at top institutions and those who were not. PREDOC accomplished this by concentrating resources on our website, founding a series of informational sessions across the United States, and forging relationships with universities and institutions to raise awareness.

PHASE 2, DECREASING
EDUCATIONAL GAPS
Phase 2 strategically leveraged the flow of students to the predoc.org site to decrease the educational gaps between different candidates. This included rolling out a suite of resources on the PREDOC website about why to complete a pre-doc and how to prepare for these positions, including advice on tackling data tasks, a common application component.

PHASE 3, EXPANDING THE
PIPELINE
Phase 3 introduces new programs designed to channel URM talent into the quantitative social sciences. Our efforts are informed by interviews with leadership, faculty, and students from several MSIs, HBCUs, and other organizations focused on expanding the profession.
ACCOMPLISHMENTS

CAPTURING A UNIVERSE OF NEW POSITIONS
PREDOC has successfully captured the universe of pre-doctoral positions with over 150 ads posted to our website, from which over 400 pre-doctoral researchers were hired. The median number of clicks on PREDOC ads was over 450 for AY2020–21.

CREATING A NEW RESOURCE
Since its launch in October 2020, PREDOC.org has had over 73,000 visits, 30,000 visitors, and 10,000 return visitors. We have also captured the number 1 and 2 search positions on Google when searching the term pre-doc, funneling interested searchers toward our opportunities and educational pages.

EMPOWERING THE NEXT GENERATION
Since its start in Summer 2020, PREDOC has held 15 events engaging 17 faculty at 10 institutions, including the only conference dedicated to preparing pre-docs for research careers, which drew over 250 participants. This summer, we will also launch our first educational course focusing on social science analytics.
TESTIMONIALS

CURRENT PHD STUDENT
The skills I learned as a pre-doc have been incredibly helpful. I learned technical skills working with big data that made me a better coder. The other key for me was working on a team, which taught me research is more fun when it’s collaborative, which I’ve carried forward.

CURRENT PRE-DOC
It was exciting that over the course of the pre-doc, my faculty supervisor gave me more and more responsibility. I went from wrangling data in the beginning to being involved in setting a research agenda by the end of my time as a pre-doc. That was invaluable.

CURRENT UNDERGRAD
Attending a PREDOC information session with Rahuram Rajan was absolutely enlightening, and I’m even more compelled to start this journey in academia.
OUR 2021-22 OBJECTIVES

ACCESS

Remove the main frictions that keep qualified candidates from being able to prepare for pre-doc opportunities and/or pursue a PhD. This includes removing financial and certification frictions through offering free course tuition and stipends as well as opening access to faculty mentorship by opening research assistant positions that can ameliorate certification issues.

RESOURCES

Be the first resource faculty supervisors turn to when they have questions related to supervising and mentoring the pre-docs they work with. PREDOC will build this reputation by offering a series of trainings and additional resources related to best practices in hiring, managing, and mentoring pre-docs while also developing a menu of diversity and inclusion programing our members can request be hosted at their institution.

STAFFING

Begin staffing and formalizing PREDOC's efforts. Thus far, PREDOC has made a great deal of progress thanks to the generous donation of time of a core group of committed individuals. This year, PREDOC will hire a director who will bring online the impressive suite of programs and opportunities we're planning for the next academic year.
GET INVOLVED

FUND
Engage with us in your grant-giving cycles and request proposals to fund organizational projects. Contributions can be earmarked solely for the annual conference or for certain Phase-3 activities.

HOST
Partner with us on an informational session for students, faculty, or staff to learn more about these positions and a research career in the quantitative social sciences.

JOIN
PREDOC membership is not exclusively for schools who already hire pre-docs. Consider joining the PREDOC consortium to take advantage of its innovative suite of resources and to connect students directly with faculty looking for research assistance.
THANK YOU!

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Financial sponsorship | give@predoc.org
Membership inquiries | partner@predoc.org
Academic inquiries | advisor@predoc.org