

ISER Research Visitor Policy

5/9/19

The aim and scope

At the heart of ISER research is a multi-disciplinary and collaborative approach, whether it is with other colleagues at the Institute, other members of the University of Essex, or with universities and research institutes across the UK and the rest of the world. At ISER we are open to new ideas, complementary expertise and understanding and are always looking to seize new opportunities to work with others to generate and disseminate high quality, innovative research outputs.

The aim of our Visitor Programme is to

- promote research links between ISER and other institutions and researchers worldwide,
- promote use of our research infrastructure resources (especially the BHPS, Understanding Society and EUROMOD) amongst a wider audience,
- complement the skills of ISER researchers and broaden and expand the range of our expertise and
- provide a net boost to ISER research performance.

As part of their research visits, visitors:

- will be provided with (shared) office space, a networked PC or terminal and access to ISER's research infrastructure resources;
- have a chance to interact and discuss their research with ISER staff and students;
- can attend ISER's seminar series and participate in regular meetings of the various internal research groups;
- can present their research in a seminar (subject to available slots);
- can submit papers (relating to their visit) to the ISER Working Paper series.

General requirements

ISER does not charge any fees for visits but visitors are generally expected to be self-funded. At times there may also be paid visiting schemes available to specifically support visits to ISER. A visiting position is offered for a defined period and does not constitute an offer of employment with the University of Essex. Visitors cannot be employees or students of the University of Essex. An applicant must hold at least a Master's degree or have equivalent experience.

Applications for research visits are accepted throughout the year though it is strongly recommended to apply at least 3-6 months in advance, depending on the duration of the visit. There are constraints on office space, which restrict the number of offers made for a given period, regardless of the quality of applications. Research visits typically last from 1 week to 3 months, though longer visits may also be accepted on an exceptional basis.

Application guidelines and assessment criteria

To apply for a research visit, the following documents need to be sent to the Visitor Coordinator by email (unless specified otherwise in a specific call):

- a full CV, specifying applicant's professional email and address at applicant's home institution and the names of two academic referees who could be contacted;
- a research proposal of 1,000-2,500 words outlining the research planned during the visit;
- a covering letter stating
 - how the visit will benefit the applicant and contribute to ISER activities;
 - whether the applicant is seeking any ISER funding (subject to open calls);
 - the preferred duration and time of visit;
- a proof of current employment or studies and a photocopy of a valid ID.

ISER aims to review applications and inform applicants of the decision within 6 weeks. The key aspects, which will be considered are:

- how well the proposed research matches ISER broad interests,
- how likely it is that the visit will be of benefit to the applicant,
- whether there is a willing host among the ISER staff,
- whether there is office space available.

There is no presumption that 'senior' researchers are preferred to 'junior' researchers.

Further particulars

Successful applicants will need to agree with the terms and conditions set out in a formal invitation letter requesting the applicant:

- to be present in ISER for the duration of the visit,
- to complete and sign a computing form and comply with ISER's information security rules,
- to provide a short report (2-3 sides of A4) at the end of the visit summarising activities and achievements (in case of visits longer than 2 weeks),
- to acknowledge the research visit in any research outputs directly benefiting from the visit.

Where a visitor requires access to data stored within the UKDA, they should ensure that they submit an application for that data well before their visit commences. Failure to do so will result in delayed access to those data, which can be substantial.

Where a visitor requires access to specific ISER data resources, they should clearly define what these are (where possible) so that access can be arranged prior to the visit. As for data held within the UKDA, failure to apply for access in good time may well lead to delays in access being granted.

Internal procedures and roles

- All visits require the approval of VISITOR COORDINATOR and HOST and, in case of seeking ISER funding, the person in charge of that funding. Longer visits (more than 3 months) need to be further approved by RESEARCH DIRECTOR.
 - application documents (see above) are not required from prospective visitors already actively collaborating with the ISER staff, unless seeking funding from ISER.
- VISITOR COORDINATOR
 - handles all visitor enquires and applications,
 - identifies a suitable HOST (with the help of RESEARCH DIRECTOR if not straightforward),
 - informs applicants of decisions regarding their applications (and their HOST and VISITOR ADMINISTRATOR if the decision is positive),
 - issues formal invitations and letters of confirmations (when required),
 - keeps a log of visitor enquiries and application decisions,
 - maintains and updates the visitor website,
 - reviews and revises RESEARCH VISITOR POLICY.
- HOST (or SPONSOR)
 - welcomes the visitor on their arrival, arranges to meet with VISITOR ADMINISTRATOR for the Welcome Pack and office keys and shows the person around,
 - helps the visitor to get engaged with the ISER staff,
 - is willing to discuss visitor's research and progress on a regular basis,
 - agrees with SEMINAR ORGANISER on the suitable date and time for visitor's presentation either in a regular or special seminar and, in the latter case, sends the seminar announcement and prepares the seminar room for presentation.
- VISITOR ADMINISTRATOR
 - handles visitor office bookings,
 - provides Information Security, computing forms and obtains Right to Work information if required,
 - liaises with HR and ISER IT to provide computing access,
 - provides visitors with the Welcome Pack, office keys (subject to the visitor presenting a valid ID) and collects the keys on their departure,
 - maintains an up-to-date list of all current and upcoming visits on the intranet,
 - maintains ISER Security Record for visitors
 - provides information on new visits in the current month for Director's Update.
- SEMINAR ORGANISER sends announcements of visitor seminars in ISER's regular seminar series and prepares seminar rooms for presentations.
- RESEARCH DIRECTOR makes the final decision regarding visits longer than 3 months.
- DIRECTOR approves revisions to RESEARCH VISITOR POLICY and announces new visitors in General Meetings.