**Frequently Asked Questions:**

* ***Is there an application fee?*** No, there is no fee associated with this application.
* ***Is this a paid position? If so, what is the salary? Does this cover health insurance? Does this fellowship come with any other benefits?***The position comes with a stipend. The stipend is competitive with other predoctoral fellowships and will be sufficient to cover living expenses in Philadelphia. The position comes with student benefits, including health insurance.
* ***Will a person in this position be considered a student, assistant, or an employee? To that end, is this a full-time position?*** This is a full-time student position. Students will earn credits through some traditional coursework and applied learning on research projects. As with all applied research on international development, that work will be a combination of applied research and administrative support. The program qualifies matriculants for an F-1 student visa, which Penn will sponsor.
* ***Will Penn cover the cost of my flights and embassy visa fee?***PDRI-DevLab will cover up to $1,500, which can be applied to the cost of flights and/or embassy visa fees.
* ***Will Penn/the lab sponsor visa? If so, what visa will the person be on? Will Penn help with visa transfer in instances when applicants are already in the US on various visas (i.e., J1, F1, OPT, H1-B)?***See above.
* ***What is the start date? How long is this appointment?*** We are accepting applications for pre-doctoral research fellowship ready to start in the Fall semester (September 2025). However, we are also open to applicants starting in the Spring semester (January 2025). Of course, some of this will depend on visa processing times. We expect the position to last for 1-2 years.
* ***Is the knowledge of programming languages necessary to be considered?*** Our work is heavily focused on quantitative and computational social science research, so we're especially interested in candidates with some background in quantitative methods and/or familiarity with computational tools (R/Python/etc). While an extensive background is not required, successful candidates should show a willingness and ability to develop these skills quickly.
* ***Do I need to have a social science background?***No. However, we are a social science lab, so the coursework and applied research will be social scientific. Applicants with backgrounds in medicine, business, etc. are welcome as long as they can display a strong interest in moving into the social sciences.
* ***What transcripts should be submitted?*** Please include any transcripts associated with degrees from an institution of higher education. This will include any college or university transcripts at the BA/BS or MA/MS level.
* ***Are there any requirements for professional experience, such as number of years of professional experience, field of that experience, etc).*** No. However, professional experience is valued and should be discussed in your letter of application and/or statement of research interest (if the experience is relevant to your research interests).
* ***Are candidates who did not get their degrees from universities in English speaking countries required to take TOEFL?*** No,candidates are not required to take TOEFL. However, candidates will be expected to complete a video call interview in English, and they may be asked to do a language assessment at a later stage of the interview process.
* ***Can I have a video call?***Unfortunately, given the volume of applications we cannot accommodate having individual video calls. Please see the pre-recorded video linked from the predoc webpage for any additional queries you might have.

For any other questions, please feel free to contact Sandy Fairclough at [sandrafa@sas.upenn.edu](mailto:sandrafa@sas.upenn.edu).