Part-Time Research Assistant I

The Department of Land Economy is seeking to appoint one part-time Research Assistant to work on a sub-project: *Psychological frictions and incomplete adoption of mobile banking: Evidences from a randomized control trial experiment*. It is supported by a ESRC-NSFC research project *Nudging Towards a Better Financial Future: Applying Behavioural Insights in the Development of Financial Systems in Rural China*.

**Abstract:** The failure to use mobile banking is especially puzzling given that conventional costs of use appear to be low and the benefits, for many, are substantial. In the extant studies, factors that affect the mobile banking adoption include the perceived ease of use, usefulness, risk and financial cost, compatibility with lifestyle and device, consumer trust in mobile banking, social and cultural factors, and a range of demographic factors (Crabbe et al., 2009). Barriers to the take-up and usage of mobile banking can go beyond the above-mentioned variables. It has been increasingly challenged by recent work that individuals may fail to take an action that is in their long-run best interest due to cognitive, motivational, and emotional limits to decision-making (Currie, 2006). If existing barriers to mobile banking use, particularly amongst those of high need, are because of “psychological frictions”, then encouraging the usage by reducing these barriers would likely improve the user’s welfare. However, there are few inferences drawn about the importance of psychological frictions in accounting for the low use in mobile banking. This study sets out to fill this gap by using a randomized controlled trial experiment to increase the use of mobile banking in urban-rural China. By cooperating with a rural and commercial bank in China, we randomly provide bank account users one-off and regular information nudges (i.e., social information and functional information) and evaluate their responses in the use of mobile banking in the short run and long run. Specifically, we will investigate 1) whether information nudges improve the adoption and usage of mobile banking among bank account users, 2) how long do the effects last and 3) whether the effects differentially manifest across individuals.

**Keywords:** Field experiment, imperfect information, social influence, randomized control trial, mobile banking, financial inclusion

**Job descriptions:** Literature review, write academic report and data analysis

**Deliveries:** An excel database of relevant literature, a literature review (a minimum of 4,000 words) and a review on financial inclusion (a minimum of 2,000 words)

**Expect duration:** to work about 10 hours per week and to receive £13.76 per hour

**Start date:** 15 January 2019 or as soon as possible thereafter

The post would enable an early career researcher to gain experience in several interlinked disciplines, including behavioural economics and household finance. We also encourage you to think outside the box and develop new studies based on our unique database. Contract extension will be considered for excellent assistance.

For information about the project please visit:  
https://www.crerc.landecon.cam.ac.uk/research/research-1/a-better-financial-future.

To apply for the post, please send a cover letter and a CV to the Principal Investigator of the project, Dr. Helen Bao (hxb20@cam.ac.uk).