

Student Research Assistant (Wissenschaftliche Hilfskraft)

Economics, Media Analysis & Large Language Models (LLMs)

Alfred Weber Institute for Economics | Heidelberg University

Prof. Dr. Prachi Srivastava is seeking a motivated and independent Student Research Assistant for an ongoing research project, starting **as soon as possible**.

Working hours: 40 hours/month

Duration: 6 months (240 hours total)

Application deadline: 8 November 2026

About the Project

The project investigates how economic developments are portrayed in US television news and newspapers, and how media narratives shape households' economic expectations.

Using transcripts from seven major US news channels (including Fox News, CNN, and MSNBC) and US newspapers, we will apply **Large Language Models (LLMs)** to analyse economic narratives, identify talk show guests and discussion topics, and construct indices of media sentiment on inflation, labor markets, and broader economic conditions.

Responsibilities

- Cleaning and processing large-scale media datasets using Python.
- Applying LLMs (OpenAI/ChatGPT and [Ollama](#)) for automated text analysis.
- Identifying television programs, invited guests, their affiliations, and discussion topics.
- Classifying economic narratives and constructing sentiment indices.
- Independently exploring new methods and improving research workflows.

Requirements

- Good knowledge of **Python and LLM-based text analysis**.
- Ability to handle large datasets and solve technical problems independently.
- Strong analytical skills, creativity, reliability, and critical thinking.

The position is particularly suitable for **Master's students in Economics, Data Science, Computer Science, or related fields**, but excellent candidates with relevant experience are also welcome. Familiarity with US media, NLP, or economic research is an advantage but not required.

What We Offer

Hands-on experience with **LLMs, Python, and large-scale data analysis** in academic economic research, with opportunities to develop independent research skills relevant for Master's theses, PhD applications, and careers in data science and AI.

Application

Please email the following by **30 October 2026**:

- **CV** and a brief explanation of your interest and relevant skills.
- **An example of relevant work, if available** (e.g., Python code, GitHub repository, or LLM project).

Email: prachi.srivastava@awi.uni-heidelberg.de

Subject: Research Assistant Application – LLMs and Media Research – [Your Name]

Note: A Bachelor's degree certificate, transcript of records, and proof of Heidelberg University enrollment may be requested later for administrative purposes. These are not required for the initial application.

Prof. Dr. Prachi Srivastava

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