

# CHINEMELU OKAFOR

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**Research Interests** Comparative politics; political economy; public policy; economic development; economic history; MSME development in emerging markets; international economics and trade

**Education** **Harvard University** Cambridge, MA  
Ph.D. Government September 2021 - Present

**Princeton University** Princeton, NJ  
Emerging Scholars in Political Science Program August 2021

**The George Washington University** Washington, DC  
M.A. Applied Economics May 2018

**The University of Michigan** Ann Arbor, MI  
B.A. Economics, B.A. International Studies May 2015

**Research Experience** **White House Council of Economic Advisers** (*took leave from PhD*) Washington, DC  
Staff Economist August 2023 - August 2024

**Advisors:** Dr. Sandile Hlatshwayo

**Areas of focus:** International Economics and Trade; Section 201 & 301 Tariffs

**Selected Projects:** Economic Report of the President, *Council of Economic Advisers* 2024

**Emerging Scholars in Political Science Program** Princeton, NJ  
Predoctoral Research Specialist August 2019 - August 2021

**Advisors:** Prof. Leonard Wantchekon

**Area of focus:** Historical applied microeconomics;

Digitized historical maps of Nigeria in QGIS to support ongoing research on the long-run effects of colonial missionary education on present-day living standards, occupation, and political participation

**Empirical Studies of Conflict Project** Princeton, NJ  
Research Specialist II September 2018 - August 2019

**Advisors:** Prof. Tarek Ghani and Prof. Jake Shapiro

**Areas of focus:** Natural resource extraction and conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa;

Preprocessed spatial data and created interactive map of Africa by merging firm-level

ownership identifiers of extractive sites in oil, gas, and mining, to instances of violent conflict

**Selected Projects:** “Firm Heterogeneity in Natural Resource Extraction” Tarek Ghani et al.

**The International Finance Corporation (IFC)** Washington, DC  
Research Assistant February - October 2018

**Advisors:** Dr. Tristan Reed and Dr. Alexandros Ragoussis

**Areas of focus:** Private sector firm development in Sub-Saharan Africa;

Created indicators of infrastructure access and ran synthetic panel fixed effects regressions

to measure inclusiveness and equality of markets to electric power and water for households

**Selected Projects:** Making It Big : Why Developing Countries Need More Large Firms, *IFC* 2020;

Creating Impact: The Promise of Impact Investing, *IFC* 2019;

Beyond Capital: Monitoring Development Outcomes of Multinational Enterprises, *World Bank* 2018

	<b>The World Bank</b> Consultant <b>Advisors:</b> Kinley Salmon and Nabila Assaf <b>Areas of focus:</b> Major challenges to firm operations in post-conflict settings; Conducted statistical hypothesis testing to investigate challenges to Syrian firms including access to economic infrastructure, supply disruptions, and loss of skilled workers <b>Selected Projects:</b> Surviving Firms of the Syrian Arab Republic, <i>World Bank</i> 2018	Washington, DC June - August 2017
	<b>The United Nations Joint Inspections Unit</b> Research Intern <b>Advisors:</b> Jose Andres Herrera, Herve Baudat, and Maria Gomez <b>Areas of focus:</b> System-wide monitoring and evaluation of United Nations agencies <b>Selected Projects:</b> Drafted Management Letters to evaluate programming of UN agencies	Geneva, CH August 2015 - January 2016
<b>Teaching Fellow</b>	Harvard: Spring ‘25 - Evaluating the Impact of Public Policies (GOV 1737), for Prof. Michael Hiscox Harvard: Spring ‘25 - Business & Entrepreneurship in Africa (HBSMBA 1555), for Hakeem Belo-Osagie Harvard: Fall ‘24 - Public Economics (ECON 1410), for Stan Veuger	
<b>Academic Affiliations</b>	London Business School’s Wheeler Institute – African Research Councillors Programme, Collaborator w/ Prof. Nathan Nunn, Prof. Elias Papaioannou, and Prof. Stelios Michalopoulos ( <i>2022-present</i> )	
<b>Selected and Invited Talks</b>	African History Through the Lens of Economics, Wheeler Institute - London Business School ( <i>2022</i> ) J-PAL Research Staff Training, Massachusetts Institute of Technology ( <i>2020, 2022</i> ) Launching Your Career as an Applied Economist, George Washington University ( <i>2020</i> )	
<b>Professional Distinctions</b>	Harvard Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Graduate Student Associate Harvard Institute for Quantitative Social Science, Graduate Student Affiliate Harvard Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Graduate Student Affiliate Harvard Department of Government Karl Deutsch Fellowship Harvard Graduate School of Arts and Sciences Graduate Prize Fellowship American Political Science Association Diversity Fellowship (\$2500) Princeton LISD Global Diplomatic and Security Challenges Fellowship	August 2024 October 2022 August 2022 August 2021 August 2021 December 2020 September 2020
<b>Selected Awards</b>	Harvard Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Pre-dissertation Grant (\$4000) Harvard Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, GSA Grant (\$2905) Harvard Jens Aubrey Westengard Scholarship (\$1250) Forbes 30 Under 30: Education - Founder, the Research in Color Foundation Harvard Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Pre-dissertation Grant (\$3500) Harvard Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Summer Language Grant (\$6000) Best Overall Performance in the Applied Economics Master’s Program, <i>Dean’s Award</i>	April 2025 November 2024 May 2024 November 2022 April 2022 April 2022 May 2018
<b>Professional Service</b>	<b>The Research In Color Foundation</b> <u>Founder and President</u> Founded and lead <u>Research In Color</u> a 501c(3) non-profit which seeks to increase the number and improve retention of historically excluded scholars in economics and economics-adjacent disciplines.	May 2019 - Present
	<b>Harvard Concentration Advisor; Resident Tutor</b> Specialities: French Language Tutor, Race Relations Tutor, Public Service Tutor, and First-gen Low-income Tutor; Economics and Government Sophomore Advisor	August 2024 - Present
<b>Technical Skills</b>	RStudio, R Shiny, STATA, L <sup>A</sup> T <sub>E</sub> X, QGIS, SPSS, Tableau, Thomson Reuters Datastream, Thomson Reuters Eikon, Excel, PowerPoint, Word, Overleaf, GitHub, Qualtrics, JavaScript	
<b>Languages</b>	English (Native proficiency), French (Advanced proficiency), Igbo (Passive proficiency)	