

CHINEMELU OKAFOR

Harvard University Government Department
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138

Email: cokafor@g.harvard.edu
Website: www.chinemeluokafor.com

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	2028 (<i>expected</i>)
	<i>Committee:</i> Melani Cammett (chair), Nathan Nunn, Awa Ambra Seck, Pia Raffler	
	Princeton University	Princeton, NJ
	Emerging Scholars in Political Science Program	August 2021
Research Experience	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
	White House Council of Economic Advisers (<i>took leave from PhD</i>)	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, <i>Council of Economic Advisers</i> 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, <i>IFC</i> 2020;	
	Creating Impact: The Promise of Impact Investing, <i>IFC</i> 2019;	
	Beyond Capital: Monitoring Development Outcomes of Multinational Enterprises, <i>World Bank</i> 2018	

The World Bank

Consultant

Washington, DC

June - August 2017

Advisors: Kinley Salmon and Nabila Assaf**Areas of focus:** 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

Selected Projects: Surviving Firms of the Syrian Arab Republic, *World Bank* 2018**Teaching Fellow**

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

Academic Affiliations

London Business School's Wheeler Institute – African Research Councillors Programme, Collaborator w/ Prof. Nathan Nunn, Prof. Elias Papaioannou, and Prof. Stelios Michalopoulos (*2022-present*)

Selected and Invited Talks

African History Through the Lens of Economics, Wheeler Institute - London Business School (*2022*)
 J-PAL Research Staff Training, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (*2020, 2022*)
 Launching Your Career as an Applied Economist, George Washington University (*2020*)

Professional Distinctions

Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Graduate Student Associate, <i>renewed</i>	August 2025
Harvard Center for International Development, PhD Affiliate	January 2025
Harvard Institute for Quantitative Social Science, Graduate Student Affiliate	October 2022
Harvard Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Graduate Student Affiliate	August 2022
Harvard Department of Government Karl Deutsch Fellowship	August 2021
Harvard Graduate School of Arts and Sciences Graduate Prize Fellowship	August 2021
American Political Science Association Diversity Fellowship (\$2500)	December 2020

Selected Awards

Harvard Center for African Studies, Travel Grant (\$1500)	May 2025
Harvard Government Department, Women and Politics Research Grant (\$2000)	April 2025
Harvard Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Pre-dissertation Grant (\$4000)	April 2025
Harvard Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, GSA Grant (\$2905)	November 2024
Harvard Jens Aubrey Westengard Scholarship (\$1250)	May 2024
Forbes 30 Under 30: Education - Founder, the Research in Color Foundation	November 2022
Harvard Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Pre-dissertation Grant (\$3500)	April 2022
Harvard Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Summer Language Grant (\$6000)	April 2022
Best Overall Performance in the Applied Economics Master's Program, <i>Dean's Award</i>	May 2018

Professional Service

Harvard Concentration Advisor and Non-Resident Tutor August 2024 - Present
Harvard Resident Tutor August 2021 - August 2023
 Specialities: French Language Tutor, Race Relations Tutor, Public Service Tutor, and First-gen Low-income Tutor; Economics and Government Sophomore Advisor

The Research In Color Foundation

May 2019 - Present

Founder and President

Founded and lead Research In Color a 501c(3) non-profit which seeks to increase the number and improve retention of historically excluded scholars in economics and economics-adjacent disciplines.

Technical Skills

RStudio, R Shiny, STATA, L^AT_EX, QGIS, SPSS, Tableau, Thomson Reuters Datastream,
 Thomson Reuters Eikon, Excel, PowerPoint, Word, Overleaf, GitHub, Qualtrics, JavaScript

Languages

English (Native proficiency), French (Advanced proficiency), Igbo (Passive proficiency)

Citizenship

United States; Nigeria