

# CHINEMELU OKAFOR

Harvard University Government Department  
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138

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

<b>Research Interests</b>	Comparative politics; political economy; public economics; economic development; economic history; narrative economics; MSME development in emerging markets; international economics and trade	
<b>Education</b>	<b>Harvard University</b> Ph.D. Government <i>Committee:</i> Melani Cammett (chair), Nathan Nunn, Mashail Malik, Pia Raffler, Awa Ambra Seck	Cambridge, MA 2028 ( <i>expected</i> )
	<b>Princeton University</b> Emerging Scholars in Political Science Program	Princeton, NJ August 2021
	<b>The George Washington University</b> M.A. Applied Economics, <i>Dean's Award</i>	Washington, DC May 2018
	<b>The University of Michigan</b> B.A. Economics, B.A. International Studies	Ann Arbor, MI May 2015
<b>Research Experience</b>	<b>White House Council of Economic Advisers</b> ( <i>took leave from PhD</i> ) Staff Economist <b>Advisors:</b> Dr. Sandile Hlatshwayo <b>Areas of focus:</b> International Economics and Trade; Section 201 & 301 Tariffs <b>Selected Projects:</b> Economic Report of the President, <i>Council of Economic Advisers</i> 2024	Washington, DC August 2023 - August 2024
	<b>Emerging Scholars in Political Science Program</b> Predoctoral Research Specialist <b>Advisors:</b> Prof. Leonard Wantchekon <b>Area of focus:</b> 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	Princeton, NJ August 2019 - August 2021
	<b>Empirical Studies of Conflict Project</b> Research Specialist II <b>Advisors:</b> Prof. Tarek Ghani and Prof. Jake Shapiro <b>Areas of focus:</b> 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 <b>Selected Projects:</b> “Firm Heterogeneity in Natural Resource Extraction” Tarek Ghani et al.	Princeton, NJ September 2018 - August 2019
	<b>The International Finance Corporation (IFC)</b> Research Assistant <b>Advisors:</b> Dr. Tristan Reed and Dr. Alexandros Ragoussis <b>Areas of focus:</b> 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 <b>Selected Projects:</b> 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	Washington, DC February - October 2018

<b>The World Bank</b>	Washington, DC
Consultant	June - August 2017
<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	
<b>Works in Progress</b>	Protest Matters: The Effects of Protests on Economic Redistribution [abstract] [working paper] When Women March: The Effects of Women-Led Protests on Gender Gaps in Political Participation
<b>Teaching Fellow</b>	Harvard: Fall '24 '25 - Public Economics (ECON 1410), for Stan Veuger 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
<b>Academic Affiliations</b>	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 London Business School's Wheeler Institute – African Research Councillors Programme May 2022 Collaborator w/ Prof. Nathan Nunn, Prof. Elias Papaioannou, and Prof. Stelios Michalopoulos
<b>Selected and Invited Talks</b>	Harvard Center for African Studies Contested Realities Workshop ( <i>2025</i> ) London Business School, Wheeler Institute - African History Through the Lens of Economics ( <i>2022</i> )
<b>Professional Distinctions</b>	Association for Comparative Economic Studies (ACES) Summer School ( <i>fully funded</i> ) July 2025 American Political Science Association Member Spotlight July 2025 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
<b>Selected Awards</b>	Harvard Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, GSA Grant <i>x2</i> (\$3000, \$2905) October 2025 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 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
<b>Professional Service</b>	Reviewer for <i>The Annual Review of Economics</i> Harvard Concentration Advisor and Non-Resident Tutor August 2024 - Present Harvard Resident Tutor, <i>Winthrop House</i> August 2021 - August 2023 Specialities: French Language, Public Service, First-gen Low-income, Economics, and Government
	The Research In Color Foundation May 2019 - Present <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.
<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 Citizenship</b>	English (Native proficiency), French (Upper-intermediate proficiency), Igbo (Passive proficiency) United States; Nigeria