

Arindam Jana Economist

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Profile

Arindam is a heterodox economist with nearly two decades of experience across policy and academic research. His work primarily focuses on developing analytical frameworks to understand spatial inequalities, especially within cities. His current research spans three broad themes: the mechanics of wealth accumulation; the impact of economic transitions on urban morphology; and the critical role of data ecosystems, specifically how data deficits hinder spatial decision-making.

Education

School of Economics, University of Cape Town / Ph.D. Economics (expected 2026)
2020—2025, CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA

Thesis: On Intra-city Spatial Inequalities: ‘Connectedness’ as a Paradigm of Inclusive Cities.

Supervisors: Prof. Murray Leibbrandt (School of Economics), Prof. Edgar Pieterse (African Centre for Cities)

Madras School of Economics, Anna University / M.Sc. Economics

2006—2008, CHENNAI, INDIA

Dissertation: Consumption Volatility and the Cost of Uninsured Exposure to Risk. A Study across Indian States, 1970-2005.

Supervisor: Prof. KS Kavi Kumar

Madras Christian College, University of Madras / B.Sc. Mathematics

2002—2005, CHENNAI, INDIA

Work Experience

African Centre of Excellence for Inequality Research, SALDRU, University of Cape Town / Postdoctoral Research Fellow

JANUARY 2024—PRESENT, CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA

Research Themes: (a) Wealth inequalities, focussing on impact of fiscal policies on accumulation at the top-end of wealth distributions, and accumulation of wealth in housing markets; (b) intra-city spatial inequalities, with a focus on access to infrastructures, services and amenities; (c) urban data deficits in Africa, with a particular focus on sub-national data collection and dissemination by national statistical offices; and (d) urban labour market transitions due to low-carbon development pathways and impacts thereof.

African Centre for Cities, University of Cape Town / Research Associate

JUNE 2019—MAY 2021, CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA

Roles and Responsibilities: Authored a series of background notes that consolidated extant literature and conducted meta-analyses of emergent research on urban inequalities, and complexities thereof, for various African urbanisation advocacy programmes.

Cities Unit, United Nations Environment Programme / Urban Economist

DECEMBER 2020—MAY 2024, VARIOUS LOCATIONS

Research Themes: (a) Data deficits in tracking investments in green and blue infrastructures in cities; and (b) designing metrics to track green transitions in urban labour markets.

School of Planning and Architecture Delhi / Adjunct Faculty

NOVEMBER 2020—MAY 2022, NEW DELHI, INDIA

Courses Taught: (a) Microeconomic theory for urban planning; and (b) quantitative research methods.

Azim Premji Philanthropic Initiative / Consulting Data Scientist

JANUARY 2019—DECEMBER 2019, VARIOUS LOCATIONS

Roles and Responsibilities: Designed and prototyped a monitoring and evaluation laboratory to track impact of ongoing social sector grants, with a specific focus on female labour force participation and local government participation among rural communities.

Catalyst Financial Technologies, Institute for Financial Management and Research / Consulting Data Scientist

JANUARY 2017—DECEMBER 2018, BENGALURU AND DELHI, INDIA

Roles and Responsibilities: Designed and implemented the analytics infrastructure to track adoption rates of a digital finance initiative targeting small and micro-enterprises across a set of Tier 2 cities in India.

Indian Institute for Human Settlements (IIHS) / Various Positions

MAY 2012—NOVEMBER 2019, BENGALURU, INDIA

Roles and Responsibilities: (a) Led the establishment of IIHS's Urban Informatics Laboratory; (b) led various research and practice projects, specifically focussed on assessing and improving data architectures for urban and spatial analytics; and (c) led the publication of IIHS' annual urban India data almanack.

Small Enterprise Finance Centre, Institute for Financial Management and Research / Research Associate

JUNE 2009—APRIL 2012, CHENNAI, INDIA

Roles and Responsibilities: (a) Designed and led development of a portfolio of credit scoring algorithms for small/micro enterprises and traders with limited retrospective transaction data; and (b) designed and implemented monitoring and evaluation assessment frameworks to study credit access among small/micro enterprises and traders in low-to-medium value markets.

Nathan Economic Consulting (India) / Economist

MAY 2008—MAY 2009, CHENNAI, INDIA

Roles and Responsibilities: Provided analytical support for the development of a portfolio of media products to assess limited overs cricket in real-time.

**Publications
(Journals,
Reports, Books,
Repositories)**

Jana A (2025) *African Statistical Agencies Need a Shared Subnational Data Protocol*. Urban2063 Policy Brief no. 8. Cape Town: African Centre for Cities.

Davidson K et al. (2025) The Impact of the Green Transition on Jobs in South Africa. *SADLNU Working Paper Series*. 318. URL: opensaldru.uct.ac.za/handle/11090/1054

Davison K et al. (2024) An Analytical Framework to Assess Green Transition Jobs in South Africa. *SALDRU Working Paper Series*. 209. URL: opensaldru.uct.ac.za/handle/11090/1044

United Nations Environment Programme (2024) *State of Finance for Nature in Cities. From Grey to Green: Better Data to Finance Nature in Cities*.

United Nations Environment Programme (2023) *State of Finance for Nature in Cities. Time to Assess*.

United Nations Environment Programme (2022) *State of Finance for Nature. Time to Act: Doubling Investments and Eliminating Nature-negative Finance Flows*.

Malladi T, Chatterji N, Jana A (2017) *India Urban Atlas: Mapping the Growth and Expansion of India's 100 Largest Cities*. Bengaluru: Indian Institute for Human Settlements. DOI: doi.org/10.24943/urbindia.2017

Bazaz AB, Jana A, Malladi T, Revi A (2016) *Urban India 2016: Evidence*. Bengaluru: Indian Institute for Human Settlements. DOI: doi.org/10.24943/urbindia.2016

Jana A (2016) *How 'Urban' is India?* Bengaluru: Indian Institute for Human Settlements and Rockefeller Foundation. Case Study no. 01-0002. DOI: doi.org/10.24943/1-0002

Revi A et al. (2015) *Urban India 2015: Evidence*. Bengaluru: Indian Institute for Human Settlements. DOI: doi.org/10.24943/urbindia.2015

- Bhan G and **Jana A** (2015) Reading Spatial Inequality in Urban India. *Review of Urban Affairs, Economic and Political Weekly*. 50(22), pp 49-54.
- Jana A** (2015) Visualising the 'Grey' Area between Rural and Urban India. *The Administrator*. 56(2), pp 51-58.
- Ministry of Home Affairs (2014) *Report of the Expert Committee to Study Alternatives for a New Capital for the State of Andhra Pradesh*. New Delhi: Government of India.
- Jana A**, Seddon J and Sami N (2014) *How 'Urban' is India?* Ideas for India. International Growth Centre Project 35109.
- Anand S, Bhan G, **Jana A**, Koduganti J and Idicheria C (2014) *Locating the Debate: Poverty and Vulnerability in Urban India*. Bengaluru: Indian Institute for Human Settlements and Rockefeller Foundation. DOI: doi.org/10.24943/ihsrfpps4.2014
- Sami N, Anand S, Koduganti J, Arakali A and **Jana A** (2014) *Manufacturing Cities: Industrial Policy and Urban Growth*. Bengaluru: Indian Institute for Human Settlements and Rockefeller Foundation. DOI: doi.org/10.24943/ihsrfpps7.2014
- Bhan G and **Jana A** (2013) Of Slums and Poverty: Notes of Caution from Census 2011. *Review of Urban Affairs, Economic and Political Weekly*. 48(18), pp 13-16.

Publications (Other Media)

- Jana A** and Ranchhod V (2025) *Spatial inertia and the racial stratification of housing wealth in post-Apartheid South Africa*. [Blog] SALDRU. URL: saldru.uct.ac.za/articles/2025-11-26-spatial-inertia-and-racial-stratification-housing-wealth-post-apartheid-south-africa
- Davidson K et al. (2024) *Green Occupations Crosswalk Data 2024*. [Dataset] DataFirst. DOI: doi.org/10.25828/1PD6-2R47
- Pieterse E et al. (2024) *CityScape. The Box: Emergence*. Cape Town: African Centre for Cities.
- Circle Economy and United Nations Environment Programme (2022) *Circular Jobs Monitor*. [Data Dissemination Website] URL: circular-jobs.world
- United Nations Environment Programme (2021) *Creating Circular Neighbourhoods: A Discussion paper*. Paris: United Nations Environment Programme.
- Jana A** and Archita S (2019) *India's Missing Middle: 24,000 'villages' with populations greater than towns lose out on policies for urban areas*. IndiaSpend (published online: 23 January 2019)
- Sharma R and **Jana A** (2015) *Babri to Dadri: What they don't tell you about good data and bad evidence*. DailyO.in (published online: 27 October 2015)

Works in Progress, and Forthcoming Publications

- Jana A** and Ranchhod V (forthcoming) 'Exiting' Segregated Spaces, Creating Wealth? Racial Wealth Divide and Spatial Mobility in South Africa. Accepted for forthcoming publication 'Colonial Pasts and Inequality Today', published by LSE International Inequalities Institute.
- Jana A**, Keshav AV and Ranchhod V (in progress) On the 'stickiness' of wealth distributions: simulating impacts of fiscal policies on wealth accumulation at the top. Part of ongoing research funded by the Volkswagen Foundation, titled 'Politicians, Policies, and the Reproduction of Wealth', with Marburg University, University of Strathclyde, and FGV Sao Paulo.
- Jana A** and Munoz E (in progress) Conceptualising an Industry-Labour space: A graph-theoretic framework to assess economic transitions at the regional scale.

**Personal
Information** Date of Birth: 12 January 1984
Nationality: Indian

Last Updated: November 2025
References available on request