

Cara Brook

I am a Branco Weiss ‘Society in Science’ Fellow (formerly a Miller Fellow), based jointly at the University of California, Berkeley and the Institut Pasteur of Madagascar. **I’ll be starting as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Ecology and Evolution at the University of Chicago in summer 2021.** Please feel free to get in touch if you are interested in becoming a part of our dynamic team!

I hail originally from beautiful Sonoma County, California, and I grew up hiking backpacking, and camping across the North American West. In 2010, I completed a Bachelor of Science degree in Earth Systems, an interdisciplinary environmental science major, at Stanford University, and shortly after graduation, I travelled to Madagascar for the first time as a sustainable development worker with World Wildlife Fund.

They say that those who drink the water of Manangareza River always find their way back to Madagascar, and this is certainly true of me. After a few years of transient globe-trotting, I made my way back to Madagascar in 2012 to pursue a PhD in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at Princeton University. Since 2012, I’ve been studying the dynamics of zoonotic infections in this island nation, with a particular focus on emerging pathogens derived from fruit bat reservoir hosts. Madagascar has shaped my life in more ways than I can count: teaching me courage, humility, wonder, and kindness, in addition to feeding my intellectual and academic curiosity. I founded Ekipa Fanihy (Malagasy for ‘Team Fruit Bat’) out of a desire to undertake scientific development and capacity building, joint with cutting-edge, international research. I believe truly that the latter cannot be achieved without the former.

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