

Elisa Macchi

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Employment

Sep 21 - Dec 22 MIT, Economics Department, Postdoctoral Associate
Jan 23 BROWN UNIVERSITY, Assistant Professor of Economics

Education

2021 UZH, PhD in Economics (summa cum laude)
Thesis title: "Essays in Development Economics and Political Economy"
Committee: David Yanagizawa-Drott, Lorenzo Casaburi, Hans-Joachim Voth
2015 UNIVERSITÀ DI BOLOGNA, M.Phil. in Economics (LMEC)
2013 UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO - BICOCCA B.Sc. in Economics and Business

Visiting Positions

2018 - 2019 HARVARD UNIVERSITY, Economics Department, Visiting Fellow
2012- 2013 EBERHARD KARLS UNIVERSITÄT TÜBINGEN, Erasmus

Working Papers

Worth your weight: experimental evidence on the benefits of obesity in low-income countries.
(R&R AER)

I study the economic value of obesity—a seemingly inconsequential but unhealthy status symbol in poor countries. Randomizing decision-makers in Kampala, Uganda to view weight-manipulated portraits, I make four findings. First, obesity is perceived as a reliable signal of wealth rather than beauty and health. Second, being obese facilitates access to credit: in a real-stakes experiment involving loan officers, the obesity premium is comparable to raising borrower self-reported earnings by 60%. Third, asymmetric information drives this premium, which drops significantly when more financial information is provided. Fourth, obesity benefits and wealth-signaling value are commonly overestimated, raising the cost of healthy behaviors.

Work in Progress

Experimental Evidence on Pressure to Hire in Uganda., with B. Caprettini

The mental health of graduate students and professors: evidence from European Economics departments., with V. Bolotnyy, P. Barreira, and C. Sievert

Healthy and beautiful: does bundling increase preventive care use among the urban poor?

Nutritional choices in the presence of a trade-off between health costs and socio-economic benefits.

Publications

EU transfers and Euroscepticism: can't buy me love?, with A. Borin and M. Mancini, *Economic Policy*, 2021.

Grants & Awards

Oct '22	<i>RESTUD Tour North America (UCSD, the University of Chicago, and UPenn)</i>
July '21	<i>Swiss Re Fund for Development Economic - Top-up grant (USD 10'800)</i>
Nov '20	<i>SNSF Early Postdoc Mobility scholarship</i>
July '20	<i>Diligentia Stiftung Research Grant, with D. Yanagizawa-Drott (USD 39'500)</i>
Dec '19	<i>GRC Travel Grant (USD 2'800)</i>
Sep '19	<i>Swiss Re Fund for Development Economics (USD 27'000, maximum amount)</i>
May '19	<i>Director's Grant Zurich GSE (USD 5'400, maximum amount)</i>
Nov '18	<i>SNSF Doc. Mobility scholarship</i>
Mar '17	<i>B. Stringher scholarship (particolarmente meritevole) • Banca D'Italia</i>
Mar '15	<i>PhD scholarship • University of Zürich</i>
Jan '14	<i>Unicredit Ad Honorem • Unicredit S.p.a.</i>
Sep '14	<i>LMEC top-four-students scholarship • Alma Mater Studiorum - Università di Bologna</i>
2010- '12	<i>Merit-based scholarships • Università degli Studi di Milano - Bicocca</i>

Conferences & seminar presentations

2022 (sched.)	<i>WEFIDEV (virtual); University of Cologne; University of Stavanger</i>
2021	<i>M.I.T. Development Seminar, Restud Tour North America (UCSD, UChicago, UPenn) EEA-ESEM congress; Weggis Workshop in Political Economy and Development, JEEs. Job Market: Brown University, CEMFI, Collegio Carlo Alberto, Harris School of Public Policy, IIES, NHH, NES Moscow, Nova, PSE, Rady School of Management at UC San Diego, Stockholm University, World Bank Research.</i>
until 2020	<i>DEVPEC, Stanford (virtual); Essen Health Conference (virtual); Early Career Behavioral Economics Conference, BRIQ (virtual); European Trade Study Group (ETSG), European University Institute and University of Florence.</i>

Teaching

Spring '22	<i>Economics and Psychology, undergraduate, MIT, Co-instructor with F. Schilbach</i>
Spring '18	<i>Econometrics for Policy Analysts, graduate, UZH, Teaching Assistant for D. Yanagizawa-Drott</i>
Fall '17	<i>Labor Economics, graduate, UZH, Teaching Assistant for D. Dorn</i>
Spring '17	<i>Intermediate Econometrics, undergraduate, UZH, Teaching Assistant for H. Schwandt</i>

Refereeing and Relevant Professional Activities

Refereeing	<i>AER: INSIGHTS, JAE, JDE, QJE.</i>
2017- 2019	<i>Research Assistant for Fabrizio Zilibotti, SNSF Project "Inequality, cultural transmission, and human capital accumulation"</i>

2018	Member of hiring committee for 2 positions in "Economics of Child and Youth Development / with a focus on breastfeeding." UZH
2017	Ph.D. Intern, DG Economics, Statistics and Research, Bank of Italy

Personal skills

IT

Stata • R • Python • ~~LaTeX~~ • OTree • HTML (beginner)

LANGUAGES

Italian (native) • English (fluent) • Spanish (fluent) • German (advanced)