

Jack Willis

<http://sites.google.com/view/jwillis>
jack.willis@columbia.edu

Office Contact Information

1113 IAB
420 W 118th
New York, NY 10027
+1 857 928 1494

Personal Information

Born: 12 March 1984
Citizenship: British

Last updated: 05/16/2024

Employment

Columbia University, Jan 2018 -
Assistant Professor, Department of Economics

Sciences Po, Sep 2023 - Dec 2023
Visiting Professor, Alliance Exchange Program, Department of Economics

Paris School of Economics, Jul - Dec 2017, Jan 2024 – June 2024
Visiting Researcher, Department of Economics

Education

Harvard University, 2011 – 2017
Ph.D. in Economics
Thesis: “Essays in Development Economics”

Paris School of Economics, Université Paris 1, 2007 - 2009
Masters in Economics (ETE-QEM)

Cambridge University, Trinity College, 2002 - 2006
Masters (Part III) and B.A. in Mathematics

Affiliations

2022 - BREAD, J-PAL
2019 - CDEP, CEPR, NBER

Publications

“Value Chain Microfinance” (with Lorenzo Casaburi), *Oxford Review of Economic Policy*, 2024
“Converging to Convergence” (with Michael Kremer, Yang You), *NBER Macro Annual*, 2021
“Time vs. State in Insurance: Experimental Evidence from Contract Farming in Kenya” (with Lorenzo Casaburi), *American Economic Review*, 2018
“Guns, Latrines, and Land Reform: Dynamic Pigouvian Taxation” (with Michael Kremer), *American Economic Review Papers & Proceedings*, 2016

Selected Research in Progress

“Land Rental Markets: Experimental Evidence from Kenya” (with Michelle Acampora, Lorenzo Casaburi), *Conditionally Accepted at American Economic Review*
“Learning vs. Unlearning: An Experiment on Retractions” (with Duarte Gonçalves, Jonathan Libgober), *R&R at Review of Economic Studies*
“Health Insurance Subsidies and Asymmetric Information: Experimental Evidence from Kenya” (with Lorenzo Casaburi, Kim Cramer)

- “Frictions in Information Diffusion Among Smallholder Farmers” (with Raissa Fabregas)
- “Targeting Dynamic Poverty” (with Eric Teschke)
- “Private vs. Public Infrastructure” (with Ben Krause and Michael Kremer)
- “Decentralized Escrow” (with Duarte Gonçalves and Jonathan de Quidt)
- “The Impact of Contract Farming” (with Lorenzo Casaburi)
- “ICT for Environmental Adaptation: Mitigating Arsenic Exposure in Bangladesh” (with Lex Van Geen, Prabhat Barnwal, Michael Best)
- “CSR and Selection in Digital Finance” (with Harrison Hong)

Teaching

Instructor:

- 2020 - Topics in Micro Development (Ph.D.), ECON 6290, Columbia University
- 2018 - Development Economics (undergraduate), ECON 4321, Columbia University
- 2023 The Economics of Poverty (masters), IFCO 2730, Sciences Po

Teaching Fellow:

- 2015 Development Economics (Ph.D.), Ec 2390, Harvard University
- 2014, 13 Development Policy Strategy (masters), PED-309, Harvard Kennedy School
- 2014 Intermediate Microeconomics (undergraduate), Ec 1010a, Harvard University
- 2014 Development Macroeconomics (Ph.D.), Ec 2390c, Harvard University
- 2013 International Trade (Ph.D.), Ec 2530a, Harvard University
- 2009 Advanced Analysis (masters), Université Paris 1
- 2008 Multivariate Calculus (masters), Université Paris 1

Professional Activities

Presentations

- 2024 Kings' College London
- 2023 Sciences Po, Cambridge, Paris School of Economics, Toulouse School of Economics
- 2022 Berkeley joint development-macro, CEPR WEFIDEV annual workshop, BREAD development (co-author), CEPR / Misum / SITE development, NOVAFRICA conference, Chicago
- 2021 Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, IMF research seminar, Berkeley, NBER macro annual meeting, UK FCDO research seminar, NBER / BREAD development, New York University, Trinity College Dublin, Yale
- 2020 University of Southern California, Columbia, NEUDC
- 2019 AEA meetings (discussant x 2), New York University, NYC-area junior development
- 2018 Early Career Behavioral Economics conference (discussant), EIEF Rome Junior Applied Microeconomics Conference, Wisconsin-Madison Emerging Scholars conference, CEAR/MRIC workshop, NYC-area junior development
- 2017 ABCA World Bank conference, Cambridge, Columbia, Cornell, CREST, DIAL conference, Early Career Behavioral Economics conference, Institute for International Economic Studies, INSEAD, Lindau meetings, NBER / BREAD development, NBER insurance, Paris School of Economics, Princeton, Sciences Po, Toulouse School of Economics, University College London, University of California San Diego
- 2016 NEUDC, BREAD / LEAP pre-conference, NOVAFRICA conference
- 2015 CSAE conference, SAET conference
- 2013 SAET conference

Referee (papers and grants):

American Economic Journal: Applied Economics, American Economic Journal: Microeconomics, American Economic Review, American Economic Review: Insights, American Journal of Agricultural Economics, Econometrica, Economic Development and Cultural Change, Economic Journal, Economics of Transition, Food Policy, Journal of Development Economics, Journal of the European Economic Association, Journal of Public Economics, Journal of Political Economy, Journal of Risk and Insurance, NSF, Oxford Bulletin of Economics and Statistics, PEDL, PNAS, Quarterly Journal of Economics, Review of Economics and Statistics, Review of Economic Studies, 3ie

Research Grants

2024	Lenfest, Columbia, “Decentralized Escrow” (with Duarte Gonçalves)
2024	STEG, “Private vs. Public Infrastructure” (with Michael Kremer)
2023	Weiss Fund, “Decentralized Escrow” (with Duarte Gonçalves)
2023	NBER Social Learning, “Understanding Information Diffusion in Poor and Rural Environments” (with Raissa Fabregas)
2023	USAID DIV, “Crop Insurance at Scale” (with Lorenzo Casaburi)
2020	USAID DIV, “Nolkup: an app to access low arsenic water in Bangladesh” (with Lex Van Geen, Prabhat Barnwal, Michael Best)
2020	ISERP, Columbia, “Incentivizing Un(der)banked Households to Socially Distance Through Conditional Digital Loan Forgiveness.” (with Harrison Hong, Neng Wang)
2020	NBER Social Learning, “Understanding Information Diffusion in Poor and Rural Environments” (with Raissa Fabregas)
2019	IC2, UT Austin, “Understanding Information Diffusion in Poor and Rural Environments” (with Raissa Fabregas)
2019	SwissRe, “Health Insurance, Impact and Price Effects: Experimental Evidence from Kenya” (with Lorenzo Casaburi)
2018	PEDL, “The Impact of Contract Farming: Experimental Evidence from Kenya” (with Lorenzo Casaburi)
2018	ATAI, “The Impact of Contract Farming: Experimental Evidence from Kenya” (with Lorenzo Casaburi)
2016	ATAI, “Time vs. State in Insurance: Experimental Evidence from India” (with Lorenzo Casaburi, Bheeshm Chaudhary, Siddharth George)
2015	Weiss Fund, “Time vs. State in Insurance: Experimental Evidence from India” (with Lorenzo Casaburi, Bheeshm Chaudhary, Siddharth George)
2014	World Bank Big Data Innovation Challenge, “Targeting Poverty by Predicting Poverty: Using Machine Learning in Targeted Transfer Programs” (with Melissa Adelman, Sendhil Mullainathan, Paul Niehaus)
2012	Weiss Fund, “The Causes and Effects of Improved Health Supply: Evidence from Rwanda” (with Martin Rotemberg)

Supervising

Graduate students (my role; first placement)

2024	Dian Jiao (letter writer; Economist at Amazon)
	Utkarsh Kumar (letter writer; Economist at Amazon)
	Parijat Lal (letter writer; Postdoc at Columbia Business School)
2023	Kyle Coombs (letter writer; AP at Bates College)
2022	Kim Fe Cramer (letter writer; AP at London School of Economics)
	Louise Guillouet (letter writer; Economist at OECD)
2021	Ye Zhang (co-sponsor; AP at Stockholm School of Economics)
2020	Han Huynh (letter writer; Economist at Bates White)
	Suanna Oh (letter writer; AP at Paris School of Economics)
2019	Qiuying Qu (letter writer; Economist at Capital One)

Pre-docs (first placement)

2023 Muhammad Bashir (PhD at Berkeley Econ)
2021 Malavika Mani (PhD at Warwick Econ)
2019 Hamza Husain (PhD at Berkeley ARE)
MA students (my role; first placement)
2020 Amol Raswan (dissertation supervisor, predoc for Dean Karlan)

Awards

2023 Long-term Faculty Exchange, Alliance Program, Columbia University – Sciences Po
2017 Padma Desai Dissertation Prize in Economic Science, Harvard University
2007 - 09 Paris School of Economics Scholarship
2003 - 05 Junior and Senior Scholarships, Cambridge University

Languages

English (native), French (fluent)