

Susanna B. Berkouwer
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Research interests

Development economics, environmental economics, behavioral economics, political economy

Academic employment

University of Pennsylvania, The Wharton School
Assistant Professor of Business Economics and Public Policy 2020–
Robert J. Aresty, W'63 Faculty Scholar 2022–2023

Current affiliations

Affiliate, [Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab \(J-PAL\)](#) 2022–
Fellow, [The Coase Project](#) 2022–
Fellow, [Penn Environmental Innovations Initiative](#) 2022–
Affiliated faculty, [Wharton Climate Center](#) at the [Wharton ESG Initiative](#) 2022–
Affiliated faculty, [Penn Program on Regulation](#) 2021–
Affiliated faculty, [Penn Development Research Initiative](#) 2020–
Affiliated faculty, [Analytics at Wharton](#) 2020–
Fellow, [Energy for Growth Hub](#) 2019–

Previous affiliations

Scholar, [Wharton Risk Center](#) 2020–2022
Graduate Student Affiliate, [Energy Institute at Haas](#) 2015–2020

Education

Ph.D., Agricultural and Resource Economics, University of California, Berkeley 2014–2020
M.A., International and Development Economics, Yale University 2012–2013
B.Sc., Statistics (with Economics), University College London 2007–2010

Teaching

Microeconomics for Managers (MGEC 6110, Wharton MBA core) Fall 2020, 2021, 2022

Journal publications

3. S. Berkouwer and J. Dean. 2022. “Credit, attention, and externalities in the adoption of energy efficient technologies by low-income households.” *American Economic Review* 122(10)1–41. [Available here](#).
2. S. Berkouwer, P. Biscaye, S. Puller, C. Wolfram. 2022. “Disbursing emergency relief through utilities: Evidence from Ghana.” *Journal of Development Economics* 156(C)102826. [Available here](#).
1. S. Berkouwer. 2020. “Electric heating and the effects of temperature on household electricity consumption in South Africa.” *The Energy Journal* 41(4)209–230. [Available here](#).

Working papers

- S. Berkouwer and J. Dean. 2022. “The impact of reduced charcoal usage on indoor air quality and health in Nairobi, Kenya”. Accepted, *Journal of Development Economics (Pre-results Review)*. [Pre-Analysis Plan](#). AEA RCT Registry [#2484](#).
- C. Wolfram, E. Miguel, E. Hsu, S. Berkouwer[Ⓡ]. 2022. “Donor contracting conditions and public procurement: Causal evidence from Kenyan electrification.” [Available here](#).
- S. Berkouwer, P. Biscaye, E. Hsu, O. Kim, K. Lee, E. Miguel, C. Wolfram. 2022. “Money or power? Choosing Covid-19 Aid in Kenya.” *Submitted*. [Available here](#).
- C. Wolfram, S. Berkouwer, F. Vial, E. Hsu, O. Kim, E. Miguel[Ⓡ]. 2021. “Decomposing political favoritism in Kenyan mass electrification.”

Research in progress

“The economics of grid reliability and voltage improvements”, with S. Puller and C. Wolfram. Pre-analysis plan available at [3ie RIDIE ID 928](#).

“Mitigating climate risk through parametric insurance”, with J. Dean

Other publications

N. Klugman, J. Adkins, S. Berkouwer, K. Abrokwah, M. Podolsky, P. Pannuto, C. Wolfram, J. Taneja, and P. Dutta. 2023. “Measuring Grid Reliability in Ghana.” Forthcoming in T. Madon et al (Eds.), *Introduction to Development Engineering: A Framework with Applications from the Field*. Springer. Open Access. [Available here](#).

N. Klugman, J. Adkins, S. Berkouwer, K. Abrokwah, I. Bobashev, P. Pannuto, M. Podolsky, A. Suseno, R. Thatte, C. Wolfram, J. Taneja, and P. Dutta. 2019. “Hardware, Apps, and Surveys at Scale: Insights from Measuring Grid Reliability in Accra, Ghana.” *Proceedings of the 2nd ACM Conference on Computing & Sustainable Societies. COMPASS’19*. [Available here](#).

S. Berkouwer, A. Sultan, and S. Yehia. 2014. “Homosexuality in Sudan and Egypt: Stories of the Struggle for Survival.” *LGBTQ Policy Journal*, Vol. IV, pp. 66–76. [Available here](#).

External grants

Weiss Fund for Research in Development Economics, 2022 (\$87,209) with Joshua Dean

Millenium Challenge Corporation, 2021 (\$1,550,000) with Duncan Callaway and Steven Puller

USAID Power Africa, 2021 (\$55,000) with Edward Miguel

International Growth Centre–Sierra Leone, 2020 (\$77,000) with Steven Puller and Catherine Wolfram

International Growth Centre–Kenya, 2020 (\$25,000) with Eric Hsu, Oliver Kim, Kenneth Lee, Edward Miguel, and Catherine Wolfram

Private Enterprise Development in Low-income Countries, 2020 (\$46,500) with Eric Hsu, Kenneth Lee, Edward Miguel, and Catherine Wolfram

DFID Energy for Economic Growth, 2020 (\$29,000) with Edward Miguel and Catherine Wolfram

International Growth Center–Kenya, 2018 (\$24,300), with Joshua Dean

Weiss Fund for Research in Development Economics, 2018 (\$31,544), with Joshua Dean

DFID Economic Development and Institutions, 2018 (\$361,000) with Edward Miguel and Catherine Wolfram

Awards & Scholarships

AAEA, Outstanding Doctoral Dissertation, Honorable Mention, 2021

US/International Association for Energy Economics, Best Student Paper Award, 2019

Art Rosenfeld Award for Energy Efficiency, 2018

Prins Bernhard Cultuurfonds, 2014

Dr Hendrik Muller’s Vaderlandsch Fonds, 2012

Internal grants

2022 Mack Institute for Innovation Management (\$62,000), Penn Global (\$74,000), Analytics at Wharton (\$17,000), Kleinman Center for Energy Policy (\$15,000), Wharton Dean’s Fund (\$8,500)

2021 Ripple Blockchain Research Fund (\$40,000), Wharton Dean’s Fund (\$20,000), Kleinman Center for Energy Policy (\$15,000), Mack Institute for Innovation Management (\$10,000), Analytics at Wharton (\$10,000), Wharton Global Initiatives (\$8,000), Wharton Risk Center (\$7,500)

2020 Kleinman Center for Energy Policy (\$15,000), Analytics at Wharton (\$15,000)

2019 Rocca Dissertation Research Fellowship (\$6,000)

2018 Rocca Dissertation Research Fellowship (\$6,000), Xlab Behavioral Research Grant (\$3,000), ARE Graduate Student Travel Grant (\$1,500)
 Prior Rocca Pre-dissertation Research Fellowship (\$4,000), Xlab Behavioral Research Grant (\$3,000), Levin Family Seed Grant (\$2,000), ARE Graduate Student Travel Grant (\$1,500), Graduate Assembly Travel Award (\$300), ARE Graduate Student Travel Grant (\$1,500)

Blog posts and policy briefs

13. “Lights on, Lights off”: Evaluating outages, voltage, and economic impacts of grid investments in Accra, Ghana, [Center for Effective Global Action](#), 8/12/2022
12. Emergency utility subsidies can help citizens weather economic crises, but may exclude the poorest citizens, [World Bank - Sustainable Energy for All](#), 7/18/2022
11. Money or Power? Financial infrastructure and optimal policy, [Private Enterprise Development in Low-Income Countries](#), 4/22/2022
10. Parametric hurricane protection in Dominica: Insights from initial adopters, [Wharton Risk Center blog](#), 2/11/2022
9. What’s reliability without voltage quality? [Energy for Growth Hub memo](#), 11/29/2021
8. Barriers to energy efficiency adoption in low-income communities, [Kleinman Center Policy Digest](#), 12/9/2021
7. Money or power? Choosing Covid-19 aid in Kenya, [International Growth Centre Blog](#), 5/25/2021
6. Does donor conditionality improve infrastructure construction quality? [DFID Economic Development & Institutions Blog](#), 3/1/2021
5. Subsidizing electricity during a pandemic: Lessons from Ghana, [Energy Institute at Haas Blog](#), 7/20/2020
4. Can energy efficiency subsidies improve welfare in low-income countries? Evidence from Kenya says yes, [VoxDev](#), 5/25/2020
3. What causes under-adoption of profitable energy efficient technologies in Kenya? [World Bank Blog](#), 11/26/2019
2. How do credit and psychology affect the adoption of profitable energy efficient technologies in Kenya? [International Growth Centre Policy Brief](#), 8/1/2019
1. Can cell phones help improve electricity reliability? [Energy Institute at Haas Blog](#), 2/18/2019

Media coverage

7. Data analytics for economic efficiency in energy policy, [Analytics at Wharton](#), 10/5/2022
6. Wharton study finds energy-efficient technologies can help families save money, [The Daily Pennsylvanian](#), 12/9/2021
5. How to drive energy efficiency among low-income households, [Knowledge@Wharton](#), 11/22/2021
4. Fuel efficient cookstoves, [Giving Green Recommendations](#), 11/2020
3. Could easier credit speed the adoption of energy efficiency? [Chicago Booth Review](#), 9/29/2020
2. Closing the energy efficiency gap for low-income households, [Energy Institute at Haas Blog](#), 10/21/2020
1. Kenya races toward goal of electrifying every household, [PBS NewsHour Weekend](#), 5/20/2017

Seminar and conference presentations (*scheduled)

- 2023 *University of Arizona; *Inter-American Development Bank; *UPenn (PDRI)
- 2022 Coase Conference at Chicago; Columbia; BREAD at UCL; Energy Camp at UC Berkeley; Occasional Workshop at UC Santa Barbara; Arizona State; CMU/Pittsburgh; NBER (EEE-discussant); Resources For the Future; Center for Global Development; Busara Center for Behavioral Economics; Working Group on Kenyan Political Economy; Strathmore University; UPenn (Wharton AEW; Africa Symposium; PDRI; Kleinman)
- 2021 Duke; Cornell; University of Hawai’i; Energy Camp at UC Berkeley; IDE Conference at Yale; London School of Economics; Berkeley-Harvard-Yale (EEE); World Bank; ASSA; AERE; GiveWell; PacDev; OSWEET; UPenn (Africa symposium; PDRI)

- 2020 NBER Fall Meetings (DEV); NBER SI (EEE); CECA E2A (Climate Change & Global Poverty); Early-Career Behavioral Economics; UPenn (Wharton AEW; EEF); Dartmouth; Boston University; Tufts; Sciences Po; University of British Columbia; Johns Hopkins (Carey); World Bank; Stockholm (IIES)
- 2019 NEUDC at Northwestern; WGAPE at University of British Columbia; Occasional Workshop at UC Santa Barbara; Heartland Workshop at UI Urbana-Champaign; USAEE; University of Nevada, Reno; Paris School of Economics (EDI); UC Berkeley (Development Economics, Psychology & Economics, ARE, SEEDC, X-LAB)
- Prior WGAPE at the University of British Columbia; IPWSD at Columbia; CREEC at Makerere University; Busara Center for Behavioral Economics; UC Berkeley

Public talks

- 3. Achieving UN SDG #1: No poverty, *UPenn Earth Day Teach-in*, 4/18/2022
- 2. Climate policy is anti-poverty policy, *UPenn 1.5°C Minute Climate Lectures*, 9/22/2021
- 1. [Power for the people: How should governments develop electric grids?](#) *DFID Economic Development & Institutions*, 11/21/2019

Conferences & events

- 2022 *Moderator*, [Are Industry Regulators Ready for the Climate Transition?](#), the Kleinman Center
Panelist, [Wharton Climate Prof](#), Wharton ESG Initiative
Panelist, Workshop on Global Climate Finance, Perry World House & Wharton Climate Center
Panelist, [Developing and managing a research agenda](#), AERE
Moderator, Clean Energy in Africa: Unfair & Impractical? [Wharton Africa Student Association](#) and the [Wharton Energy & Climate Club](#)
- 2021 *Speaker*, [Coffee Break Webinar](#), Energy for Growth
Judge, Best Student Paper award, US Association for Energy Economics
Panelist, [Wharton Climate Prof](#), Wharton Risk Center
Panelist, Womxn's Faculty and Alumni panel, Economists for Equity at Berkeley
- 2020 *Panelist*, LGBTQ Job Market panel, American Economic Association
Panelist, Women in Energy Event, Wharton Undergraduate Energy Group

Guest lectures

- 2022 Wharton Public Policy Certificate Program (Energy and Environmental Policy)
 Strathmore University (MS Sustainable Energy Transitions)
 Wharton PhD program (BEPP 941 Development Economics)
 Wharton Executive Education (Economics of Blockchain & Digital Assets)
- 2021 Virginia Tech (AAEC 3324 Environmental & Sustainable Development Economics)
 Swarthmore (ECON 044 Behavioral Economics)
- 2020 UC Berkeley (MBA 296 Applied Impact Evaluation)
- 2019 Beahrs Environmental Leadership Program (Impact Evaluation)
 UC Berkeley (ECON 172 African Economic Development)

Service

- 2022–2023 Organizer, [Penn Development Economics Seminar](#)
- 2022 Organizer, Wharton [Applied Economics Workshop](#)
- 2020– Co-organizer, [Energy Economics & Finance Seminar](#), Kleinman Center for Energy Policy
- 2020– Committee on diversity and inclusion, BEPP, Wharton
- 2022 Organizer, [Penn Development Conference on Climate Change & Environment](#)
- 2021–2022 Junior recruiting committee, BEPP, Wharton
- 2020–2021 MBA Studies Committee, BEPP, Wharton
- 2017–2018 PhD Admissions committee member, UC Berkeley Agricultural and Resource Economics

Professional activities

- 2022 CSWEP CeMENT mentee
- 2021 Faculty coach, Researcher matching programme, International Growth Centre
- 2017–2019 Leadership board, [Women in Economics at Berkeley](#)
- 2013–2014 Member of the editorial board, *Harvard LGBTQ Policy Journal*

Journal refereeing

American Economic Review, Journal of Political Economy, AEJ: Applied Economics, AEJ: Economic Policy, AER: Insights, Climatic Change, Economic Development and Cultural Change, Economic Journal, Economics Letters, Energy Journal, Energy Economics, Environment and Development Economics, Journal of Development Economics, Journal of Development Economics (Pre-results review), Journal of Public Economics, Journal of the Association of Environmental and Resource Economists, Journal of the European Economic Association, Management Science, Nature Climate Change, Review of Economics and Statistics, World Bank Economic Review

Grant & conference reviewing

J-PAL King Climate Action Initiative (K-CAI), Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, Fund for Innovation in Development (FID), Private Enterprise Development in Low-Income Countries (PEDL)

Prior employment

- 2017 UC Berkeley, Data and Decisions (MBA 200) – *Graduate Student Instructor*
- 2014–2020 UC Berkeley – *Graduate Student Researcher*
- 2013–2014 Harvard University, Kennedy School of Government – *EPoD Research Fellow*
- 2013 Yale University, Economics of Poverty Alleviation (ECON 327) – *Teaching Fellow*
- 2012 Yale University, Economics of Natural Resources (ECON 330) – *Teaching Fellow*
- 2010–2012 Citibank – *Analyst*

Languages

English (native), Dutch (native), French (advanced), Spanish (advanced), Swahili (conversant)

Citizenship

Netherlands (U.S. H-1B Work Visa)

January 2, 2023