

A. NILESH FERNANDO

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EDUCATION

HARVARD UNIVERSITY, CAMBRIDGE, MA Ph.D. Public Policy (Fields: Labor and Development Economics) Thesis: <i>"Land, Labor, and Technology: Essays in Development Economics"</i>	2010-2015
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD, OXFORD, UK Graduate-level coursework in Mathematics and Economics	2009-2010
HAMPSHIRE COLLEGE, AMHERST, MA B.A. Mathematics and Economics, Minor: Public Policy	2003-2007

ACADEMIC POSITIONS

KING'S COLLEGE LONDON, LONDON, UK Associate Professor, Department of Economics, King's Business School	2025 - *
UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME, NOTRE DAME, IN Assistant Professor, Department of Economics Concurrent Assistant Professor, Keough School of Global Affairs	2016-2025
HARVARD UNIVERSITY, CAMBRIDGE, MA Postdoctoral Fellow, Department of Economics	2015-2016

Sabbaticals/Visits

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO, CHICAGO, IL Visiting Scholar, Development Innovation Lab (DIL)	2025-2026
NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY, EVANSTON, IL Visiting Scholar, Department of Economics	2019-2020

EXTERNAL AFFILIATIONS

BUREAU FOR RESEARCH AND ECONOMIC ANALYSIS OF DEVELOPMENT (BREAD) Affiliate	2024-PRESENT
ABDUL LATIF JAMEEL POVERTY ACTION LAB (J-PAL), CAMBRIDGE, MA Faculty Affiliate	2022-PRESENT
VERITÉ RESEARCH, COLOMBO, SRI LANKA Research Affiliate	2017-PRESENT
PRECISION DEVELOPMENT (PxD), CAMBRIDGE, MA Research Affiliate	2015-PRESENT

OTHER EMPLOYMENT

Research Assistant, Evidence for Policy Design, Harvard Kennedy School	2014
Research Associate, Centre for Micro Finance/MIT-Poverty Action Lab, India	2008-2009
Research Associate, Harvard Business School, Cambridge, MA	2007-2008

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

9. “The Grass is *Not* Always Greener: The Effects of Local Labor Market Information on Search and Employment,” with Niharika Singh, forthcoming in the *Journal of Development Economics*
8. “Regulation by Reputation? Intermediaries, Labor Abuses, and International Migration,” with Niharika Singh, forthcoming in the *Review of Economics and Statistics*.
7. “Peer Pressure and Discrimination: Evidence from International Cricket,” with Siddharth Eapen George, *Journal of Law, Economics, and Organization*, Vol. 40, Issue 3, Nov., 2024.
6. “Hiring Frictions and the Promise of Online Job Portals: Evidence from India,” with Niharika Singh, and Gabriel Tourek, *American Economic Review-Insights*, Vol. 5, Issue 4, Dec., 2023.
5. “Shackled to the Soil? Inherited Land, Birth Order, and Labor Mobility,” *The Journal of Human Resources*, Vol. 57, Issue 2, Spring, 2022.
4. “Understanding Adverse Outcomes in Gulf Migration: Evidence from Administrative Data from Sri Lanka,” with Alison Lodermeier, *International Migration Review*, Vol. 56, Issue 1, 2022.
3. “Seeking Treatment: The Impact of Mobile Extension on Information Exchange among Farmers,” *Journal of Development Economics*, Vol. 153, Nov., 2021.
2. “Mobile’izing Agricultural Advice: Technology Adoption, Diffusion, and Sustainability,” with Shawn Cole, *Economic Journal*, Vol. 131, Issue 633, Jan., 2021.
1. “Field Comparisons of Incentive-Compatible Preference Elicitation Techniques,” with Shawn Cole, Daniel Stein, and Jeremy Tobacman, *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization*, Vol. 172, Apr., 2020.

WORKING PAPERS

10. “Present Mothers, Absent Children? The Effects of Migration Restrictions in Sri Lanka,” with Alison Lodermeier and Paul Shaloka.
11. “Fraternity or Fracture? National Identity, Religious Minorities, and Communal Violence in India,” with Layton Hall.
12. “Agricultural Extension, Technology Adoption, and Information Spillovers: Evidence from a Cluster Randomized Experiment,” with Shawn Cole, Raissa Fabregas, and Hee Kwon Seo.

NON-REFEREED PUBLICATIONS/INVITED POLICY WRITING

“To Protect the Welfare of Sri Lankan Migrant Workers, Hold Recruitment Agencies Accountable,” *Daily Mirror*, 2024.

“How can online job portals help firms find workers? Evidence from India,” with Niharika Singh and Gabriel Tourek, *VoxDev*, 2023.

“Mobile Phone-Based Extension, Peer Interactions, and Farmer Information Exchange: Evidence from Gujarat,” with Renee Yaseen, *VoxDev*, 2022.

“Digital Agricultural Extension: Stimulating or Supplanting Farmers Interactions?” with Renee Yaseen, *Ideas for India*, 2022.

“Assessing the Importance of Financial Literacy,” with Shawn Cole, *Asian Development Bank, Finance for the Poor Quarterly*, Volume 9, Number 3, September 2008.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

UG - Undergraduate; G - Ph.D.

King’s College London

2026-*

5QQMN938 - Intermediate Econometrics (Tutorial Leader, UG)

University of Notre Dame

2016-2025

ECON 43810 - Explaining an Unequal World: Empirical Methods in Development (UG) - *9 semesters*

ECON 70562 - Advanced Topics in Economic Development (G) - *2 semesters*

ECON 30331 - Econometrics (UG) - *2 semesters*

ECON 70572 - Microeconomic Development II: Market Failures (G) - *1 semester*

ECON 33811 - Introduction to Development Economics (UG) - *1 semester*

Harvard University

2010-2015

Exec Ed - Re-thinking Financial Inclusion: Smart Design for Policy and Practice* - *1 week*

Economics 1393 - Poverty and Development, Department of Economics (UG) - *1 semester*

*- executive education course

ADVISING AND MENTORSHIP

Undergraduate Theses:

Honors

Grace Hatfield (ND ‘24)

James Mancini (ND ‘23)

BonAnno Thesis Prize

Elena Esteve (ND ‘21)

Alison Lodermeier (ND ‘17)

BonAnno Honorable mention

Adam Ramos (ND ‘17)

Daniel Martin (ND ‘16)

BonAnno Thesis Prize

Christian Kamm (ND ‘16)

Doctoral Theses:

Paul Shaloka (ND ‘23)

Linh Nguyen (ND ‘20)

Placement
Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
Bates College

Research Assistants/Pre-Doctoral Fellows:

Renee Yaseen (ND ‘22)

Mika Inoue (ND ‘20)

Mehak Siddiquei (ND MGA ‘18)

Alison Lodermeier (ND ‘17)

Sharvari Ravishankar (2020-22)

Samiskshya Siwakoti (2019-20)

Pankhuri Jha (2018-19)

Thashiya Nauki (2018-19)

Placement
Washington Post Op-Ed Columnist
University of Michigan Economics Ph.D.
Acacia Center for Justice
Brown University Economics Ph.D.
JPAL Policy Analyst
Columbia University M.A.
Harvard Kennedy School MPAID
Verité Research

HONORS, FELLOWSHIPS, AND GRANTS

Research Awards

Total Research Funding Raised: \$941,120

Building Inclusive Growth (BIG) Lab, Research Grant	2022
Kellogg Institute, Working Group Grant, University of Notre Dame (x3)	2021-23
Kellogg Institute, Research Grant, University of Notre Dame (x8)	2018-22
Provost’s Resilience & Recovery Fund, University of Notre Dame	2021
SGB Evidence Fund, International Growth Centre	2020
ATAI Research Grant, MIT, co-PI with S. George, W. Brooks, & K. Donovan	2019 ¹
Ford Family Grant, University of Notre Dame (x2)	2018, 2019
RSP Regular Faculty Grant, Notre Dame Research	2018
Research Grant, World Bank Research Group	2015, 2018
ISLA, Small Grants, University of Notre Dame (x3)	2017, 2018, 2019
ISLA, Large Grant, University of Notre Dame	2018
Luksburg Foundation Grant, University of Notre Dame	2017
JPAL Urban Services Initiative, MIT, co-PI with N. Singh, & G. Tourek	2016
Research Grant, Weiss Family Fund for Development, co-PI with N. Singh	2015
Research Grant, Sustainability Science Program, Harvard Kennedy School	2014
USAID-Development Innovation Ventures, co-PI with S. Cole	2013
Norberg-Bohm Doctoral Fellowship, Harvard Kennedy School	2012-2013
Agriculture Technology Adoption Initiative (ATAI), MIT, co-PI with S. Cole	2012

Teaching Awards²

¹Grant awarded but turned down.

²Awards prior to 2023-24 recognize the highest rated course, thereafter a threshold system was introduced recognizing multiple courses.

Department of Economics Teaching Award, University of Notre Dame <i>Undergraduate Elective (Empirical Methods in Development)</i>	2024-25
Department of Economics Teaching Award, University of Notre Dame <i>Undergraduate Elective (Empirical Methods in Development)</i>	2023-24
Department of Economics Teaching Award, University of Notre Dame <i>Best Core-Course (Econometrics)</i>	2022-23
Department of Economics Teaching Award, University of Notre Dame <i>Best Undergraduate Elective (Empirical Methods in Development)</i>	2021-22
Department of Economics Teaching Award, University of Notre Dame <i>Best Undergraduate Elective (Empirical Methods in Development)</i>	2020-21
Department of Economics Teaching Award, University of Notre Dame <i>Best Undergraduate Elective (Empirical Methods in Development)</i>	2018-19
Department of Economics Teaching Award, University of Notre Dame <i>Best Undergraduate Elective (Empirical Methods in Development)</i>	2017-18

Other Awards

Sustainability Science Doctoral Fellowship, Harvard Kennedy School	2013-2014
Harvard Kennedy School Graduate Fellowship	2010-2012
Full Tuition Grant, Hampshire College	2003-2007

INVITED SEMINARS AND CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

2024-2025: Harvard Kennedy School Growth Lab Seminar, Kellogg Institute Panel on COVID & Poverty, Western Michigan University Economics Seminar, University of Texas-Austin Economics Seminar, University of Warwick Economics Seminar, Simon Fraser University Economics Seminar, King's College London Economics Seminar, Amherst College Economics Seminar

2015-2024: Northwestern University Economics Seminar, World Bank/LISER Conference on Migration, University of California-San Diego Economics Seminar, Conference on Growth and Economic Development: Indian Statistical Institute, Boston University Economics Seminar, Barcelona Graduate School of Economics Summer Forum/Migration Workshop, CEPR-Misum-SITE Development Economics Conference, Korean Development Institute-World Bank Conference, University of Michigan-Ann Arbor Economics Seminar, IUPUI Economics Seminar, Amherst College Economics Seminar, Development Day (University of Chicago), University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Economics Seminar, Pacific Conference for Development Economics (USC), Northwestern University Development Economics Workshop, Yale Research Initiative on Innovation and Scale (Y-RISE), Human Capital, History, Demography, and Development (H2D2) Conference (Michigan), Northeastern Universities Development Consortium (Tufts), APPAM, Johns Hopkins-SAIS Invited Lecture, Pacific Conference for Development Economics (UCSD), Northeastern Universities Development Consortium (MIT), National Bureau of Economic Research(NBER)-Digitization Conference (Stanford), Midwest International Economic Development Conference (Wisconsin), Ministry of Planning, Government of Sri Lanka, Verité Research (Sri Lanka), World Bank DECRG, Georgetown-Qatar, University of Notre Dame,

ACADEMIC SERVICE

Seminars & Conferences:

Primary Organizer of weekly ND Development Economics Lunch/Workshop (2016-24).

Co-organized the ND-ITAM Poverty and Development Economics Research Conference, Mexico City, Mexico (2023), in partnership with ND International.

Primary Organizer of the New Frontiers in Development Lecture Series (2019, 2023) in partnership with the Kellogg Institute.

Primary Organizer of the ND-PUC Conference in Development Economics, Santiago, Chile (2018) in partnership with ND International.

Co-organized ND Mini-Conferences in Development Economics (2017, 2018).

Referee Service: *Agricultural Economics, American Journal of Agricultural Economics, American Economic Journal, Applied Economics, American Economic Review, American Economic Review-Insights, Economic Journal, Economic Development and Cultural Change, Environment and Development Economics, Journal of African Economies, Journal of Comparative Economics, Journal of Development Economics, Journal of Development Effectiveness, Journal of the European Economic Association, Journal of Environmental Economics and Management, Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization, Journal of Human Resources, Journal of Politics, Journal of Political Economy, Quantitative Economics, Quarterly Journal of Economics, Review of Economics and Statistics, PLOS ONE, World Bank Economic Review, World Development*

Grant Review: Weiss Fund, USAID-DIV (Agriculture/Development), 3ie, DAISI, SGB Evidence Fund, Kellogg Institute Grants Committee

OTHER

Languages: English, Sinhalese, Spanish (Basic), Hindi (Basic)

Last updated: August 19, 2026