

Laura V. Zimmermann

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Current Positions

2021 – Associate Professor, Department of Economics, University of Georgia

2021 – Associate Professor, Department of International Affairs, University of Georgia

2022 – Member, Global Young Academy (GYA)

2022 – Labor Economist and International Migration Expert, African Programming & Research Initiative to End Slavery (APRIES), Center on Human Trafficking Research & Outreach (CenHTRO), University of Georgia

2025 – Member, Steering Group, Social Science Matters Programme, International Science Council (ISC)

2024 – Member, International Science Council's Global Roster of Experts

2025 – Member, Board of Trustees, Southern Economic Association (SEA)

Past Positions

2014 – 2021 Assistant Professor, Department of Economics, University of Georgia

2014 – 2021 Assistant Professor, Department of International Affairs, University of Georgia

2022 – 2024 Co-Lead, Science Advice Working Group, Global Young Academy (GYA)

Education

2014 Ph.D. in Economics, University of Michigan

2010 M.A. in Economics, University of Michigan

2008 B.A. in Philosophy, Politics and Economics, University of Oxford

Fields Development Economics, Labor Economics, Political Economy

Peer-Reviewed Publications

- Party Organizations and Complementary Political Control (with Ajay Shenoy), accepted at Journal of the European Economic Association.
- The Effects of Adopting a Value Added Tax on Firms (with David Agrawal), accepted at Review of Economics and Statistics.
- The Power of Lakshmi: Monetary Incentives for Raising a Girl (with Nabaneeta Biswas, Christopher Cornwell), Journal of Human Resources, 60(4): 1253–1283, 2025.
- Why Guarantee Employment? Evidence from a Large Indian Public-Works Program, Economic Development and Cultural Change, 72(4): 2031–2067, 2024.

- De Jure versus De Facto Transparency: Corruption in Local Public Office in India (with Dahjeon Jeong, Ajay Shenoy), *Journal of Public Economics*, 221: 104855, 2023.
- The Dynamic Electoral Returns of a Large Anti-Poverty Program, *Review of Economics and Statistics*, 103(5): 803–817, 2021.
- Remember When It Rained: Schooling Responses to Shocks in India, *World Development*, 126, 2020.
- It's a Boy! Women and Non-Monetary Benefits from a Son in India, *World Development*, 104: 326–335, 2018.
- Guns and Butter? Fighting Violence with the Promise of Development (with Gaurav Khanna), *Journal of Development Economics*, 124: 120–141, 2017.
- Fighting Maoist Violence with Promises: Evidence from India's Employment Guarantee Scheme (with Gaurav Khanna), *Economics of Peace and Security Journal*, 9(1): 30–36, 2014.
- Public-Works Programs in Developing Countries Have the Potential to Reduce Poverty, *IZA World of Labor*, 2014.
- Reconsidering Gender Bias in Intra-Household Allocation in India, *Journal of Development Studies*, 48(1): 151–163, 2012.
- Human Capital and Ethnic Self-Identification of Migrants (with Amelie Constant, Liliya Gataullina, Klaus F. Zimmermann), *Economics Letters*, 98(3): 235–239, 2008.
- Ethnic Self-Identification of First-Generation Immigrants (with Amelie Constant, Klaus F. Zimmermann), *International Migration Review*, 41(3): 769–781, 2007.

Working Papers

- A Multi-Modal Approach to Estimating Prevalence: The Case of Labor Trafficking (with David Okech, Hui Yi, Lydia Aletradis).
- Arsenic Symptoms and Mental Health in Bangladesh (with Shyamal Chowdhury and Klaus F. Zimmermann).

Research in Progress

- How Young Adults Choose Jobs (with David Okech, Hui Yi).
- Female Electoral Success and the Survival of Girl Children in India (with Nabaneeta Biswas, Christopher Cornwell).
- Tax Competition in India (with David Agrawal).
- Court Cases in India (with Aditi Choudhary).
- Inside the Black Box of Early-Life Shocks on Later-Life Outcomes – Evidence from Indonesia.
- Labor Trafficking in Southern Africa (with David Okech, Lydia Aletraris, Anna Michelle Cody, Hui Yi, Mary Ager), first round of data collection completed, preparation for RCT and additional data collection.

Permanent Working Papers

- Demographic Challenges Facing the Elderly in Sub-Saharan Africa (with David Lam and Rebecca Thornton).

- Clash of Cultures: Muslims and Christians in the Ethnosizing Process (with Amelie Constant, Liliya Gataullina, Klaus F. Zimmermann), IZA Discussion Paper No. 2350.

Awards, Grants and Fellowships

Awards

- World Bank Economic Review Excellence in Refereeing Award, 2015–2016.
- Swift Award for Outstanding Teaching in Undergraduate Economics, University of Georgia (2018).
- Terry College of Business Outstanding Teacher, University of Georgia (2019).
- University of Georgia Career Center Career Development Recognition: identified by at least one graduate in the Class of a given year as a person who has had a significant positive impact on their career development and success (2016, 2018, 2020, 2021).
- University of Georgia Thank-a-Teacher Program Recognition: allows students and alumni to express appreciation for teachers who have impacted their lives in profound and meaningful ways (2020, 2021).
- Richard B. Russell Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching Award, University of Georgia (2024). Highest award for outstanding teaching by early-career faculty at the University of Georgia.
- Team Impact Award as part of the interdisciplinary research team at the Center on Human Trafficking Research & Outreach (CenHTRO), University of Georgia (2024). Recognizes a team for excellence in innovative and impactful scholarship that either has or soon promises to fundamentally advance knowledge, understanding and/or applications in ways not achievable by individual investigators or single disciplinary approaches alone.
- Research Award, School of Public and International Affairs (SPIA), University of Georgia (2026).

Grants and Fellowships

- US Department of State, Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, Grant SSJTIP22CA0029. Co-PI for Project Reducing the Prevalence of Human Trafficking through Increasing the Financial Literacy and Capability of Survivors and Those At-Risk in SSA (with David Okech, Lydia Aletraris, Anna Michelle Cody, Hui Yi, Mary Ager), 2022–2024, \$2,200,065 for Phase I.
- US Department of State, Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, Grant SSJTIP22CA0029. Co-PI for Project Reducing the Prevalence of Human Trafficking through Increasing the Financial Literacy and Capability of Survivors and Those At-Risk in SSA (with David Okech, Lydia Aletraris, Anna Michelle Cody, Hui Yi, Mary Ager), 2024–2027, \$5,200,000 for Phase II.
- International Growth Centre (IGC) Grant, Principal Investigator for Project Production Responses and Tax Evasion with Limited State Capacity – Evidence from Major Reform in India (with David Agrawal), 2016–2019.
- University of Georgia Aspire Fellowship Program (2022–2023).
- University of Georgia Teaching Academy Fellows Program (TAFP) (2018–2019).
- University of Georgia Terry-Sanford and Bonbright Center Research Award (2018–2023).

- University of Georgia Bonbright Center Seed Grant (2019).
- Rackham One-Term Fellowship (Fall 2013).
- Rackham Pre-Doctoral Fellowship (2012–2013).
- Marshall Weinberg Research Fellowship (2012).
- Small Grant Program for Ph.D. Students, Department of Economics, University of Michigan (2011).
- Rackham Interdisciplinary Workshop Grant for the Informal Development Seminar (2011–2012, 2012–2013).
- Rackham Conference Travel Grant (2010, 2011, 2012, 2014).
- UGA OVPR Foreign Travel Assistance Program (2015).
- International Institute Conference Travel Award (2012, 2013, 2014).

Teaching

University of Georgia

- Government and Business (INTL 8360) – Spring 2024.
- Developing Political Systems (INTL 8340) – Spring 2022, Spring 2023, Spring 2025.
- Politics of Development (INTL 4320) – Fall 2014, Spring/Fall 2015, Spring 2017, Spring 2018, Spring 2019, Spring/Fall 2020, Spring 2021, Fall 2022.
- Economic Growth and Development (ECON 4200) – Spring/Fall 2015, Spring 2016, Spring/Fall 2017, Spring 2018, Spring/Fall 2019, Spring/Fall 2020, Fall 2021, Spring/Fall 2022, Fall 2023, Spring 2024, Spring/Fall 2025, Spring 2026.
- Special Topics in International Business (INTB 5100) – Summer 2026 (Terry School of Business Study Abroad Program in Argentina / Chile).

Ph.D. Students with graduation year and initial placement: Nabaneeta Biswas (Economics, 2017, Marshall University, committee member); Sanjukta Das (Economics, 2017, National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER), Delhi, co-chair); Walker DePuy (Integrative Conservation & Anthropology, 2021, committee member); Jeff Auerbach (International Affairs/Political Science, 2021, Head of Data Analytics, Center for International Trade and Security, committee member); Keshob Sharma (Economics, 2022, CDC Prevention Effectiveness Fellowship, committee member); Yeongmi Jeong (Economics, 2023, Postdoc Research Position with Sociogenomics Group, Purdue University, committee member); Sameera Talati Gujarathi (Integrative Conservation & Ecology/Agricultural Economics, 2025, committee member); Gabriel Soyer (International Affairs/Political Science, 2025, Postdoc Universite Catholique Louvain, Belgium, committee member); Aditi Choudhary (Economics, ongoing, chair).

Master's Students: Giovanni Righi (Economics, committee member, 2016); Ke Bai (Economics, committee member, 2017); Ahmed Simjee (International Affairs, committee member, 2019); Nicholas (Nick) Dasoveanu (Economics, committee chair, 2021); Robyn Anzulis (Economics, committee chair, 2022).

Faculty mentor of 65 undergraduate students for their senior theses, including the winner of the Economics Department's 2015 prize for the best senior thesis at the University of Georgia, and runners-up in 2018 and 2022.

University of Michigan

- Graduate Student Instructor for Government Regulation of Industry (undergraduate), 2012.
- Graduate Student Instructor for Introduction to Macroeconomics (undergraduate), 2010.
- Graduate Student Instructor for European Economy (undergraduate), 2009.

Other Teaching

- Teaching Assistant for Analysis of Census and Survey Data for Social Science Research, taught for university faculty and government research staff in Ghana (2011).

Visiting Scholar

- London School of Economics, South Asia Centre, September–November 2016.
- Cornell University, Dyson School, July 2015.

Conference and Seminar Presentations

- 2026:** German Development Conference (GDC) / European Development Economics Group (EDEG) Conference (Kiel, Germany).
- 2025:** South East Exchange of Development Studies (SEEDS) Conference; German Development Conference (GDC) (Frankfurt am Main, Germany); Swiss Young Network for Science Policy and Diplomacy (SYNESPOD) (Bern, Switzerland); European National Young Academies (ENYA) Annual Meeting (Bern, Switzerland); University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign.
- 2024:** 6th World Bank/IFS/ODI Public Finance Conference; Binghamton University; Empirical Studies of Conflict (ESOC) Annual Meeting (invited session discussant); Global Young Academy Annual General Meeting (Washington, DC); MDev Conference (University of Michigan); Southern Economics Association; Virginia Tech; UGA School of Public and International Affairs Methods Colloquium.
- 2023:** 18th Annual Conference on Economic Growth and Development (Delhi); Ashoka University (Sonapat, India); Emory University; National Tax Association Annual Conference; South East Exchange of Development Studies (SEEDS) Conference; Southeastern International/Development Economics Workshop; Southern Economic Association (x2); University of California Irvine.
- 2022:** Berkeley-UBC Political Economy Conference; Centre for the Study of African Economies Conference (Oxford); CLEAR (Corruption Lab on Ethics, Accountability, and Rule of Law) Lab Conference (University of Virginia); Dickinson College; GLO (Global Labor Organization) Global Conference; Indian Institute of Management Calcutta; Midwest Political Science Association Conference; Pacific Conference for Development Economics (PacDev); Sustainability and Development Conference (University of Michigan).
- 2021:** 16th Annual Conference on Economic Growth and Development (Delhi); Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) Conference on Development (Dhaka); Florida International University; Fourth IESR-GLO Joint Conference on 'Social Safety Net and Welfare Programs'; National Tax Association Annual Conference; NIPFP-IIPF Conference on 'Papers in Public Finance' (India); Northeast Universities Development Consortium Conference; Southern Economic Association (x4).

- 2020:** 17th Midwest International Economic Development Conference; NBER Junior Development Pre-Conference; Indian Institute of Management Lucknow; Comparative Political Economy Workshop (Southeastern Region).
- 2019:** 12th Southeastern International/Development Economics Workshop; 16th Midwest International Economic Development Conference; IFPRI; Northeast Universities Development Consortium Conference; University of California Merced.
- 2018:** 14th Annual Conference on Economic Growth and Development (Delhi); Northeast Universities Development Consortium Conference; Southern Economic Association; University of Georgia (Agricultural Economics); Sustainability and Development Conference (University of Michigan); University of Georgia (International Affairs Brownbag).
- 2017:** 13th Annual Conference on Economic Growth and Development (Delhi); American Economic Association Annual Meeting (Poster); Georgia State University; Pacific Conference for Development Economics (PacDev); Southern Economic Association.
- 2016:** London School of Economics (South Asia Centre) (x2); London School of Economics (STICERD); Delhi School of Economics Winter School (Delhi).
- 2015:** American Economic Association Annual Meeting; Centre for the Study of African Economies Conference (Oxford); Cornell University (Dyson School); 10th IZA/World Bank Conference on Employment and Development; Northeast Universities Development Consortium Conference; Ninth Southeastern International/Development Economics Workshop; United States Institute of Peace (USIP) and the Empirical Studies of Conflict Project (ESOC) Policy Meeting; University of Georgia (Agricultural Economics).
- 2014:** 10th Annual Conference on Economic Growth and Development (Delhi); College of William and Mary; Denison University; Midwest Political Science Association Conference; The MGNREGA in India: Taking Stock, Looking Ahead (Mumbai); Northeast Universities Development Consortium Conference; Eighth Southeastern International/Development Economics Workshop; University of Cambridge; University of Georgia; University of Illinois at Chicago; Uppsala University; Workshop on India's Maoist Insurgency (Princeton); World Bank.
- 2013:** Centre for the Study of African Economies Conference (Oxford); Economic Development Seminar (University of Michigan); Informal Development Seminar (University of Michigan); Population Association of America Annual Meeting; Society of Labor Economists Annual Meeting.
- 2012:** 8th Annual Conference on Economic Growth and Development (Delhi); Informal Development Seminar (University of Michigan); Informal Labor Lunch (University of Michigan); Midwest Economic Association Conference; Midwest International Economic Development Conference; Population Association of America Annual Meeting (2x).
- 2011:** 7th Annual Conference on Economic Growth and Development (Delhi); Sixth African Population Conference (Ouagadougou); 6th IZA/World Bank Conference on Employment and Development (Mexico City); Delhi School of Economics; Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (Delhi); Indian Statistical Institute (Delhi); Institute for the Study of Labor Brownbag Seminar (Bonn); Midwest Economic Association Conference; Population Association of America Annual Meeting.
- 2010:** Informal Development Seminar (University of Michigan); Midwest Economic Association Conference.

2007: European Society for Population Economics XXI Annual Conference.

Service, Professional Experience and Affiliations

Computational Social Science Workshop and Datathon (August 2021).

Service to International and Interdisciplinary Organizations

- Organized and led workshop 'GYA Science Advice Masterclass: A Global Transdisciplinary Approach' in Washington, DC. Included speakers from the International Science Council (ISC), the African chapter of the International Network for Government Science Advice (INGSA Africa), and the Geneva Science and Diplomacy Anticipator (GESDA). May 2024.
- Invited expert for roundtable discussion on the future of development in April 2024, a consultation between the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and members and partners of the International Science Council (ISC) on emerging themes of the UNDP's Signals Spotlight 2024 report. The goal of the roundtable was to stress-test signals and their interpretation before the report was finalized. The report is targeted to the global development community and the UNDP. It was launched in July 2024 by UNDP's Administrator in the run-up to the Summit of the Future, which focused on collaboration efforts towards global goals like the 2030 Sustainable Development Goal Agenda and the Paris Agreement on climate change.
- Collaboration with International Labour Organization (ILO), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), International Organization for Migration (IOM) and UGA on 'Standard tools for Measuring Trafficking in Persons' (STATIP), 2023–2025.
- Development of transdisciplinary Science Advice Masterclass with Science Advice Working Group of Global Young Academy (GYA), ongoing.
- Served as invited member of the International Science Council (ISC)'s working group coordinating the review process of the 2023 Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR). The GSDR provides evidence-based guidance on global sustainable development issues and the implementation of the 2030 SDG Agenda and was launched at the quadrennial SDG Summit in September 2023 where heads of state met to focus on progress towards the SDGs. The working group, consisting of 13 researchers worldwide from the natural and social sciences, was tasked with coordinating and synthesizing feedback on the GSDR draft from about 150 expert reviewers for communication to the UNDESA (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs).
- Programme Organising Committee, Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Global Young Academy (GYA) 'Technological Innovations for Discovering Solutions to the World's Greatest Current Challenges' in Rwanda (2022–2023).
- Organized and moderated the webinar 'Building Trust in Science Advice: an Honest Conversation' as a collaboration between the GYA's Science Advice Working Group (WG) and the Trust in Science WG, May 2023.
- Organized and moderated the capacity-building workshop 'Science Advice – Introductory Workshop' for young researchers and local participants at the GYA AGM in Rwanda, including speakers from the European Commission's Joint Research Center, the Uganda Academy of Sciences and Yale Law School, June 2023.

- Organized and moderated the workshop 'Science Advice in the Wake of Covid-19' for young researchers and local participants at the GYA AGM in Rwanda, including speaker from UNESCO International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa, June 2023.
- Presentation on GYA activities and networking discussions with Swiss Young Network for Science Policy and Diplomacy (SYNESPOD), September 2023.

Service to the Profession

Referee for: Agricultural Economics; American Economic Journal: Applied Economics; American Economic Journal: Economic Policy; American Economic Review; American Journal of Agricultural Economics; American Journal of Political Science; Applied Economics; B.E. Journal of Economic Analysis and Policy; Child and Society; Economics Bulletin; Economic Development and Cultural Change; Economics of Education Review; Economic Inquiry; Economic Journal; Economic Systems; Education Economics; Empirical Economics; Environment and Development Economics; European Journal of Political Economy; Food Policy; Health Economics; International Journal of Manpower; International Journal of Social Economics; International Studies Review; International Tax and Public Finance; IZA Journal of Labor and Development; Journal of Conflict Resolution; Journal of Development Economics; Journal of Development Studies; Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization; Journal of European Economic Association; Journal of Human Resources; Journal of Political Economy Microeconomics; Journal of Population Economics; Journal of Public Economics; Journal of the Asia Pacific Economy; Labour Economics; Oxford Bulletin of Economics and Statistics; Population Studies; Regional Science and Urban Economics; Review of Development Economics; Review of Economic Studies; Review of Economics and Statistics; World Bank Economic Review; World Development.

- Reviewer for: BRAC Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD)'s Women's Economic Empowerment and Digital Connectivity Initiative (WEE-Connect), BRAC University (Bangladesh); South Asian Network for Development and Environmental Economics (SANDEE).
- Association Mentoring in Economics (AMIE) Mentor for Graduate Student (2024).
- CSWEP Mentor at National Tax Association Conference (2023).
- Program Committee Lead for Development Economics in the South (DevSouth) Workshop (2024–2025).
- Program Committee Member for Southeastern International/Development Economics Workshop (SIDEW) (2019–2024).
- Program Committee Member for Visions in Methodology (ViM) Conference, University of Georgia (2019).
- Co-Student Organizer of Informal Development Seminar, University of Michigan (2011–2012).

Service to the University and the Departments

- Third-Year Review Committee, Department of International Affairs, University of Georgia (2026).
- Department Faculty Affairs Committee, Department of International Affairs, University of Georgia (2025–).
- Post-Tenure Review Committee, School of Public and International Affairs, University of Georgia (2025).

- Richard B. Russell Awards for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching Selection Committee, University of Georgia (2024–2026).
- Faculty Recruiting Committee, Department of Economics, University of Georgia (2024–2025).
- Third-Year Review Committee, Department of Economics, University of Georgia (2024).
- Junior Faculty Mentoring Program, Department of International Affairs, University of Georgia (2023–2024).
- Curriculum Committee, School of Public and International Affairs (SPIA), University of Georgia (2023–2025).
- Faculty Recruiting Committee, Department of International Affairs, University of Georgia (2023).
- Faculty Recruiting Committee, Department of Economics, University of Georgia (2020–2022).
- Teaching Award Review Committee, Terry School of Business, University of Georgia (2020).

Service to the Local Community

- Young Dawg Program (intensive mentoring of a high-achieving high school student from Athens) (Fall 2016, Fall 2023).

Professional Experience

- Research Assistant for David Lam, University of Michigan (Summer 2010, September 2010 – August 2011).
- Research Assistant for Raj Arunachalam, University of Michigan (Summer 2009).
- Intern, IZA (Institute for the Study of Labor), Bonn; assigned to the migration program, and member of a working group in the research program on 'The Economics and Persistence of Migrant Ethnicity' (Summer 2006).

Affiliations

- GLO (Global Labor Organization) Fellow.
- IZA (Institute for the Study of Labor) Research Fellow.
- IZA (Institute for the Study of Labor) Research Affiliate (December 2006 – July 2015).
- Population Studies Center Trainee (University of Michigan) (February 2011 – July 2014).

Guest Posts on Blogs

- Empowering Daughters: How Conditional Cash Transfers Can Shift Cultural Norms, blog post on Ideas for India Blog (with Nabaneeta Biswas, Christopher Cornwell), December 2024.
- How Anti-Poverty Programmes Are Used to Undermine Democracy in India, blog post on VoxDev Blog (with Ajay Shenoy), October 2024.
- Do Value-Added Taxes Benefit Firms? Evidence from the Adoption of State-Specific Value-Added Taxes, blog post on Ideas for India Blog (with David Agrawal), May 2022.
- Are Transparency and Accountability Enough? Open Corruption and Why It Exists, blog post on Ideas for India Blog (with Dahyeon Jeong, Ajay Shenoy), April 2019.

- India's Commodity Tax System Leads to Low Compliance, blog post on International Growth Centre (IGC) Blog (with David Agrawal), November 2017.
- Development for Peace: The Decline of Naxalite Violence in India, blog post on Sustainable Security Blog (with Gaurav Khanna), September 2017.
- MNREGA's Impact on Rural Labor Markets, lead blog post on Ideas for India Blog's e-Symposium 10 years of MNREGA and the Way Forward, March 2016.
- Maoist Violence and MNREGA, blog post on Ideas for India Blog (with Gaurav Khanna), April 2015.
- Guest Post on Development Impact Blog on paper Why Guarantee Employment? Evidence from a Large Indian Public-Works Program, December 2013.
- Paper Why Guarantee Employment? Evidence from a Large Indian Public-Works Program featured in IZA Compact, December 2012.
- Paper Why Guarantee Employment? Evidence from a Large Indian Public-Works Program featured in ADAPT International Bulletin 33/2012, November 2012.