

**Nicholas Swanson**  
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<https://nicholasgswanson.github.io>

**BUSINESS ADDRESS:**

Department of Economics  
530 Evans Hall, #3880  
Berkeley, CA 94720-3880

**FIELDS OF CONCENTRATION:**

**Primary:** Development Economics  
**Secondary:** Psychology and Economics, Labor Economics

**DISSERTATION TITLE:** "Essays in Development Economics"

Expected Date of Completion: May 2024  
Principal Advisors: Professors Supreet Kaur and Edward Miguel  
Other References: Professors Ned Augenblick and Frederico Finan

<b>PRE-DOCTORAL STUDIES:</b>	<b>DEGREE</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>FIELD</b>
LSE <i>Distinction</i>	M.Sc.	2015	Economics
University of Cambridge <i>First-Class Honors</i>	B.A.	2011	Economics

**JOB MARKET PAPER:**

“Under-training by Employers in Spot Labor Markets: Evidence from Burundi”  
with Luisa Cefala, Pedro Naso and Michel Ndayikeza

**Abstract:** An extensive labor economics literature suggests employers may underinvest in worker's general human capital because they do not capture the returns from training, but there is limited empirical evidence showing that this mechanism generates meaningful economic distortions. We test whether such models contribute to an important phenomenon in low income countries: a failure by farmers to adopt seemingly profitable agricultural technologies, because farmers invest too little in training local laborers when they do not "appropriate" the returns. First, to test for the presence of appropriability failures, we induce a subset of employers to train workers in some local labor markets (villages) and not others. Consistent with labor models of general skills, we document that many of the trained workers subsequently work for other employers in the local labor market, so that the training employer captures only a portion of the returns from training. The spillovers onto the other employers (who did not train) are large, leading to increases in use of the new technology and increased profits. Second, we randomize employers into a contract condition that increases the chances that the trained worker will work for the training employer in the future, shifting more of the training surplus to the training employer. This contract increases employers' willingness to train by 50 percentage points. The wedge that we measure between private and social returns suggests an important role for policies that incentivize those that acquire skills or information to diffuse this among others in the population.

**OTHER WORKING PAPERS:**

“Kinship Pressure and Firm Worker Matching Distortions”  
“Retrieval Failures and Consumption Smoothing: A Field Experiment on Seasonal Poverty”  
with Ned Augenblick, Kelsey Jack, Supreet Kaur and Felix Masiye

**PUBLICATIONS:**

Swanson, N., Christensen, G., Littman, R., Birke, D., Miguel, E., Paluck, E.L. and Wang, Z., 2020, May. Research transparency is on the rise in economics. In *AEA Papers and Proceedings* (Vol. 110, pp. 61-65).  
Ferguson, J., Littman, R., Christensen, G., Paluck, E.L., Swanson, N., Wang, Z., Miguel, E., Birke, D. and Pezzuto, J.H., 2023. Survey of open science practices and attitudes in the social sciences. *Nature communications*, 14(1), p.5401.

**SELECTED WORKS IN PROGRESS:**

“The Impacts of Liquidity on Low-Income Workers: Evidence from Earned Wage Access” with Luisa Cefala and Eric Koepcke  
“Measuring Slums from Space” with Michael Gechter, Minas Sifakis and Nick Tsivanidis

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

### RESEARCH:

Research Assistant (with Nick Tsivanidis), Department of Economics, U.C. Berkeley (2021-2022)  
Research Assistant (with Supreet Kaur), Department of Economics, U.C. Berkeley (2017-2018)  
Research Assistant (with Ted Miguel), Department of Economics, U.C. Berkeley (2017-2018)  
Research Assistant (with Nava Ashraf), Department of Economics, LSE (2015-2016)  
Research Assistant (with Heather Schofield, Frank Schilbach) Cornell and MIT (2013-2014)

### TEACHING:

Teaching Assistant, MBA Programs, Haas School of Business (Spring 2020)  
Strategic Leadership  
Teaching Assistant, Department of Economics, U.C. Berkeley (Fall 2018, Spring 2019)  
Introduction to Economics, Intermediate Microeconomics

### OTHER:

M&A Analyst, Evercore Partners, 2013-2014  
Equity Research Analyst, HSBC, 2011-2012

## CONFERENCES AND PRESENTATIONS

2024 CSAE Conference (*scheduled*)  
2023 PacDev, Warwick PhD Conference, All UC Labor, Advances in Field Experiments, IZA/CREST Conference:  
Labor Market Policy Evaluation, World Bank Dime-KDI (*scheduled*), NEUDC (*scheduled*)  
2022 Advances in Field Experiments, STEG Workshop, IPA GPRL, NEUDC  
2021 PEP Convening, PacDev, Early-Career Behavioral Economics Conference  
2020 Yale Whitebox Conference

## FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS:

2023 Stone Center Fellowship  
2023 IRLE Dissertation Fellowship  
2022 Global Priorities Fellowship  
2021/2022 Rocca Dissertation Fellowship  
2009, 2011 Kings Scholar, Gerald Shove Prize

## RESEARCH GRANTS:

### PI

2023 IGC (~\$25,000)  
2023 Strandberg Research Grant (\$9,300)  
2022 SurveyCTO Research Grant Awardee (\$2,000)  
2022 Weiss Fund (\$48,120)  
2022 Weiss Fund (\$44,660)  
2022 Strandberg Research Grant (\$10,000)  
2021-23 Psychology and Economics of Poverty Grants (multiple) (\$39,000)  
2021 ATAI (\$8,527)  
2021 JPal-JOI (\$7,310)  
2020 PEDL Exploratory Grant (~\$40,000)  
2020 EASST Grant Award (\$54,250)  
2018-23 CEGA Development Challenge (multiple) (\$23,500)

### Co-PI

2022 IGC (~\$25,000)  
2020 USAID-DIV (\$426,146)  
2020 MRR (\$256,716)  
2019 Weiss Foundation (\$75,862)

## SERVICE

Referee: *Journal of Development Economics*

## OTHER INFORMATION:

Citizenship: UK, USA