

B.4.2. Fellows individual research projects

Fellow	Host institution	Start date and duration TBC	
ESR	<i>PSE</i>		
Project title The Industrial Organization of the Aid Sector: NGOs, Donors and Recipients Supervisor name: Thierry Verdier			
Objectives: There is a long and often contentious debate on the effectiveness of foreign aid. The debate often focuses on problems with incentives and governance in developing countries, versus the need to address market imperfections through aid. However, relatively little rigorous work exists on the organization of the aid sector itself, and the related governance and incentives constraints that affect the performance of NGOs and donors. Drawing on the IO literature of firms, there is a large set of theoretical questions to be explored, that can shed new light on the aid effectiveness questions from a different perspective. To contribute along those lines, this project will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Train the ER on relevant economic models in industrial organization and on possible applications to the Aid sector.</i> - <i>Train researcher on empirical and theoretical methods suitable to the analysis of these questions.</i> - <i>Produce original research on this topic</i> 			
Tasks and methodology: The ESR 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Familiarize him/herself with the relevant literature in Industrial Organization, and with the small but growing body of work applying this work to the aid sector.</i> - <i>Develop skills required for the theoretical modelling and empirical analysis relevant to this project.</i> - <i>Work under the supervision of the faculty at the node to produce a draft of a research paper (possibly co-authored with the supervisor)</i> 			
Results: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Research paper to be submitted to international academic journal</i> 			
Dissemination: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>The ESR will present the research paper at the internal development workshop at PSE (intermediate stages of the project), and at conferences organized within the PODER network (finished paper).</i> - <i>The ESR will also be encouraged to submit the paper to international conferences (e.g., European economic Association, NEUDC) and meetings related to aid effectiveness and IO</i> - <i>The working paper will be posted on the PODER website.</i> 			
Planned secondment: <i>To be confirmed. The possibility to explore a case study of a country with a particularly interesting aid structure will be explored.</i>			
Risk assessment: As the primary contribution of this project can be on the theoretical development, data availability will not be a constraint, and conditional on selecting an ER with the appropriate initial skill set to further develop, <i>the risk level associated with this project is low.</i>			

Fellow	Host institution		
ESR	<i>LSE</i>		
Project title: Promoting Basic Entrepreneurship Among the Ultra Poor. Supervisor name: <i>Oriana Bandiera and Robin Burgess</i>			

<p>Objectives:</p> <p>A series of recent studies have provided tentatively positive results on the ability of simple transfer programs, coupled with basic training, to enable the ultra-poor to build basic livelihoods through simple entrepreneurial activities. Little is known, however, about where these programs will be successful, the mechanisms through which they work and their impacts on those that are excluded because they are relatively wealthier. This project is aimed at designing a series of RCTs that would allow researchers to unpack the mechanisms through which these basic entrepreneurial programs work. The ESR would work on design of these projects.</p>
<p>Tasks and methodology. The ESR(s) will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Familiarize with the relevant literature on the topic - Develop models of the labour market and psychological constraints on basic entrepreneurship among the ultra-poor. - Develop skills required for the design of RCTs aimed at unpacking the mechanisms through which basic entrepreneurship programs work. - Use the models developed to generate predications about where entrepreneurship programs will be most successful.
<p>Results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Literature Review - Development of models and potential RCT designs - Production of basic review paper
<p>Dissemination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The ESR will present the research paper at the internal development workshop at LSE (intermediate stages of the project), and at conferences organized within the PODER network (finished paper). - The ESR will also be encouraged to submit the paper to international conferences (e.g., European economic Association) and thematic meetings. - The working paper will be posted on the PODER website.
<p>Planned secondment:</p> <p>Opportunities for secondment will also be sought with one of the Associated Partners (e.g. IPA) working on basic entrepreneurship programs.</p>
<p>Risk assessment:</p> <p>There is little risk in the project</p>

Fellow <i>ESR/ER</i>	Host institution <i>Bocconi</i>	Up to 12 months	September 2016
<p>Project title: Intra-household allocation and gender in Sub-Saharan Africa</p>			
<p>Supervisor name: <i>Eliana La Ferrara</i>; Co-supervisors: <i>Selim Gulesci, Maristella Botticini</i></p>			
<p>Objectives:</p> <p>The allocation of resources within the household has important implications for the well-being of its members and for gender inequality within the household. Important determinants of this allocation include the relative bargaining power of the members (e.g., head and spouse) as well as differential access to labour and capital markets. Recent policies and interventions have been put in place in many developing countries that have the potential to change intra-household allocation and possibly reduce gender bias. These policies include reforms of inheritance and land rights (e.g., in Rwanda); training in life skills for young women (e.g., in Uganda), as well as interventions against gender based violence (e.g., in DRC and Nigeria). Analysing the impact of these policies can shed light on the optimal design of gender-focused interventions.</p>			
<p>Tasks and methodology. The ESR will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore opportunities for analysis of relevant “natural experiments” or existing randomized controlled trials with specific implications for women’s empowerment • Work on a pilot design for a new intervention 			
<p>Results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preliminary analysis of existing data • Draft research paper • Prototype of a new impact evaluation designed to fill in existing knowledge gaps from previous literature 			

<p>Dissemination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The ESR will present the research paper at the internal development workshop at Bocconi (intermediate stages of the project), and at conferences organized within the PODER network (finished paper).</i> • <i>The ESR will also be encouraged to submit the paper to international conferences (e.g., European economic Association) and thematic meetings.</i> • <i>The working paper will be posted on the PODER website.</i> • <i>For the design of the new intervention, the ESR will be encouraged to share ideas on the preliminary evaluation framework in special “work in progress” sessions network-wide.</i>
<p>Planned secondment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The ESR will be encouraged to visit nodes where faculty is actively researching topics of intra-household allocation and gender (notably, PSE and FUNDP). A partnership will be sought with IPA to conduct a randomized intervention base on the new pilot design in one of the African countries where IPA has field offices.</i>
<p>Risk assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>While the analysis of existing projects (e.g., in Rwanda and Uganda) will be feasible because local faculty already has access to the data, the identification of a promising setting for a new RCT is difficult at this stage. The second part of the project involves a medium level of risk</i>

Fellow ESR	Host institution PSE	Start date and duration TBC	
<p>Project title Evaluation of agricultural preferential trade agreements and export promotion schemes Supervisor name: Akiko Suwa</p>			
<p>Objectives: Agricultural trade policies, and the related subsidies of the US and EU, have long been considered as important potential constraints to agricultural development in many developing countries. More recently however, with high food prices and recurrent food crises, the debate has been shifting. In this context a reconsideration of agricultural preferential trade agreements and export schemes is crucial. While there exist a relatively large theoretical literature in this area, rigorous evidence on the micro-impacts of such policies is much more limited. This project aims to address this gap by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Training the researcher on relevant economic models for analysing the impact of agricultural trade instruments</i> • <i>Training researcher on empirical methods suitable to the analysis of these programs.</i> • <i>Produce original research on this topic</i> 			
<p>Tasks and methodology: The ESR will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>familiarize him/herself with the relevant theoretical and empirical literature on the topic</i> • <i>Develop skills required for the analysis of large trade datasets at the product and if available at the firm level and use them to produce statistical and econometric analysis of data relevant to this project. Specific focus will be on micro econometric tools.</i> • <i>Work under the supervision of the faculty at the node to produce a draft of a research paper (possibly co-authored with the supervisor)</i> 			
<p>Results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Research paper to be submitted to international academic journal</i> 			
<p>Dissemination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The ESR will present the research paper at the internal development workshop at PSE (intermediate stages of the project), and at conferences organized within the PODER network (finished paper).</i> • <i>The ESR will also be encouraged to submit the paper to international conferences (e.g., European economic Association) and thematic meetings.</i> • <i>The working paper will be posted on the PODER website.</i> 			
<p>Planned secondment: <i>To be confirmed</i></p>			

Risk assessment:

A potential risk related to this project is the availability of sufficiently rich micro-data that allows analysing this set of questions. However as more dataset are becoming available, and as existing contacts can facilitate further data access, the risk level associated with this project is low

Fellow <i>ESR</i>	Host institution <i>UCT</i>	12 months	Between April and September 2016
Project title: Schooling to Work transitions			
Supervisor name: <i>Cally Ardington and Murray Leibbrandt</i>			
<p>Objectives:</p> <p>Harnessing the human capital of the youth is a key challenge for developing countries, especially those currently experiencing a “youth bulge”. The school-to-work research agenda includes many issues concerning schooling, employment, training, household formation, fertility and risk preferences. We have a particular interest in studying the impact of school drop-out on future labour market performance, the scarring effects of early unemployment spells and the impact of early child-bearing, but would not be overly prescriptive to the ESR. The objectives would be to train the researcher on relevant dynamic models for studying the transition from school to work, to train researcher on empirical panel methods suitable to the analysis of these models and to produce original research on this topic.</p>			
<p>Tasks and methodology. The ESR will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>familiarize him/herself with the relevant literature on the topic</i> - <i>Develop skills required for the analysis of large datasets and use them to produce statistical and econometric analysis of data relevant to this project. Specific focus will be on the analysis of panel data.</i> - <i>Work under the supervision of the faculty at the node to produce a draft of a research paper (possibly co-authored with the supervisor)</i> 			
<p>Results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Research paper to be submitted to international academic journal</i> 			
<p>Dissemination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>The ESR will present the research paper at the SALDRU seminar and at conferences organized within the PODER network (finished paper).</i> - <i>The ESR will also be encouraged to submit the paper to international conferences (e.g., Population Association of America).</i> - <i>The working paper will be posted on the PODER website.</i> 			
<p>Planned secondment: None planned</p>			
<p>Risk assessment: <i>The risk level associated with this project is low.</i></p>			

Fellow ESR	Host institution <i>PSE</i>	Start date and duration TBC	
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<p>Project title Constraints to agricultural technology adoption</p> <p>Supervisor name: Karen Macours – co-supervisor: Luc Behaghel</p> <p>PhD enrolment: Yes. At the time of recruitment, ESR will be already enrolled in a PhD, Institution to be determined at recruitment stage.</p>
<p>Objectives:</p> <p><i>Raising world food prices and fears for widespread food shortages with recurrent food price spikes have refocused attention of many policy makers on the challenge of increasing agricultural productivity in developing countries. Agricultural productivity remains notably low in Sub Sahara Africa, and a growing literature is trying to understand this puzzle. While profitable technologies are often available, understanding the reasons why farmers are not adopting them requires careful economic analysis and empirical work. Recently a number of randomized control trials have started shedding light on some of the constraints (e.g. under the JPAL's ATAI initiative) by carefully evaluating impacts of interventions aimed at addressing some of the potential constraints. But many questions remain. This project will contribute to this literature, and in order to do so will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Train ESR on relevant economic models for agricultural technology adoption</i> ● <i>Train ESR on impact evaluation methods suitable to the analysis of these programs.</i> ● <i>Produce original research on this topic</i>
<p>Tasks and methodology: The ESR will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>familiarize him/herself with the relevant experimental and no experimental literature on the topic, as well as the existing more descriptive literature on adoption in agricultural economics</i> ● <i>Develop skills required for impact evaluation design (randomized control trials or no experimental designs) and the data analysis and use them to produce statistical and econometric analysis of data relevant to this project. Specific focus will be on micro econometric tools.</i> ● <i>Work under the supervision of the faculty at the node to produce a draft of a research paper (possibly co-authored with (one of) the supervisor)</i>
<p>Results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Research paper to be submitted to international academic journal</i>
<p>Dissemination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>The ESR will present the research paper at the internal development workshop at PSE (intermediate stages of the project), and at conferences organized within the PODER network (finished paper).</i> ● <i>The ESR will also be encouraged to submit the paper to international conferences (e.g., European economic Association, NEUDC, CSAE) and thematic meetings.</i> ● <i>The working paper will be posted on the PODER website.</i>
<p>Planned secondment: <i>Give the name of the institution involved, and the proposed timing (timing, length and purpose) MARS – research visits to MARS headquarters or to rural cooperatives in developing countries working with MARS to develop hypotheses and possible collect data – approximately 3 months. MARS is working with rural farmers to increase their productivity and living standards through innovative interventions that can help shed light on the agricultural productivity puzzle.</i></p>
<p>Risk assessment:</p> <p><i>The risk level associated with this project is low given the many open questions and ongoing projects at PSE and MARS in this area</i></p>

Fellow	Host institution	12 months	April 2016
<i>ESR</i>	<i>IIES</i>		
<p>Project title (and WP to which it is related): Public service provision: Education (WP1)</p> <p>Supervisor name: <i>Jakob Svensson, Tessa Bold</i></p>			

<p>Objectives:</p> <p>One of the explanations put forward for the relatively low levels of enrolment and completion in many developing countries is that school quality may be relatively low and teachers are often absent or undersupply their effort. This raises the issue of accountability and school governance. There is a widespread perception that community empowerment should be promoted, but parents may not be willing to get involved in schools. In addition, NGO or public schools may provide different incentives to the teachers, suggesting that the institutional environment plays a key role in the way effort is elicited. This project will investigate how parents' and community involvement may best be promoted, and what effects greater involvement has on children's educational outcomes. It will also examine how public institutions compare relative to NGO's in implementing incentives schemes aimed at raising teachers' efforts, focusing on how implementation constraints and political economy factors may differ across the different school providers.</p>
<p>Tasks and methodology:</p> <p>The project will identify successful models of parental involvement from developing and industrialized countries, and propose a specific policy to be piloted in a Sub-Saharan African country. It will also examine whether successful NGO interventions can be replicated by government agencies. The impact of the policies will be evaluated through randomized controlled trials.</p>
<p>Results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Literature overview, definition of model and estimation strategy</i> • <i>Preliminary findings)</i> • <i>Submission of paper(s) to international academic journals</i>
<p>Dissemination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The ESR will present findings of the research paper at conferences organized within the PODER network</i> • <i>The ESR will also be encouraged to submit the paper to international conferences and thematic meetings</i> • <i>The working paper will be posted on the PODER website</i>
<p>Planned secondment:</p> <p><i>Possible secondments with IPA and other associated partners.</i></p>
<p>Risk assessment:</p> <p><i>Risks include a possible delay or restructuring on the outlined field work due to unforeseeable local factors.</i></p>

Fellow <i>ESR</i>	Host Institution <i>UPF</i>	12 months	August 2016 or earlier
<p>Project title: The importance of incentives in the private and public health sector in developing countries.</p> <p>Supervisor name: Gianmarco Léon and Alessandro Tarozzi</p>			
<p>Objectives:</p> <p>This project aims at developing a broad research agenda to study the extent of and possible solutions to the widespread problem of poorly qualified and inadequately incentivized health workers in developing countries, both in the private and in the public sector.</p>			
<p>Risk assessment:</p> <p><i>This project has a low associated risk level.</i></p>			

Fellow <i>ER</i>	Host institution <i>IIES</i>	12 months	April 2016
<p>Project title (and WP to which it is related): Corruption: impact and reforms</p> <p>Supervisor name: Jakob Svensson, David Stromberg</p>			

<p>Objectives:</p> <p>Corruption distorts resource allocations. If producers expect bureaucrats to demand bribes, their expected return from investment gets smaller, hurting their incentive to invest. Alternatively, they may choose less productive technology of production that is less susceptible to corruption (e.g. diverting the traffic to avoid corrupt checkpoint officials). The literature has shown that introducing some kind of accountability mechanism (auditing by superiors, monitoring by citizens and the media, etc.) can be effective to reduce corruption. However, relative benefits of different types of anti-corruption policies are unknown. This project aims to evaluate the extent to which different policies to increase accountability of public officials, especially those involving the media, reduce distortions in resource allocations.</p>
<p>Tasks and methodology:</p> <p>The researcher will conduct an overall assessment of various anti-corruption policies, and then conduct empirical analysis based on natural experiments and randomized control trials.</p>
<p>Results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Literature overview, definition of model and estimation strategy</i> • <i>Preliminary findings</i> • <i>Submission of paper(s) to international academic journals</i>
<p>Dissemination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The ESR will present findings of the research paper at conferences organized within the PODER network</i> • <i>The ESR will also be encouraged to submit the paper to international conferences and thematic meetings</i> • <i>The working paper will be posted on the PODER website</i>
<p>Planned secondment:</p> <p><i>Possible secondments with IPA and other associated partners.</i></p>
<p>Risk assessment:</p> <p><i>Risks include a possible delay or restructuring on the outlined field work due to unforeseeable local factors.</i></p>

Fellow	Host institution	12 months	January 2016
<i>ER</i>	<i>UPF</i>		
<p>Project title: Health related decision making and infectious diseases in developing countries</p> <p>Supervisor name: Alessandro Tarozzi, co-supervisor Gianmarco Leon</p>			
<p>Objectives:</p> <p>This project aims at completing a number of different research projects with a broad focus on welfare and child health in South Asia, in particular in India. It is well known that India and other South Asian countries still suffer from considerable rates of malnutrition and infectious diseases, especially among children. This is true despite the high rates of economic growth experienced by the region. This research proposal aims at evaluating the possible reasons for such contrasting facts, and also to design and complete the evaluation of the effectiveness of a number of welfare programs (such as, but not limited to, NREGA) in helping mitigating the problem. Also of interest will be the evaluation of the extent to which changes in food prices affect nutrition and health in poor populations where food represents a large share of the total budget.</p>			
<p>Tasks and methodology. The ER(s) will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Conclude a thorough literature review on the subject</i> • <i>Develop skills required for the analysis of micro-economic datasets and use them to produce statistical and econometric analysis of data relevant to this project.</i> • <i>Identify potential data sources to complement original data collection to be completed in the field.</i> • <i>Work under the supervision of the faculty at the node to produce a draft of a research paper (possibly co-authored with the supervisors)</i> 			
<p>Results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Literature overview and identification of data sources. Definition of model and estimation strategy (M12)</i> • <i>Preliminary findings (M24)</i> • <i>Submission of paper(s) to international academic journals (M30)</i> 			

<p>Dissemination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The ESR will present periodically to discuss research progress at the internal public/labor/development workshop at UPF (intermediate stages of the project), and at conferences organized within the PODER network (finished paper).</i> • <i>The ESR will also be encouraged to submit the paper to international conferences (e.g., NEUDC, American and European economic Association, BREAD)</i> • <i>The working paper will be posted on the PODER website.</i>
<p>Planned secondment:</p> <p><i>If possible, the researcher will spend a number of months in Sri Lanka to gather additional data. Opportunities for secondment will also be sought with one of the Associated Partners working on health-related issues in South Asia.</i></p>
<p>Risk assessment:</p> <p><i>Some funding is already present at the node for a pilot study to initiate the project, so the risk level associated with this project is medium/low.</i></p>

Fellow <i>ESR</i>	Host Institution <i>FUNDP</i>	12 MONTHS	<i>Asap</i>
<p>Project title: Informal Institutions and Identity Groups in Developing Economies (WP3)</p> <p>Supervisor name: <i>Guilhem CASSAN (co-supervisor: Jean Marie Baland) (or any other person with the same profile)</i></p> <p>PhD enrolment: Y</p>			
<p>Objectives:</p> <p>The role of informal institutions has become the centre of a recent literature in economic development. Those institutions often rely on various social groups or networks based on religion, ethnicity, or more generally identity traits. The provision of information, insurance and other services offered by those groups are often essential in developing countries. However, very little is known on how those social groups themselves evolve over time in response to economic development, as well as how the services they provide change.</p> <p>This project will study the evolution of those identity groups over time, and/or the evolution of the services they provide in a context of transformation of their economic environment.</p>			
<p>Tasks and methodology: <i>synthetic description of the research methodology and the main tasks necessary to implement the project. [The use of bullet points is recommended].</i></p> <p>This ESR will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Build up a coherent literature review of the topic</i> • <i>Develop skills required for the analysis of datasets and use them to produce statistical and econometric analysis of data relevant to this project. Spatial micro econometrics might be involved.</i> 			
<p>Results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Research paper to be submitted to international academic journal</i> 			
<p>Dissemination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The ESR will present findings of the research paper at conferences organized within the PODER network. Presentations at PODER events will be made around month 26 and 34)</i> • <i>The ESR will also be encouraged to submit the paper to international conferences and thematic meetings</i> • <i>The working paper will be posted on the PODER website (month 34 approximately)</i> 			
<p>Planned secondment:</p> <p>Secondments are yet to be determined.</p>			

Risk assessment:

Some research on this area is going on in Namur, but this is a novel type of question in the field. As a result, the project of the ESR might have to be adapted during the course of the stay in Namur to adapt to the first results obtained.

Fellow ESR/ER	Host institution Bocconi	Duration Up to 12 months	Start date Sept 2016
Project title: <i>The role of the media in developing countries</i>			
Supervisor name: <i>Eliana La Ferrara</i> ; Co-supervisor:			
PhD enrolment: Yes.			
Objectives: <i>A growing economic literature on the media has shown that by providing information on policy implementation and outcomes it serves an important role for the accountability of policymakers. In the context of developing countries, two further aspects deserve particular attention. First, in addition to providing information, the media may also change the “preferences” of viewers, e.g. by exposing them to new lifestyles and role models. Second, where the structure of the media industry is not very competitive, the media may be captured by political interests and this political capture may distort the content of what the media report. This project will try to shed light on the role of media content in changing individual behaviour, and possibly on political incentives to distort content.</i>			
Tasks and methodology. The ESR will: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Analyze the structure of the television industry and TV penetration in a number of developing countries</i>• <i>Investigate the relative use of “educational entertainment” programs in these countries, and identify possibilities for impact evaluation of one or more of these programs</i>• <i>Collect data on TV licence ownership and political connections in a suitable setting (e.g., Brazil)</i>			
Results: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Summary report on TV industry and education entertainment in a number of developing countries (M28)</i>• <i>Draft of research paper (M36)</i>			
Dissemination: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>The ESR will share early ideas about possible case studies and evaluations at the internal development workshop at Bocconi.</i>• <i>He/she will be invited to participate at conferences organized within the network and present there.</i>• <i>The working paper will be posted on the PODER website.</i>			
Planned secondment: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>The ESR will be encouraged to spend time at IIES, a partner with specific expertise on media economics.</i>			
Risk assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>The risk level associated with this project is medium, due to identification challenges for the educational entertainment part. If no suitable program emerges for this part, the analysis will be re-oriented towards the second part (political economy) where suitable data has already been identified for Brazil.</i>			