# Gates Cambridge scholars drive innovation across diverse fields of economics



Gates Cambridge scholars are making significant contributions across diverse realms of economics, spanning development economics, climate economics, political economy, workers’ rights, taxation, and alternative economic models, according to a comprehensive report from Gates Cambridge.

In the area of economic development, scholars have been actively involved with major international organisations and academia. Charles Amo-Yartey, a 2002 scholar, began his career as an intern with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) while pursuing his PhD at Cambridge. His work now includes senior economist roles and country representation, focusing on policy advice for countries in Africa such as South Africa, Burkina Faso, and Malawi, and later extending to the Caribbean nations of Jamaica, Barbados, and Suriname. A decade ago, he authored Caribbean Renewal: Tackling Fiscal and Debt Challenges, which analyses the Caribbean's high debt issues and advocates for comprehensive reforms encompassing fiscal consolidation, growth encouragement, and structural changes. Amo-Yartey emphasises the necessity of having the right political environment to successfully address financial challenges.

Luca di Mario, from the 2009 cohort, works for the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and has pioneered sustainable business models targeting the conversion of solid waste and wastewater into valuable resources, focusing primarily on South Asia. As Senior Advisor to the Vice President for Finance and Risk Management, he has led projects like the establishment of a sustainable regional solid waste management system in the Maldives during the COVID-19 pandemic. Di Mario notes that the ADB’s role extends beyond financial provision to include innovative solutions, knowledge dissemination, capacity building, and ensuring social and environmental safeguards, especially supporting vulnerable populations including women, children, and people with disabilities.

Other development-focused scholars such as Dima Krayem (2016) have dealt with humanitarian and economic complexities in Lebanon, coordinating vital assistance for Syrian refugees amid Lebanon's economic crises and now serving as Senior Economist at the World Bank. Cassandra Sweet (2004) has concentrated on Latin America, researching innovation systems, technological change, and trade, contributing to agencies including the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (CEPAL) and the World Bank. Queen Nworisara-Quinn (2010) has engaged with sustainable business models in Africa through Kupanda Capital, a firm investing in businesses that integrate private, public, and nonprofit sectors to promote pan-African economic growth.

Women’s development is another critical focus. Tara Cookson (2011), co-founder of the feminist research consultancy Ladysmith and current Canada Research Chair at the University of British Columbia (UBC), is investigating the role of data in feminist development work. She explains to Gates Cambridge that “Data can be a tool for feminist change, but it is not the only tool needed. It is important to recognise its limitations, when it should not be collected and what the unintended consequences might be of collecting it.” Her work involves interviewing over 100 development practitioners to explore how data shapes programme impact and feminist practices. Similarly, Sharmila Parmanand (2016) at the London School of Economics is authoring a book advocating for a reimagined approach to anti-trafficking policies in the Philippines that highlights social justice and political agency for sex workers, rather than criminalisation.

In climate economics, scholars such as Kamiar Mohaddes (2005), Associate Professor at Cambridge Judge Business School, have conducted influential research illustrating the global economic costs of climate change under current emissions trends, including significant GDP losses in countries like the United States and Canada. Mohaddes, alongside fellow Gates scholar Ramit Debnath (2018), has co-founded the climaTRACES lab to enhance understanding of the economic impacts of climate change and biodiversity loss. “We need to take these communities with us through the right communications, and the right policy and product design,” Mohaddes remarked.

At the intersection of political and economic issues, Todd Tucker (2012) directs Industrial Policy and Trade at the Roosevelt Institute and has authored the book Judge Knot, which investigates investor-state dispute settlements and promotes democratic trade and investment reforms. Tucker has also provided expert testimony on economic policy to US governmental bodies, including advising on supply chain resilience amid economic and climate shifts. Reid Lidow (2014), who has worked with former UK Prime Minister Gordon Brown, co-authored Permacrisis: A Plan to Fix a Fractured World, addressing systemic issues in governance and economic management with a proposal for transformative reforms.

Agnieszka Piasna (2009) focuses on workers’ rights and economic policies within the European Union, conducting research for the European Trade Union Institute (ETUI) and advising EU bodies on topics including working conditions and gender equality.

Taxation and finance have been closely examined by scholars like Andrea Binder (2014) of Freie Universität Berlin, who explores how offshore financial services influence state power. Her 2023 publication Offshore Finance and State Power analyses the impact of legal offshore banking relative to tax planning and money laundering, revealing intricate ties between financial activities abroad and national governance capacities.

Exploring alternative economic approaches, Rashad Abbasov (2002) spearheads Circular Route, an AI-driven platform enhancing the second-hand market by supporting charities and promoting sustainability worldwide. Previously, Abbasov led initiatives including Scrapo, the largest plastic recycling marketplace.

Paolo Savaget (2015) combines engineering and business expertise in his role as Associate Professor at the University of Oxford. His recent book, Four Workarounds, challenges the conventional preference for established corporations by showcasing how resourceful, often underestimated organisations achieve success through inventive problem-solving. Savaget explained, “I get very annoyed with the conventional wisdom that large companies from rich countries are inherently superior, better run, and better equipped than scrappy organisations. My book shows how the business world can learn from the innovative wit and practical ingenuity of these ‘ugly ducklings’.”

The wide-ranging activities of these scholars illustrate the interdisciplinary expertise Gates Cambridge Fellows contribute to understanding and addressing complex economic challenges globally, spanning the effective management of resources, social equity, environmental sustainability, and innovative policy development.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.gatescambridge.org/about/news/economics-impact-gates-cambridge-at-25/> - This article highlights the significant contributions of Gates Cambridge scholars in various economic fields, including development economics, climate economics, and political economy. It emphasizes their impact across global organizations and academia.
2. <https://www.gatescambridge.org/current-scholars/> - This webpage provides information on current scholars and the benefits of the Gates Cambridge Scholarship, which supports students across diverse fields, including economics.
3. <https://www.gatescambridge.org/our-scholars/news/> - This news section showcases the diverse contributions of Gates Cambridge Scholars across various fields, emphasizing their work in economics, such as economic development and climate economics.
4. <https://www.gatescambridge.org/programme/the-scholarship/> - This page describes the Gates Cambridge Scholarship programme, which aims to build a global network of future leaders by providing financial support and facilitating a community of scholars at the University of Cambridge.
5. <https://www.gatescambridge.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Gates-Cambridge-Annual-Report-2023-HiRes_Spreads.pdf> - The Gates Cambridge Annual Report highlights the programme's success in fostering scholars who transform lives globally, particularly emphasizing their work in economics and beyond.
6. <https://www.gatescambridge.org/about/> - This webpage provides an overview of the Gates Cambridge programme, its history, and mission to create a global community of leaders dedicated to improving lives.
7. <https://news.google.com/rss/articles/CBMiiAFBVV95cUxOSks3T3A0Zk5VUm5waFhwYmRkc2hCRGV0WmFPbHg3bzh1alpDX2pNOFh6UTNWenlfMk9OYmZ2enpZR2RUUllLbEtCRUZJa3RoU0tfRHpoZW9tcktVS2xwT3IzQ1lGWHdXWmVydk1pSlpBSUNjRUhHRU1HQXRfc1otMmhLMXVLNEw4?oc=5&hl=en-US&gl=US&ceid=US:en> - Please view link - unable to able to access data