

Emma C. Smith

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Academic Appointments

Assistant Professor, School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University

2024 -

Provost's Distinguished Faculty Fellow, Georgetown University

2024 - 2025

Education

PhD in Public Policy (Economics Track), Harvard University

2024

BA in Economics, Middle Eastern Studies, Wellesley College

2014

Affiliations

Invited Researcher, Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL)

2024 -

Working Papers

- Stigma and Social Cover: A Mental Health Care Experiment in Refugee Networks *Winner of Weiss/NEUDC Distinguished Paper Award, 2023*
- Opportunity Across Borders? Alleviating Barriers to Remote Work for Refugees, with Layane Alhorr, Alice Danon and Pablo Acosta
Winner of the Advances with Field Experiments 2026 Fisher Prize
- Housing Subsidies for Refugees: Experimental Evidence on Life Outcomes and Social Integration in Jordan, with Samuel Leone, Edward Miguel, Sandra Rozo, Sarah Stillman, Bailey Palmer and Abdulrazzak Tamim

Peer-Reviewed Research

- Chronic Depression, Child Development and Human Capital among the Forcibly Displaced: Evidence from Syrian Refugees. (2026). *Journal of Development Economics*.
- [The Syrian Refugee Life Study: First Glance](#), with Edward Miguel, Bailey Palmer, Sandra Rozo, Sarah Stillman and Abdulrazzak Tamim (2022). *Oxford Review of Economic Policy*. 38(3): 625â653.

Selected Work in Progress

- The Cognitive and Economic Impacts of Water Scarcity: Intergenerational Evidence from Jordan, with Lydia Assouad and Giulia Buccione
- Conflict, Expectations, and Refugee Economic Behavior
- The Dynamics of Syrian Refugee Return After Regime Change, with Edward Miguel, Sandra Rozo and I. Bailey Palmer
- Identifying and Changing Stigma as an Informal Institution: Evidence from Adolescent Health, with Dickens Onyango and Stephanie Bonds

Non-Peer-Reviewed Publications

The Syrian Refugee Crisis: Insights learned and open questions, *Quarterly Digest of the World Bank-UNHCR Joint Data Center*.

Teaching

GBUS 4401/5401: Foundations in Data Science (Georgetown, undergraduate/MA) 2026
INAF 2252: Introduction to Development Studies (Georgetown, undergraduate) 2025, 2026
Economic Development: Theory and Evidence, (Harvard, MA), *Teaching Fellow* 2021

Presentations (including scheduled)

2026 WAIS, World Bank Social Policy Class, Queen's Development Workshop, Migration & Organizations Conference, Forced Displacement Working Group, Advances with Field Experiments, Wellesley Alumnae Economics Conference
2025 PacDev, University of Pittsburgh Experimental/Behavioral Seminar, University of Calgary Empirical Micro Workshop, CEPR Development Economic Symposium, AFD-World Bank Migration and Development Conference, World Bank-KDI Development Impact Conference
2024 JDC Research Conference on Forced Displacement, AFD-World Bank Migration and Development Conference, Y-RISE
2023 North East Development Consortium (*Distinguished Paper Award*), Pacific Conference for Economic Development, Harvard Economics, Harvard Social Policy, HEWG.
2022 Oxford Blavatnik School, MIT ReACT Migration Summit, World Bank-UNHCR Joint Data Center, Harvard Economics.
2021 Harvard Economics.
2020 The World Bank-UNHCR Joint Data Center, Harvard Economics, The Carnegie Endowment.
2019 The World Bank and Center for Effective Global Action, Harvard Economics.

Select Research Grants

J-PAL Governance Initiative - \$50,000 2026
with Giulia Buccione
ReCIPE Compact Grant - \$34,000 2026
Innovations for Poverty Action Peace and Recovery Fund – \$291,109 2025
with Edward Miguel, Sandra Rozo, Ala' Alrababa'h, Marine Casalis, Dominik Hangartner, Daniel Masterson and Jeremy Weinstein
International Growth Center – \$127,000 2024
with Lydia Assouad and Giulia Buccione
J-PAL Education for All Initiative – \$24,650 2024
with Lydia Assouad and Giulia Buccione
The World Bank Innovation Challenge on Jobs and Migration – \$279,090 2023
with Layane Alhorr and Lorraine Charles

Innovations for Poverty Action Peace and Recovery Fund – \$185,674 2020
with Edward Miguel and Sandra Rozo

Innovations for Poverty Action Peace and Recovery Fund – \$353,553 2018
with Edward Miguel and Samuel Leone.

Service to the Profession

- Reviewer for: American Economic Review, Journal of the European Economic Association, the Economic Journal, Journal of Public Economics, Journal of Refugee Studies, Journal of Development Economics
- American Economics Association Committee on the Status of Women in the Economics Profession mentorship panelist, North East University Gender Day mentorship panelist
- Funding reviewer for J-PAL Education for All
- Literature review on the state of Syrian refugee return, World Bank-UNHCR Joint Data Center

Languages

English (native), Arabic (intermediate)

Last Updated October 2026