
CONTACT INFORMATION Department of Political Science
Stanford University maemac@stanford.edu
www.maemacdonald.com

EDUCATION **Stanford University** Stanford, CA 2021–2027 (expected)
Ph.D., Department of Political Science

- Committee: Jeremy Weinstein (co-chair), James D. Fearon (co-chair), Jens Hainmueller, Judith Goldstein
- Knight-Hennessy Scholar

University of Oxford Oxford, UK 2015–2018
B.A., Philosophy, Politics, and Economics (*Double First Class*)

RESEARCH INTERESTS Refugee and immigration policy; foreign aid and development policy; international organisations and international law; causal inference, survey research, and field-based qualitative methods; East Africa.

PUBLICATIONS Lisa Blaydes, James D. Fearon, and **Mae MacDonald**. 2025. “Understanding Intimate Partner Violence.” *Annual Review of Political Science* 28:351–374.

WORKING PAPERS **Mae MacDonald**. “Push, Not Peace: Reconsidering the Drivers of Refugee Return.” *Job market paper*.

Mae MacDonald and Adam Lichtenheld. “Support for Refugee Integration in a Major Refugee-Hosting Country: Evidence from Kenya.” *Immigration Policy Lab Working Paper Series*. Under review.

Sigrid Weber, **Mae MacDonald**, Adam Lichtenheld, Jessica Wolff, Alex Wendo, Annet Adong, Clare Clingain, David Musiime, Andrew Zeitlin, and Jens Hainmueller. “Building Business Networks to Strengthen Refugee Economic and Social Integration.”

Mae MacDonald. “How Hearts and Minds Are Lost: Aid Withdrawal, Attribution, and Public Opinion.”

Mae MacDonald. “Examining the Link between Aid and Support for Refugees: US Aid Cuts and Kakuma Camp, Kenya.”

WORKS IN PROGRESS **Mae MacDonald**. “How Refugee Crises End.” *Book project*.

Mae MacDonald. “Trump’s Foreign Policy Shocks and Attitudes Towards the US and China.”

POLICY AND PUBLIC WRITING **Mae MacDonald**, Adam Lichtenheld, and Tolossa Asrat. 2025. “Kenya Embraces Refugee Integration – and Citizens Are on Board.” *The New Humanitarian*. Reprinted in *The EastAfrican*, a Kenyan newspaper.

Mae MacDonald. 2025. “Rapid Response Evidence: Tracking the Impact of US Aid Cuts in Kakuma Refugee Camp.” Policy Brief for UN Refugee

Agency.

Mae MacDonald. 2024. “Tackling Small Boats and Building Global Resilience: A Twofold Policy Plan on Refugees.” Policy Brief commissioned by the UK Cabinet Office, King’s College London Centre for Grand Strategy.

**AWARDS AND
HONOURS**

Centennial Teaching Assistant Award, Stanford University 2026
Award recognising outstanding teaching assistants at Stanford.

Diversifying Academia, Recruiting Excellence (DARE) Fellow, Stanford University 2025
Competitive (1 year) full-tuition graduate fellowship for students who will diversify the professoriate.

Ric Weiland Graduate Fellow, Stanford University 2024
Award to 20 exceptional Ph.D. students across the Humanities & Sciences.

Carnegie International Policy Fellow, Johns Hopkins University 2024
Fellowship and network for scholars at the intersection of policy and research.

Enhancing Diversity in Graduate Education (EDGE) Fellow, Stanford University 2021
Competitive graduate fellowship for early-stage students from underrepresented backgrounds.

Knight-Hennessy Scholar, Stanford University 2021
Competitive (3 year) full-tuition graduate fellowship (similar to the Rhodes Scholarship in the UK).

YouGov Fellowship, University of Oxford 2018
Award for graduate and undergraduate students to conduct their dissertation research through YouGov’s survey platform.

E.T. Warner Prize for Excellence in Philosophy, Politics, and Economics, University of Oxford 2018
Award for academic excellence in P.P.E. at Christ Church college.

Academic Scholar, University of Oxford 2016
Award for academic merit following first-year examinations.

Crankstart Scholar, University of Oxford 2015
Award for undergraduate students from lower-income households.

GRANTS

Stanford School of Humanities & Sciences GRO (\$5,495) 2026

J-PAL/IPA Displaced Livelihoods Initiative (\$60,000) 2024
with Jeremy Weinstein and Adam Lichtenheld

Stanford Institute for Economics Policy Research (\$5,200) 2024

Ric Weiland Graduate Fellowship (\$4,000) 2024

King Center on Global Development (\$25,000) 2023
with Jeremy Weinstein and Adam Lichtenheld

J-PAL/IPA Displaced Livelihoods Initiative (\$10,000) 2023

Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies (\$9,000) 2023

	Stanford Europe Center (<i>\$1,000</i>)	2023
	King Center on Global Development (<i>\$5,000</i>)	2023
	Sohaib and Sara Abbasi Program in Islamic Studies (<i>\$3,000</i>)	2023
	Stanford Impact Labs (<i>\$4,000</i>) with Jens Hainmueller	2022
	King Center on Global Development (<i>\$8,000</i>)	2022
	Stanford Institute for Research in the Social Sciences (<i>\$1,500</i>)	2022
	Stanford EDGE (<i>\$6,000</i>)	2021
	YouGov Fellowship (<i>\$12,000</i>)	2018
PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE	YouGov , Graduate Researcher (Public Sector), UK	2018–2019
	Movement on the Ground , Refugee Camp Volunteer, Greece	2021
	CalAid , Refugee Camp Volunteer, Greece	2017
	The Entrepreneurial Refugee Network , Intern, UK	2017
	Global Policy Institute , Research Intern, UK	2017
	Political Party , Intern, UK	2015
	House of Commons , Intern, UK	2014
TEACHING	Teaching Assistant , Stanford University	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to International Relations (James D. Fearon), Fall 2024 • War and Peace in American Foreign Policy (Kenneth Schultz), Spring 2024 • Introduction to International Relations (James D. Fearon), Fall 2022 	
	Class Co-Coordinator , Stanford University	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate Displacement, Migration, and Mobility (Chris Field), Spring 2025 	
	Research Assistant (RA) Supervision	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy Research Internship Supervisor (34 RAs), University of California Washington Program with the Political Violence Lab, 2025–2026 • Undergraduate Research Supervisor (3 RAs), Stanford IRiSS Research Assistant Internship Program, 2023–2025 • Undergraduate Research Supervisor (2 RAs), Stanford University, 2023–present 	
DATASETS	Global Refugee Return (GRR) Dataset. Original dataset of all protracted refugee situations (237 origin–asylum dyads; 1980–2023) that corrects errors in UNHCR stock and repatriation figures, and introduces new indicators of <i>de facto</i> asylum conditions and forced return practices. <i>Forthcoming.</i>	
	UNHCR Funding Dataset. Donor-level contributions to the UN Refugee Agency and country-level allocation of expenditures within recipient countries. <i>Forthcoming.</i>	
TALKS AND CONFERENCES	Scheduled: American Political Science Association (APSA); APSA Dissertation Workshop Series (Citizenship and Migration); World Bank-UNHCR Joint	

Data Center on Forced Displacement Research Conference; Berlin Meeting on the Political Economy of Development (MoPED).

2026: Online Peace Science Colloquium; Yale Research Initiative on Innovation & Scale (Y-RISE) International Conference on Migration and Development; Berkeley-Stanford IPE Colloquium; Immigration Policy Lab Workshop; Stanford International Affairs Society.

2025: American Political Science Association (APSA); World Bank-UNHCR Joint Data Center on Forced Displacement Research Conference; Forced Displacement Working Group (FDWG), Penn Development Research Initiative; Immigration Policy Lab Workshop.

2024: American Political Science Association (APSA); International Studies Association (ISA); APSA Migration & Citizenship Section Dissertation Workshop; UNHCR-IPA Evidence in Action: Displaced Livelihoods Initiative in Africa; Immigration Policy Lab Workshop.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Immigration Policy Lab, Stanford University

Forced Displacement Working Group, Penn Development Research Initiative (PDRI-DevLab), University of Pennsylvania

Centre for Grand Strategy, War Studies Department, King's College London

Carnegie International Policy Scholars Consortium and Network (IPSCON), Henry A. Kissinger Center for Global Affairs, Johns Hopkins University

Political Violence Lab, University of California Merced

SERVICE

Reviewer

Journal of Conflict Resolution, Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies

Mentorship

- Refugee-Led Research Hub (East Africa), 2023
- Young African Research Network (YARN), 2024
- Stanford Political Science Pathways to PhD, 2023
- Stanford IRiSS Research Assistant Internship Program, 2023-2024
- Stanford First Year Graduate Student Mentor, 2023

SKILLS AND FIELDWORK

Computing: R, L^AT_EX, Python, QGIS, Google Earth Engine (GEE)

Fieldwork: Kenya (2022, 2023, 2024, 2025); Uganda (2022, 2023); Thailand (2022); Greece (2016, 2021); UK (2017)

Additional training: Institute for Qualitative and Multi-Method Research, Syracuse University (2023)

Languages: English (native); French (intermediate)

Archives: UNHCR (2023)