Lukas Althoff

Last updated October 6, 2026

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EMPLOYMENT

Stanford University
Assistant Professor, Department of Economics — Since 2025
Postdoctoral Fellow, Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Research (SIEPR) — 2023 – 2024

EDUCATION

Princeton University
Ph.D. in Economics — 2018 – 2023

London School of Economics
M.Sc. in Econometrics and Mathematical Economics — 2017 – 2018

University of Munich
B.Sc. in Economics — 2014 – 2017

Technical University of Munich
B.Sc. in Computer Science and Finance — 2013 – 2017

AFFILIATIONS

National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER), Faculty Research Fellow — Since 2026
Stanford Human-Centered Artificial Intelligence (HAI), Faculty Affiliate — Since 2026
Elasticity Institute, Founding Member — Since 2026
Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Research, Faculty Fellow — Since 2025
Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality, Faculty Affiliate — Since 2025
Stanford Center for Comparative Studies in Race & Ethnicity, Faculty Affiliate — Since 2025
CESifo, Affiliate Member — Since 2024
US Census Bureau, Special Sworn Status Researcher — Since 2023
Institute of Labor Economics (IZA), Research Affiliate — Since 2023

VISITING POSITIONS

NYU Stern School of Business — 2024 – 2025
Center for Economic Studies (CES), University of Munich — 2024
Opportunity & Inclusive Growth Institute (OIGI), Minneapolis Fed — 2023

PUBLICATIONS

"Mothers, Schools, and the Making of American Human Capital Mobility" 2025
with Harriet Brookes Gray, Hugo Reichardt
Review of Economic Studies, Accepted

"Jim Crow and Black Economic Progress After Slavery" 2024
with Hugo Reichardt
Quarterly Journal of Economics

"The Geography of Remote Work" 2022
with Fabian Eckert, Sharat Ganapati, Conor Walsh
Regional Science and Urban Economics

WORKING PAPERS

"Task-Specific Technical Change and Comparative Advantage" 2026
with Hugo Reichardt

"Blindly Discriminating: The GI Bill and Racial Inequality" 2026
with Christiane Szerman

"Two Steps Forward, One Step Back: Racial Income Gaps among Women since 1950" 2023

WORK IN PROGRESS

"Artificial Intelligence and Knowledge Production"

"Networks and the Direction of Innovation"
with Cristian Alamos

"Black Teachers and Black Economic Progress: The Impact of Early Schools for Freed People"
with Angelo Azzolini, Andrea Bernini, Marco Tabellini

"Discrimination and Economic Development"
with Omer Ali

RESEARCH NOTES

"The Economics of Recursive Self-Improvement" 2026
with Tom Cunningham, Basil Halperin, Brian Jabarian, Andrew Koh, Arjun Ramani, Phil Trammell, Parker Whitfill, and Cheryl Wu

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Seminar presentations

2027 (incl. scheduled): Oxford, University of Illinois

2026 (incl. scheduled): Federal Reserve Board, Harvard, Kiel Institute for the World Economy, Stanford Research Park, Temple University Japan, UC Santa Barbara, UC Santa Cruz, University of Houston, University of Pittsburgh, University of Southern California, World Economic Forum

2025: German Ministry of Finance, Harvard, Northwestern, Rockwool Foundation, UNSW Sydney

2024: Brookings, Chicago Fed, German Ministry of Finance, NYU, Stanford, UC Davis, UCLA Anderson, UC Merced

2023: Berkeley, Harvard, LSE, Minneapolis Fed, Stanford, Stanford GSB, Stellenbosch (LEAP), Tilburg, UChicago Booth, UChicago Harris, University of British Columbia, University of Munich, Yale SOM

2022: Applied Young Economist Webinar, City University of New York, Florida State, Institute for the World Economy, Princeton

2021: Princeton, Princeton History, YSI-EHES Economic History Graduate Webinar

Conference presentations

2026 (incl. scheduled): NBER Summer Institute, Frontiers in AI and the Economy Conference (Chicago Fed), NBER Race and Stratification, CEPR Applied Micro & Economic History Workshop, World Economic Forum on the Future of Manufacturing (San Francisco), Workshop on AI and the Economics of Recursive Self-Improvement (Constellation Institute), West Coast Spatial Workshop (Stanford GSB)

2025: NBER Summer Institute, Australian Political Economy Workshop, German Economists Abroad Conference, Stanford Provostial Fellows Symposium

2024: NBER Summer Institute, Opportunity Insights Conference, "Institutions, Organizations, and Growth" (UChicago BFI), "Barriers to Economic Opportunity and Inclusion" (UChicago & Cleveland Fed), SED Annual Meeting

2023: NBER Summer Institute, Foundations of Long-Run Prosperity Conference (Hoover Institution), Chicago Economic History Workshop, UC Davis Economic History Workshop, Economic History Rookiefest (Northwestern), Southern Economic Association Conference

2022: NBER Economics of Mobility, NBER Summer Institute, CESifo Venice Summer Institute, Conference on Urban and Regional Economics (Philadelphia Fed), European & North American Meetings of the Urban Economics Association, Lindau Nobel Laureate Meeting, Economic History Association, Inequality Conference (UKonstanz), Rising Scholars Conference (UChicago Booth), Workshop on "Causal Inference with Spatial Data" (RWI), Development and Political Economics Graduate Student Conference (Berkeley & Stanford), Yale Economic History Graduate Student Conference, Economic and Business History Society, CIREQ PhD Students' Conference, Warwick Economics PhD Conference, Workshop on "Racial and Ethnic Disparities in the Labor Market" (Berkeley & Princeton), Workshop on "Racial Disparities in the 1944 G.I. Bill" (Brandeis)

Workshops

2026 (incl. scheduled): Economic Futures Workshop (OpenAI Foundation), Teaching Progress Workshop (Roots for Progress), The Economics of Recursive Self-Improvement (Elasticity)

Referee service

American Economic Journal: Applied Economics
American Economic Journal: Economic Policy
American Economic Review
American Economic Review: Insights
Economica
European Research Council
Explorations in Economic History
Journal of Economic History
Journal of Economic Literature
Journal of Human Resources
Journal of Labor Economics
Journal of Law and Economics
Journal of Political Economy
Journal of Political Economy: Microeconomics
Journal of Regional Science

Journal of the European Economic Association
Journal of Urban Economics
National Science Foundation
Regional Science and Urban Economics
Regional Studies
Review of Economic Studies
Review of Economics and Statistics
Quarterly Journal of Economics

Award Committees

John Locke Institute Global Essay Prize
US Fiscal Challenge

AWARDS, GRANTS, AND FELLOWSHIPS

Awards

W.E. Upjohn Institute Dissertation Award	2023
Erik Olin Wright Prize, Havens Wright Center for Social Justice	2023
Princeton University Graduate Student Teaching Award	2022
Urban Economics Association Best Student Paper Award	2022
IPUMS USA Best Student Research Award	2022

Grants

Stanford Human-AI Collaboration in Economics and Social Science ($50,000)	2026
Anthropic Economic Futures Grant ($50,000)	2025
Stanford Impact Labs ($50,000)	2025
Russell Sage Foundation ($66,000)	2024
Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Research ($10,000)	2023
Princeton Program for Research on Inequality ($10,000)	2021

Fellowships

Stanford Impact Labs Design Fellowship	2025 – 2026
Prize Fellowship in the Social Sciences, Princeton University	2022 – 2023
Doctoral Fellowship, Princeton University	2018 – 2023
German National Scholarship Foundation Fellowship	2017 – 2018
German Academic Exchange Service Fellowship	2017 – 2018
Dr Jost Henkel Foundation Fellowship	2017 – 2018
Deloitte Foundation Fellowship	2015 – 2017
Hans Rudolf Foundation Fellowship	2015 – 2016
Hanns Seidel Foundation Fellowship	2013 – 2017
Claussen Simon Foundation Fellowship	2012 – 2013

TEACHING

Graduate

Topics in US and International Economic History (Stanford ECON 226) Since 2025

This graduate course emphasizes theoretical and empirical methods for studying long-run economic change, with a focus on the forces that drive progress and the barriers that prevent it from being broadly shared. Drawing on historical evidence and economic analysis, we investigate how societies have generated — and distributed — economic opportunity, and what lessons the past provides for the future. While the evidence will span various periods of American history, the course will not cover those periods chronologically but rather focus on critical analysis of specific questions and mechanisms of change.

Undergraduate

Progress and Inequality (Stanford ECON 30) Starting 2026

Progress and inequality are intertwined throughout human history. This course traces both from the Neolithic Revolution to the AI era, asking: What causes progress? Who benefits? And what can we learn for the future? Topics range from the engines of progress—resources, cities, knowledge, institutions—to the barriers that determine who is left behind, including race, gender, and intergenerational mobility.

Guest lectures

2026 (incl. scheduled): UCLA

2025: Stanford (Political Science), UC Irvine, Spelman College

2024: NYU Stern, Stanford

2023: Princeton