

Martin J. WILLIAMS

Blavatnik School of Government
University of Oxford
Radcliffe Observatory Quarter
Woodstock Road
Oxford OX2 6GG
United Kingdom

Center for Advanced Study in the
Behavioral Sciences (CASBS)
Stanford University
75 Alta Road
Palo Alto, CA 94305
United States of America

E-mail: martin.williams@bsg.ox.ac.uk; martinwilliams8@gmail.com

Web: www.martinjwilliams.com

Academic Positions

Stanford University, Palo Alto, USA **2022-2023**

- Fellow, Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences

University of Oxford, Oxford, UK **2016-present**

- Associate Professor in Public Management (tenured 2020), Blavatnik School of Government
- Research Fellow, Green Templeton College
- Research sabbatical 2022-23

University College London, London, UK **2015-2016**

- Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Department of Economics

Education

London School of Economics and Political Science, London, UK **2011-2015**

- PhD Government
- Award date: February 2016
- Dissertation: “The Organizational Basis of Government Performance: Management and Policy Implementation in Ghana’s Public Sector”

University of Oxford **2008-2009**

- MSc Economics for Development
- Distinction on dissertation: “Does Acceleration Equal Transformation? Entry into New Export Sectors and Rapid Economic Growth”

University of Oxford **2007-2008**

- MSc African Studies, with Distinction
- Dissertation: “The Gold Standard of Governance: Mining, Decentralization, and State Power in Senegal”

Williams College, Williamstown, MA, USA **2003-2007**

- BA with Highest Honors in Economics, *magna cum laude*
- Thesis: “The Social and Economic Impacts of South Africa’s Child Support Grant”

Martin J. WILLIAMS

Research

Published Articles (available [here](#))

- Rasul, Imran, Daniel Rogger, [Martin J. Williams](#), and Eleanor F. Woodhouse. (2023). “Government analytics using data on task and project completion.” In D. Rogger and C. Schuster (eds.), *The Government Analytics Handbook: Leveraging Data to Strengthen Public Administration*, Chapter 17. Washington, DC: World Bank.
- [Williams, Martin J.](#) (2022). “External Validity and Institutions in Behavioral Public Administration.” Invited roundtable contribution in “The (Missing?) Role of Institutions in Behavioral Public Administration—A Roundtable Discourse” with Anthony M. Bertelli, Norma M. Riccucci, Paola Cantarelli, Maria Cucciniello, Christian R. Grose, Peter John, Elizabeth Linos, and Anjali Thomas. *Journal of Behavioral Public Administration* Volume 5, Issue 1, Pages 1-25.
- Ali, Aisha, Javier Fuenzalida, Margarita Gomez, and [Martin J. Williams](#). (2021). “Four Lenses on People Management in the Public Sector: An Evidence Review and Synthesis.” *Oxford Review of Economic Policy* Volume 37, Issue 2, Pages 335–366, <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxrep/grab003> .
- [Williams, Martin J.](#) (2021). “Beyond State Capacity: Bureaucratic Effectiveness, Policy Implementation, and Reform.” *Journal of Institutional Economics* Volume 17, Issue 2, pp. 339 – 357.
- Rasul, Imran, Daniel Rogger, and [Martin J. Williams](#). (2021). “Management, Organizational Performance, and Task Clarity: Evidence from Ghana’s Civil Service.” *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* Volume 31, Issue 2, Pages 259–277, <https://doi.org/10.1093/jopart/muaa034>.
- [Williams, Martin J.](#), and Liah Yecalo-Teclé. (2020). “Innovation, Voice, and Hierarchy in the Civil Service: Evidence from Ghana’s Civil Service”. *Governance* 33(4), p. 789-807.
- Bertelli, Anthony, Mai Hassan, Dan Honig, Daniel Rogger, and [Martin J. Williams](#). (2020). “An agenda for the study of Public Administration in Developing Countries.” *Governance* 33(4), p. 735-748.
- [Williams, Martin J.](#) (2020). “Beyond ‘Context Matters’: Context and External Validity in Impact Evaluation.” *World Development* 127, Symposium on RCTs and Development.
- [Williams, Martin J.](#) (2020). “External Validity and Policy Adaptation: From Impact Evaluation to Policy Design”. *World Bank Research Observer* Volume 35, Issue 2, Pages 158–191, <https://doi.org/10.1093/wbro/lky010> .
- [Williams, Martin J.](#) (2017). “The Political Economy of Unfinished Development Projects: Corruption, Clientelism, or Collective Choice?” *American Political Science Review* 111(4) November 2017, p. 705-723.
- [Williams, Martin J.](#) (2013). “Aid, Trade, Investment, and Dependency.” In Anderson, David, Nicholas Cheeseman, and Andrea Scheibler (eds), *The Routledge Handbook of African Politics*, London: Routledge.
- [Williams, Martin J.](#) (2010). “The Gold Standard of Governance: Mining, Decentralization, and State Power in Senegal.” *Politique Africaine* 117.

Book (under review)

- *Reform as Process: Implementing Civil Service Reform in Africa*

Abstract: Building an effective civil service is crucial for public service delivery and good governance, but reforming bureaucratic institutions is notoriously difficult. This book takes a fresh perspective on this challenge by documenting and analyzing the implementation of dozens of reforms initiated by six African countries in the last 30 years. I show that these

Martin J. WILLIAMS

reforms have largely failed to achieve their goals because they have approached organizational change mainly as a matter of changing formal structures and processes through one-off projects. However, some these reform efforts also contain the seeds of a more promising approach that sees reform as catalyzing an ongoing process of continuous improvement. The book makes theoretical and empirical contributions to academic literatures on government performance, public service delivery, and development, and discusses practical insights and strategies for reformers around the world to achieve change in practice.

Working Papers (available [here](#))

- Sheena Bell, Clare Leaver, Zahra Mansoor, Karen Mundy, Dana Qarout, and Martin J. Williams. “The Role of Delivery Units in Education Systems Reform: Evidence from a Multi-Country Study”. Working paper, April 2023.
- Ali, Aisha J., Luis Álvaro Álvarez Calderón, Pedro Arcain Riccetto, Paola del Carpio, Elise El Nouchi, Javier Fuenzalida, Margarita Gómez, Aung Hein, Oswaldo Molina, and Martin J. Williams. “Questioning hierarchies: Senior leaders’ views on how global civil services changed during the pandemic.” Working paper, March 2023. *Submitted*.
- Cardoso, Danilo, Flávio Cireno, Julien Labonne, Pedro Palotti, Flávio Sousa da Vitoria, and Martin J. Williams. “Bureaucratic Networks and Appointments: Evidence from Brazil.” Working paper, March 2023. *Submitted*.
- Azulai, Michel, Margherita Fornasari, Imran Rasul, Daniel Rogger, and Martin J. Williams. “Can Training Improve Organizational Culture? Experimental Evidence from Ghana's Civil Service.” Working paper, February 2023.
- Mansoor, Zahra, and Martin J. Williams. “Systems Approaches to Public Service Delivery: Methods and Frameworks”. Working paper, August 2022. *Revise and resubmit*.
- Williams, Martin J., and Liah Yecaló-Teclé. “The (Non-)Implementation of Performance Management Policies: Insights from Longitudinal Reform Mapping in Ghana and Zambia.” Working paper, September 2022.
- Mansoor, Zahra, Dana Qarout, Kate Anderson, Celeste Carano, Liah Yecaló-Teclé, Veronika Dvorakova, and Martin J. Williams. “A Global Mapping of Delivery Approaches”. DeliverEd Working Paper, July 2021.
- Williams, Martin J., Clare Leaver, Zahra Mansoor, Dana Qarout, Anna Bilous, Karen Mundy, Minahil Asim, Sheena Bell. “Delivery Approaches to Improving Policy Implementation: A Conceptual Framework.” DeliverEd Working Paper, July 2020.
- Diop, Binta Zahra, Koku Awoonor-Williams, Hamza Ismaila, Anthony Ofosu, and Martin J. Williams. “Understanding the Allocation of Public Personnel Across Government Health Facilities in Ghana.” IGC Working Paper, August 2019.

Research in Progress

- Adam, Christopher, Mae Chan, and Martin J. Williams. “Recurrent Costs and the Macroeconomic Impacts of Infrastructure Investment”
- Honig, Dan, and Martin J. Williams. “Organizational Autonomies”
- Honig, Dan, Peace Medie, Erica Robles-Anderson, and Martin J. Williams. “Speculative Governance”
- Williams, Martin J. “Reforming States at Scale”
- Williams, Martin J. “Inherently Endogenous Questions”

Selected Policy Material (available [here](#))

- "Questioning hierarchies: Senior leaders’ views on how global civil services changed during the pandemic". Policy Report. People in Government Lab and REDES, July 2022.

Martin J. WILLIAMS

- People in Government Lab International Conference (recording), July 2022
- “A balancing act of management approaches”. Blog from the partnership between the People in Government Lab and the UK Cabinet Office’s Civil Service HR team, April 2022.
- “External Validity and Policy Adaptation: From Impact Evaluation to Policy Design.” PEGNet Policy Brief 18/2019, October 2019.
- *With Walter Brown, Daniel Rogger, and Ella Spencer.* “Information and innovation in the public sector.” IGC Growth Brief September 2019.
- *With Stefan Dercon, Imran Rasul, and Daniel Rogger.* “How do management practices in government change over time? Evidence from Ghana.” Economic Development and Institutions Research Insight, July 2019.
- “Collaborating for impact: A partnership in Ghana.” Short video sponsored by IGC, May 2018.
- “Ghana’s infrastructure: The mystery of misspending.” Short video sponsored by IGC, viewed over 30,000 times and broadcast on national television and radio in Ghana, March 2018.
- *With Imran Rasul and Daniel Rogger.* “Autonomy, incentives, and the effectiveness of bureaucrats.” VoxDev Blog Post, September 2017.
- “External validity and policy adaptation: a five-step guide to mechanism mapping.” Blavatnik School of Government Policy Memo, July 2017.
- *With Imran Rasul and Daniel Rogger.* “Management and bureaucratic effectiveness: A scientific replication in Ghana and Nigeria.” IGC Policy Brief June 2017.
- “Variation in Infrastructure Delivery and Management Quality Among Ghana’s Local Governments.” IGC Project Memo, February 2016.
- “Bricks-and-mortar institutions matter: Project delivery and unfinished infrastructure in Ghana’s local governments.” IGC Policy Brief, November 2015.
- “There Is More Than One ‘Public Sector Way’: The Diversity of Management Practices in Ghana’s Government”. November 2013 Policy Brief for Government of Ghana.
- “Different Problems, Different Solutions? Budget Performance and Practices in Ghana’s Ministries”. November 2013 Policy Brief for Government of Ghana.

Other Publications

- Review of Beck, Linda, “Brokering Democracy in Africa: The Rise of Clientelist Democracy in Senegal,” *Politique Africaine* 115, October 2009.
- “The Social and Economic Impacts of South Africa’s Child Support Grant.” Cape Town: Economic Policy Research Institute Working Paper #39 (extended version) and #40 (short version), November 2007.

Selected Research Funding and Awards

- Research Co-Director: “DeliverEd: Research on How to Deliver Education Reforms” (Education Commission and UK DFID, £2,316,669) **2019-23**
- Academic Co-Director: People in Government Lab (BRAVA Foundation, £1,032,838) **2019-22**
- PI: “From Paper to Practice: Civil Service Reform in Ghana, Kenya, and Zambia” (International Growth Centre, £40,000) **2018-19**
- PI: “The Productivity and Allocation of Public Personnel and Funds: Evidence from Government Health Facilities in Ghana” (International Growth Centre, £30,000) **2018-19**

Martin J. WILLIAMS

- PI: “Building A Research Community on Public Finance and Management” (Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, \$195,130) **2017-19**
- Co-PI, with Imran Rasul and Daniel Rogger: “Training for Productivity: An Experimental Evaluation of Civil Service Reform in Ghana” (i2i, \$100,000) **2017-19**
- Co-PI, with Imran Rasul and Daniel Rogger: “Training for Productivity: An Experimental Evaluation of Civil Service Reform in Ghana” (International Growth Centre, £100,000) **2017-19**
- Co-PI, with Imran Rasul, Daniel Rogger, and Stefan Dercon: “Training for Productivity: An Experimental Evaluation of Civil Service Reform in Ghana” (Economic Development and Institutions, £100,000) **2017-19**
- Co-PI, with Chris Adam: “Political Economy of Infrastructure in Africa” (Oxford Martin School, £45,500 sub-component of a broader grant) **2017-19**
- Co-PI, with Nahomi Ichino and Erik Wibbels: “The Delivery and Spatial Distribution of Development Projects: Evidence from a USAID Governance Project in Ghana” (AidData, \$200,000) **2015-17**
- With Imran Rasul and Dan Rogger: “Management and Productivity in Ghana’s Civil Service: An Experimental Study of Reform”, (International Growth Centre, £150,000) **2015-16**
- PI: International Growth Centre project grant “Infrastructure Delivery and Management in Ghana’s Local Governments” (International Growth Centre, £12,000) **2014**
- London School of Economics and Political Science PhD Scholarship **2011-14**
- Donovan-Moody Scholarship, Exeter College, University of Oxford **2007-09**
- Anthony Kirk-Greene Prize for best overall performance in MSc African Studies **2008**
- Jack Larned ’42 International Management Prize for BA thesis **2007**
- Muhammad Kenyatta ’66 Community Service Prize **2007**
- Phi Beta Kappa Honors Society, elected as a junior (top 5% of class) **2006**
- Van Duyne Prize for best honors thesis proposal, Economics Department **2006**
- Class of 1960 Scholar, Williams College Economics Department **2006-07**
- Kershaw Fellowship for economic research in South Africa **2005**
- Tyng Scholar, Williams College **2003-07**

Selected Conference and Invited Presentations

2023

- Comparative politics seminar, University of California-Berkeley
- Seminar, Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences, Stanford University

2022

- Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office (FCDO – UK) Chief Economist’s Seminar
- Invited seminar, Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada (Brazil)
- Invited seminar, Escola Nacional de Administração Pública (Brazil)
- Keynote presentation for workshop, Escola de Administração de Empresas de São Paulo, Fundação Getulio Vargas (FGV-AESP)
- Invited panelist for workshop session on legal certainty in public administration, Escola de Administração de Empresas de São Paulo, Fundação Getulio Vargas (FGV-AESP)
- Invited panelist, Why Should We Care About Public Financial Management in Education?, Funding Education for Results Global Conference, World Bank
- Invited presentation, Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences – Cambridge Judge Business School joint conference

Martin J. WILLIAMS

- Brumley Speaker Series, University of Texas at Austin Strauss Center for International Security and Law
- Paper development workshop, “It’s About Time: Temporal Dynamics and Longitudinal Research in Public Administration”, University of Bergen

2021

- Invited seminar, Escola Brasileira de Administração Pública e de Empresas, Fundação Getulio Vargas (FGV-EBAPE)
- Invited seminar, European University Institute
- Invited seminar, University of Ghana, Centre for Social Policy Studies
- Education and Development Forum (UKFIET) Annual Conference
- Invited seminar, Universidad del Rosario (Colombia) Economics Department
- Convocation Presentation, Stanford Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences Summer Institute on Organizational Effectiveness
- Invited seminar, World Bank Bureaucracy Lab
- Comparative and International Education Society Annual Conference

2020

- Bureaucrats and Politics workshop, Norwegian Business School
- American Political Science Association 2020 Annual Conference. Co-organizer of “Bureaucratic Politics and Management” mini-conference with Dan Honig, Jan Pierskalla, and Alison Post.

2019

- Public Management Seminar, Utrecht University School of Governance
- Society of Institutional and Organizational Economics Annual Conference, Stockholm
- Economic Development and Institutions Annual Conference, Paris
- Working Group on African Political Economy (WGAPE), WZB Berlin
- Midwest Political Science Association 2019 Annual Conference, Chicago
- Comparative Politics Seminar, University of Michigan

2018

- Department of Social Policy Seminar, University of Oxford
- Economics Seminar, Stockholm Institute of Transition Economics, Stockholm School of Economics
- American Political Science Association 2018 Annual Conference
- Global Priorities Institute workshop on “Causal Inference and Extrapolation”, University of Oxford
- “Bureaucratic Politics” workshop, Ohio State University
- DFID Chief Economist Seminar, London

2017

- Department of Social Policy and Intervention, University of Oxford
- Blavatnik School of Government Research Seminar, University of Oxford
- Implementation Seminar, Johns Hopkins University
- American Political Science Association 2017 Annual Conference, San Francisco, invited panel on “The Politics of Public Service Provision in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa”
- Public Management Research Conference 2017, convening a panel on “What Makes Bureaucrats Tick? Recent Methodological Advances in Studying Bureaucratic Performance”

Martin J. WILLIAMS

- Public Management Research Conference 2017, pre-conference workshop on “Designing Public Sector Performance”
- Centre for the Study of African Economies, University of Oxford

2016

- Blavatnik School of Government Research Seminar, University of Oxford
- American Political Science Association 2016 Annual Conference, Philadelphia
- Working Group on African Political Economy (WGAPE) National Conference, Washington DC
- Georgetown University
- Pacific Conference for Development Economics, Stanford University
- Management Innovation in the Public Sector, Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, Princeton University
- International Monetary Fund, Fiscal Affairs Department seminar
- Midwest Political Science Association 2016 Annual Conference, Chicago
- Civil Service Training Centre (Ghana), IGC-funded research dissemination seminar at invitation of the Head of Civil Service

2015

- American Political Science Association 2015 Annual Conference, San Francisco
- European Political Science Association 2015 Annual Conference, Vienna
- UK Department for International Development (DFID), Chief Economists’ seminar
- Overseas Development Institute (ODI), Centre for Aid and Public Expenditure seminar
- London School of Economics and Political Science, Political Science and Political Economy workshop
- Civil Service Training Centre (Ghana), IGC-funded research dissemination seminar

2014

- American Political Science Association 2014 Annual Conference, Washington, DC
- European Political Science Association 2014 Annual Conference, Edinburgh
- Civil Service Training Centre (Ghana), research dissemination seminar at invitation of the Head of Civil Service

Teaching: Masters, Undergraduate, and Online

Co-Convenor, Evidence and Public Policy Online	2019-
• <i>Blavatnik School of Government’s Inaugural Full Online Course</i>	
Co-Convenor, Evidence in Public Policy	2017-
• <i>Blavatnik School of Government, Masters in Public Policy (MPP)</i>	
• <i>Co-Convenor and lecturer 2017-21, lecturer 2021-22</i>	
Invited Lecturer, Performance Applied Module	2020
• <i>Blavatnik School of Government, Masters in Public Policy (MPP)</i>	
Teaching Fellow, Economic Development in Africa	2015
• <i>School of Oriental and African Studies, Economics Department, Undergraduate</i>	
Teaching Assistant, Statistics/Econometrics: Advanced Section	2006
• <i>Williams College Center for Development Economics MA program</i>	
Teaching Assistant, Principles of Microeconomics	2005
• <i>Williams College, Economics Department, Undergraduate</i>	

Martin J. WILLIAMS

Teaching: Selected Executive Education, Short Courses, and Workshops

Masterclass, Researching Systemic Reforms methods workshop 2022

- *Escola de Administração de Empresas de São Paulo, Fundação Getulio Vargas*

Convenor, Organizational Effectiveness Module 2021-

- *Blavatnik School of Government, three executive education groups:*
 - *Africa Initiative for Governance Public Leaders Programme, with approx. 50 mid-level civil servants from Nigeria*
 - *Rising Public Leaders Programme, with 15-20 senior civil servants from around the world*
 - *Executive Public Leaders Programme, with 15-20 very senior (Permanent Secretary or Minister equivalent) civil servants from around the world*

Governing Digital Transformation: Improving Outcomes in Education Systems 2021

- *Module on 'Managing public policy change'. Blavatnik School of Government in collaboration with EdTech Hub*

Budget Monitoring and Evaluation for Officials of Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (Nigeria) 2021

- *Session on 'Using Budget Data to Improve Delivery'. Collaborative Africa Budget Reform Initiative (CABRI) in collaboration with Nigerian Federal Civil Service*

Ghana Civil Service Chief Directors Induction 2019

- *Invited training session on research methods and information technology for incoming Chief Directors of Ghanaian ministries*

Implementation in Government 2018, 2019, 2022

- *Blavatnik School of Government in collaboration with Centro de Liderança Pública (Public Leadership Centre), Brazil*

Brazil Rising 2018

- *Blavatnik School of Government in collaboration with Fundação Lemann*

Blavatnik School of Government in Whitehall 2018

- *Research seminar on performance management for UK senior civil servants, in partnership with Civil Service Learning*

From Impact Evaluation to Policy Design: Evidence, External Validity, and Effective Policymaking 2017, 2018

- *5-day course for mid-career civil servants at Escola Nacional da Administração Pública (ENAP), Brazil*

Instructor, Microsimulation in Social Grant Analysis 2008

- *Economic Policy Research Institute (Cape Town) short course for policymakers*

Doctoral Supervision

- Aisha Jore Ali (Public Policy, co-supervisor), 2021-
- Amirah Sumarto (Public Policy, co-supervisor), 2021-
- Aung Hein (Public Policy, sole supervisor), 2019-
- Binta Zahra Diop (Economics, co-supervisor), 2018-
- Muhammad Khudadad Chattha (Public Policy, co-supervisor), 2018-2021
- Shruti Lakhtakia (Public Policy, co-supervisor), 2018-2022

Martin J. WILLIAMS

Teaching Cases Authored

- Williams, Martin J., and Sarah McAra. 2022. “Civil Service Reform in Ghana.” Available in [English](#) and [Portuguese](#).
- Correa, Izabela, Margerita Gomez, Sarah McAra, and Martin J. Williams. Forthcoming. “Pens’ blackout: corruption, control, and discretion in Brazilian public management”.

Professional

Review Service

Political Science

- American Political Science Review; American Journal of Political Science; Journal of Politics; Comparative Political Studies; Comparative Politics; British Journal of Political Science; Political Research Quarterly; African Affairs; Politique Africaine; Africa Today

Public Administration and Public Policy

- Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory; Public Administration Review; Journal of Policy Analysis and Management; Governance; Journal of Public Policy; Administration and Society; International Review of Administrative Studies; Research and Politics; Revista de Administração Pública; European Planning Studies; Local Government Studies

Economics and International Development

- Econometrica; Economic Development and Cultural Change; Journal of Institutional Economics; Journal of Law, Economics, and Organization; Oxford Development Studies

Book Manuscripts

- Oxford University Press; Cambridge University Press; LSE Press; Routledge; Palgrave

Editorial Boards

- Journal of Public Policy

Professional Memberships and Affiliations

- Comparative and International Education Society, Society of Institutional and Organizational Economics, Public Management Research Association, American Political Science Association, European Political Science Association, Midwest Political Science Association, AidData Research Consortium, Centre for the Study of African Economies

Committee Membership

- Blavatnik School of Government Strategy and Resources Group; Blavatnik School of Government Appointments Committee; Blavatnik School of Government Departmental Research Ethics Committee; Athena SWAN Committee; Equality and Diversity Working Group; Africa Initiative for Governance Aig-Imoukhuede Public Sector Performance Index Advisory Council

Non-Academic Employment

Ministry of Trade and Industry, Accra, Ghana **2009-2011**

Trade Economist – Fellow of the Overseas Development Institute

Economic and legal analysis of trade and investment agreements and negotiation positions, industrial policy, private sector development, and tariff reform.

Economic Policy Research Institute, Cape Town, South Africa **2005-2009**

Senior Researcher (consulting and in residence part-time)

Econometric, statistical, and theoretical analysis of social policy; designed and instructed short courses for policymakers. Designed and implemented a national household survey.

Martin J. WILLIAMS

Languages

- Native English speaker; advanced French; conversational in Twi (Ghana) and Wolof (Senegal)