

# Joel Lamb

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**Placement Director:** Mahreen Mahmud  
**PhD Director:** Sanchari Roy

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## Education

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**Ph.D. in Economics** *Expected 2026*  
University of Exeter  
Supervisors: *Oliver Hauser and Daniele Rinaldo*

**Visiting 4th year Ph.D Fellow** 2025 – 2026  
Aix-Marseille School of Economics (AMSE)  
Tutor: *Marc Sangnier*

**M.Res in Economics** 2022  
University of Exeter  
*Distinction, Dean's Commendation (Top 5%)*

**B.Sc. in Economics** 2020  
University of Exeter  
*First-Class Honours, Dean's Commendation (Top 5%)*

## Fields

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Applied Microeconomics, Behavioural Economics, Political Economy

## References

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**Prof. Oliver Hauser**  
Department of Economics  
University of Exeter

**Dr. Daniele Rinaldo**  
LEEP  
University of Exeter

**Prof. Iris Bohnet**  
Harvard Kennedy School  
Harvard University

## Job Market Paper

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**Strategy of the Commons: Causal Evidence from a Lottery in Parliament**  
(with Connor Powell) Draft available [here](#)

**Abstract:** How do politicians secure top government positions? We exploit a natural experiment in the UK House of Commons, where politicians enter a lottery to win the opportunity to introduce legislation of their choosing. First, we verify that winning this lottery improves career outcomes, leading to a 65% (12 percentage point) increase in ministerial appointments five years after treatment. Next, we present a model of the choice of bill that lottery winning MPs make. To verify predictions from our model, we use Natural Language Processing techniques to analyse the content of the bills presented by lottery winners. We provide evidence that politicians who strategically use this opportunity to push party objectives see a larger boost to their careers.

## Working Papers

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**1. Confidence in Job Search: Closing the Gender Gap in Reapplications**  
(with Iris Bohnet, Hui-Yih Chai, Oliver Hauser, and Kim Louw) Draft available [here](#)

**Abstract:** We explore reapplication gaps to leadership positions and to research assistantships caused by applicants' gender and confidence, respectively. Providing applicants with information that helps them update their beliefs of the likelihood of receiving an offer closes both gaps, suggesting that confidence-boosting messages not only make underconfident but also female applicants more willing to reapply. A mediation analysis corroborates the role of confidence: when (truthfully) informed that they were among the top 20% of applicants and possessed characteristics desired by the employer, beliefs about relative performance and relative fit mediated the treatment's impact on expected likelihood of success and willingness to reapply. Our findings are compatible with a simple model of Bayesian updating, with one exception: in the field experiment, men's likelihood of reapplying decreased when informed of their high relative standing. The paper discusses the importance of employer feedback boosting employee confidence towards closing gender gaps in the labor market.

## 2. Media Misinformation and Childhood Vaccination

(with Oliver Hauser and Daniele Rinaldo) Draft available [here](#)

**Abstract:** In 1998, *The Lancet* published an article that erroneously linked the Measles, Mumps, and Rubella (MMR) vaccine to autism. A media scare questioning the safety of the MMR vaccine followed. To analyze the effects of exposure to different reporting during this scare, we exploit exogenous variation in newspaper readership caused by the boycott of *The Sun* (England's most widely read newspaper) in Liverpool. Using difference-in-differences and synthetic methods, we find that MMR vaccination rates fell 20% less in Liverpool compared to similar health authorities after the media scare. We analyze the content of newspaper articles around the time of the scare using Large Language Models (LLMs). When compared to the most widely read newspaper in Liverpool after the boycott, *The Sun*'s reporting was more likely to drive fears about the vaccine, even when fraud surrounding the original *Lancet* paper became a major news story. In line with the natural language processing analysis, the differences in vaccination rates are largest for cohorts of children due to be vaccinated just after major events in the MMR scandal.

## Works in Progress

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### 1. Stereotypes and Effort Provision in Teams

(with A. McCrea and R. Tariq) – Data collection ongoing

### 2. Environmental Beliefs and Effort Between Generations

(with H. Fornwagner and O. Hauser) – Draft in preparation

### 3. Giving More Together

(with B. Grodeck and O. Hauser) – Draft in preparation

## Teaching

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### Teaching Assistant: Environmental Economics & Sustainability

2024

(3rd Year Undergraduate)

Module Lead: Ethan Addicott

### Teaching Assistant: Environmental Economics

2023, 2024

(2nd Year Undergraduate)

Module Lead: Brett Day

### Teaching Assistant: Introduction to Statistics

2023

(1st Year Undergraduate)

Module Lead: Eva Poen

## **Presentations**

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**2026 (including scheduled):** Fairness and Meritocracy at Work (Harvard Kennedy School); Masterclass on AI in Social Research (Cabinet Office, No. 10 & HM Treasury)

**2025:** 19th Workshop on Political Economy (ifo Dresden); Newcastle Experimental Economics Workshop (Newcastle University); Tor Vergata Ph.D. Conference in Economics (University of Rome Tor Vergata); Fourth International Behavioural Public Policy Conference (King's College London); Text as Data in Behavioral Economics Workshop (University of Potsdam); South West Economics PhD Conference (University of Exeter); Fourth Scotland and Northern England Applied Microeconomics Workshop (University of St Andrews)

**2024:** Nordic Conference in Behavioral and Experimental Economics (Copenhagen Business School); European Meeting of the Economic Science Association (Hanken School of Economics); European Association of Environmental and Resource Economics Summer School (University of Graz); 16th Maastricht Behavioral and Experimental Economics Symposium (Maastricht University)

## **Academic Service**

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**Refereeing:** *Oxford Bulletin of Economics and Statistics*

## **Software Skills**

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- Stata, R, Python, Qualtrics, oTree, Git