

BRIAN DILLON

Charles H. Dyson School of Applied Economics & Management
Cornell University
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ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

2025-present	Associate Professor of Development Economics and Applied Econometrics Charles H. Dyson School of Applied Economics and Mgmt., Cornell University
2018-2025	Assistant Professor of Development Economics and Applied Econometrics Charles H. Dyson School of Applied Economics and Mgmt., Cornell University
2013-2018	Assistant Professor of Public Policy & Adjunct Assistant Professor of Economics Evans School of Public Policy and Governance, University of Washington
2011-2013	Giorgio Ruffolo Post-doctoral Fellow in Sustainability Science Harvard Kennedy School
2011-2013	Post-doctoral Research Fellow Charles H. Dyson School of Applied Economics and Mgmt., Cornell University

EDUCATION

Ph.D. Economics	Cornell University	2011
M.A. Economics	Cornell University	2009
M.Phil. Economics	University of Cambridge	2005
B.S. Mathematics, <i>magna cum laude</i>	Loyola University Chicago	2000
B.A. Philosophy, <i>magna cum laude</i>	Loyola University Chicago	2000

PUBLISHED AND FORTHCOMING

Dillon, Brian, Jenny Aker, and Joshua Blumenstock (2025). "Yellow Pages: Information, Connections, and Firm Performance." *The Economic Journal*: 135 (670): 2067-2082.

Dillon, Brian and Travis J. Lybbert (2024). "The Gambler's Fallacy Prevails in Lottery Play." *Journal of Risk and Uncertainty* 69(1): 33-56.

Aker, J. C., Dillon, B., & Welch, C. J. (2023). "Demand, supply and long-term adoption: Evidence from a storage technology in West Africa." *Journal of Development Economics*, 103-129.

Raghunath, A., Krovetz, L., Mpogole, H., Mulisa, H., Dillon, B., & Anderson, R. (2023, April). From Grasshoppers to Secondhand Cars: Understanding the Smartphone-Enabled Marketplace in Peri-urban Tanzania. In *Proceedings of the 2023 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems* (pp. 1-13).

Rakotonarivo, O. S., Bell, A., Dillon, B., Duthie, A. B., Kipchumba, A., Rasolofoson, R. A., Razafimanahaka, J., & Bunnefeld, N. (2021). Experimental evidence on the impact of payments and property rights on forest user decisions. *Frontiers in Conservation Science* 2: 33.

Dillon, Brian (2021). "Selling Crops Early to Pay for School: A Large-Scale Natural Experiment in Malawi" *Journal of Human Resources*, 56(4): 1296-1325.

Dillon, Brian, Joachim De Weerdt and Ted O'Donoghue (2020). "Paying More for Less: Why Don't Households in Tanzania Take Advantage of Bulk Discounts?" *World Bank Economic Review* 35(1): 148-179.

Dillon, Brian, Peter Brummund and Germano Mwabu (2019). "Asymmetric Non-Separation and Rural Labor Markets" *Journal of Development Economics* (139): 78-96.

Dillon, Brian and Alessandra Voena (2018). "Widows' Land Rights and Agricultural Investment" *Journal of Development Economics* (135): 449-460.

Christian, Paul and Brian Dillon (2018). "Growing and Learning When Consumption is Seasonal: Long-Term Evidence from Tanzania" *Demography* (2018) 55: 1091-1118.

Weld, Galen, Trevor Perrier, Jenny Aker, Joshua Blumenstock, Brian Dillon, Adalbertus Kamanzi, Editha Kokushubira, Jennifer Webster, and Richard Anderson (2018). "eKichabi: Information Access through Basic Mobile Phones in Rural Tanzania" CHI 2018 conference proceedings.

Dillon, Brian and Chelsey Dambro (2017). "How Competitive are Crop Markets in sub-Saharan Africa?" *American Journal of Agricultural Economics* 99(5): 1344-1361.

Dillon, Brian and Chris B. Barrett (2017). "Agricultural factor markets in Sub-Saharan Africa: an updated view with formal tests for market failure." *Food Policy* 67: 64-77.

Dillon, Brian and Chris B. Barrett (2016). "Global Oil Prices and Local Food Prices: Evidence from East Africa" *American Journal of Agricultural Economics* 98(1): 154-171. [Honorable Mention, Outstanding Article in AJAE]

Dillon, Brian (2012). "Using Mobile Phones to Collect Panel Data in Developing Countries" *Journal of International Development* 24(4): 518-527.

WORKING PAPERS

Lallemand, Tess, and Brian Dillon (2026). “Beyond the Campus: Indirect Effects of University Openings in Uganda.” *Invited submission, AEA 2026 Papers and Proceedings*.

Christian, Paul, Brian Dillon, Erin Lentz, Hope Michelson, Dana Smith, and Joanna Upton (2025). “Sentinels and Satellites: Food Security Monitoring from Near and Far.” *Revise and resubmit, Food Policy*.

Dureti, Guyo, Wyclife Oluoch, Brian Dillon (2025). “Cluster farming, farm input investment and environmental trade-offs in Ethiopia.”

Aker, Jenny, Brian Dillon, Leticia Donoso Peña, and Anne Krahn (2025). “It’s all Fun and Games? The Persistent Treatment Effects of Willingness-to-Pay Experiments.”

Rudder, Jessica and Brian Dillon (2024). “Search Costs and Relational Contracts.”

Dillon, Brian, Twivwe Siwale, and Joanna Upton (2024). “Phone Tree Surveys and the Wisdom of Crowds.”

Dillon, Brian, Jihye Jang, John Mulenga, and Twivwe Siwale (2024). “Tax Evasion in Relational Contracts.”

Krovetz, Laurel and Brian Dillon (2024). “Efficient Monitoring.”

Dillon, Brian (2017). “Private Information and Dynamic Risk.”

Dillon, Brian (2016). “Measuring Subjective Probability Distributions.” *Revise and resubmit, Quantitative Economics*.

WORK IN PROGRESS

“Search Costs, Mobile Phones, and Agricultural Investment” with Jenny Aker, Hosea Mpogole, and Jess Rudder

“Supply and Demand Constraints to Technology Adoption” with Jenny Aker

“Behavioral Explanations for the Sell Low-Buy High Puzzle in Smallholder Market Participation” with Joachim De Weerdt, Emmanuel Hami, Leocardia Nabwire, and Bjorn Van Campenhout

“Surface Water and Livestock Holding in sub-Saharan Africa” with Molly Doruska and Jeff Wall

OTHER WRITING

“Behavioral Explanations for the Sell-Low-Buy-High Puzzle in Smallholder Market Participation: Lessons from a field experiment in Malawi” (2024) International Food Policy Research Institute blog post, with Joachim De Weerdt, Emmanuel Hami, Leocardia Nabwire, and Bjorn Van Campenhout.

“Incentivizing Small Firms to Boost VAT Revenue: Evidence from Zambia” (2023) International Growth Center Policy Brief.

“Harnessing the Power of Electronic Fiscal Devices (EFDs) to Increase VAT Revenue in Zambia” (2021) Report to the Zambia Revenue Authority (ZRA), with Twivwe Siwale (International Growth Center), John Mulenga (ZRA), and Kangwa Musole (ZRA).

“Evidence Insight: A Mobile Phone Directory Connects Farmers and Enterprises in Tanzania” (2019). Policy Brief for the USAID Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Markets, Risk, and Resilience.

“Ethnic Diversity and Civil War in Africa” (2018). Blog post for CEGA, published February 14, 2018.

“Agricultural Markets in ‘Rising’ Africa” (2017). With Lorenzo Casaburi and Tristan Reed. Invited blog post for *Vox Dev*, published November 20, 2017.

“An Updated View of African Factor Markets” (2017). With Chris Barrett. In *Agriculture in Africa: Telling Facts from Myths*, edited by Luc Christiaensen and Lionel Demery.

“Selling Crops Early to Pay For School: A Large-Scale Natural Experiment in Malawi” (2017). Policy Brief, African Development Bank.

“Labor Markets in East Africa” (2016). With Peter Brummund and Germano Mwabu. GLM-LIC Program of the IZA, Policy Brief 7.

“Do Households in Malawi Use Labor Efficiently?” (2016). With Peter Brummund and Joshua Merfeld. GLM-LIC Program of the IZA, Policy Brief 8.

“Farmer Demand for Fertilizer in Sub-Saharan Africa: Theory, Evidence, and Policy” (2016). With Sarah Coffey. Background paper for the Agricultural Policy team at the Gates Foundation.

RESEARCH FUNDING

2025 “How do Firms Hire? A Demand-Side Experiment to Reduce Matching Frictions in Uganda Labor Markets” (\$40,396)
Faculty PI for PhD student award (Tess Lallemand)
J-PAL Jobs and Opportunity Initiative

“Tax Compliance Incentives in a New Digital Tax Platform in Zambia” (\$151,394)
Principal Investigator

J-PAL Innovations in Governance Initiative

2023 “Tax Exposure and Digital Exchange at the Edges of the Formal Economy” (\$30,000)
Principal Investigator w/ Jessica Rudder
International Growth Center

2022 “Mark-ups and Entry in the Food Markets of a Large African City” (£23,200)
Principal Investigator
Structural Transformation and Economic Growth (STEG)

2021 “Harnessing the Power of Electronic Fiscal Devices to Increase VAT Revenue” (£65,000)
Principal Investigator w/ Twivwe Siwale (IGC)
International Growth Center

2020 “Extreme Poverty – Building Evidence for Effective Action” (\$1.9 million)
Co-Investigator
Consortium Lead: Oxford Policy Management
UK Department for International Development

“Scoping and Pilot Work: Harnessing the Power of Electronic Fiscal Devices to Increase VAT Revenue” (£16,746)
Principal Investigator w/ Twivwe Siwale (IGC)
International Growth Center – Small Grants Program

2019 “Network expansion and firm growth in Tanzania” (\$8,500)
Principal Investigator
Cornell Institute for the Social Sciences

2018 “The Emergence of a Market for Storage Solutions: Addressing Demand and Supply Constraints” (\$400,000)
Co-PI with Jenny Aker (Tufts)
Agricultural Technology Adoption Initiative

2017 “Deepening Business Networks in Africa” (\$100,000)
Principal Investigator
Amazon Catalyst

2016 “Remote Tracking of Grain Flows” (\$5,000)
Principal Investigator
Development Impact Lab, Explore Grant

2015 “Cowpeas, Credit and Storage: How do Marketing and Liquidity Constraints Affect Farmers in Niger?” (\$49,916)
Co-Investigator (PI: Jenny Aker, Tufts)
Agricultural Technology Adoption Initiative

“Farmer Learning and Trader Competitiveness: Program and Policy Implications” (\$75,712)
Principal Investigator
Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

2014 “Labor Markets and Household Enterprises: Evidence from New Nationally Representative Surveys in Five African Countries” (€253,400)
Principal Investigator (Co-Is: Peter Brummund and Germano Mwabu)
Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA) GLM-LIC

“Communication, Search, and Mobile Phones: A Telephone Directory Intervention in Tanzania” (\$124,900)
Principal Investigator (Co-Is: Jenny Aker, Joshua Blumenstock, and Adalbertus Kamanzu)
USAID BASIS

2013 “Agriculture in Africa: Telling Facts from Myths” (\$40,000)
Participating researcher (PI: Luc Christiaensen)
World Bank and African Development Bank

2012 “Oil Prices and African Food Security” (\$192,000)
Co-Recipient (PI: Chris Barrett)
Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

2009 “Subjective Expectations, Information, and Competitiveness in East African Agricultural Output Markets” (\$42,000)
Co-Investigator (PI: Chris Barrett)
NSF Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grant

FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

Outstanding Early Career Achievement Award, Cornell Dyson, 2024
Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab, Faculty Affiliate, 2023-present
Selected Faculty Mentor, Ruth Park, Cornell Merrill Presidential Scholar, 2021
Professor of the Year, Evans School Student Organization, 2017-2018
Honorable Mention, AAEA Outstanding *AJAE* Article Award, 2016
Nominated for University of Washington Distinguished Teaching Award, 2014-2015
Professor of the Year, Evans School Student Organization, 2013-2014
Giorgio Ruffolo Post-doctoral Fellow in Sustainability Science, HKS, 2011-2013
Chester O. McCorkle Fellowship, Agricultural and Applied Economics Association, 2010
Buttrick-Crippen Fellowship, Knight Institute for Writing, Cornell University, 2008
Ernest Liu Outstanding Teaching Award, Department of Economics, Cornell University, 2008
Gates Scholarship, University of Cambridge, 2003-2005
Joseph Zajdel Award for Excellence in Mathematics, Loyola University Chicago, 2000

PRESENTATIONS AND SEMINARS

2026 ASSA annual meeting, Virginia Tech (scheduled)

2025 AAEA annual meeting, DEEP Research Symposium, World Bank

2024 Yale University Kuznets Lecture Conference, World Bank Pulse of Progress Conference

2023 ASSA Annual Conference, Dickinson College, 8th Zurich Conference on Public Finance in Developing Countries

2022 Boston University, Cornell University, UC Berkeley, UC Davis, UC Santa Cruz, U of San Francisco, FAO, IFPRI Malawi

2021 University of Michigan, CEGA Evidence2Action, IPA-JPAL Methods and Measurement Conference, Midwest Development Economics Conference

2020 University of Illinois; Northeast Universities Development Conference; Wageningen (postponed); KU Leuven (postponed); U of Georgia (postponed)

2019 Northeast Universities Development Conference

2018 ASSA Annual Conference; Cornell Dyson School; University of British Columbia; UC San Diego; UC Davis; Cornell Institute for African Development

2017 Pacific Development Conference; International Food Policy Research Institute; Midwest Development Economics Conference; Annual World Bank Conference on Africa; AAEA Annual Meeting; Northeast Universities Development Conference; Montana State University

2016 KU Leuven, Belgium; Michigan State University; Pacific Development Conference; IZA GLM-LIC Conference in Oxford; CEGA R² Research Retreat; BASIS/USAID at George Washington University; Northeast Universities Development Conference; World Bank DIME seminar

2015 ASSA Annual Conference; University of Alabama; 2nd International Conference on Global Food Security at Cornell; 1st IZA/DFID GLM-LIC Research Conference on New Research on Labor Markets in Low-Income Countries at the World Bank; WGAPe at U. of Arizona

2014 Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation; World Bank Annual Bank Conference on Africa (Paris); Center for Global Development; Oxford Center for the Study of African Economies Annual Conference; IMF/OCP Conference “Food Price Volatility: Causes and Consequences” (Rabat)

2013 International Agricultural Trade Research Consortium Annual Meeting; University of Washington Evans School, Department of Economics, and Center for Studies in Demography and Ecology; World Bank Land and Poverty Conference (DC); University of Illinois; University of Minnesota; Williams College; University of Notre Dame

2012 Northeast Universities Development Conference; Cornell University; Oxford Center for the Study of African Economies Annual Conference; Harvard Development Lunch

2011 Northeast Universities Development Conference; AAEA Annual Meeting; Econometric Society Summer Meetings

COURSES TAUGHT

Cornell University: Microeconomics of International Development (PhD)
Applied Econometrics I (MS)
Applied Econometrics II (MS)

Development Economics (MS)
Doing Business in the Developing World (Undergraduate)
Economics of Developing Countries (Undergraduate)

U. of Washington: Economics for Policy Analysis and Management (MPA)
Quantitative Analysis II (Applied Econometrics) (MPA)
Food and Agricultural Policy in Developing Countries (MPA)
Advanced Microeconomics for Policy Analysis (PhD)
Deep Dive Capstone Seminar (MPA)

GRADUATE STUDENT SUPERVISION AND EXAMINATION

Graduate Fields at Cornell

Applied Economics, 2018-present
Regional Science, 2020-present

Master's Level

Lauren Asprooth	UW MPA 2017, Supervised independent study for Degree Project
Keyu Chen	Cornell MA Asian Studies 2020, Thesis committee member
Molly Doruska	Cornell Dyson MS-PhD, Thesis committee member
Emily Gerth-Guyette	UW MPA 2014, Supervised independent study for Degree Project
Laurel Krovetz	Cornell MS Applied Economics 2023, Thesis committee chair
Audrey Royston	UW MPA 2016, Supervised independent study for Degree Project
Jessica Rudder	UW MPA 2015, Supervised independent study for Degree Project
Peizan Sheng	Cornell MS Applied Economics 2022, Thesis committee chair
Feifei Yang	Cornell MS Applied Economics, 2024-, Thesis committee chair
Xuan Zou	Cornell MS Regional Science 2020, Thesis committee member

Ph.D. Level

Jordan Banks	UW School of Public Health, PhD Committee Grad. School Rep.
Sylvia Blom	Cornell Dyson, PhD Committee member, completed 2021
Leonel Borja	Cornell Dyson, PhD Committee member, completed 2024
Rebecca Brander	UW Dept. of Epidemiology, PhD Committee Grad. School Rep.
Pasita Chaijaroen	UW Economics, PhD Committee member, completed 2016
Tarana Chauhan	Cornell Dyson, PhD Committee member, completed 2024
Sam Henly	UW Economics, PhD Committee Grad. School Rep.
Hui Mai	UW Economics, PhD Committee Grad. School Rep., completed 2015
Natasha Jha	Cornell Dyson, PhD Committee member, completed 2023
Tess Lalemant	Cornell Dyson, PhD Committee chair
Elodie Marlet	UW Economics, PhD Committee member
Jennifer Meredith	UW Economics, PhD Committee Grad. School Rep.
Joshua Merfeld	UW Evans School, PhD Committee member, completed 2018
Yuma Noritomo	Cornell Dyson, PhD Committee member
Benjamin Norton	Cornell Dyson, PhD Committee chair
Sarah Paisner	UW Evans School, PhD Committee member, completed 2020

Sungchul Park	UW Health Services, PhD Committee Grad. School Rep., completed 2018
Sergio Puerto	Cornell Dyson, PhD Committee member, completed 2024
Laine Rutledge	UW Economics, PhD Committee member, completed 2017
Andres Sanchez	UW Economics, PhD Committee member, completed 2019
Vanisha Sharma	Cornell Dyson, PhD Committee member, completed 2024
Dana Smith	Cornell Dyson, PhD Committee member, completed 2024
External	
Jessica Rudder	UC Davis, PhD Committee member (external), completed 2021
Guyo Dureti	Cornell STARS program mentor, 2025-
Soumaila Gansonre	Cornell STAARS program mentor, 2018-2019
MWAPATA team	Cornell STAARS program mentor, 2021-2022, to MWAPATA team members Maggie Munthali, Zephaniah Nyirenda, and Christone Nyonko
S. Rakotonarivo	Cornell STAARS program mentor, 2020-2021
Mark Treurniet	Wageningen University, PhD external examiner, 2020

REVIEWING AND EDITING

Co-editor, *Journal of African Economies*, 2020-present

Referee: *Agribusiness, Agricultural Economics, Agricultural and Resource Economics Review, American Economic Journal: Applied Economics, American Economic Journal: Economic Policy, American Economic Review, American Journal of Agricultural Economics, Econometrica, Economic Development and Cultural Change, Economic Journal, European Review of Agricultural Economics, Feminist Economics, Food Policy, Journal of African Economies, Journal of Development Economics, Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization, Journal of the European Economic Association, Journal of Human Resources, Journal of International Development, Journal of Risk and Uncertainty, Oxford Bulletin of Economics and Statistics, PLoS ONE, Quarterly Journal of Economics, Review of Development Economics, Review of Economics and Statistics, Science, World Development*

Reviewer: IZA, National Science Foundation, UK Department for International Development, US-Israel Bi-national Science Foundation, USAID Development Innovation Ventures, World Bank, CG Standing Panel on Impact Assessment, Cambridge University Press

Panels: STEG 9th Small Research Grant 2025; NSF International Research Experience for Students, SBE, 2021

CONFERENCE ORGANIZATION

Working Group in African Political Economy, Conference Co-organizer:
 University of Washington, Fall 2014
 Brown University, Spring 2015

Arizona State University, Fall 2015
NYU Abu Dhabi, Winter 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019
World Bank/George Washington University, Spring 2016
Stanford University, Fall 2016
UC Berkeley, Spring 2017
University of British Columbia, Fall 2017
UCLA, Spring 2018
University of Cape Town, Summer 2019
Addis Ababa University (remote), Summer 2020
Cornell University, Spring 2022
Northwest Development Workshop 2016, Co-organizer and host
AAEA Annual Meeting, Session organizer, 2025
AAEA Annual Meeting, Abstract reviewer for International Section (2014-2018, 2021, 2025, 2026)
ASSA Annual Meeting, Session organizer, 2015 and 2018
Northeast Universities Development Conference (NEUDC) reviewer, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2023-2025
Association for Mentoring and Inclusion in Economics, conference review committee, 2021
Midwest Development Economics Conference, review committee, 2022

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS AND LEADERSHIP

Working Group in African Political Economy (WGAPE)
Co-organizer, 2014-2020
Co-recipient of WGAPE Training Grant, 2016, \$146,017, Hewlett Foundation

Agricultural and Applied Economics Association, Member, 2012-present
American Economic Association, Member, 2012-present
Center for Effective Global Action, Faculty Affiliate, 2014-present
International Association of Agricultural Economists, Member, 2017-present
Cornell Atkinson Center for Sustainability, Faculty Fellow, 2019-present
Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab, Faculty Affiliate, 2023-present
Agricultural Technology Adoption Initiative, Invited Researcher, 2017-present
DigiFi Africa, DigiFi Africa, Invited Researcher, 2019-present
King Climate Action Initiative, Invited Researcher, 2020-present

DEPARTMENT AND UNIVERSITY SERVICE

2025-2026 PhD Placement Chair
 Co-organizer, Development Economics Research Seminar
 Dyson Faculty Fellow for Inclusive Excellence
 University: Faculty Advisory Committee on Athletics and Physical Education

2024-2025 Dyson School Graduate Studies Committee
 Co-organizer, Development Economics Research Seminar
 Dyson Social and Wellness Committee

	Dyson Faculty Fellow for Inclusive Excellence
2023-2024	University: Faculty Advisory Committee on Athletics and Physical Education
	Dyson School Graduate Studies Committee
	Co-organizer, Development Economics Research Seminar
	Dyson MS and PhD Curriculum Review Implementation Committee
	Dyson Social and Wellness Committee
	University: Faculty Advisory Committee on Athletics and Physical Education
2022-2023	Dyson School Graduate Studies Committee
	Co-organizer, Development Economics Research Seminar
	Dyson MS and PhD Curriculum Review Committee
2021-2022	Dyson School Undergraduate Curriculum Committee
	Co-organizer, Development Economics Research Seminar
	PhD Admissions Review, International and Development Economics
2020-2021	Dyson School Undergraduate Curriculum Committee
	Co-organizer, Development Economics Research Seminar
	PhD Admissions Review, International and Development Economics
2019-2020	Dyson School Undergraduate Curriculum Committee
	Co-organizer, Development Economics Research Seminar
	Organizer, Development Economics Reading Group
	PhD Admissions Review, International and Development Economics
2018-2019	Dyson School Placement Committee
	Dyson School Undergraduate Curriculum Committee
	PhD Admissions Review, International and Development Economics
2017-2018	Co-coordinator, Joint Seminar in Development Economics
	Evans School Faculty Search Committee
	Evans School Diversity Committee
2016-2017	Co-coordinator, Joint Seminar in Development Economics
	Evans School International Development Certificate Committee
	Evans School Faculty Council
2015-2016	Co-coordinator, Joint Seminar in Development Economics
	Evans School Undergraduate Program Committee
	Evans School Faculty Council
2014-2015	Co-coordinator, Joint Seminar in Development Economics
	Evans School Undergraduate Program Committee
2013-2014	Co-founder and Co-coordinator, Joint Seminar in Development Economics
	Evans School Admissions Committee
	Evans School Research Symposium Judge

LANGUAGES

English (native); Swahili (basic); Spanish (basic)