

Scott Williamson

ACADEMIC POSITIONS

University of Oxford

Associate Professor, Department of Politics and International Relations 2024 to Present

Tutorial Fellow, Magdalen College 2024 to Present

Bocconi University

Assistant Professor, Department of Social and Political Sciences 2021 to 2024

New York University Abu Dhabi

Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Social Science Division 2020 to 2021

Based in Department of Politics at New York University

George Washington University

Visiting Scholar, Institute for Middle East Studies 2019 to 2020

AFFILIATIONS

Evidence in Governance and Politics (EGAP) 2025 to Present

Oxford Authoritarian Politics Network 2024 to Present

Dondena Centre, Bocconi University 2024 to Present

EDUCATION

Stanford University, Stanford, CA

Ph.D., Political Science 2014 to 2020

American University in Cairo, Egypt

Center for Arabic Study Abroad (CASA) Fellowship 2012 to 2013

Indiana University, Bloomington, IN

B.A., Political Science and Arabic (Summa Cum Laude) 2008 to 2012

BOOKS

2. [The King Can Do No Wrong: Blame Games and Power Sharing in Authoritarian Regimes.](#) 2024. *Cambridge University Press.*

Featured on the Project on Middle East Political Science (POMEPS) Podcast and the CUP Fifteen Eighty Four Blog; Reviewed in *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics.*

1. [Policy and Opposition in the Middle East's Authoritarian Legislatures.](#) (With Marwa Shalaby). Under Advance Contract with *Cambridge University Press, Elements in Middle East Politics.*

JOURNAL ARTICLES

23. "The Political Roots of Ageism in Greying Democracies: Evidence from Italy, South Korea, and the United States." (With Alonso Roman Amarales). Forthcoming at *Research & Politics.*

22. "Are People Willing to Trade Away Democracy for Desirable Outcomes? Experimental Evidence from Six Countries." (With Jonathan A. Chu and Eddy S.F. Yeung). Online First at *Comparative Political Studies.*

21. "Anti-Americanism and Foreign Aid Preferences Among Political Elites: Evidence from Tunisia." (With Alexandra Blackman, Aytuğ Şaşmaz, and Renu Singh). Online First at *The Review of International Organizations.*

20. “Who Gets the Guns? How Democratic Values and Security Threats Affect American Attitudes toward Military Aid.” Online First at *Journal of Conflict Resolution*.
19. “When Hearts Meet Minds: Complementary Effects of Perspective-Getting and Information on Refugee Inclusion.” (With Claire Adida, Adeline Lo, Melina Platas, and Lauren Prather). 2025. *Political Science Research & Methods*.
18. “Respect the Process: The Public Cost of Unilateral Action in Comparative Perspective.” (With Jonathan Chu). 2025. *The Journal of Politics*.
17. “People Consistently View Elections and Civil Liberties as Key Components of Democracy.” (With Jonathan A. Chu and Eddy S.F. Yeung). 2024. *Science*.

Featured on the Science Podcast; covered in Science Magazine Policy Forum, Cosmos, The Conversation, Veja, Folha de S. Paulo.
16. “Executive Compliance with Parliamentary Powers under Authoritarianism: Evidence from Jordan.” (With Marwa Shalaby). 2024. *Governance*.
15. “Do Proxies Provide Plausible Deniability? Evidence from Experiments on Three Surveys.” 2024. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*.
14. “Learning from Null Effects: A Bottom-Up Approach.” (With Ala’ Alrababa’h, Andrea Dillon, Dominik Hangartner, Jens Hainmueller, Michael Hotard, David Laitin, Jeremy Weinstein). 2023. *Political Analysis*.
13. “Preaching Politics: How Politicization Undermines Religious Authority in the Middle East.” (With A.Kadir Yildirim, Sharan Grewal, Mirjam Kuenkler). 2023. *British Journal of Political Science*.
12. “Where’s the Money From? Attitudes toward Donor Countries and Foreign Aid in the Arab World.” (With Renu Singh). 2022. *International Studies Quarterly*.
11. “Refugees to the Rescue: Motivating Pro-Refugee Public Engagement during the COVID-19 Pandemic.” (With Claire Adida, Adeline Lo, Lauren Prather). 2022. *Journal of Experimental Political Science*.
10. “Did Egypt’s Post-Uprising Crime Wave Increase Support for Authoritarian Rule?” (With Lisa Blaydes, Alexandra Blackman, Caroline Abadeer). 2022. *Journal of Peace Research*.
9. “Signal Received? Authoritarian Elections and the Salience of Autocrats.” (With Paul Schuler, Raphael Cunha.) 2022. *Electoral Studies*.
8. “Reporting All Results Efficiently: A RARE proposal to open up the file drawer.” (With David Laitin, Edward Miguel, Ala’ Alrababa’h, Aleksandar Bogdanoski, Sean Grant, Katherine Hoerberling, Cecilia Mo, Don Moore, Simine Vazire, Jeremy Weinstein). 2021. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS)*.
7. “Elections, Legitimacy, and Compliance in Authoritarian Regimes: Evidence from the Arab World.” 2021. *Democratization*.
6. “Family Matters: How Immigrant Histories Can Promote Inclusion.” (With Claire Adida, Adeline Lo, Melina Platas, Lauren Prather, Seth Werfel). 2021. *American Political Science Review*.
5. “Attitudes toward Migrants in a Highly-Impacted Economy: Evidence from the Syrian Refugee Crisis in Jordan.” (With Ala’ Alrababa’h, Andrea Dillon, Dominik Hangartner, Jens Hainmueller, Jeremy Weinstein). 2021. *Comparative Political Studies*.

4. “Contesting Narratives of Repression: Experimental Evidence from Sisi’s Egypt.” (With Mashail Malik). 2020. *Journal of Peace Research*.
3. “Legislatures and Policy Making in Authoritarian Regimes.” (With Beatriz Magaloni). 2020. *Comparative Political Studies*.
2. “Countering Misperceptions to Reduce Prejudice: An Experiment on Attitudes toward Muslim Americans.” 2020. *Journal of Experimental Political Science*.
1. “Voting in Transition: Participation and Alienation in Egypt’s 2012 Presidential Election.” 2018. *Middle East Law and Governance*. (With Alexandra Blackman, Caroline Abadeer).

WORKING
PAPERS

4. “Crisis Performance, Hegemonic Preferences, and Support for Democracy.” (With Renu Singh and Jonathan Chu). *Revise & Resubmit*.
3. “Age and Agency: Sources of Attitudes toward Refugee Children.” (With Kerim Can Kavakli). *Revise & Resubmit*.
2. “Age Gaps Between Political Leaders and the Public Can Undermine Support for Democracy.” (With Alonso Roman Amarales). *Revise & Resubmit*.
1. “It’s Good to be King: Ruler Type and Perceptions of Democracy in Authoritarian Regimes.”

BOOK
CHAPTERS

4. “Public Opinion in Authoritarian Regimes.” In *The Oxford Handbook of Authoritarian Regimes*. Oxford University Press. 2026. (With Tony Yang).
3. “Legislatures in Authoritarian Regimes: Lawbreakers and Lawmakers.” In *The Oxford Handbook of Law and Authoritarianism*. Oxford University Press. (With Ben Noble). *Forthcoming*.
2. “Regime Type, State Capacity, and the Politics of COVID-19 Vaccinations in Egypt, Jordan, and Tunisia.” In *Vaccination Politics*. University of Michigan Press. (With Renu Singh). *Forthcoming*.
1. “Discourses on Muslims and Welfare across the Atlantic.” In *Race, Ethnicity and Welfare States: An American Dilemma?*, Sonya Michel, Klaus Pedersen, and Pauli Kettunen (eds). Edward Elgar. 2015. (With Abdulkader Sinno, Eren Tatari, Antje Schwennicke, and Hicham Bou Nassif).

OTHER
SELECTED
WRITING

19. “How Autocrats Avoid Angering Their Pro-Democratic Publics.” *Westminster Foundation for Democracy*. May 4, 2026. (With Jonathan Chu, Lisa Fan, and Eddy S.F. Yeung).
18. “Political scientists studying democracy and autocracy think that US democracy has declined significantly.” *LSE United States Politics and Policy*. May 1, 2026.
17. “Why do people continue to support politicians who attack their democracies? Expert Q&A.” *The Conversation*. May 1, 2025.
16. “How Dictators Evade Blame.” *CUP Fifteen Eighty Four Blog*. November 25, 2024.
15. “How different people around the world understand democracy – and why it matters.” *The Conversation*. October 23, 2024. (With Jonathan Chu and Eddy Yeung).
14. “Autocratic Blame Games.” *The Loop, European Consortium for Political Research*. May 9, 2023.

13. “Americans see Afghan and Ukrainian refugees very differently. Why?” *Monkey Cage Blog, Washington Post*. April 29, 2022. (With Claire Adida, Adeline Lo, Lauren Prather, and Melina Platas).
12. “Popular Politics in Egypt: From the 2011 Revolution to al-Sisi’s Authoritarian Revival.” *Project on Middle East Democracy*. August 17, 2021.
11. “When Americans recall their roots, they open up to immigration.” *The Conversation*. March 16, 2021. (With Claire Adida, Adeline Lo, Lauren Prather, and Melina Platas).
10. “Coronavirus and Prospects for Instability in Egypt.” *Sada, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*. April 22, 2020. (With Renu Singh).
9. “Separating Islam from Politics but Not the State: Implications for Religious Authority in Jordan.” *Rice University’s Baker Institute for Public Policy*. March 14, 2019.
8. “Jordan shut out 60,000 Syrian refugees – and then saw a backlash. Here’s why.” *Monkey Cage Blog, Washington Post*. July 20, 2018. (With Ala’ Alrababa’h).
7. “Transitional Justice Falters in Tunisia.” *Sada, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*. September 22, 2015.
6. “Divining Divisions in Egypt’s Deep State.” *Political Violence @ a Glance*. January 27, 2015.
5. “Egypt, Counterterrorism, and the Politics of Alienation.” *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*. August 20, 2014. (With Michele Dunne).
4. “Sisi’s Dilemma.” *Sada, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*. July 24, 2014; Republished in *Cairo Review of Global Affairs*.
3. “Egypt’s Unprecedented Instability by the Numbers.” *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*. March 25, 2014. (With Michele Dunne).
2. “The Egypt Effect: Sharpened Tensions, Reshuffled Alliances.” *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, February 13, 2014. (With Anouar Boukhars, Nathan J. Brown, Michele Dunne, Raphael Lefevre, Marwan Muasher, Frederic Wehrey, and Katherine Wilkens).
1. “Protest, Uprising, and Regime Change in the Arab Spring.” *Muftah*. January 28, 2014. (With Caroline Abadeer).

GRANTS,
HONORS,
& AWARDS

Calleva Centre, Magdalen College (2026) - £4,600

John Fell Fund, University of Oxford (2025) - £41,000

ERC Starting Grant DEVAL, funded by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) under the UK government’s Horizon Europe funding guarantee [EP/Y036832/1] (2024-2029) - €1,493,875

PRIN-PNRR Grant, The Perpetual Refugee Crisis in Italy and beyond: Humanitarian Emergencies, Prejudice, and Social Capital among Host Communities (as Co-I), with (PIs) Nicolò Cavalli, Camilla Borgna and (Co-Is) Renu Singh, Effrosyni Charitopoulou (2023) - €262,077.

Age-IT PNRR Grant, Cultural and Political Dimensions of Ageing Societies, Participant in multi-institution project (2023) - Personal funding of €31,500

Junior Researcher Grant, Bocconi University (2023) - €10,000

Honorable Mention, Best Dissertation Award, APSA MENA Politics Section (2021)

Dissertation Fellowship, Stanford Center for Human Rights and International Justice (2019) - \$5,000

Junior Fellow, Association for Analytic Learning about Islam and Muslim Societies (2019)

TRE Grant, Project on Middle East Political Science (2019) - \$3,000

Europe Center Graduate Student Grant, Stanford University (2018) - \$1,500

Modern British History and Culture Graduate Research Opportunity Award, Stanford University Sciences and Humanities (2017) - \$4,500

FSI Graduate Student Small Research Grant, Stanford University (2017) - \$1,500

Computational Social Science Fellowship, IRiSS, Stanford University (2017) - \$2,000

Abbasi Program in Islamic Studies Graduate Student Grant, Stanford University (2017) - \$2,500

Religion in International Affairs Grant, Henry Luce Foundation (as Jordan Country Director and Co-PI), with (PI) A.Kadir Yildirim and (Co-PIs) Sharan Grewal, CJ Freer, Mirjam Kuenkler, Tarek Masoud, and Yusuf Sarfati (2017-2018) - \$400,000

National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship, (2016-2019)

Goldsmith Summer Research Grant, Stanford Center for International Conflict and Negotiation (2016, 2017) - \$5,475

Sakurako & William Fisher Family Graduate Fellowship, Stanford University (2016)

CISAC Security Research Seed Grant, Stanford University, with Mashail Malik (2015) \$1,500

Center for African Studies Graduate Student Summer Research Fellowship, Stanford University (2015) - \$5,000

Global Studies Urban Beyond Measure Grant, Stanford University, with Alexandra Blackman and Caroline Abadeer (2015) - \$6,000

William Jennings Bryan Award for Outstanding Honors Thesis, Indiana University Political Science Department (2013)

Fulbright Research Scholarship, Jordan, IIE Fulbright Program (2012-2013, regretfully declined)

Cox Research Scholarship, Indiana University Hutton Honors College (2008-2012)

Phi Beta Kappa, Indiana University College of Arts and Sciences (2011)

Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship, Indiana University (2010)

TALKS &
WORKSHOPS

2026: Satyawati College, University of Delhi; University of Leeds Workshop on the Politics of Pandemics and Health Governance; Middlebury College PEP Talk (Discussant); ISA; APSA Democracy and Autocracy / APSG Event on Attacks on Free Media; University of Oxford Book Workshop (Discussant); University of Oslo; DPIR EDI Research Spotlight: Advancing Excellence, Opportunity, Freedom of Speech and Pluralism through Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (Co-Organizer); University of Sussex Book Workshop (Discussant); University of Oxford Book Workshop (Discussant); Oxford Authoritarian Politics Network and Calleva Centre Workshop on Political Communication in Autocracies (Organizer); University College London Book Workshop (Discussant); Authoritarian Political Systems Group Annual Conference

2025: University of Glasgow; Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies; American University PhD Course; ISA; POMEPS Podcast; University of Liverpool; University of Colorado Boulder PhD Course; Workshop on Mass Attitudes and the Resilience of Democracy; Oxford Authoritarian Politics Network Workshop on Engaging Democratic and Authoritarian Politics Scholarship in Conversation (Co-Organizer); Sage event on Democracy in decline? The risk and rise of authoritarianism; Oxford workshop on Popular Politics and Institutions in Authoritarian Regimes (Organizer); Why Curve Podcast; Nuffield College workshop on Social and Moral Norms, Political Violence, and Threats to Democracy; Oxford Political Review; Magdalen College Outreach; Authoritarian Political Systems Group Workshop (Discussant); University of Oxford Book Workshop (Discussant)

2024: POMEPS Virtual Workshop (Discussant); McMaster University Spark Talk; All Souls College Oxford Conference on Change, Adaptation, and Contention in Formal Institutions in Authoritarian Regimes; National University of Singapore; Oxford Authoritarianism Network; Oxford-Berlin Democratic

Resilience Workshop; Pre-EPISA Mini Conference on Authoritarian Politics; EPISA; ESA; APSA; Oxford DPIR Colloquium

2023: ERC LOSS Workshop on the Material Origins of Political Change (Discussant); Newcastle University; University of York; University of Manchester; ISA; PNRR “Age-It” State of the Art Seminar; University College London; Central European University; CIVICA Political Behavior and Institutions Conference; Bocconi SPS Global Challenges Conference; University of Sussex; University of Oxford; EPISA; APSA; Authoritarian Political Systems Group Workshop (Discussant)

2022: ETH Zurich Political Economy Seminar; University of York: ISA; Yale University Program on Refugees, Forced Discontent, and Humanitarian Responses; University of Wisconsin-Madison Comparative Politics Colloquium; College of William & Mary Introduction to Comparative Politics Course; City University of Hong Kong One Health Seminar; Bocconi Students for Diplomacy and International Cooperation; EISA; APSA; Immigration Policy Lab at ETH Zurich; SIPGI Conference at University of Gothenburg; BLEST Seminar Contesting Repression: Women and Protest in Iran; Harvard Business School BGIE Unit Seminar; Dondena Politics & Institutions Clinic

2021: POMEPS Virtual Workshop; Stanford University Master’s in International Policy Program; NYUAD Postdoc Workshop; ISA; MPSA; Georgetown University Economic Policy Immersion Course; APSA; Yale University Immigration, Integration, and Multiculturalism in the West Course; ETH Zurich Political Economy Seminar; City University of Hong Kong; MESA; POMEPS Book Workshop; Dondena Politics & Institutions Clinic

2020: SPSA; IMES Workshop; POMEPS Virtual Workshop; Elliott School Visiting Scholars Workshop; Stanford University Master’s in International Policy Program; Georgetown University Economic Policy Immersion Course; MENA Politics Workshop; APSA; NYU Comparative Politics Workshop; NYUAD Event “The Politics of Wars and Conflicts: Armenia and Azerbaijan”; NYUAD Postdoc Workshop; Bocconi Event “Counting Political Parties in the MENA” (Moderator); *Canceled due to COVID-19*: ISA; MPSA

2019: AALIMS; SPSA Mini Conference on Authoritarian Regimes; Bridging the Gap New Era Workshop; Carnegie Endowment for International Peace; CDDRL Conference on Human Rights and Repression (Discussant); MPSA; WPSA Mini Conference on Authoritarian Regimes; Berkeley-Stanford Political Economy Working Group; IPSCON; Georgetown University Economic Policy Immersion Course; US Department of State; APSA; BITSS Unlocking the File Drawer Workshop

2018: Stanford Abbasi Program in Islamic Studies; UNICEF Jordan Office; Rice University Baker Institute for Public Policy; Georgetown University Economic Policy Immersion Course; APSA; WESSI Beirut; MESA; Stanford Arab Studies Table

2017: APSA; Berkeley-Stanford Political Economy Working Group; POMEPS Annual Conference; SCICN; MPSA

2016: Berkeley-Stanford Political Economy Working Group; APSA; UCLA Compass Graduate Student Conference; MPSA; Stanford New Directions in Political Economy Conference

2015: Stanford Center for African Studies; Stanford Global Studies; ISA

TEACHING	DPhil Supervisor, Oxford	2024 - Present
	Comparative Government Tutorials, Oxford	2024 - 2026
	Introduction to the Practice of Politics Tutorials, Oxford	2024 - 2026
	Comparative Political Economy Tutorials, Oxford	2024
	The Politics of Conflict and Violence (PhD students), Bocconi	Spring 2023
	Islam, Politics, and the Middle East, Bocconi	Fall 2021, Fall 2022, Fall 2023
	Introduction to Political Science (PhD students), Bocconi	Fall 2021, Fall 2022, Fall 2023
	Political Science and Comparative Politics, Bocconi	Fall 2021, Fall 2022, Fall 2023
	Undergraduate and Master’s Thesis Adviser, Bocconi	Fall 2021 - Spring 2024
	Capstone Thesis Adviser, Institute for Middle East Studies, GWU	2019 to 2020

	Teaching Assistant, Middle Eastern Politics (Political Science 149T), Stanford	Fall 2018
	Teaching Assistant, Data Science for Politics (Political Science 150A), Stanford	Fall 2016
	Teaching Assistant, The Science of Politics (Political Science 1), Stanford	Winter 2016
SERVICE	Democracy & Autocracy Section Chair, APSA	Fall 2025 - Fall 2027
	Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee Lead, DPIR, Oxford	Fall 2025 - Present
	General Purposes Committee Member, DPIR, Oxford	Fall 2025 - Present
	Policy Committee, Magdalen College, Oxford	Fall 2025 - Present
	APSA MENA Section Nominations Committee	Summer 2026
	Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee Member, DPIR, Oxford	Fall 2024 - Fall 2025
	Research Committee Member, SPS Department, Bocconi	Fall 2022 - Fall 2023
	PhD Admissions Committee Member, SPS Department, Bocconi	Spring 2023
	Arab Studies Table Graduate Student Coordinator, Stanford	2016 to 2017
	Political Science Cohort Representative, Stanford	2016 to 2017
REVIEWER	<i>American Political Science Review; American Journal of Political Science; The Journal of Politics; Comparative Political Studies; International Organization; British Journal of Political Science; Political Science Research & Methods; Journal of Conflict Resolution; Comparative Politics; Terrorism & Political Violence; Journal of Peace Research; Studies in Comparative International Development; Journal of Comparative Economics; International Studies Review; Political Research Quarterly; Journal of Experimental Political Science; International Studies Quarterly; Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies; PS: Political Science & Politics; Politics & Religion; European Journal of Political Economy; Democratization; Foreign Policy Analysis; Time-sharing Experiments for the Social Sciences; Perspectives on Politics; Government & Opposition; Cornell University Press; Cambridge University Press; SOAS Promotion Committee.</i>	
RESEARCH & EDITING EXPERIENCE	Research Intern, Center for Strategic Studies, University of Jordan	2017 to 2018
	Research Assistant, Stanford University, Professor Avidit Acharya	Summer 2015
	Junior Fellow, Middle East Program, Carnegie Endowment	2013 to 2014
	Co-Editor, Egypt and North Africa Pages, Muftah	2013 to 2014
	Research Assistant, Indiana University, Professor Abdulkader Sinno	2008 to 2012
	Research Intern, Middle East Program, CSIS	Summer 2011
LANGUAGE & METHODS TRAINING	Institute for Qualitative and Multi-Method Research	Summer 2017
	Qasid Language Institute: Amman, Jordan	Summer 2017
	CASA Fellowship: Cairo, Egypt	2012-2013
	CIEE Arabic Language Program: Amman, Jordan	Spring 2011
	UVA-Yarmouk University Summer Arabic Program: Irbid, Jordan	Summer 2010
FIELDWORK	Jordan: Summer 2016; January 2017; Summer 2017; Academic Year 2017-2018 Tunisia: Summer 2015; Summer 2019	