VAGEESHA BAINWALA

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Education

Northwestern University — **Evanston, IL**

PhD Economics — Expected 2026

MA Economics — Jun 2021

- Dissertation Committee: Christopher Udry (Co-Chair), Dean Karlan (Co-Chair), Lori Beaman, Jacopo Ponticelli
- Dissertation Papers: Bank Presence & Informal-Formal Household Borrowing (*Job Market Paper*), Women's Land Inheritance and Credit, Demonetisation and Domestic Violence
- Research Interests: Applied Microeconomics, Development, Gender, Household Finance
- Awards: Dissertation Fellowship (2025-2026), CEGA PhD Partner Fellowship (Jan-Jun 2024), Graduate Fellowship (2020-2021)

Indian Statistical Institute, Delhi Centre — **Delhi, India**

MS Quantitative Economics (86.4%, University Third Rank) — Jun 2018

- Awards: Graduate Fellowship (2016–2018) - full tuition support & stipend

Shri Ram College of Commerce, University of Delhi — **Delhi, India**

BA Economics (Honors) (89.7%, College Third Rank) — Jun 2016

- Awards: Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ Scholarship (2013) - sole recipient, worth 3 times tuition

Research and Teaching Experience

Northwestern University — **Evanston, IL**

Doctoral Researcher — Jun 2021 - Present

- Implemented **causal inference methods** like regression discontinuity, difference-in-differences etc. for papers using large observational datasets
- **Coded statistical analyses** prioritizing runtime and scalability; presented findings in seminars (∼5-20+ attendees)
- Developed research ideas and plans both independently and alongside faculty and student collaborators
- Secured $11,000 in grants for project scoping, stakeholder engagement, and focus group execution in India and Philippines

Graduate Research Assistant, Prof. Dean Karlan — May 2022 - Present

- Led the design and pilot of a debt-payoff randomized control trial in the US, overseeing **survey development, participant recruitment, budgeting** and management of stakeholder relations and project team
- Conducted **econometric analysis of large** (∼100,000 obs.) experimental and geo-location datasets in developing economies and performed **literature reviews**
- Supported **fieldwork in the Philippines** with Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA), contributing to questionnaire design, enumerator training and pilot implementation of the Philippines Socioeconomic Panel Survey (PSPS)

Teaching Assistant — Sept 2021 - Dec 2023

- Delivered **110-minute lectures and review sessions** for 20–100 students, simplifying complex concepts and modeling problem-solving techniques
- **Provided research supervision**, advising students on proposal design and development

Professional Experience

Amazon — **Arlington, VA**

Intern - Economics, Amazon Manager Experience — Jun 2025 - Aug 2025

- Executed **causal inference analysis** to evaluate how manager behavior influences key business outcomes, leveraging data on ∼90,000 corporate managers worldwide to assess the effectiveness of Amazon's Manager Development Product
- Built a **surrogate index model using ML methods** combining short-term outcomes to predict long-term metrics such as regretted attrition and career growth sentiment, enabling scalable product evaluation
- Presented actionable insights on adoption mechanisms and product impact to senior product leadership, informing next-phase product design and contributing to notable improvements in manager engagement

Goldman Sachs Pvt Ltd. — **Bengaluru, India**

Analyst, Global Portfolio Solutions, Goldman Sachs Asset Management — Jun 2018 - Jun 2020

- Spearheaded analysis and due diligence of internal and external funds, **collaborating cross-functionally with portfolio managers** to evaluate risk-return profiles and portfolio fit of alternatives, guiding allocation decisions and reshaping the investment approach
- Generated **investment insights and portfolio strategies for $5–20B client portfolios** through macroeconomic research and quantitative analysis of short- to medium-term return drivers
- Delivered **client-facing market commentary on macro trends and volatility** to an audience of 75+ institutional clients, highlighting portfolio implications in both monthly updates and ad hoc briefs during major market shocks

Programming: Python, SQL, Stata, ArcGIS/QGIS