

# Stanford King Center on Global Development

ANNUAL REPORT  
2021-2022



# About

The King Center on Global Development is a Stanford University research center that works to help improve the lives of people living in poverty around the world. We enable a multidisciplinary community of Stanford scholars to conduct path-breaking research; we inform current debates and help shape effective policy and practice;

and we train and inspire a diverse new generation of global leaders.

Research insights generated by faculty, students, and researchers affiliated with the King Center not only help to provide a better understanding of critical issues—they also contribute to creating scalable solutions and aid in their effective deployment.

## By the Numbers

**Over \$1.75m**  
awarded in new faculty research support

**Over \$376k**  
awarded to support graduate student research

**173**  
quarters of research assistantship funding for undergraduate, masters, and PhD students

**2,116**  
people attended King Center events in-person and online

**126**  
affiliated faculty and researchers at Stanford

**27+**  
countries from which people tuned in for King Center events

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## A Note From Leadership

Dear Friends,

For the past five years, the King Center has had the great privilege of convening and supporting Stanford's multidisciplinary community of global development scholars. Our mission is to help alleviate global poverty. We do so by fostering research that can shape policy and practice, by training a diverse new generation of global scholars and leaders, and by providing opportunities for engagement between scholars and external stakeholders from around the world.

Our annual report is an opportunity to take stock and reflect on how we are doing. This year, we are especially proud to share with you progress from our programs to support and train the next generation of scholars.

Our now one-year-old [Predoctoral Research Fellows Program](#), which strives to bring a diverse [cohort](#) of recent college graduates from low- and middle-income countries to Stanford, continues to grow and has become a model on campus and in the larger global development community. We welcomed a cohort of five new predocs this year. It has been exciting to host and mentor many young researchers who are passionate about studying global poverty alleviation, who are learning from our community and from each other, and who are immersing themselves in their research teams and campus life.

In 2022, we welcomed two new outstanding [postdoctoral fellows](#): Juan Felipe Riaño Rodriguez from the University of British Columbia and Karmini Sharma from the University of Warwick. We also said goodbye to two scholars: Augustin Bergeron, who began his new role as an assistant professor of economics at the University of Southern California, and Nirvikar Jassal, now an assistant professor of political science at the London School of Economics.

This past academic year, we invested in the success of 45 graduate students by providing [funding](#) or [fellowships](#) to help them advance their research agendas. This support helps students conduct essential field research for their work on topics ranging from local integration of refugees in Jordan to improving profits for small enterprises in Latin America.

Stanford undergraduates participated in nearly 100 quarters of research assistantships under the mentorship of our Faculty Affiliates. These early research opportunities provide an opportunity for students to work on topics at the research frontier and learn new skills. Sophia Nesamoney, '23, and Keona Blanks, '24, both worked with Faculty Affiliate Gary Darmstadt on [new research](#) on COVID-19, HIV, and infant health, publishing peer-reviewed articles in the process.



Supporting Stanford faculty continues to be a core objective of the King Center. Our multidisciplinary [initiatives](#) bring together faculty from across the university to examine critical issues in global development, such as understanding the pervasive impacts of [lead exposure](#) in Bangladesh and designing and testing solutions to identifying how climate change affects [infrastructure development](#) and poverty in sub-Saharan Africa. Simultaneously, the center encourages the research endeavors of individual faculty members, like Faculty Affiliate [Alison Hoyt](#), who received a grant from the center to help support her research on peatland conservation to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in Colombia.

We are delighted to be able to host in-person [events](#) like our Speaker Series again, but continue to appreciate how virtual events enable us to foster connections between academics and policymakers around the globe. For example, in our discussion on how to [improve education in low-income countries after COVID](#), we were able to have a productive discussion with an economist at a policy institute in Washington, DC, a policymaker in South Africa, and the Stanford community. Going forward, we hope to present a mix of in-person and virtual events and look forward to connecting with you at one of them.

As we reflect on the past academic year, we are reminded of and grateful for people like you—the generous and dedicated members of our community. Thank you for supporting our mission as we continue to advance research and opportunities for Stanford faculty and the next generation of scholars working to improve the lives of the world's poor.

Sincerely,

**Pascaline Dupas**  
Faculty Director,  
King Center on Global Development  
Kleinheinz Family Professor  
of International Studies,  
Department of Economics

**Jessica Leino**  
Executive Director and  
Research Scholar,  
King Center on Global Development

# Next Generation of Global Scholars

The King Center's [Predoctoral Research Fellows Program](#) and [Postdoctoral Fellows Program](#) train a cohort of the next generation of scholars and leaders in global development. Their diverse perspectives and expertise expand the King Center's research community.

In summer 2022, the start of the second year of our Predoctoral Research Fellows Program, we welcomed five new predocs from Bangladesh, Egypt, Nigeria, and Sudan. These recent college graduates joined the initial cohort of predocs (from Haiti, Myanmar, Peru, and Turkey). Over the next two years, they will immerse themselves in King Center initiatives, gaining valuable training and research experience before applying to PhD programs and continuing their paths to becoming the next generation of leaders in global development.

The King Center's Postdoctoral Fellows Program provides new PhD recipients the time and flexibility to incubate ambitious research agendas while at Stanford. Two new postdocs joined the center in summer 2022: Juan Felipe Riaño Rodríguez and Karmini Sharma. Riaño Rodríguez's research examines state capacity in Central and Latin America and the long-term impact of conflict and historical institutions on economic development. Sharma focuses on the economics of gender, including the deterrence of sexual harassment, gender segregation, and discrimination, with a focus on India.

The full list of the King Center's Predoctoral Research Fellows and Postdoctoral Fellows is on [page 9](#).



## Predocs Immersed in Field Research

The Predoctoral Research Fellows Program provides opportunities for fellows to work with local research teams on the ground and observe what goes into designing and conducting effective field research.

Christlee Doris Elmera works closely with the team of a King Center initiative led by Professor of Medicine Steve Luby and postdoc Jenna Forsyth that is focused on [reducing lead exposure](#) in low-income countries. In 2022, Elmera traveled to Dhaka, Bangladesh, to participate in a new environmental sampling pilot for a future study on the impacts of heavy metal exposure on child development. The initial in-person survey by Elmera and her team will help the team craft more accurate outcome measures.

"Traveling to Dhaka and experiencing the work firsthand helped me better understand what's needed to run successful field research," Elmera said. "The knowledge I've gained in Bangladesh and being part of the King Center's predoc program will help me develop better research questions in the future."

## Postdocs Inform Policy Debates

The King Center launched a new series of briefs to highlight the research by our postdoctoral fellows and other affiliated scholars. The first brief focused on [Augustin Bergeron's research](#) on how governments in low-income countries can increase their revenue-generating capacity.

Bergeron partnered with the Provincial Government of Kasai-Central in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) to test a series of strategies to boost revenues from property taxes. Bergeron's research showed that:

- reducing tax rates for specific groups increased payment rates and revenue;
- increasing enforcement capacity resulted in additional compliance;
- local city chiefs outperformed state agents in collecting taxes;
- and optimizing the assignment of the best tax collectors to locations where tax compliance was highest increased revenues without increasing collection costs.

Other provincial governments in the DRC, as well as other governments in Africa and the Middle East, have reached out to learn more about the findings and their implications for tax collection strategies in their settings.



# Undergraduate and PhD Programs

[Undergraduate students](#) have the opportunity to gain hands-on learning experience through the center's research assistantship programs. Faculty Affiliate mentors conducting research in low- and middle-income countries incorporate students into their research teams and work closely with the undergrad RAs as they learn how to conduct research using a range of methodologies and tools, from machine learning to statistical analysis to combing archives for colonial records. Over the past year, the center supported 57 undergraduate students conducting research in over 15 countries on topics such as inclusive education in Guatemala and human rights in Indonesia.

[Graduate student programs](#) support the emerging independent research agendas of PhD students. Both research funding and fellowship programs go to support a broad range of topics related to global development, including how climate change is affecting small-scale fisheries in Palau and why female labor force participation in India is exceptionally low. Last year, the center provided funding and fellowships to 45 PhD students conducting research in over 30 countries, including Bolivia, Jordan, Mozambique, and Vietnam.



## Increasing Women's Electoral Representation in India

For the past two years, Somer Khambu Bryant, '22, has worked with Assistant Professor of Political Science Soledad Artiz Prillaman with support from both the King Center's part-time and full-time research assistant programs. Bryant was drawn to Prillaman's research because of its focus on women's issues. The research assistantship provided an opportunity for Bryant to approach development through a feminist lens and to familiarize herself with South Asia.

Beginning in 2020, Bryant [worked with](#) Prillaman on research analyzing the reasons why women in India have lower rates of community political participation than their male counterparts and when female representatives choose to elevate women's issues. This question led Prillaman and Bryant to explore a potential correlation between participation in self-help groups and increased female involvement in politics.

Bryant compared interview transcripts of men and women in 20 villages in rural India and created a coding scheme that allowed her to quantify the political participation of interviewees. Her statistical analysis found that women who participated in self-help groups showed consistently higher rates of political participation.

Bryant is now helping to create a comprehensive database of elected officials across local governments in India. Once completed, this data will allow researchers to better understand the conditions under which female elective representatives work to implement policies preferred by women.

"It's been one of the best experiences I've had at Stanford," Bryant said. "It's definitely shaped my future ambitions."

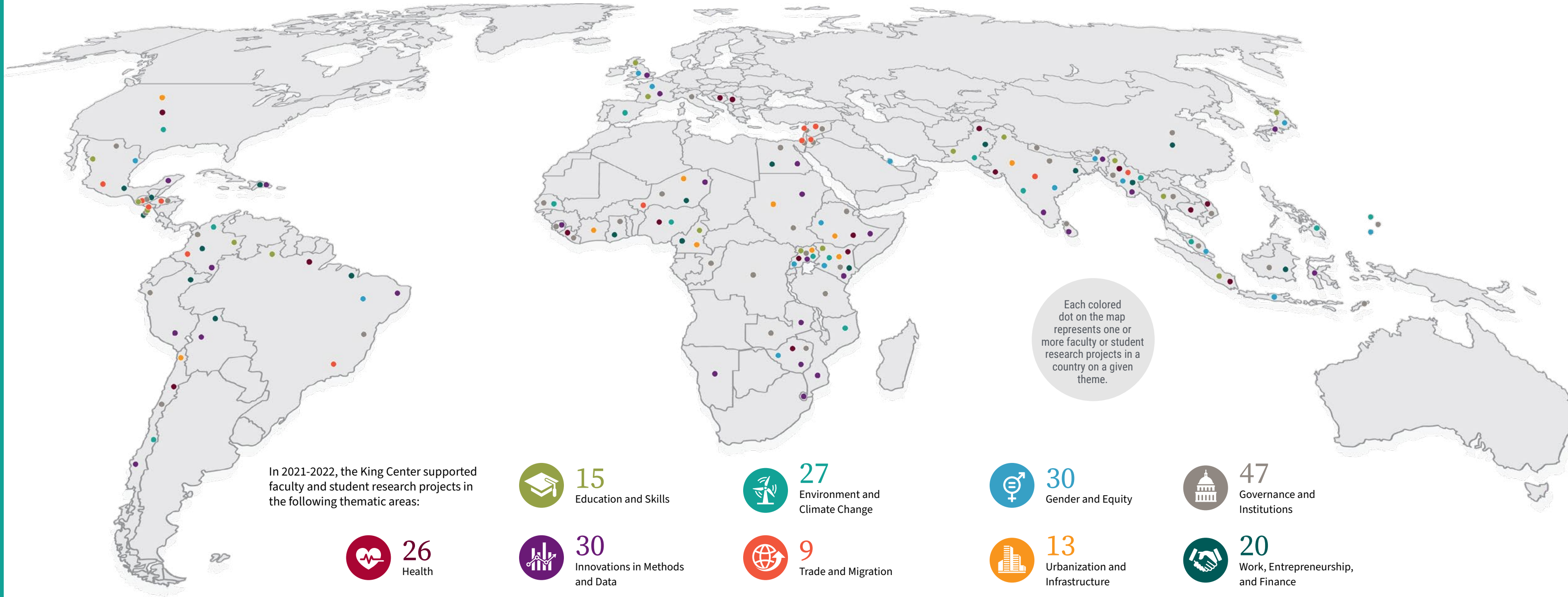


"Funding from the center has enabled me to conduct research in Kenya and Uganda throughout my PhD studies. The research support I received in the first year of my PhD allowed me to pursue my own ideas early on in my academic career. The continued support of the King Center has also made my current dissertation research on urbanization and inter-group relations in East Africa possible. In addition to being an essential source of graduate student research funding, the King Center has also impacted my work by bringing together a community of interdisciplinary scholars interested in global development. The exposure to faculty and graduate student colleagues facilitated by this community has given me a space to discuss research ideas with and obtain valued feedback from like-minded peers."

— Nic Lyon, political science PhD student

# Our Global Reach

[VIEW MAP ONLINE](#)



In 2021-2022, the King Center supported faculty and student research projects in the following thematic areas:

**26**  
Health

**15**  
Education and Skills

**30**  
Innovations in Methods and Data

**27**  
Environment and Climate Change

**9**  
Trade and Migration

**30**  
Gender and Equity

**13**  
Urbanization and Infrastructure

**47**  
Governance and Institutions

**20**  
Work, Entrepreneurship, and Finance

Each colored dot on the map represents one or more faculty or student research projects in a country on a given theme.

## Research Highlights and Media Mentions

Research in Mexico by Faculty Affiliates Alberto Diaz-Cayeros and Grant Miller that shows how aging pipe systems and a dearth of investment in sanitation infrastructure compromise the health benefits of water disinfection was highlighted in *VoxDev*. [READ MORE](#)

Research by Faculty Affiliate Will Tarpeh examines how sulfide, a toxic byproduct of wastewater filtering, can be converted to chemicals used in fertilizer or batteries while creating drinkable water. [READ MORE](#)

A study of policies in Brazil, Colombia, and Costa Rica by Faculty Affiliate Eric Lambin outlines a series of coordinated interventions to slow deforestation through public and private collaboration. [READ MORE](#)

Faculty Affiliate Dana Foarta's work on vote-buying by politicians, using data from experiments in the US and Kenya, finds that voters who receive payments from politicians are less likely to hold politicians accountable for stealing public funds and was featured in a *VoxDevTalk*. [READ MORE](#)

*The Economist* highlighted a large-scale analysis conducted by the researchers from the Migration and Development Initiative showing that the vast majority of African migrants plan to stay in Africa rather than move to Europe. [READ MORE](#)

Faculty Affiliate Jason Andrews shows that crowded prisons in Brazil amplify the spread of tuberculosis and that mass screenings of incarcerated people are efficient for early detection and treatment and a cost-effective way to reduce spread in prisons and surrounding communities. [READ MORE](#)

Affiliated researcher Michael Machala, PhD '17, developed a solar-powered technology that smallholder farmers in India can use to improve the quality and quantity of dried agricultural produce. [READ MORE](#)

# Faculty Programs and Initiatives

The King Center has more than 120 [affiliated faculty](#), representing all seven of Stanford's schools. From the Department of Anthropology to the School of Engineering to the Graduate School of Business, faculty members bring unique expertise to bear on global development challenges.

The King Center leverages the talent, enthusiasm, and energy of the Stanford community to address global poverty through large-scale, multidisciplinary initiatives, seed funding to test new ideas, and support for capacity building and policy engagement activities. Our 10 initiatives cover critical global development topics and a range of themes:

African Urbanization	Conflict and Polarization
Data for Development	Extreme Poverty, Infrastructure, and Climate
Firms and Global Productivity	Gender-based Violence
Inclusive Democracy and Development	Migration and Development
Reducing Human Trafficking	Reducing Lead Exposure



One goal of the King Center's [Data for Development initiative](#) (DDI) is to inspire students to tackle sustainable development challenges using new data and new methods in machine learning and data science. After participating in a lab class supported by the initiative, a team of students created a machine-learning tool to encourage new ways to measure progress on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The tool, named [SustainBench](#), is designed to lower the barrier to entry for researchers to train new models that can provide insights for governments, international organizations, and local NGOs on poverty levels, potential for hunger or malnutrition, and access to clean water at a very localized scale.

These key indicators of well-being are traditionally monitored by ground surveys and censuses, which are very expensive. "Many countries go decades between measurements on key SDG indicators. Machine learning provides new tools to help plug those data gaps, including through satellite imagery, social media posts, and mobile phone activity," said PhD student Chenlin Meng '20, '25 PhD, one of the leads of the work. The potential impact of such tools in the fight against global poverty is huge. Meng and her team point to recent efforts by governments in Togo, Uganda, and Bangladesh to use machine learning to target economic aid to vulnerable populations during the COVID-19 pandemic.

SustainBench fills a void between academic disciplines: most machine-learning researchers don't focus on development issues, and most development researchers don't understand machine learning. "The SDGs are arguably the most urgent challenge facing the world today," Meng said. "They require domain-specific knowledge from machine learning, computer science, environmental science, and economics. It makes sense that we are working together to figure out ways to provide better insight into monitoring the SDGs."



"The King Center funding has enabled us to generate very valuable preliminary data that has already yielded interesting results and is forming the foundation for new collaborations to better understand vulnerable peatland carbon stocks in Colombia. The funding has also enabled undergraduates to get involved in this research; this summer we had two undergraduate students collaborating on the project."

— Alison Hoyt,  
Assistant Professor of Earth System Science

# Visitors and Events

The King Center regularly convenes researchers, students, policymakers, and private-sector leaders from around the world to share knowledge, explore new partnerships, and promote evidence-based policies and practices. Last year, the King Center's [events](#) took place both virtually and in person, with more than 2,116 people attending from at least 27 countries. Event topics included [supply chain disruptions](#) caused by COVID-19, innovative efforts to reduce the spread of [mosquito-borne viruses through plastic recycling](#), and [donor conditionality and international development outcomes](#).

This past academic year, the center hosted two visiting faculty members whose research focuses on sub-Saharan Africa. Belinda Archibong, assistant professor of economics at Barnard College, and Augustin Tapsoba, assistant professor of economics at the Toulouse School of Economics, joined the Stanford community as visiting professors. They presented their research, built new collaborations with faculty and graduate students at Stanford, and spoke with undergraduates.

"My visit at the King Center allowed me to share my work to a wider audience and get feedback from leading experts in my field. It was a game-changer for me in terms of visibility within the broader research community and allowed me to connect with amazing new collaborators, whom I am now working with on exciting new projects."

— Augustin Tapsoba,  
Assistant Professor of Economics,  
Toulouse School of Economics, Université Toulouse 1 Capitole.



Ted Miguel, the Oxfam Professor of Environmental and Resource Economics at the University of California, Berkeley, speaking at the King Center about his research on donor conditionality and international development outcomes.



## Next 10 Years in Education Policy

The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated an education crisis in low- and middle-income countries, and the impact on human capital is likely to be long-lasting. The King Center hosted David Evans, senior fellow at the Center for Global Development, and Nompumelelo Mohohlwane, deputy director at the South African National Department of Basic Education, for a conversation on the state of learning and education systems in the Global South during COVID-19, with a focus on how to build back after the disruptions caused by the ongoing pandemic.

# Financials and Support

## King Center Funding Sources FY22

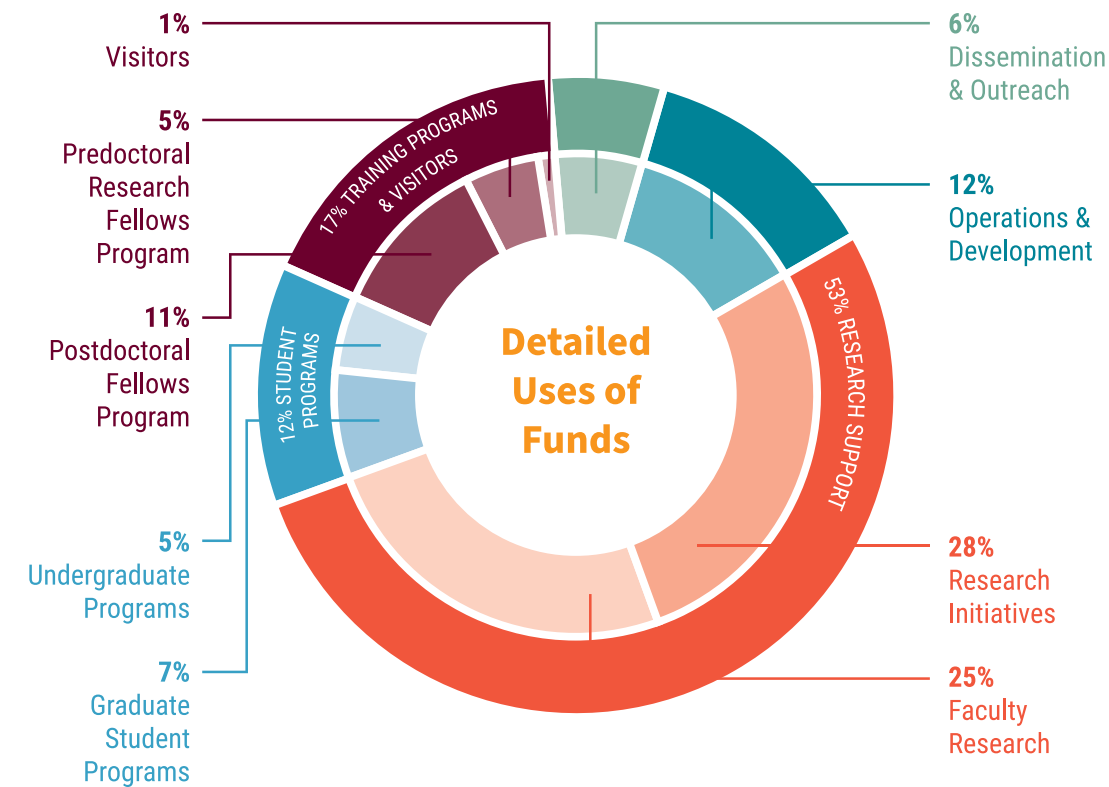
Endowment Payouts	\$3,636,687
Endowment Shares Sales	\$1,053,952
Gifts	\$321,414
University Central	\$616,288
University Partnerships & Transfers	\$219,670

**Total** \$5,848,012

## King Center Funding Uses FY22

Research Support	\$3,014,380
Student Programs	\$673,652
Training Programs & Visitors	\$986,141
Dissemination & Outreach	\$328,692
Operations & Development	\$659,875

**Total** \$5,662,739

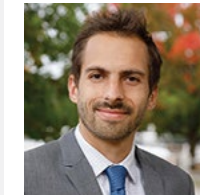


With COVID restrictions lifting, the King Center was able to resume supporting hands-on research around the globe, and our spending grew 21.7% in 2021-2022 compared to the previous year. In the 2022 fiscal year, the King Center's training programs also grew substantially, as we welcomed a second cohort of Predoctoral Research Fellows and expanded our fellowship and research grants to students who were eager to resume field work.

The King Center is grateful to its generous supporters who make it possible for the center and its affiliates to consistently innovate in research and training, and to help inform global development policies and practices. Looking ahead, we intend to sustain our programs for the next generation of global scholars and our support for faculty and student research and experiential learning opportunities. We look forward to sharing gift opportunities with our supporters in the coming year.

# King Center Fellows

## POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWS



AUGUSTIN BERGERON  
France,  
economics



JEREMY BOWLES  
United Kingdom,  
political economy



YOSHIKA CRIDER  
United States,  
energy and resources



NIRVIKAR JASSAL  
India,  
political economy



MARIE CHRISTELLE MABEU  
Cameroon,  
economics



JUAN FELIPE RIAÑO  
Colombia,  
economics



KARMINI SHARMA  
India,  
economics

## PREDOCTORAL RESEARCH FELLOWS



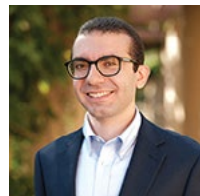
AMNA AHMED EL MUSTAFA  
Sudan



MERT AKAN  
Turkey



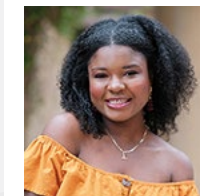
SHAKIL AYHAN  
Bangladesh



MICHAEL BESHAY  
Egypt



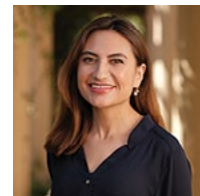
BESINDONE DUMI-LESLIE  
Nigeria



CHRISTLEE DORIS ELMERA  
Haiti



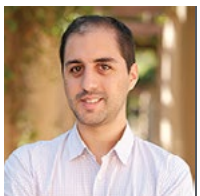
SUHI HANIF  
Bangladesh



LAURA FABIOLA HERNANDEZ  
Colombia



EI THANDAR MYINT  
Myanmar



DIEGO TOCRE  
Peru

## RONALD I. MCKINNON MEMORIAL FELLOWS



ALVARO CALDERON  
Peru,  
PhD Student, Department  
of Economics



RENAN CHAVES YOSHIDA  
Brazil,  
PhD Student, Department  
of Economics

## NAMED FACULTY FELLOWS



KATHERINE CASEY  
Associate Professor of Political  
Economy, Stanford Graduate  
School of Business, Peiros  
Family Faculty Fellow



GRANT MILLER  
Henry J. Kaiser, Jr. Professor  
School of Medicine, Dong  
Wei Faculty Fellow

# Opportunities to Engage

## Read our Newsletter

To stay updated on new research insights, events, and other news, visit the King Center's website and subscribe to our bi-monthly newsletter: <https://kingcenter.stanford.edu>

## Follow us on Social Media

    @StanfordKingCtr

## Support our Work

To learn more about how to contribute and shape the King Center's work, please visit: <https://kingcenter.stanford.edu/giving>



**Education  
and Skills**



**Governance  
and Institutions**



**Trade and  
Migration**



**Environment and  
Climate Change**



**Health**



**Urbanization and  
Infrastructure**



**Gender  
and Equity**



**Innovations in  
Methods and Data**



**Work,  
Entrepreneurship,  
and Finance**

## PHOTO CREDITS

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