

Sebastian Ottinger

Contact

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Employment

CERGE-EI, Assistant Professor *since 2022*

CERGE-EI, Visiting Faculty *2021 – 2022*

Northwestern University, Postdoctoral Research Fellow *2021 – 2022*

Education

Ph.D. Economics, UCLA, Anderson School of Management *2017 – 2021*

M.A. Economics, University of Zurich *2013 – 2016*

B.A. Economics, University of Zurich *2010 – 2013*

Research visits and affiliations

Visiting Graduate Student, Harvard University *Fall 2019*
Host: Alberto Alesina

IZA, Research Affiliate *2021 - 2025*
Research Associate *since 2025*

Affiliate, Center for Economic History, Northwestern University *since 2023*

Student Affiliate, CCPR - California Center of Population Research *2018 - 2021*

Published papers

“History’s Masters: The Effect of European Monarchs on State Performance”

[Link to published version] *with Nico Voigtländer* ***Econometrica***, 2025, 93(1): 95–128.

“Essays on Political Economy and Economic Geography (Dissertation Summary)”, (non-peer-reviewed)

[Link to published version] ***The Journal of Economic History***, 2023, 83(2): 573-611.

Working papers

“The Political Economy of Propaganda: Evidence from US Newspapers”

(IZA WP) *with Max Posch*

Revise & Resubmit at the Journal of the European Economic Association

“The American Origin of the French Revolution”

(IZA WP) *with Lukas Rosenberger*

“Racial Discrimination and Innovation: Evidence from US Inventors, 1895-1925”

(CERGE-EI WP) *with Davide M. Coluccia and Gaia Dossi*

“Immigrants, Industries, and Path Dependence”

European Economic Association (EEA) - Best Job Market Paper Award , 2020/21

“Why Aren’t People Leaving Janesville? Industry Persistence, Trade Shocks, and Mobility”

(Upjohn Institute WP) *with Michael Poyker*

Work in Progress

Postroads to Path Dependence

[Slides available upon request] *with Elizaveta Zelnitskaia*

Teaching

CERGE-EI

Every Fall since 2022: “US Economic History” – Second-year Ph.D. course

Every Fall since 2025: “Economics across the Atlantic” – Undergraduate course, AEP program

Northwestern University

Spring 2022: “US Economic History After 1865” – Elective course for undergraduate students.

Awards

2025. Czech Academy of Sciences. Otto Wichterle Award for promising young scientists under the age of 35.

2022. Economic History Association. Finalist, Allan Nevins Prize for the best dissertation in U.S. or Canadian economic history.

2020/21 European Economic Association (EEA). Best Job Market Paper Award.

Grants

2023 – 2026. Czech Science Foundation (GACR). Principal Investigator for the project “The Effects and Origins of National and Local Institutions.” (≈ 117’000 USD)

2023 – 2025. Charles University JUNIOR Fund (≈ 50’000 USD)

2018 – 2021. Several grants from the UCLA Economics Department, the Center for Global Management, the Ziman Center for Real Estate, and the Price Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation. (38’000 USD in total)

Presentations

2026 scheduled: Potsdam, ZEW Mannheim

2025 1st CEPR Applied Micro-Economic History Workshop (Heidelberg), “Totalitarianism and Nation Building” (Bergamo), 6th EBRD & King’s College London Workshop on Migration (Madrid), Université libre de Bruxelles, Bavarian Graduate Program in Economics (invited guest speaker), VfS Cologne, University of Copenhagen, scheduled: UPF Barcelona

2024 ASSA (San Antonio, TX), Groningen, Lisbon Migration Economics Workshop, VSB Ostrava, ERUNI, Peking University (online), 2nd ZEW-ifo Young Scholar Political Economy Workshop (Fuerth), KU Leuven Fresh Meeting, University of Mannheim

2023 Big Counterfactuals of Macro-political History Conference (University of Manchester), Cologne FRESH Meeting, CEPR Political Leaders Workshop (ENS de Lyon), EEA Barcelona, European Historical Economics Society Conference (Vienna), Political Economy in History Workshop (Bonn), VfS Annual Meeting, VSE Prague, University of Duisburg-Essen, Charles University (Faculty of Law), ASREC 2023 (Milan), IESEG (Paris)

2022 Northwestern Economic History Lunch, EEA Milan, VfS Basel, EHA La Crosse, RWI Essen, UNCE Workshop

2021 Georgetown Qatar, CERGE-EI, Hong Kong University, IWH Halle, University of Essex, Bocconi University, University of Toronto, Einaudi Institute of Economics and Finance, New Economic School, Stockholm University, CREi, UC Dublin, HSE, Northwestern Economic History Rookiefest, Quantitative Spatial Economics Junior Workshop, Brock University, HEDG Workshop

2020 “Political Economy Lunch”, at Harvard University, Government Department (Boston, MA), “Reading Group in Development and Growth”, Boston University (Boston, MA), “Online Science Days 2020”, Lindau Nobel Laureate Meetings (Next Generation Science presentation), NBER Summer Institute - Urban Economics (presentation), NBER Summer Institute - Development of the American Economy (poster presentation), Econometric Society World Congress, EEA Virtual Congress 2020, Florida State University, UEA 2020 PhD Workshop in Urban Economics, RIDGE “Towards Sustainable Growth” Workshop

2019 “12th Migration and Development Conference” at Carlos III University Madrid, co-organized by the World Bank, “22nd IZA Summer School in Labor Economics” at Buch a. Ammersee (Germany), “ifo Junior Economist Workshop on Migration Research”, at ifo Institute Munich (Germany), “Economic History Workshop”, at Harvard University (Boston, MA), “Trade Reading Group”, at Harvard University (Boston, MA), “Graduate Growth Breakfast”, at Brown University (Providence, RI), “9th International Conference on Immigration in OECD countries”, co-organized by the OECD, Paris (France)

Service to the institution and profession

CERGE-EI

Seminar & Faculty Development: Co-organizer of the Applied Seminar; contributed to a guide for incoming faculty.

Committees & Mentorship: Member of the Committee of Graduate Studies (since 2023); Teaching Fellows Mentor (since 2023).

Foundation & Outreach: Supported CERGE-EI Foundation through donor outreach (public talks, podcast recording at foundation's request).

Representation: Delivered invited public lectures for the Czech Economic Association (Faculty of Economics, VSB Ostrava) and the Center for Theoretical Studies, Charles University.

Service to earlier institutions

Organization of the Northwestern Economic History Lunch *2021 - 2022*

Co-organization of "Los Angeles Applied Economics Conference" *2018*

Service to the profession

Referee for journals: American Economic Journal: Applied Economics, American Economic Review, American Economic Review: Insights, Economic Inquiry, Economic Journal, Explorations in Economic History, Journal of Economic History, Journal of Development Economics, Journal of Law and Economics, Journal of Public Economics, Journal of the European Economic Association, Journal of Political Economy, Journal of Urban Economics, Quarterly Journal of Economics, Regional Science and Urban Economics, Review of Economics and Statistics, and the Review of Economic Studies.

Referee for grant agencies and publishers: Charles University Grant Agency, ERC Consolidator Grants, and Princeton University Press

Discussions

1. 2022, NBER Political Economy Fall Meeting: "Black Empowerment and Whites' Backlash: The Effect of the Voting Rights Act" by Bernini, Facchini, Tabellini, and Testa
2. 2022, Northwestern Conference on Economic History of War: "The Impact of Potatoes on Inequality, Conflict and State Size, 1400-1900" by Iyigun, Mueller, Nunn, and Qian
3. 2021, NBER Immigrants and the U.S. Economy: "Immigration and Local Business Dynamics: Evidence from U.S. Firms" by Mahajan
4. 2019, Immigration in OECD Countries: "Immigration and Worker-Firm Matching" by Orefice and Peri