

# JESSE LASTUNEN

UNU-WIDER | Katajanokanlaituri 6 B, 00160 Helsinki, Finland | lastunen@wider.unu.edu | +358 961 599 225

## EXPERIENCE

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- 2020–present **UNU-WIDER, THE UNITED NATIONS UNIVERSITY WORLD INSTITUTE FOR DEVELOPMENT ECONOMICS RESEARCH** HELSINKI, FINLAND  
**Research Associate** • Collaborative research addressing policy challenges in the Global South, tax-benefit microsimulation modelling, training and capacity building (2020–); planning and oversight of activities in the SOUTHMOD programme, including research, contracts and events (2022–23)
- 2015–20 **RAND CORPORATION** SANTA MONICA, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES  
**Assistant Policy Researcher** • Policy-oriented, interdisciplinary research for public sector clients
- 2017–18 (7 months) **INTERNET ASSOCIATION** WASHINGTON D.C., UNITED STATES  
**Internet Economy Research Fellow** • Research on the economic impact of autonomous vehicles
- 2016 (6 months) **OECD, DIRECTORATE FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION** PARIS, FRANCE  
**External Consultant** • Research on the welfare gains of digital innovations for vulnerable groups
- 2014–15 (6 months) **TECHNOPOLIS GROUP** TALLINN, ESTONIA  
**Consultant** • Policy evaluation, data collection and analysis, funding proposals
- 2013 (6 months) **PROJECT POLICY LTD** CAMBRIDGE, UNITED KINGDOM  
**Policy Researcher** • Compiling, manipulating and analysing public socioeconomic data
- 2012 (9 months) **BGATOR LTD** TAMPERE, FINLAND  
**Consultant** • Ramping up international R&D projects, funding proposals, market research
- 2011 (3 months) **CERN, THE EUROPEAN ORGANIZATION FOR NUCLEAR RESEARCH** GENEVA, SWITZERLAND  
**Researcher** • Technology and market research, project funding, industry-science relations

## EDUCATION

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- 2015–20 **PARDEE RAND GRADUATE SCHOOL**  
**Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Policy Analysis**  
Analytical concentrations in Economics and Quantitative Methods  
Dissertation: “Technological Change and the Skill Premium: 21st Century Evidence“
- 2014–15 **UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO**  
**Doctoral Student, Fulbright Scholar in Public Policy** (Political Economy and Statistics)
- 2013–14 **BARCELONA GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS**  
**Master’s Degree in Specialized Economic Analysis** (Int’l Trade, Finance and Development)
- 2012–13 **UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE**  
**Master of Philosophy (M.Phil.) in Technology Policy** • Graduated *with Distinction*
- 2011–12 **MASDAR INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY** IN COLLABORATION WITH **MIT**  
**Graduate Student in Engineering Systems and Management** • *Certificate of Excellence*
- 2009–11 **TAMPERE UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY & UNIVERSITY OF TAMPERE**  
**Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) in Industrial Engineering and Management** • *Distinction*  
**Undergraduate Student in International Relations**
- Other Courses and workshops in R, Python, STATA and Excel; data visualization; scientific presentations; effective writing; economic inequality; R&D evaluation, competency-based interviewing (CBI)

## ACTIVITIES

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Professional service	<b>UNU-WIDER Working Group on Artificial Intelligence, Chair, 2023–</b> <b>UNESCO Inclusive Policy Lab, Expert, 2023–</b> <b>International Tax and Public Finance, Referee, 2023–24</b>
Teaching and mentoring	<b>UNU-WIDER, Visiting PhD Fellowship Programme, Mentor for Basit Abdullah, Trang Thi Pham, Shakeba Foster, Kivamivi Gomado and Abdoul-Akim Wandaogo, 2021–24</b> <b>Pardee RAND Graduate School, Teaching Assistant, Operations Research I, 2017</b>
Media and blogs	SOUTHMOD Online Course on tax-benefit microsimulation for the Global South, 28 May 2024. AI for economists: Prompts and resources on personal webpage, policy.fi, featured on the Marginal Revolution blog, 15 Jan 2024. Toppari, A. & <b>Lastunen, J.</b> , <i>SOUTHMOD family extended: Welcome to the three new Latin American teams</i> , WIDERAngle, UNU-WIDER, 2023. <b>Lastunen, J.</b> , Rattenhuber, B. & Oliveira, R.C., <i>The pandemic and Africa's social safety net</i> , Project Syndicate, 2021. Oliveira, R.C., Rattenhuber, B. & <b>Lastunen, J.</b> , <i>Efforts to protect the poor during COVID: How five African countries fared</i> , The Conversation, 2021. Remes, M., <i>Pandemia paljasti aukot turvaverkoissa</i> , commentary in Kehitys-Utveckling, a quarterly magazine produced by the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, no. 4/2021. Rattenhuber, B., Oliveira, R.C. & <b>Lastunen, J.</b> , <i>Working together to better understand how COVID-19 affects poverty and inequality</i> , WIDERAngle, UNU-WIDER, 2021. <b>Lastunen, J.</b> & Rattenhuber, B., <i>Studying COVID-19 through the lens of microsimulation: The role of tax and benefit policies in alleviating poverty and inequality</i> , WIDERAngle, UNU-WIDER, 2020. <b>Lastunen, J.</b> , <i>Politiikan tutkimuksen tulisi tarjota välineitä päättäjille</i> , Vieraskynä (op-ed), Helsingin Sanomat, 2014.
Short-term consulting	<b>Czech Republic Technology Agency</b> , evaluation methodology for an R&D funding program, 2013 <b>Microsoft Research</b> , business implications of changes in European privacy policy, 2013
Selected presentations	Talks on microsimulation and AI in economics research at the UNU Macau AI Conference (Apr 2024) • Webinar on AI for economists for the Government Economic and Social Research Team at HM Treasury (Mar 2024) • Practical session on AI and economics at UNU-WIDER research retreat (May 2023) • WIDER Development Conference (Sep 2023) • 'Celebrating tax-benefit modelling: 50 years with LOTTE' conference (Jun 2023) • IARIW-ITNBS Conference on 'Measuring Income, Wealth and Well-being in Africa' (Nov 2022) • Global Development Conference (Nov 2022) • Delivered microsimulation training events in Rwanda, Uganda and Vietnam (twice in each country in 2022 and 2023) • 'Futures of Global Social Policy' Workshop (May 2022) • 6th Zurich Conference on Public Finance in Developing Countries (Dec 2021) • 8th World Congress of the International Microsimulation Association (Dec 2021) • International Centre for Economic Analysis Inequality conference (Nov 2021) • UNU-WIDER Development Conference (Sep 2021) • 'Assessing Presumptive Tax Policy in Uganda' online seminar (Aug 2021) • Online microsimulation training workshops for participants in Rwanda (Aug 2021) and Vietnam (Jan 2021) • Development Studies Association's 'Unsettling Development' conference (July 2021) • 9th Meeting of the Society for the Study of Economic Inequality (July 2021) • Annual Conference of the East Asian Social Policy Research Network and the Foundation for International Studies on Social Security (July 2021) • 6th Joint Nordic Development Research Conference (June 2021) • Institute for Employment Research online seminar (May 2021) • UNU-WIDER online conference on 'Development challenges in Africa in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic' (Feb 2021) • African Tax Research Network's Webinar Series (Nov 2020)

## SCHOLARSHIPS & AWARDS

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Dissertation support	Emil Aaltonen Foundation Scholarship (2019) • Anne and James Rothenberg Dissertation Award (2018) • Alfred Kordelin Foundation Scholarship (2017) • American Scandinavian Foundation Scholarship (2016) • Finnish Foundation for Economic Education Scholarship (2015) • Yrjö Jahnsson Foundation Scholarship (2014)
Other scholarships	Fulbright Scholarship, University of Chicago (2013) • British Council Scholarship, University of Cambridge (2012)
Academic honours	Distinction, ranked first in class of 33 students, University of Cambridge (2013) • Certificate of Excellence for Outstanding Academic Performance, Masdar Institute (2012)

## JOURNAL ARTICLES

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- Lastunen, J.** & Richiardi, M. *Forecasting Recovery from COVID-19 Using Financial Data: An Application to Viet Nam*, World Development Perspectives, Vol. 30, June 2023.
- Miller, B., Metz, D., Smith, T.D., Landree, E., **Lastunen, J.** & Nelson, C. *Understanding the Economic Benefit Associated with Research and Services at the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health: An Approach and Three Case Studies*, RAND Health Quarterly, Vol. 8(1), August 2018.

## BOOK CHAPTERS

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- Lastunen, J.**, Nyyssölä, M., Heimo, L., Karjanlahti, K. & Tiililä, N. *Talousshokit hyvinvoinnin haasteena* (Johdatus Globaaliin Sosiaalipolitiikkaan, edited by Heimo, L. & Lambin, R.), Vastapaino, 2024, forthcoming.
- Lastunen, J.**, Shahir, A.A., Rattenhuber, P., Adu-Ababio, K. & Oliveira, R.C. *Performance of Tax-benefit Systems during the COVID-19 Pandemic in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Comparative Perspective* (Cushioning against Crises: The Role of Tax-Benefit Systems in the Developing World, edited by Jousté, J., Kanbur, R., Pirttilä, J. & Rattenhuber, P.), Oxford University Press, 2024, forthcoming.
- de Mahieu, A. & **Lastunen, J.** *The Cushioning Effects of Tax-benefit Policies in Viet Nam during the COVID-19 Pandemic* (Cushioning against Crises: The Role of Tax-Benefit Systems in the Developing World, edited by Jousté, J., Kanbur, R., Pirttilä, J. & Rattenhuber, P.), Oxford University Press, 2024, forthcoming.
- Oliveira, R., **Lastunen, J.**, Rattenhuber, P., Samarin, M. & Shahir, A.A. *The Role of Social Protection and Tax Policies in Cushioning Crisis Impacts on Income and Poverty in Low- and Middle-income Countries: A Rapid Scoping Review* (Cushioning against Crises: The Role of Tax-Benefit Systems in the Developing World, edited by Jousté, J., Kanbur, R., Pirttilä, J. & Rattenhuber, P.), Oxford University Press, 2024, forthcoming.

## PEER-REVIEWED REPORTS

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- Andrew, M., Marler, T. & **Lastunen, J.**, Acheson-Field, H. & Popper, S. *An Analysis of Education and Training Programs in Advanced Manufacturing Using Robotics*, RAND Corporation, 2020.
- Miller, B., Metz, D., Smith, T.D. & **Lastunen, J.** *Selecting and Evaluating Case Studies of the Economic Benefits of Research and Services at the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health: Case Studies on Personal Dust Monitors for Coal Miners, Improved Ambulance Design, and Amputation Surveillance*, RAND Corporation, 2020.
- Gehlhaus Carew, D., Martin, N., Blumenthal, M., Armour, P. & **Lastunen, J.** *The Potential Economic Value of Unlicensed Spectrum in the 5.9 GHz Frequency Band: Insights for Future Spectrum Allocation Policy*, RAND Corporation, 2018.
- Miller, B., Camm, F., Blumenthal, M., **Lastunen, J.** & Miller, K.W. *Inching Toward Reform: Trump's Deregulation and Its Implementation*, RAND Corporation, 2017.
- Silbergitt, R., **Lastunen, J.**, Lauand, A., Watson, M. & Eusebi, C.A. *Wearable Technologies for Law Enforcement: Multi-functional Vest System Options*, RAND Corporation, Justice Policy Program, National Institute of Justice, 2017.
- Melin, G., Zuijdarn, F., Good, B., Angelis, J., Enberg, J., Fikkers, D.J., Puukka, J., Swenning, A., Kosk, K., **Lastunen, J.** & Zege, S. *Towards a Future Proof System for Higher Education and Research in Finland*, Publications of the Ministry of Education and Culture, 2015.

## OTHER RESEARCH

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- Lastunen, J.**, de Mahieu, A., Jara, H.X., Gasior, K. & Pirttilä, J. *Microsimulation of Tax-benefit Systems in the Global South: A Comparative Assessment*, WIDER Working Paper 2024/35, Helsinki: UNU-WIDER, 2024.
- Nguyen, D.A., Tran, M.B., Le, A.M. & **Lastunen, J.** *SOUTHMOD Country Report Viet Nam: VNMOD v3.4*, Helsinki: UNU-WIDER, 2024.
- de Mahieu, A., Mukangango, J., Harerimana, T., **Lastunen, J.**, Hakizimana, N., Karangwa, J., Nsabimana, A., Noble, M. & Wright, G. *SOUTHMOD Country Report Rwanda: RWAMOD v1.1*, Helsinki: UNU-WIDER, 2024.
- Lastunen, J.**, Shahir, A.A., Rattenhuber, P., Adu-Ababio, K. & Oliveira, R.C. *Performance of Tax-benefit Systems amid COVID-19 Crises in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Comparative Perspective*, WIDER Working Paper 2023/130, Helsinki: UNU-WIDER, 2023.
- de Mahieu, A. & **Lastunen, J.** *Addressing Poverty and Inequality in Viet Nam during the COVID-19 Pandemic: An Examination of the Alleviating Impact of Tax and Benefit Measures*, WIDER Working Paper 2023/120, Helsinki: UNU-WIDER, 2023.
- Oliveira, R., **Lastunen, J.**, Rattenhuber, P., Samarin, M. & Shahir, A.A. *The Role of Social Protection and Tax Policies in Cushioning Crisis Impacts on Income and Poverty in Low- and Middle-income Countries: A Rapid Scoping Review*, WIDER Working Paper 2023/6. Helsinki: UNU-WIDER.

- de Mahieu, A., **Lastunen, J.**, Mukangango, J. & Harerimana, T. *Evaluating the Impact of the 2023–2024 Personal Income Tax Reform in Rwanda: An Analysis using Tax-benefit Microsimulation Modelling*, WIDER Working Paper 2023/73, Helsinki: UNU-WIDER, 2023
- Hakizimana, N., Karangwa, J., **Lastunen, J.**, Nsabimana, A., Murasi, I., Niyigena, L., Noble, M. & Wright, G. *Tax-Benefit Microsimulation Model in Rwanda: A Feasibility Study*, WIDER Working Paper 2022/72, Helsinki: UNU-WIDER, 2022.
- Wandaogo, A.-A., Sawadogo, F. & **Lastunen, J.** *Does the Adoption of Peer-to-government Mobile Payments Improve Tax Revenue Mobilization in Developing Countries?*, WIDER Working Paper 2022/18, Helsinki: UNU-WIDER, 2022.
- Waiswa, R., **Lastunen, J.**, Wright, G., Noble, M., Okello Ayo, J., Isingoma, N.M., Kaidu, T., Kavuma, S., Arinaitwe, I., Mwesigye, M., Asimwe, W. & Rattenhuber, P. *An Assessment of Presumptive Tax in Uganda*, WIDER Working Paper 2021/163; *New Directions for Presumptive Tax in Uganda*, WIDER Policy Brief 2021/8, Helsinki: UNU-WIDER, 2021.
- Lastunen, J.**, Rattenhuber, P., Adu-Ababio, K., Gasior, K., Jara, X.H., Jousté, M., McLennan, D., Nichelatti, E., Oliveira, R.C., Pirttilä, J., Richiardi, M. & Wright, G. *The Mitigating Role of Tax and Benefit Rescue Packages for Poverty and Inequality in Africa amid the COVID-19 Pandemic*, WIDER Working Paper 2021/148, Helsinki: UNU-WIDER, 2021.
- Lastunen, J.**, Wright, G., Noble, M., Waiswa, R., Okello Ayo, J. & Isingoma, N.M. *Distributional Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic in Uganda*, WIDER Policy Brief 2021/5, Helsinki: UNU-WIDER, 2021.
- Lastunen, J.** *Technological Change and the Skill Premium: 21st Century Evidence*, doctoral dissertation, Pardee RAND Graduate School, 2020. Published by the RAND Corporation (RGSDA1167-1), 2021.
- Lastunen, J.** *Scenarios of the Role of Autonomous Vehicles in Society: Estimating the Net Impact on Professional Driving Jobs*, research report and invited talk, Internet Association, 2018.

## TECHNICAL NOTES

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- Noble, M. & **Lastunen, J.** *Dealing with the Oversimulation of Taxes and Benefits in SOUTHMODO Microsimulation Models: The Case of Girinka in Rwanda*, WIDER Technical Note 2023/2, Helsinki: UNU-WIDER, 2023.
- Lastunen, J.** *On-model Adjustment of Incomes During COVID-19 in SOUTHMODO Tax-benefit Microsimulation Models*, WIDER Technical Note 2022/4, Helsinki: UNU-WIDER, 2022.
- Oliveira, R.C., **Lastunen, J.**, Nichelatti, E. & Rattenhuber, P. *Imputation Methods for Adjusting SOUTHMODO Input Data to Income Losses Due to the COVID-19 Crisis*, WIDER Technical Note 2021/19, Helsinki: UNU-WIDER, 2021.
- Gasior, K., Barnes, H., Jousté, M., **Lastunen, J.**, McLennan, D., Noble, M., Oliveira, R.C., Rattenhuber, P. & Wright, G. *Full-Year Adjustment for Modelling COVID-19 Policies in SOUTHMODO Tax-Benefit Microsimulation Models*, WIDER Technical Note 2021/18, Helsinki: UNU-WIDER, 2021.
- Lastunen, J.** *Deriving Shocks to Household Consumption Expenditures from the Associated Income Shocks Resulting From COVID-19*, WIDER Technical Note 2021/16. Helsinki: UNU-WIDER, 2021.
- Chen, J., Kumar, K.B., **Lastunen, J.**, Nataraj, S., Nowak, S. & Carter, P. *Modeling Outcomes Based on Inequality in Labor Earnings: Model Overview and Policy Experiments*, a report describing a general equilibrium model on the U.S. labour market, RAND Corporation, 2017.

## RESEARCH ASSISTANCE

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- National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, *Advancing Automated and Connected Vehicles: Policy and Planning Strategies for State and Local Transportation Agencies*, Research Report 845, Washington, DC: The National Academies, 2017.
- OECD, *Making Innovation Benefit All: Policies for Inclusive Growth*, OECD Publishing, Paris, 2017.