

Simone Paci, PhD

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SUMMARY:

Quantitative social science researcher with advanced methodological background and strong writing, presentation, and interpersonal skills, eager to tackle complex problems with innovative and data-backed solutions.

EDUCATION:

Columbia University, New York, NY (2017-2023)

Ph.D., in Political Science, concentration in Comparative Political Economy and Quantitative Methodology

M.A. and M.Phil. in Political Science

Yale University, New Haven, CT (2013-2017)

B.A. in Economics and Political Science, Summa cum Laude, Phi Beta Kappa, Departmental Honors

WORK EXPERIENCE:

Lecturer and Associate Director, Stanford University (2024 –)

Affiliated Researcher, CDDRL, FSI, Stanford (2025-)

- Performed independent social science research, expanding on the research agenda from my doctoral work.
- Designed three new courses on research design and political economy. Taught over 200 students.
- Led research lab with over 10 assistants directly reporting to me.
- Obtained over \$50,000 in competitive research grants.

Data Science Contractor, Schedule Validator (2023-)

- Developed a predictive statistical model for construction delays, integrating machine-learning analysis and Monte Carlo simulations of over 10k projects, 150k schedule updates, 50M construction activities with qualitative insights from industry experts.

Postdoctoral Research Affiliate, Princeton University (2023 – 2024)

- Performed independent social science research, expanding on the research agenda from my doctoral work.

University Researcher, Columbia University (2017 – 2022)

- Developed five end-to-end quantitative studies, formulating novel hypotheses and empirical designs.
- Managed 15 research assistants across four data collection projects.
- Presented original work at 15 international academic conferences and seminars.
- Organized a conference panel on the politics of tax evasion, gathering fellow top researchers in the field.
- Submitted successful grant applications and obtained over \$50,000 in competitive research funding.
- Solved complex causal inference problems with advanced statistical methods.
- Fielded 4 surveys in Italy, Slovakia, and the US with over 5000 combined respondents.
- Analyzed large datasets (+1M), cleaning and merging data from diverse sources (historical and contemporary census data, existing surveys, government budget and electoral data).

MA Program Tutor, Columbia University (2021)

- Mentored 40 MA students on their thesis projects, advising on their research questions and data designs.
- Assisted MA students sharpening their writing skills, argument coherence, and essay structure.

Instructor, Columbia University (2017 – 2023)

- Taught two coding-based undergraduate courses in quantitative research methods.
- Designed and taught two undergraduate seminars on the politics of the European Union.
- Led undergraduate discussion sections in political science and history courses.
- Trained in research-based teaching, centered around learning objectives and active student engagement.

SELECTED RESEARCH:

Solo-Authored Projects

- *“Is Academic Research Safe in the AI Revolution? Evaluating LLMs with Bayesian Process Tracing”* (published in the Chinese Review of Political Science, 2026)
Developed a novel benchmark to test critical thinking abilities of LLMs. Use large body of academic work to compare how researchers and LLMs weigh empirical evidence for theoretical claims.
- *“Filling the Tax Gap: How Evasion Disclosures Increase Donations to Local NGOs”* (published in the American Journal of Political Science, 2026)
Assembled large time-series (+36k data-points) of over 200 public finance, political, and local business indicators; conducted a survey experiment with 2000 respondents; performed advanced statistical analyses.
- *“Tax Thy Neighbor: How Italian Mayors Increase Taxes in their Hometowns”* (Revise and Resubmit at lead journal)
Assembled large time-series (160k data-point) of over 700 local public finance, political, and socioeconomic indicators; conducted a survey with 2000 respondents; led a team of 10 assistants to build an original database of over 3000 electoral manifestos; performed advanced statistical analyses, including regression discontinuity design, difference-in-difference, and text analysis.

Selected Multi-Authored Projects

- *“Global Government GenAI Panel (G3O)”* (with Lowry Pressly, Sanford, Nathan Feldman, University of Rochester, and Silvia Vannutelli, Northwestern)
Developed and co-lead a pipeline that turns open-web evidence into a versioned institution×quarter panel of government GenAI use, shipped with citations and reproducible code.
- *“Applications of GPT in Political Science Research”* (published in PS: Political Science, 2025; with Kyuwon Lee, Jeongmin Park, Hye Young You, and Sylvan Zheng)
Developed an automated web-scraping, event-extraction algorithm based on ChatGPT API; supervised a team of research assistants to build a human-coded training dataset; coordinate an evaluation and benchmarking exercise.
- *“To Privatize or To Centralize: How Economic and Political Incentives Affect Local Tax Collection Strategies”* (with Silvia Vannutelli, Northwestern University)

SELECTED TEACHING:

- The Politics of Artificial Intelligence (Stanford, 206)
- The Capstone Project (Stanford, 2024-6)
- The Science of Politics (Stanford, 2025)
- The Political Economy of Tax Evasion (Stanford, 2025)
- European Politics (Columbia, 2023)

SELECTED AWARDS & FELLOWSHIPS:

- UNU WIDER – Taxation in Conflict-Affected Areas (2024)
- Research Fellowship, Digital Data for the Social Sciences Institute, Princeton University (2023)
- Philip E Mosely Fellowship in Political Science, Columbia University (2019, 2022, 2023)
- C. Lowell Harriss Dissertation Fellowship, Lincoln Institute for Land Policy (2022)
- HSF Research Fellowship, Institute of Humane Studies (2018, 2019, 2020, 2021)

SELECTED CONFERENCES & INVITED TALKS:

- APSA: American Political Science Association Conference (2021-25)
- MPSA: Mid-Western Political Science Association Conference (2021-24)
- EPSA: European Political Science Association Conference (2021-2024)

- CLEAN Research Seminar, Bocconi University (Invited Talk, 2023)
- NEWEPS: Northeast Workshop on Empirical Political Science (2022)

SKILLS:

Analytical

Causal Inference | Statistical Analysis | Mixed-Methods | Survey Design | Presentation | Scientific Writing

Coding

R (advanced) | Python (advanced) | SQL (intermediate) | QGIS (intermediate) | GitHub (intermediate)

Languages

Italian (native) | English (native) | French (proficient) | German (intermediate)