

Hiba Sameen

Lead Research Economist • Technology, Productivity & Labour Markets • Applied Econometrics • Policy Impact
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Profile

PhD economist with 15+ years' experience across government, think tanks and academia, specialising in policy-relevant empirical economics, productivity, workforce transformation, technology adoption and large-scale administrative data. Currently leading economics function at the Health Foundation, covering NHS demand, funding, workforce, productivity and technology, including commissioned research on automation in health and social care. My programme of work combines applied and structural econometrics, causal inference, machine learning, macro modelling and policy translation, with experience building measurement infrastructure and research partnerships across government, academia and policy institutions. Particularly interested in how frontier AI affects tasks, occupations, productivity, inequality and public-policy choices.

Relevant Strengths for AI Economic Research

- **AI, productivity and task transformation:** lead and commission research on how AI, LLMs, robotics and automation could reshape health and social care tasks, productivity, labour demand, skills mix, training pathways and worker wellbeing in labour-intensive public services.
- **Frontier empirical economics:** PhD training and applied experience in causal inference, structural econometrics, dynamic modelling, machine learning, macroeconomic forecasting and large-scale administrative data.
- **Novel data and measurement systems:** commissioned and assured open-data products and analytical pipelines integrating large volumes of NHS data for analysis, visualisation and policy use.
- **Task-based economic analysis of automation:** commissioned REAL Supply research applying future-of-work frameworks to health and care occupations, including capital-labour substitution, complementarities, diffusion barriers, patient preferences, professional regulation and equity/safety constraints.
- **Regional policy and research networks:** built trusted relationships across DHSC, HMT, NHS England, SAGE, NAO, universities, think tanks and research funders; experienced translating technical research into policy-relevant recommendations.
- **Research leadership and communication:** lead complex research from conception to publication; publish in peer-reviewed and policy outlets; brief senior decision-makers, journalists and non-technical audiences on uncertainty, assumptions and implications.

Experience

Head of Economics

2025–present

The Health Foundation, London

Provide senior leadership across work on health care demand, funding, technology adoption, workforce and productivity. Direct in-house analytics and assure commissioned research with academic partners; prioritise topics, scope projects, set quality-assurance standards and brief senior stakeholders. Lead the Health Foundation's economics function and oversee the [REAL Supply Research Unit](#), a £3.75m partnership with the University of York to build policy-relevant evidence on the health system. Commissioned and assured a REAL Supply pathfinder on automation of health and social care, examining which tasks may be automated, how LLMs and robotics alter the automation frontier, and what this implies for productivity, labour demand, skills mix, equity, safety and worker wellbeing. Contribute to research strategy, budget oversight, partnership management and cross-organisational analytical capability.

Lead Economist, REAL Centre

2022–2025

The Health Foundation, London

Led the analytical portfolio on health and social care supply, spanning technology, workforce and productivity. Commissioned and developed research on how AI, automation and other technologies could affect NHS productivity, skills mix and workforce constraints, with a focus on task-based measurement, adoption barriers, capital investment, professional/patient preferences and policy implications. Organised the REAL Lecture on AI, convening academics, policymakers and practitioners around emerging evidence and measurement challenges. Commissioned two major projects: measuring productivity in the NHS; and building an open-data platform integrating large volumes of health-system data for analysis and visualisation, including data architecture, pipelines, governance and reproducibility. Managed a team of economists and analysts; embedded code review, peer challenge, sensitivity analysis and publication QA across workstreams.

Economic Adviser

2014–2022

Department of Health & Social Care, UK Government

Led COVID-19 health-economic impact analysis, bringing together epidemiological evidence, service activity data, economic analysis and scenario modelling; presented evidence to SAGE to inform national system planning. Managed a team of four economists during the pandemic. Earlier led economic analysis on medicines pricing and regulation, community pharmacy market reform and funding, and supply resilience, using applied economic modelling and policy evaluation to inform high-stakes fiscal and regulatory decisions.

Teaching Fellow / Graduate Teaching Assistant – Econometrics

2022–2023

Birkbeck, University of London

Delivered teaching in advanced econometrics and economic evaluation of public policy, including Python implementation; designed and marked applied problem sets.

Principal Researcher

2011–2014

Lancaster University

Designed and led a research programme on financing innovation and growth; authored peer-reviewed research, policy papers and briefings on SME finance, innovation and productivity. Built partnerships with academics, industry stakeholders and policy audiences.

Research Fellow in Economics

2009–2011

Policy Exchange

Applied macroeconomic forecasting and policy modelling to estimate dynamic revenue impacts of tax changes; co-authored four policy reports on growth, fiscal policy and public-sector reform.

Research Assistant

2009

New Policy Institute

Analysed UK microdata including HBAI, BHPS/Understanding Society, LFS and the Student Income & Expenditure Survey to study poverty, household income and youth outcomes.

Education

PhD in Economics, Birkbeck, University of London

2018–2024

Thesis: *Three Essays in the Economics of Pharmaceuticals and Health Care* — causal and structural evaluation of NHS prescribing, drug demand and pricing. Awarded with no corrections. ESRC UBEL DTP Studentship; BEI Doctoral Studentship. Visiting PhD student: UCL (Microeconomics; Health Economics); Helsinki GSE (Structural Econometrics I–II). Supervisor: Professor Walter Beckert. Examiners: Professor Marcos Vera-Hernández and Professor Carol Propper.

MSc Economics (Distinction), University of Essex

2007–2008

Thesis: *Redistribution and Public Good Provision in a Three-Group Model of Democratic Politics*.

BSc (Hons) Economics & Mathematics, American University in Cairo, Magna Cum Laude

2004–2007

Year abroad: New York University.

Selected Publications & Policy Outputs

- *Prescribing Cost-effective Treatments in the English NHS* (with V. Dimitrova) — accepted, **Journal of Health Economics**.
- *Demand for New Drugs and Cost Containment in the English NHS* — revise and resubmit, **Journal of Public Economics**.
- *Replacement vs Pre-emption Effects: Optimal Timing to Launch Innovations* — submitted, **RAND Journal of Economics**.
- Lee, N., Cowling, M. & Sameen, H. (2015). *Access to finance for innovative SMEs since the financial crisis*. **Research Policy**, 44(2), 370–380.
- Sameen, H., Iqbal, M., Abu-Zaineh, M., Mataria, A. & Siddiqi, S. (2022). *Decision-Making Tools for Informed Decisions by Health Policymakers and Managers*. In *Making Health Systems Work in Low and Middle Income Countries*. Cambridge University Press.
- *Direct and Indirect Health Impacts of Covid-19 in England*. Prepared for Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE), September 2021.
- *Analysis of the Health, Economic and Social Effects of COVID-19 and the Approach to Tiering*. HM Government, November 2020.

Methods, Data & Tools

Methods: causal inference; quasi-experimental designs; panel methods; structural econometrics; dynamic structural models; macroeconomic forecasting; scenario modelling; machine learning; task-based analysis of automation; subgroup, distributional and place-based analysis. **Tools:** Python, R, Stata, SQL; reproducible analytical pipelines; data visualisation. **Data:** large UK micro and administrative datasets including HBAI, Understanding Society, ASHE, UCAS, CPRD and HES; experience with secure data environments, information governance and open-data products. **AI research workflows:** experience using large language models to support coding, literature synthesis, drafting and exploratory analysis, with attention to validation, reproducibility, privacy and appropriate human oversight.

External Engagement, Advisory Roles & Communication

- **Advisory roles:** Internal Advisory Committee, [NHS Productivity Commission](#); Advisory Board, [NIHR Policy Research Unit on Economics of Health & Social Care Systems](#); Advisory Board, [Connect Pensions & Health Care Project](#); Health Foundation lead for [REAL Supply Research Unit](#).
- **Selected talks and testimony:** HESG; EuHEA; York CHE Seminar; DSE Conference; evidence to SAGE; organiser of REAL Lecture on AI.

- **Public communication:** policy blogs and commentary for [Economics Observatory](#), [Local Government Association](#) and [LSE Politics & Policy](#); interviews and briefings for BBC Radio 4, BBC Radio Surrey, Times Radio and national press.

Selected Training & Awards

Deep Learning for Dynamic Models (Lausanne, 2023); Dynamic Structural Models for Policy Evaluation (Barcelona GSE, 2019); RES Easter School in Industrial Organisation (2017); CEMMAP Masterclasses; Oxford School in Economic Networks (2019). ESRC UBEL DTP Studentship (2019–2022); BEI Doctoral Studentship (2018/19).

Languages

English; Urdu/Hindi; French and Arabic working knowledge.