

IPA Congratulates 2019 Nobel Prize Winners Abhijit Banerjee, Esther Duflo, and Michael Kremer

On Monday, IPA-affiliates [Abhijit Banerjee](#) and [Esther Duflo](#) of MIT, and Michael Kremer of Harvard were named co-winners of the [2019 Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences](#) for their “experimental approach to alleviating global poverty.”

"We want to congratulate Abhijit, Esther, and Michael on this well-deserved accolade," IPA's Executive Director (and Esther's sister) Annie Duflo said. "They were the early pioneers of randomized evaluations in the field of development—bringing rigor into the sector and inspiring hundreds, if not thousands, of others to continue in their path. Along with the large network of researchers they have created, these Nobel laureates have generated evidence that has benefitted millions of people living in poverty. We are so proud to be part of this movement of using a rigorous, evidence-based approach to fight poverty."

Esther Duflo is the second woman and, at age 46, the youngest person to receive the Nobel in economics. She told NPR, “I think the three of us stand for hundreds of researchers – who are part of a network that have worked on global poverty that we created together 15 years ago - J-PAL (the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab) - and thousands of staff and of course all of the partners and NGOs and governments that we have worked with.”

The Nobel committee described the Laureates' contribution as transformative for the field: “In just two decades, their new experiment-based approach has transformed development economics, which is now a flourishing field of research,” the Nobel committee said on Twitter.

Dean Karlan of Northwestern University—who studied under all three Laureates and is proud to have been Esther's first PhD student—founded IPA in 2002 to expand research in the field of development economics. Esther and Abhijit were founding board members of IPA, and IPA and J-PAL have worked together closely since the start.

Since its founding, IPA's infrastructure for carrying out field experiments helped enable a proliferation of rigorous evaluations. IPA's largest office, in Kenya, was started in 2005 to carry out projects that Michael Kremer and other researchers had started. As of 2019, IPA has implemented over 830 evaluations of programs in 51 countries, each led by leading researchers, such as the three Laureates, to test key questions about how to alleviate poverty.

"We are proud of and thankful for the thousands of staff (past and present) and the hundreds of researchers and partners who continue to make this work possible," Dean said.

"Everyone's compassion for humanity brought them to the fight against poverty, and their passion for analytical rigor and willingness to ask tough questions led everyone to join this movement of evidence."

"The world is a better place because of these three," said Chris Udry of Northwestern University on Twitter. "Their work sparkles with originality, and sets an appropriately high standard for rigor. They've built institutions so that many others can follow."

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