Curriculum Vitae: Lara Marie Berger

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RESEARCH INTERESTS

Digital Economics, Applied Microeconomics, Economics of Information, Political Economy

Research Agenda: I analyze how digital technologies, especially platforms and AI, transform information environments and thereby influence firm behavior, individual decision-making, and the distribution of economic outcomes, with implications for regulation and policy.

CURRENT POSITION

07/2020 - present Research Associate, Department of Economics, University of Cologne
(parental leave 07/2023 – 03/2024)

EDUCATION

10/2020 - present **PhD in Economics** (graduation in Summer 2026)
Title: Essays on Attention and Information in Digital Media Markets
University of Cologne, Cologne Graduate School of Economics
Supervisors: Prof. Dr. Johannes Münster, Prof. Dr. Bettina Rockenbach

10/2018 - 09/2020 **Double Degree: Master in Economics**
University of Cologne, Germany (MSc) and Keio University, Japan (MA)
One year of studies at each institution graduating with two degrees

04/2014 - 09/2018 **Bachelor of Science in Economics**
University of Cologne
Exchange semesters: WSE Poland (SS2016), PUC Brazil (WS2015/16)

10/2013 - 09/2018 **Apprenticeship as Journalist for Economics and Politics**
Cologne School of Journalism

PUBLICATIONS

- **Debunking "fake news" on social media: immediate- and short-term effects of fact checking and media literacy interventions**

  with Anna Kerkhof, Felix Mindl and Johannes Münster
  Journal of Public Economics, Vol. 245, May 2025

  Large-scale randomized experiment on belief formation in digital information markets, providing causal evidence that scalable, low-cost interventions (media literacy) outperform platform-based corrections (fact-checking) in improving information processing and economic decision-making online.

- **Science literacy in the newsroom: Experimental evidence**

  with Anna Kerkhof and Nikola Noske
  PNAS Nexus, Volume 5, Issue 4, April 2026, pgag099

  Randomized experiment on the supply of information in digital media markets, providing causal evidence that scalable interventions can improve the accuracy of professional content producers and reduce distortions in public information environments.

WORKING PAPERS

- **How digital media markets amplify news sentiment**

  single-authored *(Job Market Paper)*

  Studies how digital attention markets reshape the supply and consumption of information, showing that performance-based incentives induce more emotionally amplified news and thereby increase engagement but distort factual learning. Combines large-scale text analysis and quasi-experimental methods with linked randomized experiments involving professional journalists and representative audiences.

- **How narratives persuade: Experimental Evidence**

  with Sören Harrs and Bettina Rockenbach *(submitted)*

  Provides causal evidence that narratives transmitted in digital information environments act as an economic force, shaping expectations and, in emotionally salient contexts, altering risk taking and intertemporal choices.

SELECTED WORK IN PROGRESS

- **Information Acquisition on Digital Platforms: The Effect on Beliefs and Behavior** *with Yero Ndiaye*
- **Upholding a good image: Selective country comparisons in the media** *with Gönül Dogan and Louis Strang*
- **Algorithmic Personalization and Content Production in Digital Information Markets**

POLICY PAPERS (no peer-review)

- **Digitale Medienmärkte: Was tun gegen Hassrede und Falschinformationen?** *with Raphaela Andres.* Wirtschaftsdienst 105(3) , 161-166, 2025.
- **Fake News in den sozialen Medien – was hilft?** *with Anna Kerkhof, Felix Mindl and Johannes Münster.* ECONtribute Policy Brief No. 039, 10/2022.

RESEARCH VISITS

02/2023 - 04/2023	CBS, Columbia University, New York. Host: Andrea Prat
05/2025	Digital Economics Group, ZEW, Mannheim. Host: Irene Bertschek
07/2025	Economics of Change Group, WZB, Berlin. Host: Maja Adena

PRESENTATIONS AT SEMINARS, WORKSHOPS AND CONFERENCES

2026: C-SEB Early Ideas Workshop, Applied Micro Seminar Cologne, EAYE Annual Meeting, Joachim Herz AddOn Meeting Science Communication and Transfer, ZEW Conference on ICT

2025: Seminar Cologne, C-SEB Workshop, AYEW, Text-as-Data Workshop Potsdam, ZEW Conference on ICT, WZB Econ Seminar, ZEW Econ Seminar

2024: RGS Doctoral Conference, AYEW, EAYE Annual Meeting, MaCCI/JRC Digital Economics Workshop, ZEW Conference on ICT, EEA-ESEM, MWZ Text-as-Data Workshop, GfeW Annual Meeting, Econ Seminar Linz

2023: C-SEB Workshop Cologne, Economics of Media Bias Workshop, Studi-BUCH Interdisciplinary Text-As-Data Workshop, Doctoral Workshop on the Economics of Digitization

2022: WZB Berlin Workshop, Seminar Cologne, Economics of Media Bias Workshop, Doctoral Workshop on the Economics of Digitization, SMYE, SSES Annual Meeting, ESA European Meeting, Hannover Workshop on Field Experiments, VfS Annual Conference, CESifo Junior Workshop on Big Data, ECONtribute Young Economist Workshop, BiGSEM Workshop

2021: Applied Microeconomics Workshop Cologne, C-SEB Early Ideas Workshop

GRANTS, FELLOWSHIPS AND EXTERNAL FUNDING

2022 - 2026	**Joachim Herz AddOn Fellowship** flexible funds for research related expenses	(15,500€)
2023 - 2024	**C-SEB Junior Start Up Grant** with Gönül Dogan and Louis Strang	(3,750€)
2023	**C-SEB Travel Grant** for research visit in New York	(3,000€)
2022 - 2024	**C-SEB Junior Start Up Grant** for experimental project on journalistic content choices	(3,000€)
2021	**Grant by the ECONtribute Cluster of Excellence** with Anna Kerkhof, Felix Mindl, and Johannes Münster funding for project on debunking fake news	(50,000€)
2021	**C-SEB Student Grant** part of the "C-SEB Student Award"	(1,500€)
2020 + 2023	**Grants by the ECONtribute Cluster of Excellence** with Sören Harrs and Bettina Rockenbach	(5,000€)
2018 - 2020	Scholarship for master studies: Foundation of German Business	
2016	PROMOS Scholarship for Internship at ZDF in Washington D.C.	
2016	Erasmus Scholarship for studies at Warsaw School of Economics	
2015	DAAD Scholarship for exchange at PUC in Brazil	

ACADEMIC DISTINCTIONS

2023	Junior Teaching Award, awarded by the WiSo-Faculty of the University of Cologne
2021	C-SEB Student Award for excellent master thesis
2019	1st prize at Fintech Programming Competition of Keio University
2015	Deans Award for Bachelor studies at University of Cologne (top 5%)

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

- **Media Economics (graduate)**
  Tutorial: WS20/21, WS21/22, WS22/23, WS24/25, WS25/26
  Seminar: WS21/22, WS22/23

- **Media Economics (undergraduate)**
  Tutorial: SS21, SS22, SS23, SS24, SS25, SS26
  Seminar: SS21, SS22, SS23, SS24, SS25, SS26
- **Supervision of Bachelor and Master Theses** (27x)
- **Science Journalism:** Co-designed and taught a seminar on science journalism and evidence-based reporting (with Anna Kerkhof at Cologne School of Journalism in 2022)

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCES AND SKILLS

- **Computational Skills:** Web scraping and API-based data collection, large-scale text data processing, training and fine-tuning transformer-based language models
- **Programming and Software:** Python, R, Stata, LaTeX, HTML, Java, Git, Qualtrics
- **Languages:** German (mother tongue), English (C2), Brazilian Portuguese (B1)
- **Science Communication:** Presented research at public reach events such as the Global Media Forum and in a ZEW podcast.
- **Work Experience as Economic Journalist:** Seven years of freelance and newsroom reporting experience for major German outlets.

REFERENCES

Prof. Dr. Johannes Münster johannes.muenster@uni-koeln.de
University of Cologne

Prof. Dr. Bettina Rockenbach bettina.rockenbach@uni-koeln.de
German National Academy of Sciences Leopoldina