

Launching the Water, Air, and Energy (WAE) Lab

14 March 2024 | 16h30–19h00

Banqueting Hall, Cape Town Civic Centre



Abhijit Banerjee

**Ford Foundation International Professor of Economics, MIT;
Co-Founder and Co-Director, J-PAL**

Abhijit Vinayak Banerjee is the Ford Foundation International Professor of Economics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and a Co-Founder and Co-Director of J-PAL. His areas of research are development economics and economic theory. Abhijit has received numerous honors including the 2019 Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel (with co-Laureates Esther Duflo and Michael Kremer). He has served on the U.N. Secretary-General's High-level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda. He is a trustee of Save the Children USA and the Chair of the Global Education Evidence Advisory Panel and the Global Advisory Board for Covid-19 Response of the government of West Bengal. Abhijit is the author of several articles and six books, including *Poor Economics*, *Good Economics for Hard Times* (both co-authored with Esther Duflo), and *Cooking to Save Your Life*.

The WAE Lab is part of J-PAL's Air and Water Labs (AWLs) with Community Jameel. AWLs partner with government agencies to co-generate evidence-based solutions for the most pressing air and water challenges.

Government partner



Founding partner



Host university





Esther Duflo

Abdul Latif Jameel Professor of Poverty Alleviation and Development Economics, MIT; Co-Founder and Co-Director, J-PAL

Esther Duflo is the Abdul Latif Jameel Professor of Poverty Alleviation and Development Economics in the Department of Economics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a Co-Founder and Co-Director of J-PAL. In her research, she seeks to understand the economic lives of the poor, with the aim to help design and evaluate social policies. She has worked on health, education, financial inclusion, environment and governance. Esther has received numerous honors including the 2019 Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel (with co-Laureates Abhijit Banerjee and Michael Kremer). With Abhijit Banerjee, she wrote the critically acclaimed books *Poor Economics: A Radical Rethinking of the Way to Fight Global Poverty* and *Good Economics for Hard Times*.



Geordin Hill-Lewis

Executive Mayor, City of Cape Town

Geordin Hill-Lewis was sworn in as Executive Mayor of Cape Town on 18 November 2021. Mayor Hill-Lewis is the youngest Executive Mayor Cape Town has had, and was the youngest Member of Parliament when elected in 2011. Geordin began his political activism while studying at university. He has served on the oversight committees for Public Service and Administration, as well as Trade and Industry, and most recently served as the Shadow Minister for Finance. His reason for political activism has been to eradicate extreme poverty in South Africa, and achieve a society where the circumstances of one's birth do not define life chances. He firmly believes that providing quality basic services is the primary mandate of local government, and is critical to empowering each Capetonian to live a life of dignity. Geordin has a Masters in Economic Policy: Finance from the University of London and Honours in

Politics, Philosophy and Economics from the University of Cape Town.



Hugh Cole

Director of Policy and Strategy, City of Cape Town; Visiting Senior Fellow, School of Public Policy, LSE

Hugh Cole is the Director of Policy and Strategy at the City of Cape Town, responsible for the following functions: Policy, Strategic Planning, Economic Analysis, Research and Partnerships (fundraising). Hugh leads aspects of Data Strategy and Infrastructure Strategy for the city administration. Prior to joining the City of Cape Town, Hugh was Director of Country Programmes at the International Growth Centre in the UK, a partnership between the London School of Economics and the University of Oxford. In this role Hugh was responsible for teams in 14 countries in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. Hugh is a Visiting Senior Fellow at the School of Public Policy at the London School of Economics (LSE). He has an MPA degree from the London School of Economics and a BSc (Hons) degree from University of Cape Town.



Kelsey Jack

Associate Professor, UCSB; Co-Chair, J-PAL's Environment, Energy, and Climate Change sector; Scientific Advisor, J-PAL's WAE Lab

Kelsey Jack is an Associate Professor at University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB), with a joint appointment in the Bren School of Environmental Science and Management and the Department of Economics. She currently serves as the Co-Chair of J-PAL's Environment, Energy, and Climate Change sector and King Climate Action Initiative and is the Scientific Advisor of the WAE Lab. Her research is at the intersection of environmental and development economics, focusing on the interplay between poverty and natural resources including water, energy and land. She has partnered on various research

projects with the City of Cape Town for the past decade. Kelsey is a Faculty Research Fellow at the National Bureau of Economic Research, an Associate Editor at the American Economic Review and Econometrica, and serves on the boards of J-PAL and the Bureau for Research and Economic Analysis of Development. Kelsey earned her PhD in Public Policy from Harvard University.



Lungelo Mbandazayo

City Manager, City of Cape Town

Lungelo Mbandazayo was appointed as City Manager for the City of Cape Town in 2018. He offers valuable experience from more than 28 years in the legal profession and public service. As City Manager, he has been able to develop a clear understanding of strategy formation and implementation in line with the overall business strategy. He has been part of the City of Cape Town for nearly two decades and has previously been the Director of Legal Services and the Executive Director for Corporate Services. Having started his career as a petrol attendant, he briefly entered politics and joined the opposition to the Apartheid regime. Lungelo soon realized that politics was not for him and decided to become an attorney. Lungelo has a BProc degree from the University of Fort Hare and an LLB degree from the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal.



Uzma Sulaiman

Associate Director, Community Jameel

Uzma Sulaiman is the Associate Director for Community Jameel, an independent, global organization advancing science and learning for communities to thrive. Uzma leads Community Jameel's engagement with the public and private sector, galvanizing support and influencing policymakers to ensure scientific breakthroughs contribute to society and policy decisions. Uzma has over a decade of experience in the

international development field. Prior to joining Community Jameel, Uzma spent six years at Save the Children, leading the organization's Middle East partnerships team and developing its strategy. Before joining Save the Children, Uzma led communications for a social enterprise in South Africa that focused on access to education for remote communities. Uzma started her career as a journalist working for BBC World and was instrumental in creating UNESCO's first World Radio Day, celebrating the power of radio in journalism. She holds a MA in International Journalism from City, University of London and a BA in History and Politics from the University of Exeter.



Vinayak Bhardwaj

Executive Director, J-PAL Africa

Vinayak Bhardwaj is the Executive Director for the Africa office of the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL). Before joining J-PAL, he worked as a senior health economist at the University of Witwatersrand. He worked as deputy country director and regional migration coordinator of Doctors Without Borders (MSF) South Africa. He has consulted widely for the Asian Development Bank, the Open Society Foundations, Ford Foundation, Omidyar Network, Johns Hopkins Department of International Health, and the World Bank. He has doctoral and masters' degrees in public health from Johns Hopkins University where he was a Sommer Scholar and a recipient of an Oppenheimer Memorial Trust scholarship. Previously, he received a masters' degree in chemical engineering from the University of Cape Town and a bachelor's degree in biochemistry.