

Robert D. Metcalfe

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Google: [Scholar \(5124 citations\)](#)

Research Areas

Applied Microeconomics, Behavioral & Experimental Economics, Environmental & Energy Economics, Public Economics.

Current Employment

Associate Professor of Economics (with tenure), University of Southern California, 2020–

Previous Employment

- Assistant Professor, Questrom School of Business, Boston University, 2017–2020
- Postdoctoral Research Scholar, Department of Economics, University of Chicago, 2012–2017
- Fitzjames Research Scholar, Department of Economics, University of Oxford, 2009–2012
- Economist, Department of Work & Pensions, U.K. Government, 2004–2005

Affiliation

- Research Associate, National Bureau of Economic Research, EEE, 2021–
- Faculty Research Fellow, National Bureau of Economic Research, EEE, 2019–2021
- Affiliate, J-PAL, 2020–
- Faculty Affiliate, E2e Project, UC Berkeley, 2019–
- Faculty Affiliate, Susilo Institute for Ethics in the Global Economy, Boston University, 2019–
- Faculty Affiliate, Institute for Sustainable Energy, Boston University, 2017–
- Academic Affiliate, Social & Behavioral Sciences Team, Office of the U.S. President, 2013.
- Co-founder, Signol, 2018–
- Co-founder, The Behavioralist, 2016–

Education

- Ph.D. Economics, Imperial College London, 2010
- M.Sc. London School of Economics, 2005
- B.A. University of Wales, Swansea, 2003

Peer-Reviewed Publications

Butera, L., Metcalfe, R., Morrison, W., Taubinsky, D. (2022) [Measuring the Welfare Effects of Shame and Pride](#). **American Economic Review**, 112 (1): 122-168.

- Akesson, J., Ashworth-Hayes, S., Hahn, R., Metcalfe R., Rasooly, I. (2022) [Fatalism, Beliefs, and Behaviors During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#). *Journal of Risk and Uncertainty*.
- Burgess, S., Metcalfe, R., Sadoff, S. (2021) [Who Responds to Financial Incentives in Schools? Evidence From a Large Scale Field Experiment Using High-Stakes Assessments](#). *Economics of Education Review*, 85: 102195.
- Hahn, R., Metcalfe, R. (2021). [Efficiency and Equity Impacts of Energy Subsidies](#). *American Economic Review*, 111 (5): 1658-1688.
- Gosnell, G., List, J., Metcalfe, R. (2020) [The Impact of Managerial Practices on Employee Productivity: A Field Experiment with Airline Captains](#). *Journal of Political Economy*, 128 (4): 1195-1233.
- Hahn, R., Metcalfe, R., Rundhammer, F. (2020). [Promoting customer engagement: A new trend in utility regulation](#). *Regulation & Governance* 14(1): 121-149.
- Brandon, A., List, J., Metcalfe, R., Price, M., Rundhammer, F. (2019) [Testing for Crowd Out in Social Nudges: Evidence from a Natural Field Experiment in the Market for Electricity](#). *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States*, 116 (12): 5293-5298
- Metcalfe, R., Burgess, S., Proud, S. (2019) [Students' Effort and Educational Achievement: Using the Timing of the World Cup to Vary the Value of Leisure](#). *Journal of Public Economics*, 172: 111-126.
- Dolan, D., Kavetsos, G., Krekel, C., Mavridis, D., Metcalfe, R., Senik, C., Szymanski, S., Ziebarth, N. (2019). [Quantifying the intangible impact of the Olympics using subjective well-being data](#). *Journal of Public Economics*, 177.
- Hallsworth, M., List, J., Metcalfe, R., Vlaev, I. (2017). [The Behavioralist as Tax Collector: Using Natural Field Experiments to Enhance Tax Compliance](#). *Journal of Public Economics*, 148: 14-31.
- Feddersen, J., Metcalfe, R., Wooden, M. (2016). [Subjective Wellbeing: Why Weather Matters](#). *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*, 179(1): 203-228.
- Hahn, R., Metcalfe, R. (2016). [The impact of behavioral science experiments on energy policy](#). *Economics of Energy & Environmental Policy*, 5(2): 27-44.
- Story, G., Vlaev, I., Metcalfe, R., Crockett, M., Kurth-Nelson, Z., Darzi, A., Dolan, R. (2015). [Social Redistribution of Pain and Money](#). *Nature Scientific Reports*, 5, 15389.
- Drouvelis, M., Metcalfe, R., Powdthavee, N. (2015). [Can priming cooperation increase public good contributions?](#) *Theory and Decision*, 79(3): 479-492.
- List, J.A., Metcalfe, R. (2014). [Field experiments in the developed world: an introduction](#). *Oxford Review of Economic Policy*, 30(4): 585-596.
- Dolan, P., Metcalfe, R. (2012). [The relationship between innovation and subjective wellbeing](#). *Research Policy*, 41(8): 1489-1498.
- Dolan, P., Metcalfe, R. (2012). [Measuring subjective wellbeing: Recommendations on measures for use by national governments](#). *Journal of Social Policy*, 41(2): 409-427.
- Dolan, P., Hallsworth, M., Halpern, D., King, D., Metcalfe, R., Vlaev, I. (2012). [Influencing behaviour: The mindscape way](#). *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 33: 264-277.
- Dolan, P., Metcalfe, R. (2012). [Valuing Health: A Brief Report on Subjective Well-Being versus Preferences](#). *Medical Decision Making*, 32(4): 578-582.

Metcalfe, R., Dolan, P., Powdthavee, N. (2011). [Destruction and Distress: Using a Quasi-Experiment to Show the Effects of the September 11 Attacks on Subjective Well-Being in the UK](#). **Economic Journal**, 121, F81-F103.

Dolan, P., Metcalfe, R. (2010). [Oops... I did it again: Repeated focusing effects in reports of happiness](#). **Journal of Economic Psychology** 31(4): 732-737.

Dolan, P., Lee, H., King, D., Metcalfe, R. (2009). [Valuing Health Directly](#). **British Medical Journal**, 339.

Working Papers

Larson, F., List, J., Metcalfe, R. [Can Myopic Loss Aversion Explain the Equity Premium Puzzle? Evidence from a Natural Field Experiment with Professional Traders](#). NBER Working Paper No. 22605. Reject and Resubmit at **Econometrica**. Currently re-running the field experiment.

Goldszmidt, A., List, J., Metcalfe, R., Muir, I., Smith, K., Wang, J. [The Value of Time in the United States: Estimates from a Nationwide Natural Field Experiment](#). Reject and Resubmitted at **American Economic Review**.

List, J., Metcalfe, R., Price, M. [Smart Meters: Do Prices Matter to their Adoption and Do They Reduce Consumption?](#) Revise and Resubmit at **Journal of Environmental Economics and Management**.

Cohen, P., Hahn, R., Hall, J., Levitt, S., Metcalfe, R. [Using Big Data to Estimate Consumer Surplus: The Case of Uber](#). NBER Working Paper No. 22627.

Zhang, C.Y., Hemmeter, J., Kessler, J.B., Metcalfe, R., Weathers, R. [Nudging Timely Wage Reporting: Field Experimental Evidence from the U.S. SSI Program](#). Under review.

Brandon, A., Ferraro P., List, J., Metcalfe, R., Price, M., Rundhammer, F. [Do The Effects of Social Nudges Persist? Theory and Evidence from 38 Natural Field Experiments](#). NBER Working Paper No. 22627.

Hallsworth, M., List, J., Metcalfe, R., Vlaev, I. [The Making of Homo Honoratus: From Omission to Commission](#). NBER Working Paper No. 21210.

List, J., Metcalfe, R., Price, M., Rundhammer, F. [Harnessing Policy Complementarities to Conserve Energy: Evidence from a Natural Field Experiment](#). NBER Working Paper No. 23355.

Work in progress

Hahn, R., Hendren, N., Metcalfe, R., Sprung-Keyser, B. [A Unified Theory of Welfare Under Regulation: An Application to Environmental and Climate Change Policy](#).

Metcalfe, R., Sollaci, A., Syverson, C. [Management and Productivity](#).

Bursztyn, L., Metcalfe, R., Pallais, A. [Improving Productivity while Working From Home](#).

Hahn, R., Metcalfe, R., Tam, E. [Measuring Welfare when Prices Differ from Marginal Cost: : An Application to Congestion Pricing in Public Transit](#).

Hahn, R., Hendren, N., Metcalfe, R. [Income Taxes versus Commodity Taxes: An Application to Energy Demand](#).

Hahn, R., Metcalfe, R., Tam, E. [The Welfare Effect of Personal Energy Debt Forgiveness](#)

Akesson, J., Hahn, R., Metcalfe, R. The Salience of Paying for Energy: A Natural Field Experiment with 2 million Households.

Brandon, A., Clapp, C., List, J., Metcalfe, R., Price, M. Smart Technologies, Dumb Humans: The Perils of Scaling Household Technologies.

Metcalfe, R., Roth, S. The Demand for Indoor Clean Air.

Hahn, R., Metcalfe, R. The Demand for Electric Vehicles

Fairweather, D., Kahn, M., Metcalfe, R., Sandoval-Olascoaga, S. Impact of Flooding Information on Property Search and Purchases: Evidence from a Nationwide Natural Field Experiment.

Akesson, J., Hahn, R., Metcalfe, R., Monti-Nussbaum, M. The Impact of Fake Reviews on Consumer Demand and Welfare.

Akesson, J., Hahn, R., Mahler, A., Metcalfe, R. Attention and Information Frictions in Predicting Consumer Inertia.

Akesson, J., Conti, R., Hahn, R., Metcalfe R., Rasooly, I. The Non-linear Effect of Descriptive Social Norms.

Akesson, J., Hahn, R., Metcalfe R., Rasooly, I. Race and Redistribution in the United States.

Brooks, B., Metcalfe, R., Stalinski, M. Impact of Auction Design on Welfare.

Bhardwaj, S., Cruce, T., Hahn, R., Metcalfe, R. Getting More Low-Income Students to take a College Entrance Exam: Three Natural Field Experiments Suggest It's Harder Than You Think.

Davis, J., Hahn, R.W., List, J., Metcalfe, R., Price, M. The Efficiency of Referral Incentives: Evidence from Two Large Natural Field Experiments.

Research Grants as PI

Improving Efficient Electric Vehicle Charging. J-PAL, \$75,000. Principal Investigator, 2021-2023.

Understanding The Human Impact on Air Pollution in the Maritime Industry. J-PAL, \$125,000. Principal Investigator, 2020-2022.

Using a Travel App to Understand Travel and Commuting Behavior. Innovate UK, \$125,000. Principal Investigator, 2016-2017.

Using Behavioral Science to Increase Airline Fuel Efficiency. Innovate UK, \$125,000. Principal Investigator, 2015-2016.

Using Behavioral Science to Change Travel Behavior. Innovate UK: \$220,000. Principal Investigator, 2015-2018.

Motivating Parents Using a Parent Academy. Education Endowment Fund - \$1.8 million. Principal Investigator, with John List, Steven Levitt, Sally Sadoff, 2014-2015.

Financial Incentives in English School. Education Endowment Fund - \$2.2 million. Co-PI, with Simon Burgess, Sally Sadoff, 2012-2014.

The Use of Online Social Norms in Influencing Energy Consumption: Tides Foundation - \$90,000. Principal Investigator, 2011-2012.

Seminars, Talks

2022 - Harvard Economics; Keynote at the Economic Science Association Conference, Buenos Aires.

2021 - Center for Economic and Social Research, USC; Texas A&M; University of Zurich; NBER Spring EEE Session; Max Planck Institute Bonn University; Hertie School Berlin; Duke University; University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

2020 - AEAs; USC; Columbia SIPA; University of Michigan; University of Rotterdam.

2019 - AEAs; Stanford; Yale; Cornell; Johns Hopkins; Boston College; Harvard Business School; Columbia Business.

2018 - Carnegie Mellon University; Empirical Management conference, Harvard Business School; University of Pittsburgh; University of California San Diego; Purdue; Boston University (Econ); London School of Economics; University of Oxford; Journal of Environmental Economics and Management Inaugural conference in Oslo; NBER Summer Institute EEE.

Service

- Chair of two Junior Recruitment Committees, University of Southern California (2020-21)
- Strategic Leadership Council, Questrom, Boston University (2019-2021)
- MBA Social Impact PDC at Questrom, Boston University (2018-2021).
- Initiated and run a work-in-progress seminar group for MPPL faculty at Questrom (2017-2021).
- Co-organize the annual Advances with Field Experiments conference, with John List (2016-).
- Co-organize the virtual Advances with Field Experiments seminar series, with John List (2020-).

Refereeing

American Economic Review; American Economic Review: Insights; American Economic Journal: Applied; American Economic Journal: Economic Policy; American Journal of Political Science; Economic Journal; Economica; Global Environmental Change; Journal of the Association of Environmental and Resource Economists; Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization; Journal of Environmental Economics and Management; Journal of European Economic Association; Journal of Health Economics; Journal of Human Resources; Journal of Public Economics; Journal of Urban Economics; Management Science; Oxford Review of Economic Policy; Quarterly Journal of Economics; Psychological Science; Research Policy; Review of Economic Studies; Review of Economics and Statistics; Science.

Teaching

- Field Experiments, University of Southern California (2021)
- Modeling Business Decisions and Market Outcomes, Boston University:
 - 2017 - two sections with teaching evaluation scores of 5.0 and 4.85 out of 5 (50 students); 80 contact hours
 - 2018 - three sections with teaching evaluation scores of 5.0, 4.82, and 4.78 out of 5 (110 students); 120 contact hours.
 - 2020 - three sections with teaching evaluation scores of 4.81, 4.74, and 4.70 out of 5 (120 students); 120 contact hours.
- Behavioral Economics, M.Sc. Executive students, London School of Economics (2016); 10 contact hours
- Public Economics, Undergraduate, Department of Economics, University of Oxford (2011-2012); 24 contact hours.
- Microeconomics, Undergraduate, Merton College, University of Oxford (2009-2012); 200 contact hours.

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