



---

Can an elite university provide people across the globe the tools they need to help eliminate poverty?

Can renown faculty—using a radical approach to higher education—empower students around the world to help drive economic development?

## Data, Economics & Development Policy: MicroMasters & Master’s Degree Programs

Rigorous evidence—based on well-designed research—is a critical tool in the global fight against poverty. But around the world, too few promising students have opportunities to learn how to use that tool effectively. Fewer still have the chance to study with world-class instructors and build a network of highly skilled collaborators.

That’s why MIT’s Department of Economics and its Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab created two unique programs in Data, Economics, and Development Policy (DEDP): an MITx MicroMasters program, consisting of six online courses that are available to virtually anyone in the world; and a Master’s of Applied Science program, blending online learning and on-campus courses.

Both programs offer the mix of practical skills and theoretical knowledge that professionals need to tackle pressing challenges facing developing countries and those experiencing poverty around the world. These transformational programs are redefining who can attend a world-renown university and how challenging curricula can be effectively delivered.

Through these innovative programs, MIT is training a global cadre of highly skilled professionals equipped to solve problems of poverty. It is also leveling the playing field in higher education: helping students from nontraditional backgrounds signal their ability to graduate admissions committees, while enabling universities to spot talent in unusual places.

## STRIVING TO LEVEL THE PLAYING FIELD

Through six online courses and associated proctored exams, the MicroMasters program offers all students—no matter their background or location—an opportunity to prove their ability and drive. The courses are led by some of MIT’s most highly regarded economics faculty, including Nobel Prize recipients Abhijit Banerjee and Esther Duflo. The program offers a rigorous and practical introduction to the knowledge and skills needed in a career in development policy.

To date, tens of thousands of students from nearly every country in the world have enrolled in the MicroMasters courses—more than 60% from low-to middle-income countries.

Students who excel in completing the MicroMasters credential can apply for the eight-month Master’s of Applied Science degree program in Data, Economics, and Development Policy (DEDP), with courses taught on the MIT campus. Those who are accepted and complete their degree gain the knowledge and skills to become policy makers, development practitioners, and entrepreneurs in under-resourced regions across the globe.

The MicroMasters program has also blazed a path to graduate schools beyond MIT: 16 universities in 11 nations have created graduate degree pathways by granting credit to students who successfully complete the MicroMasters credential.

## YOU CAN HELP ADVANCE OUR WORK

For these programs to fulfill their potential impact, we must ensure that cost is not a barrier for those who could benefit most from this unique learning experience. To make the MicroMasters program available as broadly as possible, costs are scaled to ability to pay, with lowest-earning students paying \$250 or less per course. We also strive to help lower-income DEDP Master’s students cover tuition, fees, and living expenses for their on-campus studies and summer internships. Such funding is critical to attracting and ensuring access for the best students.

Operating for just a few years, these programs are already having impact around the world. But we need your support: to keep MicroMasters costs low; to help Master’s students be able to afford to attend; and to underwrite the work necessary to keep the DEDP curriculum on the cutting edge of content and pedagogy.

To discuss the meaningful, global impact you could have through these programs, please contact Anne Marie Michel, Assistant Dean for Development, at [ammichel@mit.edu](mailto:ammichel@mit.edu) or 617-253-4075.



---

“Growing up in Bangkok, seeing the poverty in the surrounding communities, I dreamed of making even the smallest contribution to improving my country. MIT has given me the knowledge, skills, and confidence to have real impact.”

Pavarin Bhandtvej  
DEDP MicroMasters  
credential holder & DEDP  
Master’s ‘21 graduate

“The DEDP programs are fundamentally about creating opportunity: enabling people anywhere to develop data skills; and empowering them to help drive economic development for their communities and nations.”

Sara Fisher Ellison, PhD  
Faculty Director,  
DEDP MicroMasters  
and Master’s programs