

Kari E. R. Heerman

August, 2025

Professional Experience

The Brookings Institution, Senior Fellow and Director of Trade and Economic Statecraft

August 2025 – Present

- I research issues at the nexus of economics, foreign policy and national security, including the impacts of international trade and trade policy and the effectiveness of economic statecraft.
- I coordinate and develop research initiatives on trade and economic statecraft across the Brookings Institution's five programs.

U.S. Department of State, Acting Chief Economist

January 2025 – August 2025

Senior Advisor and Lead Economist

July 2023 – January 2025

- I prepare and deliver advice for the Secretary of State, the Undersecretary of State for Economic Growth, Energy and the Environment, and other senior leadership in the State Department and other U.S. government agencies on priority issues at the intersection of foreign policy and economics.
- I lead initiatives to better equip U.S. diplomatic engagement on economic issues by providing analysis and guidance that enhances the Department's fluency with topics in economic policy. This includes developing accessible data-driven analytical tools that allow for more informed engagements and decision-making.
- I represent the State Department in engagements on topics including economic security, Russia sanctions, China's economic coercion, global trade and industrial policy, supply chain resilience, advanced and emerging tech policy with foreign government officials, international organizations, private sector representatives and interest groups.
- I initiated and contribute to global partnerships among economic analysts in like-minded governments working to develop analytical methodologies and advance common understanding the nature of spillovers from China's economic model and its engagement in strategic economic behavior, including trade and industrial policy and economic coercion.
- I facilitate data, methodology and other information sharing among economic analysts in U.S. government agencies on approaches to analysis of challenging issues in economic policy. This helps analysts better prepare senior leaders and facilitates productive discussion among principals.
- I lead a team of seven individuals with diverse backgrounds and economics training to consistently deliver impactful analysis during a highly challenging and uncertain time period.

Council of Economic Advisers (CEA), Senior Economist

November 2021 – March 2023

- I advised the CEA Chair and Members on trade and other international economic policy, including providing analysis of the impact of international events and policy on U.S. economic outcomes.

- I contributed economic analysis and provided international economic context for White House policy processes, including but not limited to processes covering macroeconomics, climate, agriculture, technology, domestic industrial strategy, sanctions, geopolitical strategy, national security, and international trade.
- I provided analysis to clarify economic tradeoffs for CEA leaders and other White House officials balancing multiple objectives, including domestic socio-economic goals, climate goals, industrial policy goals and national security goals.
- I led the CEA senior staff response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, providing daily briefings to the CEA Chair and Members, preparing economic analysis to inform several White House policy processes, and managing inputs provided by other CEA senior staff.
- I led efforts to deepen the understanding of the international impacts of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, CHIPS and Science Act and Inflation Reduction Act within CEA and to incorporate international economic considerations into their implementation.
- I coordinated CEA's staff-level input and positions on issues in U.S. trade policy as the CEA representative on USTR's Trade Policy Staff Committee.
- I co-authored Chapter 3 of the 2022 Economic Report of the President, describing a more equitable approach to international economic policy and Chapter 3 of the 2023 Economic Report of the President on the importance of international partnerships.
- I developed and led a team of junior-level CEA economists to work on international issues, including training them to be proficient with trade and other international economic data. The team ultimately produced a series of regular and ad hoc memos that were distributed to CEA leadership and others in White House Policy Councils.

Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR), Senior International Economist GS-15, Office of Trade Policy and Economics (TPE)

September 2018 – July 2024

- I introduced technological and analytical tools to enhance the rigor of economic analysis at TPE. This relieves some of USTR's reliance on other agencies in cases where information must be closely-held.
- I worked closely with the USTR legal team to integrate rigorous economic analysis into U.S. positions in international trade disputes. This led to economic arguments that were reflected positively in the determinations of WTO panels.
- I led inter-agency teams of economists to develop reasoned approaches to quantify economic damages associated with USTR legal proceedings, including Section 301 investigations using a variety of partial equilibrium modeling and econometric techniques.
- I worked with inter-agency colleagues to communicate and enhance the understanding of the impacts of trade policy, with particular emphasis on non-tariff measures like regulations and standards.
- I provided economic and statistical support, including reviews of economic literature analysis and interpretation of economic data covering individual industries and the economy more broadly.
- I supported trade negotiations and other trade policy initiatives with economic, statistical and analytical inputs.

Economic Research Service (ERS), United States Department of Agriculture, Research Agricultural Economist, International Trade and Development Branch

December 2013 – September 2018

- I replaced two full-time equivalent positions working on macroeconomics and pursued my own program of international trade research, resulting in both internal and external, peer-reviewed publications on international agricultural trade.
- I led an effort to update ERS research staff capacity in structural gravity modeling for both partial and general equilibrium analysis.
- I prepared and presented the macroeconomic assumptions underlying the annual ERS Long-Term Agricultural Projections and managed the ERS International Macroeconomics Data Set. I also created and managed an intern position to assist with this responsibility.
- I contributed Economic Outlook text and data to the quarterly USDA Outlook for U.S. Agricultural Trade. In this role, I initiated and implemented changes to standard data tables to make them more relevant to the publication's audience.
- I managed and updated the ERS Agricultural Exchange Rates Data Set on a quarterly basis. In this role, I initiated research to modernize the methodology used to calculate real effective exchange rates weighted by agricultural trade data.
- I updated the set of external subscriptions and resources used by my team at ERS and was responsible for preparing the justifications used for procurement.

Other Positions Held

Hamline University, St. Paul MN, Adjunct Professor, Business Statistics and Introductory Macro and Microeconomics, Part Time
Winter-Fall 2012

Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Rome, Italy Consultant, Full Time
Winter 2011

University of Minnesota/Woodrow Wilson Center for Scholars, Research Assistant on 2008 Farm Bill Recommendations for C. Ford Runge & Robbin Johnson, Part Time
Spring – Summer 2007

University of Minnesota Department of Applied Economics, Research Assistant on International Trade & Economic Policy Issues for G. Edward Schuh, Part Time
Fall 2006 – Spring 2007

The German Marshall Fund of the United States (GMF), Washington, D.C., Fellow, Full Time, Agricultural Trade & Development Policy Consultant, Part Time
Summer 2006, September 2006 – August 2007

International Food & Agricultural Trade Policy Council (IPC), Washington D.C., Communications Director, Full Time
March 2002 – July 2005

Education

Ph.D., Applied Economics, University of Minnesota, December 2013

Dissertation Title: Technology, Ecology and Agricultural Trade

Dissertation Committee: Terry Roe, Timothy Kehoe (Chair), C. Ford Runge, Gerard McCullough

M.S., Agricultural and Applied Economics, University of Minnesota, Incomplete, Enrolled Fall 2005

B.A., Economics, University of Minnesota, Fall 2001

Honors and Awards

Department of State Superior Honor Award, December 2024

Department of State Award for Excellence in Economic Security, Second Runner Up, December 2024

USTR Superior Achievement Award, June 2021

Outstanding Performance Rating, USTR 2021 and 2022

AAEA Quality of Communication Award for “The Global Landscape of Agricultural Trade”, 2018

USDA-ERS Amber Waves Award, Markets and Trade Economics Division Best Finding 2016

Participant, AAEA Mentoring Program, 2015/16

Outstanding Performance Rating, ERS 2015 and 2016

USDA Certificate of Merit for extra effort associated with updating the Macroeconomic and Exchange Rate data sets in preparation for the USDA Baseline and other forecasting activities, 2014

Outstanding Dissertation Award, University of Minnesota Department of Applied Economics, 2013

Invited Member, University of Minnesota Economics Department Trade & International Macroeconomics Workshop 2011-2013

USDA National Needs Scholar, 2008-2011

Professional Service and Affiliations

ERS Macroeconomics Specialist, 2014-2018

Co-organizer with Jason Grant and Ian Sheldon, IATRC 2019 Annual Meeting Theme Day, “Recent Advances in Applied General Equilibrium Modeling: Relevance and Application to Agricultural Trade Analysis”

Co-organizer with Wyatt Thompson, IATRC 2017 Annual Meetings Theme Day, “Globalization Adrift”

Member and Program Committee Chair, IATRC 2017-18

Topic Leader, International Trade, Agricultural and Applied Economics Association (AAEA) Annual Meeting

Member, American Economics Association (AEA) and Agricultural and Applied Economics Association (AAEA)

Selected Publications

Published

“Sustainable Agricultural Production, Income and Eco-Labeling: What Can be Learned from A Modern Ricardian Approach?”, with Ian Sheldon, Applied Economic Perspectives and Policy, June 2022.

“Technology, Ecology and Agricultural Trade”, Journal of International Economics, 123, March 2020.

“The Global Landscape of Agricultural Trade: 1995-2014”, with John Dyck and Jayson Beckman. USDA-ERS Economic Information Bulletin Number 181.

“Effects of tariff concessions on Japanese beef imports by product and source,” with Andrew Muhammad and Amanda Countryman, Agricultural and Resource Economics Review, 47 (1), April 2018.

“Chapter 2: Macroeconomic Assumptions,” in USDA Agricultural Projections to 2026, Erik O’Donoghue and Jim Hansen, editors, (OCE-2017-1), Interagency Projections Committee, U.S. Department of Agriculture, February 2016

“Global Macroeconomic Developments Drive Downturn in U.S. Agricultural Exports,” with Bryce Cooke, Getachew Nigatu, Maurice Landes and Ralph Seeley, ARS-94, U.S. Department of Agriculture, July 2016.

“Chapter 2: Macroeconomic Assumptions,” in USDA Agricultural Projections to 2025, Paul Westcott and Jim Hansen, editors, (OCE-141), Interagency Projections Committee, U.S. Department of Agriculture, February 2016

“Tariff Reforms and the Competitiveness of U.S. Beef in Japan”, with Andrew Muhammad, Alex Melton and John Dyck, LDPM-259-01, Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, January 2016.

“Asia-Pacific Integration: Examining trade patterns under heterogeneous agricultural sectors”, with Shawn Arita and Gopinath Munisamy, *American Journal of Agricultural Economics (AJAE)*, 97 (5), October 2015.

Working Papers

“Gravity and Comparative Advantage: Estimation of Trade Elasticities for the Agricultural Sector,” with Ian Sheldon. No. w24772, National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER), 2018.

“Increased economic integration in the Asia-Pacific Region: What might be the impact on agricultural trade?”, with Ian Sheldon. Prepared as selected paper for AAEA Annual Meeting, August 2018.

“A quantitative analysis of the importance of currency competitiveness for U.S. agricultural trade,” with Getachew Nigatu and Bryce Cooke.

“Trade and production impacts of rolling back NAFTA's agricultural preferences: An application of the systematic heterogeneity general equilibrium gravity model”, with Steven Zahniser. Prepared as invited paper for 2017 ASSA Annual Meetings.

“Farmer response to crop insurance incentives under heterogeneous risk-management strategies”, with Robert Johansson, Tom Worth and Joseph Cooper.