

Meet & Greet with Dr. Jason Wilks

Tuesday March 16, 2021 at 1:00pm ET/10:00am PT

Dr. Jason Wilks Biography:

Jason Wilks is a Public Management Specialist at the InterAmerican Development Bank, where he works with government authorities throughout Latin America and the Caribbean to develop innovative solutions to address development challenges in the region. Currently, Jason covers the specific countries of Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago and Suriname for the Innovation in Citizen Services Division, providing oversight and advisory support in the preparation and delivery of tailor-made loan operations and technical assistance grants in critical areas such as citizen security, public finance, digital governance and transparency in extractive industries.

Prior to joining the Bank in 2019, Jason worked as a Knowledge Management and Learning Specialist with Creative Associates International, a Research Associate at the Criminal Justice Police and Management Program at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government and the Manager of Program and Policy Evaluation within the Ministry of National Security in Jamaica. Jason has worked on citizen security projects in Jamaica, Ethiopia, Guyana, Saint Lucia and Saint Kitts and Nevis and collaborated on citizen security research in several other countries including Honduras and Nigeria. Jason has co-authored research on police militarization in the United States and has several working papers on the nexus between politics and citizen security in the Caribbean.

Jason has a Ph.D. in Political Science from Florida State University, a Master of Public Administration from Baruch College and a B.Sc. in Psychology from the University of the West Indies.

Dr. Jason Wilks Contact Information

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Questions Asked during Meet & Greet

Background and Prior Work

1. You are the first AltAc RockStar that we have chatted with here in our AltAc series that is working in the international research and policy space, so we are so excited to be having this conversations today! As mentioned in your bio, you have worked in various capacities within the international AltAc space. Can you tell us a bit about your background, how did you get to your current position?
2. Your academic training was in a fairly traditional space, prioritizing traditional academia. Can you talk to us about the experiences and skills you sought out during your doctoral training that set you on the pathway for work in an international space?
 - a. How did prior life experiences set you on the pathway to this international work?
3. In conversations with other Rock Stars we have discussed the connection between personal values and prior experiences and the requirement to be objective and non-political in the

interpretation of research findings. How do you reconcile your positionality within your work? What does that look like in an international space?

Overview of International Research & Policy Space

4. We've talked with some AltAc RockStars who's work takes more of an applied research orientation, whereas the research work in other AltAc spaces looks more like agenda-setting. How you would place your work at the Inter-American Development Bank?
5. Can you give us some idea about topic or subject matter areas that are important within the international space? Are projects or research questions largely cross-national?
6. One thing that I've been thinking about when preparing for our discussion today is the extent that what we look at in the US parallels (or diverges from) what can, or should, be done in an international context?

Working within an International Space

7. Thanks for giving us an overview about what AltAc work around public safety and criminal justice related topics looks like. Now I'm hoping we can spend some time talking about what *your job and your work* looks like.
 - a. What does your day-to-day look like?
 - b. What is the usual pace of your work?
 - c. Are you constantly traveling? Where are you and your colleagues based out of?
8. How do you use the skills gained in your Doctoral program in your current work?
9. How does one even search for jobs in the international justice policy research space? What does the application and interview process look like?

Recommendations for Students

10. Do you think it is important for people to have non-Western experience to make it into the international justice policy research space?
11. What kind of skills or experiences would you advise students seek out while in their graduate training to set themselves up for future success in the international space?
 - a. Anything that you think employers and those doing the hiring would love to see?
 - b. Conversely, anything that you think about be a sort of red flag?