

JEFFERSON RODRÍGUEZ NÁJERA

Extended Curriculum Vitae — Full Professional Record

San José, Costa Rica • +506 71021816 • jeffersonrodriguez12@gmail.com • linkedin.com/in/jefferson-rodriguez-najera • jefferson-rodriguez.vercel.app

EDUCATION

University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA

May 2026

Frank Batten School of Leadership & Public Policy — Master of Public Policy, concentration in Leadership and Public Policy

- GPA: 3.80 out of 4.00
- Fulbright Scholar; Batten Family Bicentennial Scholars Fellow
- Relevant Coursework: Research Methods & Data Analysis I–II; Economics of Public Policy I–II; Advanced Topics in Impact Evaluation; Regional Economic Modeling; Poverty Reduction & Aid Policy; Policy Analysis; Applied Policy Projects I–II; Independent Study I–II; Leadership in the Public Arena
- Trained in the Adaptive Leadership framework (Ronald Heifetz), taught at UVA by Prof. Andrew Pennock

University of Costa Rica, San José, Costa Rica

School of Public Administration

Licentiate's Degree in Public Administration

May 2020

- GPA: 9.45 out of 10; Graduation with honorific mention
- Specialization in Public Budgeting & Finance
- Thesis: “Cultural Public Policies Analysis: A Compared Study of Management Models in Santa Ana, Escazú, and Belén”
- Relevant Coursework: Leadership and Decision-Making; Research and Knowledge Management; Stakeholders and Conflict Resolution; Challenges of the Public Administration

Bachelor of Arts in Public Administration

Aug 2018

- GPA: 9.03 out of 10; Graduation with honorific mention
- Relevant Coursework: Impact Evaluation; General Statistics; Public Finance; Calculus I; Public Resources Management; Public Services Management

University of Los Andes, Bogotá, Colombia

Jan – Jun 2018

School of Government and Public Affairs — Study Abroad Semester

- International Studies Office Scholarship recipient (two scholarship awards)
- Relevant Coursework: Introduction to Policy Analysis; The Right to the City; Public Management Practice

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Independent Consultant, Charlottesville, VA

Aug 2025 – May 2026

Consultant — National Emergency Commission (CNE), Costa Rica

Project: Flood-Induced Displacement Policy Analysis, Esparza, Puntarenas

- Designed a year-long policy analysis for Costa Rica's National Emergency Commission on flood-induced displacement and relocation in three communities in Esparza, applying a full-cycle framework: international literature review, cost-benefit evaluation of alternatives, and stakeholder-informed prioritization.
- Delivered a complete technical report with a phased implementation plan, cost forecasts, and practical tools to adapt the proposed alternatives to different institutional contexts.

Frank Batten School, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA

Aug 2025 – May 2026

Independent Researcher — Independent Study, supervised by Prof. Daniel Player

Project: Impact Evaluation of the National Judicial Facilitators Service (SNFJ), Costa Rica

- Designed and executed a full-cycle impact evaluation of a nationwide judicial-access program using a difference-in-differences framework on administrative panel data, building the identification strategy, data pipeline, and econometric models from scratch in Stata.
- Studied information asymmetries and access-to-justice outcomes, producing the first quantitative evidence on the program's causal effect, including robustness and falsification tests and specification testing; culminated in a draft academic paper submitted for peer review.

The Center for Social Innovation at UVA, Charlottesville, VA

Mar 2025 – May 2026

Research Assistant, supervised by Prof. Molly Lipscomb

Project: Electricity Subsidies and Firm Performance in Argentina

- Supported an empirical study estimating the effects of electricity subsidies on firm behavior in Argentina, sourcing nationwide firm-level and regulatory data and contributing to econometric modeling and robustness testing that enabled statistically significant, economically meaningful results.

Project: Public Investment and Development Outcomes in Colombia

- Supported a second study on the influence of local public investment on development outcomes in Colombia, building administrative datasets from scratch and testing multiple identification strategies (OLS, instrumental variables, LASSO, machine learning) to estimate effects on sanitation, education, and health indicators.
- Across both projects: cleaned and harmonized large administrative datasets, produced data visualizations, and contributed to research outputs informing policy discussions on economic development and labor markets in the region.

Judicial Branch of Costa Rica, San José

Sep 2021 – Jun 2024

Senior Policy Analyst — Open Justice Program

Worked across open government, open data, access to justice, citizen participation, and technology policy, combining evidence-based policy analysis, data work, and multi-stakeholder negotiation at the national and subnational levels.

Project: National Open Data Protocol

- Led the nationwide implementation of the Judicial Branch's Open Data Protocol and redesigned the institutional Open Data Portal, coordinating negotiations with high-ranking officials, citizen engagement, and policy drafting, resulting in a 100% increase in publicly available datasets (2022–2023).
- Designed and delivered a national training program on open data for institutional staff, building internal capacity to sustain the open-data initiative beyond the initial implementation.

Project: Inclusive Data: Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation Variables

- Designed and implemented a national strategy to integrate gender-identity and sexual-orientation variables into judicial service-delivery and technology systems, a regionally unprecedented initiative built through participatory co-design with magistrates, technical staff, and civil society; deployed across four offices serving over 10,000 weekly users.

Project: Urban Expansion of the National Judicial Facilitators Program

- Directed the expansion of the National Program of Judicial Facilitators into urban communities by developing a research proposal and a geospatial prioritization and targeting methodology, increasing national program coverage by 15% and the number of active facilitators by 7% within the first six months.

Project: International Cooperation & Open Government Partnership

- Served as institutional expert in international cooperation projects on public governance, open data, and transparency, and contributed to the design of Costa Rica's IV National Action Plan under the Open Government Partnership.

University of Costa Rica, San José

Mar 2016 – Jul 2022

Co-founder and Area Coordinator – “Idea Pública” Public Innovation Lab, now Innovaap (part time, Jun 2018 – Jul 2022)

Co-founded Costa Rica's first collaborative public-innovation lab, articulating academia, the public sector, and citizens to design alternatives for public challenges; led the lab's Public Services Innovation area, managing a 15-person team, a portfolio of 10+ projects, and negotiating new project proposals directly with high-ranking public officials.

Project: Local Innovation Methodology for 12 Municipalities (OAS Trust for the Americas)

- Designed and deployed a structured policy-analysis methodology combining design thinking, cost-benefit analysis, stakeholder mapping, and participatory M&E across 12 Costa Rican local governments for the Organization of American States' Trust for the Americas, leading the methodology-design team and coordinating logistics for the initiative, achieving 100% completion and five new local policies drafted.

Project: Diagnosis of Services for Victims of Violence in Talamanca (United Nations Costa Rica)

- Led a collaboration with the United Nations Office in Costa Rica to diagnose bottlenecks in violence-response service processes in the Caribbean region of Talamanca through participatory design-thinking workshops with community members and local institutions.

Project: Human-Capital and Public-Employment Trends Study (with CICAP-UCR)

- Coordinated a research study on human-capital and public-employment trends among Costa Rican public servants, in partnership with CICAP-UCR, using administrative survey data; resulted in the lab's first peer-reviewed publication.

Project: Ministry of Agriculture — National Production Council Diagnosis

- Led a diagnosis of service delivery under the National Production Council's Program of Institutional Allocation for the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock.

Project: Public-School Innovation Hackathon

- Organized the lab's inaugural activity, a hackathon with students from a public high school in San José, applying design-thinking and user-centered design methodologies in collaboration with public institutions.

Senior Project Manager – Public Administration Research and Training Center (CICAP) (full time, Sep 2019 – Aug 2021)

Negotiated and managed policy and organizational-reform projects for Costa Rican public institutions across regional development, labor-force management, social protection, and public-sector modernization, contributing to over USD 1 million raised in two years (~50% of department revenue) and delivering 18+ consulting projects across CICAP's portfolio during this period, while supervising University of Costa Rica student assistants throughout the role.

Project: Junta de Protección Social (JPS) — Organizational Redesign

- Rescued a stalled, multi-million-colón organizational redesign engagement that had fallen more than a year behind schedule, renegotiating scope and resolving entrenched stakeholder disputes to cut accumulated delays by over 50%; delivered a new organizational structure, job and succession manuals, and IT security and continuity studies.
- Led a second, parallel engagement directing the first-phase implementation of JPS's Information Technology Strategic Plan under guidelines issued by Costa Rica's Comptroller General, and strengthened the institution's Talent Development Department.

Project: 911 Emergency System — Organizational Redesign

- Negotiated and led a full organizational redesign of Costa Rica's 911 Emergency System, directing a 10-person senior consultant team to deliver a new structure, risk-management system, project portfolio, IT strategic-investment plan, and change-management sessions for the full staff.

Project: ARESEP — Public-Transport Drivers' Working Conditions Study

- Led a mixed-methods regulatory study for the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (ARESEP) on bus-driver working conditions, combining time-and-motion measurement with qualitative focus groups to provide the evidentiary basis for national regulatory decisions.

Project: Municipality of Esparza — Strategic and Human-Capital Planning

- Led strategic planning and human-capital policy work for the Municipality of Esparza, including a local economic-development policy component.

Project: Internal Capacity Building

- Developed CICAP's internal Project Management Policy and financial-control tools, strengthening the center's monitoring, evaluation, and budget-control capacity. Also authored the center's Technical Advisory Services Catalog and its Technical Advisory Management Policy.

Project: Ministry of Public Works and Transport (MOPT) — Public-Transport Modernization Training Program

- Designed and delivered a national capacity-building program on public policy and governance for MOPT's public-transport modernization initiative, addressing sectoral, intersectoral, and intergovernmental coordination approaches.

Project: National Archives Policy 2020–2030 (Junta Administrativa del Archivo Nacional)

- Served as project manager and lead technical professional for the formulation of Costa Rica's National Archives Policy 2020–2030 and its accompanying Action Plan 2020–2025.

Project: Municipality of Montes de Oca — Comprehensive Institutional Strengthening

- Led a renewed, comprehensive institutional-strengthening engagement for the Municipality of Montes de Oca, building on earlier work with the canton's local government.

Project: Municipality of Vázquez de Coronado — Process and Procedures Manual

- Directed consulting and training services to develop the Municipality of Vázquez de Coronado's Process and Procedures Manual.

Project: Municipality of Barva — Cantonal Development Plan and Strategic Planning

- Led the development of Barva's Cantonal Development Plan, Municipal Strategic Plan, and municipal indicators system.

Central American Institute of Public Administration (ICAP)

Feb 2019 – Aug 2019; Oct 2019 – May 2020

Project Manager (full time, Feb – Aug 2019)

Identified, planned, and implemented consulting projects in regional development, strategic planning, public governance, and regulation policy for national and Central American public institutions.

Project: COMURES (Corporación de Municipalidades de la República de El Salvador)

- Contributed to a local public-governance project in Costa Rica developed in partnership with COMURES, El Salvador's national association of municipalities.

Project: Ministry of Culture and Youth — Organizational Redesign

- Led an organizational redesign and competency-framework design for the Ministry of Culture and Youth, grounded in a public-value framework.

Project: Costa Rican National Theater — Strategic Planning

- Developed the strategic plan for the Costa Rican National Theater.

Project: Public Service Regulatory Authority (ARESEP) — Regulation Policy Training

- Collaborated with ARESEP to create Central America's first training specialization in Regulation Policy.

External Lead Consultant (Oct 2019 – May 2020)

Project: Foreign Service Department Reform — Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship

- Led an external technical-cooperation engagement supporting the partial organizational restructuring of the Foreign Service Department, diagnosing the unit's organizational situation and producing process-characterization sheets using the SIPOC methodology.
- Directed the mapping, documentation, and validation of institutional processes and procedures through structured interviews with process leads, culminating in an internal Process Manual and a full set of procedure sheets.
- Delivered a structural analysis with recommendations on the department's ideal organizational structure and functional-unit staffing profiles.

School of Public Administration, University of Costa Rica, San José

Jun 2017 – Jan 2019

Research Assistant (part time)

- Supported research on institutional change and transformation in the Costa Rican public sector, with assistance extending to the School's Project Design course.

Local Government Development Program, University of Costa Rica (CICAP)

Mar 2016 – Dec 2017

Research Assistant / Project Assistant (part time)

Administrative and research assistant in consulting projects for local governments and rural communities, conducting policy analysis, literature reviews, and project coordination in regional and local economic development.

Project: Municipality of Montes de Oca

- Contributed to an organizational redesign and a local economic-development policy positioning the technology sector as a growth engine for the canton, which became a leader in local economic performance.

Project: DINADECO — National Strategy for Community Development

- Supported the National Directorate for Community Development (DINADECO) in formulating a national strategy for community development, including moderating participatory workshops for the National Community Development Plan.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA

Jan – May 2026

Teaching Assistant — “Leadership in the Public Arena”

- Assisted a course built on Ronald Heifetz's Adaptive Leadership framework and case-in-point methodology. Responsibilities included class planning, holding office hours, explaining complex concepts to a broad range of audiences, and other administrative tasks.

School of Public Administration, University of Costa Rica, San José

Mar 2020 – Jul 2024

Junior Lecturer (part time)

- Delivered undergraduate lectures on leadership and ethics, strategic communication, rural and local development, and public governance models and trends, fostering critical thinking and practical application in future public-sector leaders.
- Served as researcher and international project coordinator for the School, and designed research proposals and community-engagement projects to expand its international visibility.
- Advised five final thesis projects on topics including local development, public policy, and budget analysis, and served as research adviser for additional student projects.

PUBLICATIONS

Rodríguez-Nájera, J. (2026). From Invisibility to Evidence: Reflections on Inclusive Participatory Data Collection in the Costa Rican Judiciary. *Revista del CLAD Reforma y Democracia*, (95). (Accepted – Pending publication)

Rodríguez Nájera, J.; Barquero Gamboa, C. y Hernández Cruz, O. (2021). Strategic linking of cultural public policies: case analysis of the cantons of Belén, Santa Ana and Escazú. *Compilación Administrar lo Público*, p. 70–82; 9na. Edición; Enero–Diciembre, Vol. 1 Núm. 1. ISBN 978-9968-932-41-7, San José, CR. Licencia CC BY 4.0.

Rodríguez Nájera, J.; Barrantes Herrera, A. y Hurtado Herrera, A. (2020). Cultural public policy implementation: compared study of the management models of Santa Ana, Escazú, and Belén territories. *Universidad de Costa Rica, Facultad de Ciencias Económicas*.

Rodríguez, J.; Fernández, C.; Calderón, C.; Calderón, J. & Umaña, J. (2018). *Collaboration networks for local innovation*. Organization of American States (OAS), Trust for the Americas, and Innovaap UCR. San José, Costa Rica.

FELLOWSHIPS, SCHOLARSHIPS & AWARDS

Fulbright Scholarship (2025) — Full funding for graduate study in the United States, including tuition, living expenses, airfare, and relocation support; total value of approximately USD \$185,000.

Batten Family Bicentennial Scholars Fellowship, University of Virginia (2025) — Valued at USD \$80,000.

Graduation with Honorific Mention, Licentiate's Degree in Public Administration, University of Costa Rica (2020) — GPA 9.45/10.

Graduation with Honorific Mention, Bachelor of Arts in Public Administration, University of Costa Rica (2018) — GPA 9.03/10.

First Place, Student Debate “Evaluación de Políticas Públicas Municipales,” XI Congress of Red-e-Mun, Universidad Autónoma de Tamaulipas, México (2017).

International Speaker, XI Congress of Red-e-Mun, Universidad Autónoma de Tamaulipas, México (2017).

International Studies Office Scholarship (two awards), University of Los Andes, Bogotá, Colombia (2018).

TOEFL iBT: 105/120.

Other Graduate Admissions & Scholarship Offers (2025)

- University of Chicago, Harris School of Public Policy — Master of Public Policy, admitted with a partial scholarship of USD \$70,000.
- Carnegie Mellon University, Heinz College of Information Systems and Public Policy — Master of Science in Public Policy and Management, admitted with the Heinz College Strategic Partner Scholarship covering 50% of tuition.
- University of Texas at Austin, Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs — Master of Public Affairs, admitted with a partial scholarship.
- Türkiye Scholarships — Full scholarship for a Master's in Public Administration at Hacettepe University (covering stipend, housing, language courses, health insurance, travel, and tuition); declined upon acceptance of the Fulbright Program.

CERTIFICATIONS & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Power BI Course (2022)
- Python Fundamentals Course (2022)
- Creative Coding Course, CIID Copenhagen (2021)
- Project Management Professional (PMP) Preparatory Course, PMI (2021)
- Public Budget Specialist, CICAP (2020)
- Certified in Behavioral Economics, IDB – INDES (2020)
- Central American Course on Formulation and Design of Public Policies, ICAP (2019)
- Certified in SCRUM Fundamentals (2017)
- Certificate in Public Management, University of Costa Rica (2014)
- Member, Colegio de Ciencias Económicas de Costa Rica (Professional Association of Economic Sciences) — Associate No. 046725

LEADERSHIP, CIVIC & VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

Acción Ciudadana Party, Coronado

Oct 2019 – Feb 2020

Municipal Council Candidate

- Served as the youth representative on the ruling party's formula for the Municipal Council in the 2020 elections, engaging in lobbying and collaboration with local representatives and designing a comprehensive development plan for the local government.
- Member of the party's national team for Economy and State Reform, and led local campaign processes.

APO FU Foundation, Malawi / San José

Jan 2019 – Jun 2021

International Fundraising & Awards Coordinator

- Led the international fundraising process, including designing proposals, strategies, and alliances to develop projects, and directed the creation of a new business model and operating strategy for the foundation's educational and fundraising sectors in Costa Rica.
- Coordinated a community-development project in Valle de la Estrella, Limón, overseeing logistics, field visits, budget management, and community and volunteer mobilization.

University of Costa Rica

2014 – 2018

- President, Association of Students of Public Administration (2017).
- Deputy Coordinator, Council of Students of Economic Sciences (2017).
- Student Representative, 2018 Curriculum Redesign Process, Public Administration major (2017).

- Student Representative, School Assembly and Faculty Assembly of Public Administration (2017).
- Moderator, public-innovation workshops, Abrelatam Costa Rica (2017).
- Member, Open Government and Innovation Commission, Federation of Students of the University of Costa Rica (2016).
- Participant, XXV University Student Congress, University of Costa Rica (2017).
- Certificate in Public Management, University of Costa Rica (2014).

Other Civic Engagement

- Member, Local Management Team, Municipality of Vázquez de Coronado — contributed to the Cantonal Plan for Local Human Development and the Municipal Strategic Plan (2015).
- Moderator, participatory workshops for the National Community Development Plan, DINADECO (2015).
- Moderator, participatory workshops for the methodology of the Education Policy for Sustainable Development, Ministry of Public Education (MEP) and UNESCO (2015).

SKILLS

- Software: MS Office — Excel, Word, PowerPoint (advanced); MS Project (advanced); Stata (advanced); Tableau, Power BI (intermediate); Python, R (basic)
- Project Management: Waterfall, Agile, Kanban, PMBOK, and Scrum methodologies (basic–intermediate); Certified in SCRUM Fundamentals
- Research Methods: Difference-in-differences; causal inference; impact evaluation; econometric analysis; mixed-methods and participatory research; cost-benefit analysis; geospatial analysis; design thinking; survey design
- Core Competencies: Leadership; adaptability; teamwork; goal orientation; proactivity
- Language: Spanish (native speaker); English (advanced proficiency; TOEFL iBT 105/120)