

Funding: an update

Published: January 13, 2026, 5:04 am

Earlier this year, as Covid spread, I watched my income disappear. I don't blame anyone for that, but a research appointment was put on hold, seemingly indefinitely; a consultancy contract disappeared, and any hope that my appointment at City, University of London might continue vanished. What had looked to be a pretty stable funding position, built up over time as I knew that leaving full-time academia was on the cards, vanished pretty much overnight.

On the advice of the Joffe Trust, who had been reduced to being the provider of my sole remaining funding at that point, I made an appeal on here for funds. They implied this as a condition of any further support. And I am immensely grateful that many people responded, and so, in turn, did they: providing a grant for the work I have been doing on tax after coronavirus for a submission to parliament, engagement via the videos on this issue, and on further work on government funding which I hope will come to fruition soon.

But I did, of course, apply for other funding. And now it seems that these bids have delivered. A number of things have happened.

First, on the academic front, I have, as previously advised, been appointed as a visiting professor of accounting at Sheffield University Management School. I have also now been appointed as a visiting professor of political economy at City, University of London. These are in addition to my appointment as visiting professor at Anglia Ruskin University in their Global Sustainability Institute.

Second, the work at City has a small consultancy arrangement attached to it related to my ongoing work on an impact case study there, whilst that at Sheffield now has a confirmed contract with Sheffield University Management School attached to it as part of their ESRC funded work for the Productivity Insight Network. This contract is with the Corporate Accountability Network, and is for £35,000 although it is likely that there will be significant disbursements for data costs out of this sum.

And now, again working in association with Sheffield University Management School,

the Corporate Accountability Network has secured a contract for about £30,000 for work to be done on audit reform between now and March 2022. This contract is with [The Luminate Group](#). The Corporate Accountability Network is one of at least seven groups being funded in varying amounts, of which Sheffield University Management School and my old friends at CBS are others. My role is to explain the technical reasons why audit and accounting reform are now required, as well as to provide technical support to others in the project. Again, this is a gross sum: there will be significant disbursement costs for video and other production costs related to this project.

In addition, I have agreed to do some new work with the Fair Tax Mark on its internalisation project. The amount involved is not yet known.

I should add the existing project on sustainable cost accounting with the Joffe Trust also runs into next year now. Work has been going on with regard to this, but as yet largely behind the scenes. That's how research works most of the time.

Four things emerge from this. First, there is new direction to my academic work, and new ideas on several papers arising from the above work are in development. I like that: although I know academic papers are probably the least read part of my work output they impose a discipline that informs the rest of the work.

Second, Sheffield is now my new academic epicentre.

Third, tax is now a fairly small part of my work, with accounting and auditing dominating it. I suspect that this is a trend that will continue. I do, of course, continue to be interested in tax and its development but my concerns and those of funders do not seem to overlap these days. I have changed my twitter profile to reflect this. I no longer say I am a tax justice campaigner: I say I am an economic justice campaigner.

And fourth, I have more funding than I could have dared expect not that long ago. If anybody wants to reconsider donations as a result, I would completely understand. But what I am hoping to do is rethink how I use donations.

One thing I did not expect to do when lockdown began was the video series. Mark Cooney of Spotted in Ely has, so far, been supporting these in the hope that at some time they might be monetised. I will now be discussing with him how we might do this more formally. I now see the videos we've been making appearing on Twitter on a regular basis as people use them to support their arguments. That means that they are working and are improving outreach for the blogging ideas - for which the donations remain the only direct support I have ever had. It's my aim then to use donations to help support this programme of videos now, including some which may well be slicker productions in due course. Comments on this plan would be welcome.

In the meantime, my thanks for your support. It's made a real difference during a period when just where income was to come from looked pretty unclear.