Elton Eduardo Freitas

Postdoctoral Researcher, Center for Collective Learning, IAST, Toulouse School of Economics
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Economist working on the economics of productive transformation and regional development: how firms, productive capabilities, market structures and production networks shape the economic transformation of cities and regions, and how industrial and place-based policies can foster productivity, diversification and inclusive development. I combine large-scale Brazilian administrative data (RAIS, SECEX, CAGED), applied econometrics and economic complexity, with over 15 years of experience across academia, government and industry.

Academic positions

2026-2027	**Postdoctoral Researcher**, Center for Collective Learning, Institute for Advanced Study in Toulouse (IAST), Toulouse School of Economics, France Microfoundations of economic complexity, regional diversification and green productive capabilities. Expected end: April 2027.
2022-now	**Associate Professor (Professor Adjunto)**, Department of Economics and Graduate Programme in Economics (PPGE), Federal University of Sergipe, Brazil Regional Economics and Industrial Economics, undergraduate and graduate; supervision of student research.
2022-now	**Visiting Researcher**, CEDEPLAR, Federal University of Minas Gerais, Brazil
2021-2022	**Substitute Lecturer**, Federal University of Minas Gerais (also 2016-2017)
2010-2015	**Lecturer**, FEAD Centro de Gestão Empreendedora, Belo Horizonte

Education

2019	**PhD in Economics**, CEDEPLAR, Federal University of Minas Gerais Thesis: *Related industries, economic complexity and regional diversification: an application for Brazilian microregions*. UFMG Thesis Award, best thesis in economics (2020).
2012	**MSc in Economics**, CEDEPLAR, Federal University of Minas Gerais Thesis: external economies, urban attributes and productivity in Brazilian microregions, 2000-2010.
2008	**BSc in Economics**, Federal University of Ceará, Magna Cum Laude

Peer-reviewed publications

2026	Queiroz, A., **Freitas, E.** and Romero, J. P. **Economic complexity and local employment multipliers.** *Structural Change and Economic Dynamics* 76: 20-43. doi.org/10.1016/j.strueco.2025.11.005
2025	Silveira, F., Romero, J. P., Queiroz, A., **Freitas, E.** and Stein, A. **Economic complexity and deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon.** *World Development* 185: 106804. doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2024.106804
2024	**Freitas, E.**, Britto, G. and Amaral, P. **Related industries, economic complexity, and regional diversification: an application for Brazilian microregions.** *Papers in Regional Science* 103: 100011. doi.org/10.1016/j.pirs.2024.100011
2024	Romero, J. P., **Freitas, E.**, Silveira, F., Britto, G., Cimini, F. and Jayme Jr., F. **Complexity-based diversification strategies: a new method for ranking promising activities for regional diversification.** *Spatial Economic Analysis* 20(4): 640-663. doi.org/10.1080/17421772.2024.2384744
2024	Ribeiro, L. C., Santos, F., De Moura, F., Montenegro, R. and **Freitas, E. Determinants of tourist employment in Brazilian microregions: a dynamic panel data approach.** *Journal of Regional Science* 64: 1622-1646. doi.org/10.1111/jors.12723

2024 Queiroz, A., Romero, J. P. and **Freitas, E. Relatedness and regional economic complexity: good news for some, bad news for others.** *EconomiA* 25: 264-288. doi.org/10.1108/econ-11-2023-0185

2024 Lopes, C., Romero, J. P. and **Freitas, E. Smart diversification strategies differentiated by countries' complexity.** *CEPAL Review* 143: 127-147. doi.org/10.18356/16840348-2024-143-7

2023 Queiroz, A., Romero, J. P. and **Freitas, E. Economic complexity and employment in Brazilian states.** *CEPAL Review* 139: 177-196. doi.org/10.18356/16840348-2023-139-9

2019 Britto, G., Romero, J. P., **Freitas, E.** and Coelho, C. **The great divide: economic complexity and development paths in Brazil and the Republic of Korea.** *CEPAL Review* 127: 191-213. doi.org/10.18356/d06fff2f-en

2017 Gala, P., Camargo, J. and **Freitas, E. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) was right: scale-free complex networks and core-periphery patterns in world trade.** *Cambridge Journal of Economics* 42: 633-651. doi.org/10.1093/cje/bex057

Ongoing research projects

2025-now **Lithium batteries in Brazil: markets, impact and feasibility of a plant**. Researcher (R&D fellow). SENAI/PE, Rota 2030 programme.

2026-2027 **Observatory of the New Industry Brazil in the Northeast (DataNordeste panel)**. Coordination, with UFCG. SUDENE.

2024-2026 **Textile supply chain in Sergipe**. Coordinator. FAPITEC/SE.

2024-now **Regional development and vocational training: productive arrangements in Sergipe**. Coordinator. FAPITEC/SE.

2024-now **Evaluation of ISCON, the Sebrae small business confidence index**. Coordinator. Sebrae/MG.

2024-now **Green and inclusive smart diversification strategies**. Member. Coordinated by J. P. Romero, CEDEPLAR/UFMG.

2024-now **Economic complexity and smart specialisation**. Member. Coordinated by G. Britto; CNPq.

2024-now **DataViva: productive development and social transformation**. Member. Coordinated by G. Britto; FAPEMIG.

Policy and professional experience

2021-2022 **Competitive Intelligence Product Manager**, Industry Observatory, Federation of Industries of Ceará (FIEC)
Led the portfolio of sectoral and economic studies for Ceará's industrial strategy and the use of quantitative methods.

2020-2021 **Business Analyst**, Euvaldo Lodi Institute (IEL/FIEMG)
Sectoral and market research and strategic intelligence for industrial firms.

2019-2020 **Technical Adviser**, State Audit Court of Minas Gerais (TCE-MG)
Advised on the creation of a public policy evaluation unit.

2017-2019 **Consultant, Development and Research**, Gove
Studies on economic development, productive diversification and complexity; georeferenced data platforms for public and social-impact decisions.

2017 **Technical Adviser, Market Intelligence**, INDI, Minas Gerais investment and trade agency
Built the Strategic Market Map for Minas Gerais exports.

2013-2017 **DataViva**, Government of Minas Gerais (Office of Strategic Priorities) and FAPEMIG
Managed development and content of dataviva.info, an open platform of Brazilian economic data, with César Hidalgo's team; defined its economic models and business rules.

2019-now **Consultant**, Fundação IPEAD
Studies for Sebrae/MG, CGEE, the City of Belo Horizonte and federal ministries.

Awards and distinctions

2026	**FIEMG Economics Prize**, 2nd place, with Y. N. Santos and G. Britto
2026	**ABEIN Paper Prize in Industrial Economics and Innovation**, 2nd place, X ENEI
2020	**UFMG Thesis Award**, best thesis, Graduate Programme in Economics
2015	**CNI Economics Prize**, 1st place, Brazilian Industry category
2015	**19th Banco do Nordeste Regional Economics Prize**, 3rd place
2012	**CNI Economics Prize**, 1st place
2012	**17th Brazil Economics Prize**, 2nd place, Federal Council of Economics
2012	**16th Regional Economics Prize**, 3rd place, master's dissertation category, Banco do Nordeste and ANPEC
2009	**Magna Cum Laude**, Federal University of Ceará
2008	**12th BNB Regional Economics Prize**, 2nd place, professional category
2008	**Germana Amaral de Morais Prize**, 1st place, 27th Scientific Initiation Meeting, UFC

Skills and languages

- **Methods:** applied econometrics and causal inference (panel data, difference-in-differences, shift-share), economic complexity, network and spatial analysis.
- **Data:** Brazilian administrative and trade microdata (RAIS, CAGED, SECEX, Census, Base dos Dados); reproducible pipelines.
- **Software:** Python, R, Stata, SQL/BigQuery, Neo4j; D3Plus, Power BI.
- **Languages:** Portuguese (native), English (full professional proficiency).
- **Referee for:** World Development, Journal of Regional Science, Spatial Economic Analysis, EPJ Data Science, among others.

References available on request. Updated November 2026.