

PROMOTION RECOMMENDATION  
The University of Michigan  
Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy

Megan E. Tompkins-Stange, assistant professor of public policy, Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy, is recommended for promotion to associate professor of public policy, with tenure, Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D.	2013	Stanford University, Education Policy and Organization Studies
Ed.M.	2004	Harvard University, Administration, Planning and Social Policy
B.A.	2003	Stanford University, History, Literature and the Arts, with honors

Professional Record:

2020-Present	Scientific Committee, ESSEC Business School
2018-2019	Visiting Professor, La Chaire Philanthropie, ESSEC Business School
2015-Present	Assistant Professor of Public Policy, Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy, Faculty Affiliate, Poverty Solutions at the University of Michigan, Faculty Affiliate, Education Policy Initiative, Faculty Affiliate, Youth Policy Lab
2014-2015	Lecturer IV, Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy Faculty Co-Director, Nonprofit and Public Management Center
2011-2014	Lecturer III, Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy

Summary of Evaluation

Teaching: Professor Tompkins-Stange has a truly exceptional teaching record. Throughout both her service as a lecturer and as an assistant professor, she has routinely registered some of the very strongest teaching evaluations in the Ford School. This performance ranges over 27 courses, all but seven of which were required core courses for either the MPP/MPA or BA program. In 2018, she was recognized with the Provost's Teaching Innovation Prize for one of the courses she developed. She has also supervised 28 independent study or directed readings courses, worked closely with four PhD students as advisor, mentor, or cognate, and served on two external dissertation committees.

Research: Professor Tompkins-Stange is a pioneering scholar on the role of philanthropic foundations in the arena of educational policy in the United States. This is an area of ever-growing policy significance but one in which existing scholarship has been largely confined to historical and archival-based research due to highly limited access to foundation operations. Much of her research to date has involved engaging new methods to move behind the closed doors of these institutions and make extensive use of elite interviews to illuminate key patterns of decision making while contributing to the development of theory. Her works speaks not only directly to issues of philanthropy, but also to American governance, non-profit management, and education policy.

### Recent and Significant Publications:

- Tompkins-Stange, M. With Sarah Reckhow. Value Added: How Teacher Evaluation Became A Big Idea. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press under contract
- Tompkins-Stange, M. Policy Patrons: Philanthropy, Education Reform, and the Politics of Influence. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press. 2016
- Reckhow, S.,\* Tompkins-Stange, M.,\* and Galey, S. “What Drove Support for Teacher Evaluation in Federal Policy Debates? How the Political Economy of Knowledge Production Shapes Education Policy.” *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*. 2021
- Reckhow, S.\* and Tompkins-Stange, M.\* Financing the education policy discourse: Funders as catalysts in policy networks. *Interest Groups and Advocacy* 7(3): 258-288. 2018
- Brandner, C.,\* Bromley, P.,\* and Tompkins-Stange, M.\* “Walk the line:” How institutional influences constrain elites. Lounsbury, M. (ed.), *Research in the Sociology of Organizations* 48(B): 281- 309. 2016
- Quinn, R.,\* Tompkins-Stange, M.\*, and Meyerson, D. “Beyond grantmaking: Philanthropic foundations as agents of change and institutional entrepreneurs.” *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* 43(6): 950-968. 2014

Service: Professor Tompkins-Stange is an active and engaged member of the Ford School Community, the broader University of Michigan community, and her profession through her service work. She plays a particularly crucial role in the Ford School curriculum around both nonprofit and public management and values and ethics, serving as the faculty lead for the Values and Ethics undergraduate curriculum committee (2017-present) and the faculty lead for the nonprofit and public management MPP concentration (2019-present). She has also served on the Bachelors Program Committee and the Masters Program Committee. Professor Tompkins-Stange is a member of the American Educational Research Association (AERA) where she has been heavily involved in governance. She served as the program chair for AERA Division on Education Policy and Politics during 2019-2020. She has also served as the chair for governance, politics, and intergovernmental relations and as the secretary-treasurer and president of the AERA special interest group on philanthropy and education.

### External Reviewers:

Reviewer A: “Taken together, Dr. Tompkins-Stange has developed a coherent body of research on a timely and important topic that is centrally related to understanding of policymaking processes. Her approach to qualitative methods appears to be rigorous and systematic and has been enhanced in recent publications by integrating qualitative methods with social network and other approaches to quantitative analysis. Dr. Tompkins-Stange is exactly where you would want an early career scholar to be as she or he stands for a tenure review. Her work is solid and getting more sophisticated with each project.”

Reviewer B: “It is my assessment that this evidence clearly demonstrates that Dr. Tompkins-Stange is a scholar with a national reputation and exceeds the criteria for the rank of Associate Professor. I am appreciative of the significant topics she undertakes for her research agenda and the collaborative nature with which she publishes.”

Reviewer C: “Dr. Tompkins-Stange is one of the nation’s leading [junior] scholars of philanthropy. Interest in this trillion-dollar-plus ‘industry’ is growing, and research will be

desperately needed to advance the twin goals of maximizing philanthropy's positive social impact and enhancing its democratic accountability. Dr. Tompkins-Stange is poised to shape research and policy ideas as scholars and policymakers are forced to grapple with elite philanthropy as a consequential political institution."

Reviewer D: "After reviewing the Ford School's criteria for tenure and Professor Tompkins-Stange's record of scholarship, I believe she easily meets the criteria and merits tenure. Professor Tompkins-Stange is among the top junior scholars (and really scholars at any level) in the study of modern foundations and public policy. Her work is well-known and well regarded among scholars of nonprofits, philanthropy and civic engagement and her work has already been extremely influential in the development of the field. I rarely make this kind of categorical statement in a tenure case but in Professor Tompkins-Stange's case it is clearly true."

Reviewer E: "A third characteristic [of her work] is a methodological stance that includes both qualitative and quantitative analysis and is oriented more toward building theory than hypothesis testing. Professor Tompkins-Stange herself is probably more oriented toward qualitative analysis, as indicated in her major sole-authored projects like *Policy Patrons*. She has found ways to get access to organizations that are not always happy to have folks looking behind their curtains. She's a deft interviewer and a subtle analyst of interviews, able to distinguish between open and revealing statements and canned responses by subjects who are trying to sell her a line. Her accounts uncover parallels and contrasts that others might miss."

Reviewer F: "Megan has produced a remarkable body of policy scholarship in the general area of philanthropy, civil society and public policy. I consider her, and I believe she is considered by my senior colleagues in the field, one of the two or three leading scholars nationally in this field."

Reviewer G: "It is imperative that I highlight the fact that from her journal publication record alone, although it may appear that the quantity of articles Dr. Tompkins-Stange has produced over a nearly 10-year span does not amount to the quantity one might expect over this time period, the quality and relevance of her work in *Policy Patrons* more than makes up for any lulls or lack of quantity in journal publications. Moreover, although unpublished works are generally not (directly) considered in tenure and promotion decisions, I believe that it is also important to highlight that Dr. Tompkins-Stange currently has a co-authored book under contract with University of Chicago Press. As such, I am convinced that the Dr. Tompkins-Stange is committed to *continuing* scholarly productivity, quality, and growth."

Reviewer H: "The Michigan tenure criteria say that candidates are expected to have achieved national recognition among leaders in her field. I would say that Professor Tompkins-Stange has accomplished that. Along with Sarah Reckhow, she is one of the two leading scholars on educational philanthropy. It is not that highly populated a field, perhaps because it is so difficult to gain access, but her and Sarah's work are the clear go-to on the topic."

Reviewer I: "Professor Tompkins-Stange's rigorous, qualitative approach in her book *Policy Patrons* and in her peer reviewed articles helps her work bring new light to enduring puzzles. It is important to bear in mind that this approach is both extraordinarily difficult and extraordinarily time consuming. No part of her data comes easily off-the-shelf. Yet, through this labor-

intensive process, Tompkins-Stange amasses truly original data that enable her to open new terrain and extend how we understand the grant-making process in the United States. Relying on her high quality, labor-intensive methodological approach, Tompkins-Stange's impressive and consistent pipeline of work offers a strong signal that her research agenda will make innovative contributions for years to come."

Reviewer J: "Reviewing the papers sent to me confirmed my previous reading and impressions that Dr. Tompkins-Stange is an insightful and talented scholar. I am particularly struck by the degree of innovation, rigor, and art that I see across her work. *Innovation* in that her book and related publications were early trendsetters in a vibrant new literature; *rigor* in that that it is incredibly rare to receive the access she does for her work, especially from such large and prominent foundations, and her qualitative work is rich, grounded, and advancing theory; and *art* in that this is work that is simply quite interesting as well as written and presented in a compelling style."

Summary of Recommendation: Professor Tompkins-Stange is a leading scholar at the intersection of philanthropy and education policy, making important and original contributions. She has successfully expanded and enriched Ford School curricular offerings at the intersection of public management, values and ethics, and philanthropy. She is an excellent teacher and a valued colleague. Her work has been recognized with several accolades, including the Provost's Teaching Innovation Prize (2018), and the Henry Russel Award (2020), which is the University of Michigan's highest honor for faculty at the early-to-mid stages of their career. I am pleased to recommend Megan E. Tompkins-Stange for promotion to associate professor of public policy, with tenure, Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy.



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Michael S. Barr  
Joan and Sanford Weill Dean of Public Policy  
Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy

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