



Roger Myerson

ECONOMIST · NOBEL PRIZE LAUREATE

Senior teams routinely have to set rules, contracts and incentives for parties who know things they will not share and whose interests do not fully align with the firm's. Auctions, supplier contracts, sales compensation, internal capital allocation and partnership governance all fail in the same way: the rules reward the wrong behaviour because they were designed without a model of how informed agents will actually game them. The question is not how to motivate people. It is how to design the rules so that telling the truth and acting in the firm's interest become the rational choice.

Roger Myerson is the University of Chicago economist whose Nobel-winning work on mechanism design gives leaders a rigorous framework for designing rules, contracts and incentives when the other side knows more than they do.

Roger Myerson's 2026 Biography

Why organisations work with Roger Myerson

- He is one of three living architects of mechanism design, the field that won the 2007 Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences and now underpins serious thinking on auction design, procurement, regulation and incentive contracts.
- His revelation principle and revenue-equivalence results are not abstractions for a senior team setting bid rules, supplier contracts or commission structures. They tell you when an incentive system can be made truth-telling at all, and when no rule will work without changing the information environment.
- He occupies the David L. Pearson Distinguished Service Professorship in Global Conflict Studies at Chicago, which means his second body of work, on political leadership, federalism and post-conflict state-building, is directly relevant to boards exposed to weak-institution markets.
- His textbook *Game Theory: Analysis of Conflict* has trained a generation of economists, regulators and strategists, which makes him unusually effective with audiences who already speak some of the language and want the original source rather than a popularisation.
- Past president of both the Econometric Society and the Game Theory Society, member of the National Academy of Sciences, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the Council on Foreign Relations: a level of peer recognition that travels into board rooms and policy settings without further explanation.

AVAILABLE FOR

- Guest Appearance
- Speaking

ROGER'S SPEAKING THEMES

- Behavioural Economics
- Business Strategy & Growth
- Economic Forecasting
- Geopolitics
- Risk Management

LANGUAGES: English

Biography highlights

- Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences, 2007, shared with Leonid Hurwicz and Eric Maskin for the foundations of mechanism design theory.
- David L. Pearson Distinguished Service Professor of Global Conflict Studies, University of Chicago, with appointments in the Harris School of Public Policy and the Kenneth C. Griffin Department of Economics.
- PhD in applied mathematics, Harvard University, supervised by Kenneth Arrow; twenty-five years on the faculty at Northwestern's Kellogg School of Management before moving to Chicago in 2001.
- Author of *Game Theory: Analysis of Conflict* (Harvard University Press) and *Probability Models for Economic Decisions* (now in a second edition with MIT Press).
- Past President of the Econometric Society (2009) and the Game Theory Society (2012 to 2014); Jean-Jacques Laffont Prize, 2009.
- Member of the National Academy of Sciences, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the American Philosophical Society and the Council on Foreign Relations.

Biography

Most rules inside an organisation are written as if everyone has the same information and roughly aligned interests. Procurement contracts, sales commissions, internal capital allocation, joint-venture terms: the rule is set, and then people behave as the rule incentivises them to behave, which is rarely what the designer intended. Mechanism design is the formal answer to that problem, and Roger Myerson is one of the three economists who built it.

The 2007 Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences recognised that body of work, shared with Leonid Hurwicz and Eric Maskin. Within it, two of Myerson's results carry the most operational weight. The revelation principle tells designers when a system can in principle be made truth-telling. The revenue-equivalence theorem, derived in his auction work, tells sellers when superficially different bidding rules produce the same outcome and when they do not. Senior teams designing auctions, bid processes or contracts use these ideas whether they cite him or not.

His training is Harvard, applied mathematics, supervised by Kenneth Arrow. The career sat at Northwestern's Kellogg School for twenty-five years before he moved to the University of Chicago in 2001, where he now holds the David L. Pearson Distinguished Service Professorship in Global Conflict Studies, with joint appointments in the Harris School of Public Policy and the Griffin Department of Economics. *Game Theory: Analysis of Conflict*, published by Harvard University Press in 1991, remains a standard graduate text.

The Pearson chair signals the second arc of his work. Over the past fifteen years he has applied the same incentive-and-information lens to political institutions: how leaders build reputations, how federal structures change the supply of credible politicians, how post-conflict states succeed or fail at building durable government. For boards with serious exposure to weak-institution markets, that is a different and rarer kind of advisor than a geopolitical commentator.

Key speaking topics

- Mechanism design and incentive systems under asymmetric information
- Auction design and competitive bidding
- Game theory for strategy and negotiation
- Contract and procurement design
- Political economy of leadership and state-building
- Federalism and the design of democratic institutions

Ideal for

- Boards and executive teams designing auctions, bid processes, procurement frameworks or major partnership contracts.
- CSOs, CFOs and corporate development leaders working on incentive structures, internal capital allocation or commission and bonus design.
- Regulators, central bank teams and policy bodies working on market design, spectrum or asset auctions, and institutional reform.
- Leadership teams of multinationals with substantive exposure to weak-institution or post-conflict markets.

Audience outcomes

- A working understanding of mechanism design as a tool for setting rules when the other side knows more than you do.
- The ability to recognise when an auction, bid or contract structure is fighting against the information environment rather than working with it.
- A clearer view of where incentive design can solve a coordination problem and where the underlying information asymmetry has to be changed first.
- A grounded perspective on how political incentives shape the operating environment in fragile or institutionally weak markets.
- Direct exposure to one of the three living architects of the field, with the precision that brings to questions teams are usually forced to answer with intuition.

Roger Myerson's Videos



