NBER Entrepreneurship Research Boot Camp 2018

Applicant: Wendy Chen

Ph.D. Student in Entrepreneurship

George Mason University

Wendy Chen
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Reference: Zoltan J. Acs, Ph.D.
Email: zacs@gmu.edu

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to express my strong interest in joining the 2018 NBER entrepreneurship research boot camp which I believe will greatly enhance my understanding of the economics of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial finance.

Hailing from China, I was an entrepreneur myself in the fashion industry where I learned firsthand about the challenges of being an entrepreneur. In addition, my experiences in writing and reporting for an entrepreneurship magazine allowed me to observe why some nascent startups can overcome the odds in their journeys to success and provided me with a unique perspective in conducting entrepreneurship research.

These experiences also led me to my current studies in entrepreneurship and policy in the PhD program at George Mason University under the guidance of Dr. Zoltan Acs. I am very amazed by the question why some startups can evolve into high-impact companies while the majority cannot. More specifically, as one of the earliest attempts, I examine the impact of early entrepreneurial ecosystems during teenage years on high-tech entrepreneurship. In addition, I plan on investigating why female-led ventures are less likely to be recognized than those founded by men and how international businesses can be competitive in the US in my dissertation.

My research would greatly benefit from this boot camp which will help facilitate my understanding of the economics of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial finance. The readings and discussions surrounding the leading entrepreneurship research will certainly help me develop a strong theoretical understanding and expose me to cutting-edge methods in the entrepreneurship literature that will be employed in my dissertation and research papers. More importantly, getting a chance to learn from and discuss with the top entrepreneurship scholars would surely open my view and give a clearer direction for my future research. Attending this program will not only help me in terms of research but will be pivotal to my future teaching in the domain of entrepreneurship. Therefore, I am looking forward to joining the boot camp this summer and thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Wendy Chen

Wendy Chen

Curriculum Vitae

Schar School of Policy and Government
George Mason University
3351 Fairfax Dr., Arlington, VA 22201

Email: wendychen0316@gmail.com

EDUCATION

Ph.D. in Entrepreneurship and Public Policy, George Mason University, VA (expected 2020)
M.A. in Sociology, University of North Carolina—Chapel Hill
M.A. in Asian Studies, Washington University in St. Louis
B.A. in Interdisciplinary Studies, Fudan University, Shanghai, China (The most prestigious program of the university; Top 3 university in the country)

RESEARCH INTERESTS

- Economics of Entrepreneurship
- Entrepreneurial Finance
- Entrepreneurship in Asia
- Adolescent Entrepreneurship
- Female-led Entrepreneurship
- Entrepreneurship policy
- Labor market and Entrepreneurship
- Management of Entrepreneurship
- Research methodology

RESEARCH AND PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES

2016-present:	Research Assistant, Schar School of Policy and Government, George Mason University
2014-2016:	Research Assistant, Sociology, University of North Carolina—Chapel Hill
2011-2012:	Research Assistant, Center for Labor, Human Services, and Population, the Urban Institute, Washington, DC
2010-2011:	Policy Researcher for the U.S. Congress, Washington, DC
2010:	Student Research Fellow for the Hudson Institute, Washington, DC
2005-2009:	Part-time Chinese Culture and Language Instructor, US Consulate General, China
2007-2009:	Co-founder, Minshen Fashion Consulting Company
2008:	Business Analyst for McKinsey Consulting Group, China
2006-2007:	Public Relations Assistant, Ogily&Mather, China
2005-2006:	Special Reporter for *Liberation Daily*, Shanghai, China (Top 2 national newspaper in the country)

2004: Journalist for the *Shanghai Manager* Magazine, China

HONORS AND AWARDS

2018: Emerging Scholar Fellowship, Interdisciplinary Social Sciences Research Network
2018: Hayek Fund for Scholars Award
2017-2018: Daniel Searle Foundation Fellowship
2017: Emerging Scholar Award, International Conference on Interdisciplinary Social Sciences
2017: Daniel Druckman Fellowship Finalist
2017: Doctoral Student Research Travel Grant, George Mason University
2017: Conference Accommodation Award, International Conference on Public Policy
2016-2017: John William Pope Foundation Fellowship Winner
2016 Doctoral Student Research Travel Grant, George Mason University
2015-2016: John William Pope Foundation Fellowship Winner
2010-2011: Washington Scholar
2009-2011: Tuition Scholarship and Teaching Assistantship Award, Washington University in St. Louis
2006: National Classical Literature Scholarship
2006: People's Scholarship for Excellent Undergraduate Student, Fudan University
2006: L'Oréal Global Universities Business Competition: 2nd Prize
2005: People's Scholarship for Excellent Undergraduate Student, Fudan University
2005: Red Flag Journalism Prize, *Liberation Daily*
2004: Lipton Campus Poem Competition Winner, Fudan University
2004: People's Scholarship for Excellent Undergraduate Student, Fudan University
2004: Creative Prize of the Poem Competition for the New Year hosted by *Xinmin Evening Newspaper*

PUBLICATIONS

"Class Debate to Improve Class Participation Quality." 2015. *Teaching Resources and Innovations Library for Sociology*. American Sociological Association.

"Peer Influence on Obesity-Related Health Risk Behaviors and Body Mass Index—A Natural Experiment of Randomly—Assigned College Roommates" (accepted). 2016. *American Journal of Sociological Research*, 6(1).

"Marriage, Family Structure, and Children's Educational Attainment" (with Patrick F. Fagan and Leonie Ten Have). 2011. *Marri Research*. Marriage and Research Institute.

"Book Review: Virginia M. Brennan, Shiriki K. Kumanyika, & Ruth Enid Zambrana ed. *Obesity Interventions in Underserved Communities*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014. $44.95. pp. 398. Paper. ISBN: 9781421415444." 2017. *World Medical & Health Policy.*

WORKING PAPER

"Lessons from 'Black Swans': The Effect of an Early Tech Learning Ecosystem on High-Tech Entrepreneurship"

CONFERENCE PAPER PRESENTATIONS

Chen, Wendy. 2018. "What Makes the Next High-Tech Entrepreneur?" Darden-Cambridge Judge-HKU FBE Entrepreneurship and Innovation Conference (poster session). *Hongkong*.

Chen, Wendy. 2018**.** "Are Unequal Educational Outcomes Caused by Imbalanced Spending Distribution on Education? Lessons from Cross-Country Comparison." Association for Education Finance and Policy Annual Meeting. *Portland, Oregon*.

Chen, Wendy. 2018. "Are Unequal Educational Outcomes Caused by Imbalanced Spending Distribution on Education? Lessons from Cross-Country Comparison." American Society of Public Administration Annual Conference**.** *Denver, Colorado.*

Chen, Wendy. 2017. "Chinese School District Reform and Educational Inequality." 2017, International Conference on Interdisciplinary Social Sciences, *Hiroshima, Japan*.

Chen, Wendy. 2017. "All-Round Education Reform in China." 2017, International Conference on Public Policy, *Singapore*.

Chen, Wendy. 2017. "Where Do They Belong? The Effect Western College Expansion Policy Has on International Migration and the Job Market." Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management International Conference. *Brussels, Belgium.*

Chen, Wendy. 2017. "We the Teachers"—Innovative Course Assessment Strategy for Political Science." American Political Science Association T&L Annual Conference, *Long Beach, California*.

Chen, Wendy. 2016. "Peer Influence on Obesity-Related Health Risk Behaviors and Body Mass Index—A Natural Experiment of Randomly-Assigned College Roommates." Annual Meeting of Population Association of America, *Washington, DC*.

Chen, Wendy. 2011. "Children's Politics in China's Cultural Revolution." Northeastern University *Boston, MA.*

Chen, Wendy. 2011. "Social Policy Change in Higher Education and the Transformation of Urban Marriage in China." Washington University in *St. Louis, Missouri.*

Chen, Wendy. 2011. "From Mistress-Maid Tensions in *Jiaohong ji*—a Pre-Modern Chinese Play—to Mother-Nanny Conflicts in the Modern World." 2010, Graduate Student Symposium, Washington University, *St. Louis, Missouri*.

Chen, Wendy. 2007.Time and Space: The Study of Xietiao's Mountains-and-rivers Poems." Social Science Academic Annual Meeting, *Shanghai, China*.

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCES AND ACADEMIC SERVICES

2018:	Paper Submission Reviewer, Academy of Management Annual Meeting
2018:	Paper Submission Reviewer, East Academy of Management Annual Meeting
2018:	Conference Paper Proposal Reviewer, Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management (APPAM)

2018:	Conference Panel Discussant, Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management (APPAM) DC regional Annual Conference
2017:	Conference Coordinator, Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management (APPAM)
2017:	Conference Panel Chair and Moderator, International Conference on Interdisciplinary Social Sciences
2017- present:	Chair for the PhD Research Workshop, Schar School of Policy and Government, George Mason University
2017- present:	Chair for the PhD Conference Committee, Schar School of Policy and Government, George Mason University
2009-2011:	Department Representative of the Graduate Student Senate and Graduate Professional Student Council, Washington University in St. Louis
2003-2006:	Editor of *Fudan Weekly* and President of the Academic Division of the Student Union, Fudan University
2003-2005:	Vice President of the Speech and Debating Association, Fudan University

JOURNAL MANUSCRIPT REFEREE

Small Business Economics
International Journal of Educational Organization and Leadership

TEACHING EXPERIENCES

GRADUATE LEVEL

Macroeconomic Policy and Global Economy, Teaching Assistant, Schar School of Policy and Government, George Mason University
Entrepreneurship/Economic Development, Teaching Assistant, Schar School of Policy and Government, George Mason University
Multivariate Statistical Analysis in Public Policy, Teaching Assistant & Guest Lecturer, Schar School of Policy and Government, George Mason University (PhD level)
Research Design for Public Policy, Teaching Assistant & Guest Speaker, Schar School of Policy and Government, George Mason University (PhD-level course)
Advanced Statistical Methods for Policy Analysis, Teaching Assistant & Guest Lecturer, Schar School of Policy and Government, George Mason University (PhD-level course)
Statistical Analysis for Public Policy, Guest Lecturer, Schar School of Policy and Government, George Mason University

UNDERGRADUATE LEVEL

Human Societies, Solo Instructor, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill (with excellent teaching evaluation)
Social Relations at Work, Solo Instructor, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill (with excellent teaching evaluation)
Contemporary Chinese Society, Teaching Assistant, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill
Family and Society, Teaching Assistant, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill

Chinese Language, Teaching Assistant, Washington University in St. Louis

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

Academy of Management
American Society for Public Administration
Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management

ECONOMETRIC AND STATISTICAL SKILLS

Econometrics	Linear Regression Modeling
Data Collection and Data Mining	Survival Analysis
Social Network Analysis	Hierarchical Modeling
Spatial Econometrics	Factor and Cluster Analysis
Structural Equation Modeling	Longitudinal Data Analysis
Large Database Management	Random Experiment Design

OTHER SKILLS

Languages: Native in Chinese (Standard Mandarin and Shanghai Dialects – translation as well)
Proficient in English
Middle-level in Japanese
Statistical packages and Software: STATA, R, SAS, MPlus, and ArcGIS
Programs: Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, and PowerPoint)
Field Research Abilities: Excellent Interview and Observation Skills

SELECTED RELEVANT COURSES TAKEN IN THE PHD PROGRAM

Organizational Behavior	A+
Entrepreneurship/Economic Development	A+
Managerial Microeconomics	A
Regional Economic Development	A
Research Design of Public Policy	A
Multivariate Statistics Analysis	A+
Advanced Statistical Methods	A
Seminar in Public Policy	A
Social entrepreneurship (this semester)	

Application Essay

The insurmountable impact of entrepreneurship on global economy has been witnessed throughout the world and has astonished people for decades. Growing up in a large city in China, I can still vividly recall the picture of people lining up to receive a regulated amount of rice and flour in front of a designated granary during the planned economy era when I was little. Over the recent years, thanks to the open market policy, I have seen how modern entrepreneurship influenced by the West has revolutionized the quality of life for the masses in my hometown.

In the West, the mushrooming of high-tech unicorns has not only pushed the economy to a new level but also led entrepreneurship research to a different stage. While many are fascinated by the quick success that a number of unicorn companies have achieved, how those companies reached what many would call the quintessential definition of success remains an elusive enigma. To me, entrepreneurship including the traditional routine entrepreneurship (e.g. small retail stores etc.) serves a positive role in an economy. However, it is yet to be discovered why some startup ventures can be turned into high-impact businesses while the vast majority cannot. I am therefore very interested in exploring the "secret sauce" that sets these young unicorn companies apart from the pack and if that secret sauce can be replicable.

Currently, I have been delving into large data sources of entrepreneur biographical information and investigating the impact that an early entrepreneurial ecosystem surrounding an individual exerts on the propensity of his/her becoming an entrepreneur in a high-tech field later. In addition, I check the robustness of the findings by using a representative longitudinal dataset. Nevertheless, because it is one of the earliest attempts to explore this issue, I would like to have a more thorough grasp of the existing entrepreneurship literature, which I believe the NBER entrepreneurship boot camp could certainly help me achieve. The extensive reading of the leading topics related to entrepreneurship will help me develop a solid theoretical understanding of entrepreneurship which I can build upon in my own research.

Additionally, I plan on examining why female-led companies are less likely to be recognized than the ventures owned by men and why it is harder for international ventures to scale quickly on American soil in my future research. I have finished all the course work and am currently preparing for the dissertation proposal. Therefore, it would be great timing for me to join the boot camp, through which I will develop a better understanding of the entrepreneurship literature, formulate questions, solicit feedback, and have a clear direction of my dissertation.

As an entrepreneur myself and a journalist for an entrepreneurship magazine, I observed multiple times that whether one venture can be influential or not has a lot to do with entrepreneurs' critical decision making on entrepreneurial finance. Therefore, it is very necessary for me to have deep comprehension of both entrepreneurship economics and entrepreneurial finance to examine my research questions. I am very pleased to learn that the NBER entrepreneurship research boot camp offers the opportunity to introduce the leading literature in both areas. I am eager to read the over 50 papers prior to the boot camp and look forward to the fruitful discussions and lessons I will learn.

In addition, by going through the readings and joining the discussions at the boot camp, I believe that I will be able to learn cutting-edge research methods and new perspectives that I can apply to my future research on entrepreneurship. By doing so, I hope to be able to hone my methodological skills even further.

More importantly, I am eager to join the boot camp to learn from the leading scholars in the field directly. I would like to get their advice on my current and future projects and be able to discuss their research projects as well. It would be a very exciting learning experience that I would remember for my whole career. I would also like to meet other fellows who will attend the boot camp and exchange ideas with them to enhance my network of entrepreneurship scholars.

Entrepreneurship has been the linchpin of the economy and is one of the prime examples of an embodiment of the human spirit. For that reason, it is crucial for the field to be studied and to develop new ways to foster this manifestation as the gift that it is. I am therefore determined to incorporate the knowledge that I will learn from the boot camp in my studies to further the state of entrepreneurship studies. In addition, I will use the knowledge to facilitate my future teaching in entrepreneurship as well.

The NBER entrepreneurship research boot camp has been running for over ten years, and many past fellows who were once trained by the boot camp have now become successful scholars in the domain of entrepreneurship studies. Therefore, I would like to follow in their footsteps and join the boot camp. I appreciate your consideration very much.

To: NBER Boot Camp

From: Zoltan J. Acs, University Professor, George Mason University

RE: Letter of recommendation for Wendy Chen

Date: March 30, 2018

I would like to recommend Wendy Chen for the NBER Boot Camp 2018. Wendy is a second year PhD student in the policy school. She was a student of mine last semester in my class on Entrepreneurship and Economic Development. I am also her dissertation advisor. Wendy has an impressive background with several degrees from prestigious schools and an extensive work experience. I have been very impressed with her intellectual curiosity and methodological capabilities. She is totally self- motivated, most things you only have to tell her once and she does three of them. She is quick and gets things the first time. Here intellectual curiosity goes beyond the normal graduate student interest and her intellectual curiosity is boundless. She is also technically very good.

I gave an assignment that most students have never been able to figure out. How does a 22 year old start of $22 billion company in 22 months? She came back with an answer that was impressive, methodologically solid, statistically sophisticated and theoretically sound. As you can see she is knowledgeable in statistical packages and willing to learn what she does not know. She is interested in entrepreneurship, psychology and education policy. The particular puzzle she is interested in is the role of the middle and high school organizational ecosystem as it might produce students that start billion dollar companies in college. This experience starts in high school or sometimes even in middle school. She has teased this out with a national survey data that tracks students over time and follows up later on in life. This approach can be used to study entrepreneurs vs workers, gender etc. It might just be that like most things entrepreneurship is dependent on the educational ecosystem early on in one's life. The summer institute would allow Wendy to test her ideas, learn new methods and theories and put her research in perspective. I also think the Summer School would be strengthened by per participation. She is pure energy.

Wendy to explore broadly the organizational role of this entrepreneurial ecosystem and examine its impact on how individuals in their early twenties are able to create technologically sophisticated organizations from apparel almost nothing. She would be a great asset to the summer institute as she is perfectly fluent in English and can easily engage with other students and faculty.

Her research has the potential to open up a black box that up to now has been more or less ignored or studied only in fits and starts.

In sum she has my highest recommendation that I seldom give.