Cover Letter

Ruichi Xiong

March 13, 2020

Applicant Name :	Ruichi Xiong
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Recommendation Letter Writer :	Professor April Franco

Ruichi Xiong

March 8, 2020

Contact

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Research Interests

Entrepreneurship, Innovation, Economic Geography and Trade,

Current Education

Rotman School of Management,
University of Toronto,
Toronto, Canada

PhD Candidate., Management (Economic Analysis and Policy Area), 2018.8 - Present

Previous Education

Centro de Estudios Monetarios y Financieros (CEMFI), Madrid, Spain

M.Phil., Economics and Finance, 2018.7

Central University of Finance and Economics, Beijing, China

M.A., Economics, 2016.7

Hubei University, Wuhan, China

B.A., Chu Cai Class of Liberal Arts, 2012.7
B.A., Economics, 2012.7

RA Experience

CEMFI, for Prof. **Monica Martinez-Bravo** 2017.8 - 2017.9
University of Toronto, for Prof. **Daniel Trefler** 2019.6 - Present
University of Toronto, for Prof. **Loren Brandt** 2019.6 - Present

Awards and Scholarships

CEMFI Master Full Scholarship 2016.9 - 2018.7
University of Toronto Tuition Fellowship - Management 2018.8 - Present
University of Toronto Fellowship - Management 2018.8 - Present
Rotman School of Management Dean's Fellowship 2018.8 - 2020.8
Rotman School of Management Moving Grant 2018.8
Distinction in Microeconomics Comprehensive Exam (U of T Econ) 2019.7

Languages

Chinese(Native), English(Fluent)

Computer Skills

Stata, LaTeX, Matlab, ArcGIS, Python (Basic)

List of PhD Courses

Ruichi Xiong

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Completed PhD Courses:

Microeconomic Theory I (PhD)

Macroeconomic Theory I (phD)

Econometric I (PhD)

Microeconomic Theory II (PhD)

Macroeconomic Theory II (phD)

Econometric II (PhD)

Advanced Topics in Urban and Real Estate Economics (PhD)

Labour Economics I

International Trade Theory

Current PhD Course:

International Trade II

Networks in Trade and Macroeconomics

Industrial Organization II

Empirical Applications of Economic Theory

Motivation Essay

Ruichi Xiong

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I am a second year PhD student in Economic Analysis and Policy at the Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto. My research interests lie in the intersection between innovation and economic geography, with a special focus on how geography and trade shape spatial entrepreneurial activities.

My interest on entrepreneurship originated from the exposure to the researches on agglomeration in the Urban class I took in the first semester of this academic year. One of the main mechanisms for explaining agglomeration is more knowledge generation and exchange in large cities. This is exactly innovation defined as a process including both invention and commercialization of ideas, for which entrepreneurial activities are main drivers. This apparent relationship between agglomeration and entrepreneurship motivates me to start to think about how city complements firm creation behavior by entrepreneurs, and how trade and migration between cities affect the spatial distribution of entrepreneurial activities and aggregate growth of the country.

In terms of regional focus, I am strongly motivated to explore around my research interests in a developing context as a country's development is featured by both rising number of incorporated firms founded by high value creation entrepreneurs and growing cities with more frictionless trade and migration between each other. For example, in my home country China, the number of registered private firms have increased from zero before 1978 to about 15 million in 2014. Some of them have grown to be super large and highly innovative such as Alibaba and Tencent. At the same time, urbanization rate has risen to 58.52% in 2017 and trade

and migration barriers have decreased a lot during the last forty years because of policy changes and more transportation infrastructures. How growing cities, less costly trade and more mobile labor interact with entrepreneurship during the development process of China is of great significance for understanding the role played by economic geography and entrepreneurship in development and growth.

The NBER entrepreneurship Research Boot Camp is a great opportunity for me. I have taken courses in Urban, Trade, Labor and IO which give me fair amount of knowledge on economic geography, trade, migration and firms themselves. But my understanding on entrepreneurship is not as good as on those topics because I don't have a chance to take a course on entrepreneurship. Participating in the research boot camp will for sure build me a deep understanding on the frontier of entrepreneurship research. And armed with the insights learned from the professors involved, I believe I could make significant progress along my research interests. Besides, some of the past lecturers are currently working on projects on similar topics as my interests. For example, my interest is inspired by Professor William Kerr who has great papers on the intersection between economic geography and entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship in developing countries. And Professor Scott Stern is also very active in the researches on clustering of entrepreneurship. I have also read some of the papers on firms and management by Professor Nick Bloom in my labor class and trade class. Chance to interact extensively with these leading researchers who are working on topics close to my own interests would definitely benefit me a lot. I am also looking forward to communicating and exchanging ideas with other PhDs in the research boot camp who share common interest with me. And as researches are becoming more and more collaborative nowadays, opportunity to participate the research boot camp would also be a great opportunity to build networks with these early-stage researchers who might become my coauthors in the future. I will, if being admitted, try to interact with not only the lecturers but also the other PhDs to take advantage of the agglomeration of knowledge creation and exchange kindly provided by the research boot camp and hopefully generate innovative ideas as what entrepreneurs do.