Cover Letter

I am interested in applying for the NBER Innovation Research Boot Camp (2025) and attended the NBER Entrepreneurship Boot Camp last year (2024). While the entrepreneurship boot camp was *immensely* informative/helpful (and led to a project I embarked on with the help of some of the instructors), if anything it reassured me that working on science and innovation is the topic that I enjoy working on the most. I think I would benefit from the innovation program because I'd benefit from the learning material (UC Merced doesn't offer an innovation class) and hopefully build up a set of peers to work with in the future.

I currently have a few projects that I'm working on related to the economics/politics/science of science that I talk about in my CV that are closed to being submitted. I hope to leverage the boot camp to explore new ideas and get feedback on existing ideas.

Information

Name: Kris Gulati
Email: kgulati@berkeley.edu
Address: 1937 Francisco Street, Berkeley, CA, 94709
Mobile Number: +1 857 396 3416

Recommendation Letter

Name: Professor Christian Fons-Rosen
Email: cfons-rosen@ucmerced.edu

Kris Gulati

https://sites.google.com/view/kris-gulati/home
+1 857 396 3416 | kgulati@berkeley.edu

EDUCATION

The Data Innovation Lab (Berkeley Haas), Visiting Student, September 2024 - Present

- Organised Berkeley Haas's Entrepreneurship and Innovation Seminar

Berkeley Haas, Visiting PhD Student, September 2023 - September 2024

- Hosted by Professor Solène Delecourt

Dartmouth College, Visiting PhD Student, January 2024 - April 2024

- Hosted by Professor Heidi Williams

Harvard Business School, Visiting PhD Student/Fellow, Jan 2023 - September 2023

- Hosted by Professors Kyle Myers and Rem Koning
- Audited graduate field class on the economics of science and innovation by Professor Richard Freeman

University of California: Merced, Economics PhD Student, 2021 - Present

- Core modules (All A's): Microeconomic Theory, Macroeconomic Theory, Statistics, Econometrics, Applied Research Methods, and Game Theory. Field Classes (All A's): Data Science, Economic History, and Research Methods.
- Accepted (but declined due to financial reasons) into the MSc in Mathematical Economics and Econometrics at The London School of Economics

The Open University, BSc Mathematics, 2018 – 2019

- Average grade of Distinction in the first year, equivalent to a 4.0 GPA

The University of Nottingham, 2015 - 2017, Distinction

MSc Econometrics and Economics (First year: Graduate-diploma in Economics)

- MSc final grade 75%, equivalent to 4.0 GPA
- MSc thesis (distinction), "One Person, Two Languages, Two Economic Agents: How does a Second Language Affect Economic Decisions?" supervised by Professor Matthias Dahm
- Highest marks in all group coursework throughout the MSc
- Modules: Microeconomic Theory, Macroeconomic Theory, Advanced Microeconomic Theory, Advanced Macroeconomic Theory, Applied Microeconometrics, Econometric Theory, Advanced Econometric Theory, Economic Growth and Development

The University of London: Goldsmiths College, 2012-2015

BA Hons Politics, Economics and Public Policy

- Confucius Institute Scholarship to The University of Business and Economics (Beijing)
- Research Assistant for Professor Tim Allen (The London School of Economics) 2014-2015

FIELDS OF INTEREST

- Strategy and Innovation, Entrepreneurship, The Economics and Politics of Science and Innovation, Political Economy, Applied Microeconomics

RESEARCH PAPERS IN PROGRESS

"How 'Free' is Free Speech in Academia? Effects on Researchers and Their Research" with Lorenzo Palladini (Luxembourg)

Freedom of speech plays a crucial role in science and the pursuit of knowledge. However, recent evidence indicates a decline in such freedom in the academy with rising calls for sanctions against scholars who make statements deemed controversial, unpopular, or challenge prevailing norms. We examine the effect of these incidents using a series of difference-in-differences designs. Using a novel dataset, we find that the affected scholar's body of work, published prior to the incident, receives 4 percent fewer citations after the incident. Affected scholars also become less productive after incidents, publishing 20 percent fewer new papers than the counterfactual, suggesting a direct loss to the production of new knowledge in the academy.

- *DRUID24 Steven Klepper Award for Best Young Scholar Paper, 2024*
- *I won the IHS 2024 Research Award Fellowship for my work on the Politics of Science*

"Ideology in the Scientific Workforce" with Jessica Khan (Northwest Florida State College) [IRB approved]

"The Impact of Government Shutdowns on Scientific Productivity" with Christian Helmers (Santa Clara) [IRB approved]

We examine the impact of political instability on scientific productivity, through the lens of the 2013 U.S. federal government shutdown. The 16-day shutdown coincided with the start of the austral summer, a critical period for research in Antarctica, amplifying the effect and disrupting researchers' projects. Leveraging a novel dataset with a difference-in-differences approach, we identify declines in both the quantity and quality of publications among affected researchers, as well as altered collaboration patterns. This is corroborated by qualitative evidence. Together, the results demonstrate that even short-lived political instability can disrupt science. Furthermore, they highlight how even brief periods of instability in scientific institutions can have cascading effects, disrupting the production of new knowledge, particularly in time-sensitive, geographically dependent research environments or large-scale 'big science' projects reliant on stable infrastructure and institutional support.

OTHER PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Organised Berkeley Haas's Entrepreneurship and Innovation seminar
Advisor to the undergraduate badminton club at UC Merced (2023 - Present)
Advisory Board, Progress Studies Journal (2022 - Present)
Mentor for the Effective Thesis (2022 - Present)
Advisory Board and Founding Committee, Unjournal (2022 - 2024)
PhD student representative (2021-2022)

REFEREED JOURNALS/CONFERENCES

Review of Economics and Statistics, Management Science, Research Policy, Telecommunications Policy, European Association of Young Economists, DRUID 2025

TEACHING EXPERIENCE & RESEARCH ASSISTANCE

Spring 2023: Research Assistant for Professor Fons-Rosen
Fall 2023: Game Theory (Econ 170) for Professor Grossman
Fall 2022: Statistical Inference (Econ 010) for Professor Hicks
Summer 2022: Research Assistant for Professors Justin Cook and Fons-Rosen
Spring 2022: Statistical Inference (Econ 010) for Professor Christafore
Fall 2021: Statistical Inference (Econ 010) for Professor Christafore

REFERENCES

Professor Andrew Johnston
Associate Professor
University of California: Merced
acjohnston@ucmerced.edu

Professor Christian Fons-Rosen
Associate Professor
University of California: Merced
cfons-rosen@ucmerced.edu

Josh Graff Zivin
Professor
University of California, San Diego
jgraffzivin@ucsd.edu

PRIZES, GRANTS, TRAVEL AWARDS

Astera Institute ($5,000), 2025
UC Merced Economics Department Grant ($600), 2024
UC Merced Economics Department Grant ($500), 2024

UC Merced Economics Department Fellowship ($50,000), 2024
The Institute of Humane Studies Research Award ($10,000), 2024
ACLEC Travel Grant ($475), 2024
The Institute of Humane Studies Mentorship Grant ($8,000), 2024
FIRE Faculty Conference honorarium speaker fee ($1,000), 2024
FIRE Faculty Conference travel award ($700), 2024
The Institute of Humane Studies Grant ($3,200), 2024
Emergent Ventures Travel Award ($1,400), 2024
UC Merced Professional Development Award ($1,000), 2024
ICSSI 2024 Travel Grant and Registration Fee Waiver ($600), 2024
UC Merced Travel Award and Department Award ($750), 2024
UC Merced Graduate Summer Fellowship ($8,000), 2024
Dartmouth College Visiting PhD Fellowship ($7,500), 2024
Free Inquiry Grant Program ($13,200), 2024
Graduate Fellowship Incentive Program Award ($200), 2024
UC Merced Travel Awards ($1100), 2024
Emergent Ventures Travel Award ($750), 2024
UC Merced Travel Award ($500), 2023
UC Merced GSA Travel Award ($400), 2023
Metascience Grant ($5,000), 2023
FIRE Faculty Conference honorarium speaker fee ($1,000), 2023
FIRE Travel and Accommodation Award ($1,500), 2023
Co-investigator: Alfred P. Sloan Foundation ($250,000), 2023
Emergent Ventures Fellowship ($20,000), 2023
Global Priorities Institute Travel Award ($3,000), 2023
Wikimedia Research & Technology Fund Grant ($50,000), 2022
Graduate Fellowship Incentive Program Award ($200), 2022
Graduate Travel Award ($600), 2022
Global Priorities Institute Travel Award ($3,000), 2022
EAecon Retreat Travel Award ($500), 2022
Two EA Forum Comment Prizes ($250), 2021

PRESENTATIONS & SEMINARS

Censorship in the Sciences: Interdisciplinary Perspectives (University of Southern California)*, January 2025
Technology and Policy Research Initiative (Questrom School of Business, Boston University), November 2024
Berkeley Haas Macro Research Seminar Lunch, November 2024
UC Merced Economics Brown Bag Seminar, November 2024
MetaSTEM seminar (cognitive science department), The University of California: Merced, November 2024
FIRE Faculty Conference, October 2024
International Conference on Science of Science and Innovation*, July 2024
Research Policy Early Careers Conference, April 2024
SOIBS*, February 2024
Research Policy Early Careers Conference, December 2023
Max Planck RISE Conference, December 2023

FIRE Faculty Conference, October 2023
Southern Economic Association, November 2022

*Indicates poster

ADDITIONAL TRAINING

NBER Digital Economics and AI Tutorial, February 2025
NBER Entrepreneurship Bootcamp, June 2023
Global Priorities Research Workshop, Keble College, The University of Oxford, June 2023
Economics of Science and Innovation PhD Course, The Institute for Progress, 2022
Global Priorities Research Workshop, The University of Oxford, June 2022
EAecon Retreat, Oxford, July 4th-5th 2022

My research focuses on how politics influences scientific outcomes, and I have three papers in this domain.

The first paper leverages a novel dataset on academic cancellations related to free speech. It finds that scholars' prior work receives 4% fewer citations after the incident, compared to papers published in the same journal, volume, and issue. Additionally, following such incidents, scholars produce 20% fewer papers relative to a control group of peers matched on observable characteristics—a direct loss of knowledge production in academia. This paper won the Best Student Paper Award at DRUID in 2024, and I received the IHS Research Fellowship for my broader work on the politics of science.

The second paper conducts a large-scale audit study involving 10,000 professors across STEM, social sciences, and the humanities in the U.S., testing for bias against conservative students. Given the strong influence of political orientation on the direction of science and ongoing concerns about homogeneity in academia, this experiment provides valuable insights. I find no evidence of bias in STEM, a small bias in the social sciences, and a significant bias in the humanities against conservative students.

The third paper explores two key questions: Can domestic instability threaten scientific progress? And can small shocks in science compound? To address these, I examine the 2013 U.S. government shutdown, which disproportionately affected researchers working in Antarctica. My findings show that impacted scholars produced 5–10% fewer papers, published lower-quality work, and experienced altered collaboration patterns compared to unaffected peers. The results also speak to scientific exploration that is fragile to perturbations such as fields that are time or geographical-sensitive, and 'big science' projects that require institutional stability or large-scale physical infrastructure.

These projects are nearing completion, and I am now formulating new research ideas to pursue in the final 18 months of my PhD before entering the job market. I believe I would benefit greatly from the guidance of professors, constructive feedback from peers, and the opportunity to develop collaborations through this program.