Kate Kennedy-Moulton
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January 31, 2025

Professor Kevin Bryan
University of Toronto
105 St. George St, Suite 7034
Toronto, ON, M5S 3E6

Professor Ina Ganguli
UMass Amherst
412 N. Pleasant St
Amherst, MA 01002

Professor Kyle Myers
Harvard Business School
Morgan Hall 431
Boston, MA 02163

Dear Dr. Bryan, Dr. Ganguli, and Dr. Myers,

I am writing to express my interest in the 2025 NBER Innovation Research Boot Camp. I am a third year Economics PhD student at Columbia University where I study health, labor, and public finance, with a focus on inequality and gender. Innovation plays a critical role in my research, and I am eager to grow my knowledge and skillset in the economics of innovation.

In a current project, I explore the role of innovation in health disparities. Novel medical devices are key pathways to improving health, and may help to alleviate health disparities if disadvantaged patients reap the highest gains. However, barriers to access may unintentionally exacerbate existing health disparities. My research aims to understand how hospitals choose to adopt technology and the subsequent impact technology adoption has on health disparities.

Another interest of mine is the FemTech industry—a field of innovation focused on women's health issues. I plan to investigate ways in which innovation may be affected by gender bias, leading to underinvestment in research in women's health issues. Additionally, I am eager to identify ways to encourage innovation in this space, and subsequently quantify the positive health and labor benefits that follow.

This workshop will be an excellent opportunity to learn the foundations and frontier of innovation research as well as connect with others interested in innovation. As a third year student, this workshop takes place at a particularly useful time where I am narrowing my research interests and concurrently building up relevant skills. I believe this workshop will be an excellent complement to my coursework and research experience while allowing me to dive deeper into the topic of innovation.

Enclosed is my CV, list of PhD coursework, and essay with more information on my research and interest in the program. My advisor, Professor Sandra Black (sblack@columbia.edu), will be sending a letter of recommendation to Brett Maranjian. Thank you for taking the time to consider my application, and I look forward to the possibility of participating in this workshop.

Sincerely,

Kate Kennedy-Moulton

KATE KENNEDY-MOULTON

(858)735-8907 | kam2373@columbia.edu

EDUCATION

Columbia University *2022 - Present*
PhD in Economics

California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo (Cal Poly) *2016 - 2020*
Bachelor's of Science in Mathematics, Summa Cum Laude
Concentration in Teaching, Minor in Economics

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Research Assistant to Dr. Sandra Black *May 2024 - Present*
Columbia University

Research Assistant to Dr. Miguel Urquiola *Jan. 2024 - May 2024*
Columbia University

Predoctoral Fellow to Dr. Petra Persson and Dr. Maya Rossin-Slater *Jul. 2020 - Jul. 2022*
Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Research (SIEPR)

Research Assistant to Dr. Stefanie Fischer *Jan. 2020 - Jun. 2020*
Cal Poly San Luis Obispo

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Teaching Assistantships
Introduction to Econometrics, Columbia University *Fall 2023*
Principles of Economics, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo *Fall 2018, Spring 2019, Fall 2019*

Cal Poly Supplemental Workshops in Math *Mar. 2018 - Jun. 2020*
Senior Leader (Sept. 2019 - Jun. 2020)

- Promoted from Workshop Facilitator to Senior Leader because of demonstrated leadership skills and high student evaluations
- Conducted workshop evaluations, assisted in hiring and training new facilitators, and led biweekly staff meetings

Workshop Facilitator (Mar. 2018 - Jun. 2019)

- Facilitated a supplemental course on Linear Algebra and Differential Equations consisting of twice weekly 90-minute sessions with 10-20 students
- Designed creative lesson plans to help students master content and build study skills
- Corresponded with the professor to ensure learning materials were aligned with course objectives

Cal Poly Educational Opportunity Program *Nov. 2017 - Jun. 2018*
Linear Algebra and Differential Equations Tutor

- Tutored students in math as part of the Educational Opportunity Program, which assists students who have been historically, economically, or educationally disadvantaged

WORKING PAPERS

Kennedy-Moulton, Kate, Sarah Miller, Petra Persson, Maya Rossin-Slater, Laura R. Wherry, and Gloria Aldana. Maternal and Infant Health Inequality: New Evidence from Linked Administrative Data. NBER Working Paper No. 30693. Revise and resubmit at the *Review of Economics and Statistics.*

PRESENTATIONS

ASSA 2024 Annual Meeting *Jan. 2024*

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Programs: Stata, R, LaTeX, Python, SAS
U.S. Census Bureau Special Sworn Status Researcher

SERVICE AND MENTORING

Columbia University Student Research Breakfast Organizer *Sept. 2024 - Present*

- Organized a weekly breakfast meeting for students to present and discuss research ideas, as well as share resources and skills with other graduate students

Columbia University Economics Diversity Initiative *Sept. 2023 - Present*

- Assisted with organizing the Undergraduate Mentoring Program for underrepresented students
- Mentor for Undergraduate Mentoring Program

Economics Pre-Doc Pipeline Workshop for Underrepresented Groups *Sept. 2021*

- Advised students on predoctoral research fellowship applications as part of a one-day workshop hosted by Texas A&M University

SIEPR Summer Planning Committee *Jun. 2021 - Sept. 2021*

- Organized community building activities and taught an introductory coding workshop for the new cohort of predoctoral research fellows at Stanford

AWARDS

Cal Poly Math Department

Robert P. Balles Scholarship - *awarded to the graduating senior with the highest GPA in math* *2020*
Edward Van Duyne Memorial Scholarship *2019*
Barry Family Scholarship *2018*

Cal Poly Economics Department

Outstanding Senior in the Economics Minor *2020*
BEACoN Grant *2020*

List of current and completed PhD courses:
Microeconomic Analysis I, Microeconomic Analysis II
Macroeconomic Analysis I, Macroeconomic Analysis II
Introduction to Econometrics I, Introduction to Econometrics II
Math Methods for Economics
Perspectives on Economics Studies
Economics of Education
Economics of Labor I, Economics of Labor II
Public Finance I, Public Economics and Development
Industrial Organization I, Industrial Organization II

Innovation has been a life-long interest of mine. In my undergraduate studies, I initially majored in biomedical engineering, eager to come up with novel medical solutions to help people live healthier and happier lives. However, I became dissuaded by concerns that new medical technologies are often expensive and inaccessible to the people who really need them. I worried that biomedical engineering was more about making profits than improving health. Something that excites me about economics is that I am now able to address these questions head on—I can investigate issues systematically and conduct analysis to offer evidence-based solutions.

My research in health economics seeks to address the large disparities in health by factors such as race and ethnicity, income, and geography. In my paper "Maternal and Infant Health Inequality: New Evidence from Linked Administrative Data" with Professors Miller, Persson, Rossin-Slater, and Wherry, we find that while outcomes like low birthweight, preterm birth, and severe maternal morbidity are the highest at the top of the income distribution, maternal and infant mortality are still the lowest. This suggests that higher income mothers may have better access to protective factors such as expensive medical interventions. This project motivated me to explore the extent to which different families have access to novel medical interventions.

In an ongoing project, I investigate the relationship between innovation and health disparities. New technological advancements in medicine are important pathways to improving health. However, barriers to access such as which hospitals adopt the technology, how doctors decide to utilize the technology, or costs may inhibit how health gains are distributed. My project first studies the process in which hospitals adopt new technologies. Which hospitals choose to adopt new technologies first, and why? I plan to investigate how adoption relates to hospital characteristics such as organizational structure or the population it serves, as well as device characteristics such as cost effectiveness or ease of use. Second, I plan to assess the role of technology adoption in disparities in health. To what extent can differences in health be explained by differences in hospital adoption of technology? Finally, I will investigate how technology adoption impacts within-hospital disparities in health: for example, if new technologies reduce the capacity for provider bias in treatment or if cost barriers prohibit access.

Lastly, innovation in healthcare has long-standing issues of gender bias, ranging from women's health issues being taken less seriously to policies excluding women from clinical trials from 1977 to 1993. I am passionate about advancing development in the FemTech industry: a field of medical innovation targeting women's health issues. In my research, I plan to identify barriers to progress in this field, such as the role of homophily in venture capital funding and how this consequently impacts the predominantly female-founded FemTech industry. Furthermore, I hope to explore ways in which advancements in FemTech can improve women's labor market outcomes, for example by mitigating period pain or improving treatment of menopause.

As a third year in the economics PhD, I am at a pivotal time of defining my research interests and developing my skillset in tandem. This workshop will complement my existing coursework and provide critical skills to enhance my research. Additionally, I am excited to meet other people in the field of innovation, as collaboration and the sharing of ideas are key to quality research. I believe the Boot Camp will be an ideal fit for me to build skills, develop my research ideas, and engage with the innovation research community.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK

ECONOMICS

January 30, 2025

To whom it may concern:

I am writing to give my strongest recommendation for **Kate Kennedy-Moulton** to participate in the NBER Innovation Bootcamp. Kate is an exceptional 3rd-year Ph.D. student in the Department of Economics at Columbia University. I first learned about her from Petra Persson and Maya Rossin-Slater, with whom she worked as a pre-doctoral fellow and coauthored the project *"*Maternal and Infant Health Inequality: New Evidence from Linked Administrative Data." Given her impressive background and research interests, I was thrilled that Kate was joining Columbia and looked forward to working with her. She is now a member of my advising group—where I meet with her weekly to discuss research progress—and she also works as my research assistant. Simply put, she is an outstanding scholar with innovative ideas, and I give her my **strongest** endorsement.

Kate's research sits at the intersection of medical innovation and health disparities**,** focusing on how hospitals decide to adopt novel technologies and whether such adoption reduces or exacerbates disparities. She examines both across-hospital disparities**,** where differences in adoption decisions can widen inequality, and within-hospital disparities**,** where factors like provider discretion or financial barriers can limit access to new treatments. Her work is critical for understanding how innovation may unintentionally reinforce inequalities—and how we can ensure that advancements in medical technology promote equity rather than deepen existing gaps**.**

Beyond this, Kate is deeply committed to advancing innovation in women's health**,** an area that has long been underfunded and understudied. Her research seeks to uncover barriers to innovation and identify practical solutions for addressing long-standing inequities in women's health research and care.

To illustrate Kate's research potential, her 2nd-year paper, *"*Does Eliminating Copayments Increase Vasectomy Utilization*?"* investigates the puzzle of why female sterilization remains twice as common as male sterilization, despite being more invasive, riskier, and costlier. She documents trends in contraceptive choices, showing that vasectomy rates have risen between 2014 and 2020 but remain stratified by socioeconomic status—female sterilization is more common among lower-SES women, while vasectomies are more frequent among higher-SES men.

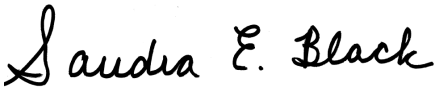
Using policy-driven variation in state insurance mandates, she tests whether cost reductions affect vasectomy rates. While she finds limited overall effects, her analysis uncovers important heterogeneity by family size and socioeconomic background. This is a well-executed and insightful study—though its null findings may pose publication challenges, it highlights Kate's analytical rigor, creativity, and promise as a researcher.

1022 International Affairs Building Mail Code 3308 420 West 118th Street New York, NY 10027 212-854-3680

Kate is a highly promising scholar whose research aligns perfectly with the goals of the NBER Innovation Bootcamp. She would benefit immensely from participation and, in turn, would make valuable contributions to the group.

Please feel free to contact me if I can provide any further information.

Sincerely,



Sandra E. Black
Professor of Economics and International and Public Affairs
Columbia University
New York, NY 10027
sblack@columbia.edu