As a second-year PhD candidate in Innovation and Entrepreneurship Strategy at Simon Fraser University, my research bridges innovation ecosystems, entrepreneurial finance, and policy design to address how institutions catalyze high-impact entrepreneurship. My academic journey is deeply rooted in practical experience: prior to my PhD, I served as an Innovation Lead at the Atal Innovation Mission, NITI Aayog (apex public policy think-tank of the Government of India), under the mentorship of Dr. Chintan Vaishnav (Mission Director, AIM, and Senior Lecturer at MIT). In this role, I was responsible for fostering bilateral innovation partnerships between India and other countries (e.g. USA, Israel, Denmark, Australia, and Sweden) to scale deep-tech ventures. In one such initiatives, I led a cohort of thirty academic scientists, supporting them in commercializing their research, including innovations like a skin-spraying gun for wound healing and an early detection device for cervical cancer. With seven years of experience in strategy management and innovation policy consulting, I bring an implementation-focused perspective to my research, driving my agenda at the intersection of economics, policy, and entrepreneurial strategy.

I am currently involved in three research projects. First, we are exploring how innovation program managers at DARPA, ARPA-E, and the European Innovation Council create and shape opportunities for breakthrough climate innovation. Second, we are investigating how and why do interconnected innovation ecosystems emerge and scale-up with a specific focus on actors' positioning (value chain) and roles (leadership and value creation). Third, we are examining how academic scientists can leverage technology–market matching to translate their radical inventions into commercially viable innovations. My current work draws inspiration from scholars like Scott Stern and Jorge Guzman, whose research on innovation-driven entrepreneurial ecosystems and innovation policy and management has guided my approach.

In the next phase of my PhD, I plan to investigate how policy-driven interventions can catalyze systemic innovation in emerging industries, using India's National Green Hydrogen Mission (NGHM) as a focal case. Drawing on the Regional Innovation Ecosystems (RIE) framework, I aim to map the green hydrogen ecosystem in India and use the National Green Hydrogen Mission (NGHM) as a case study to analyze the "theory of change"—specifically focusing on how financial incentives, regulatory levers, and pilot projects fuel technology adoption, knowledge spillovers, and entrepreneurship. I am also interested in exploring the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy's evolving role as a "venture capitalist," examining how its funding models and strategic partnerships shape green hydrogen startups trajectory. The Boot Camp's emphasis on entrepreneurial finance aligns closely with my goals, and I look forward to refining my research with insights from scholars like Scott Stern and Josh Lerner, whose expertise will help me build a stronger theoretical and empirical foundation for studying government-led innovation ecosystems.

The NBER Boot Camp offers a unique opportunity to immerse myself in the interdisciplinary dialogue driving entrepreneurship research. By attending the boot camp, I aim to strengthen my empirical strategies, particularly in addressing methodological challenges related to entrepreneurial finance and ecosystem dynamics, while connecting with peers studying similar dynamics in other regions. As I transition from coursework to core research, this workshop will be instrumental in sharpening my research questions and positioning my work within broader academic and policy conversations.

In summary, participating in the boot camp would accelerate my growth as a scholar committed to understanding how institutions and finance can unlock entrepreneurial potential globally. I am eager to contribute my perspective and learn from this exceptional community. Thank you for your consideration.

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Dear Selection Committee, Feb 14, 2025

With great pleasure, I wholeheartedly support Anurag's application to the NBER Entrepreneurship Research Boot Camp. As an alum of MIT, and having looked into this opportunity, with the emphasis on understanding the phenomenon of entrepreneurship as well as incorporating rigorous methods, it is clear to me that Anurag would greatly benefit from this boot camp before embarking on the design of his PhD dissertation. I am also confident that Anurag has a great deal to contribute to the boot camp, and that he has tremendous potential as an impactful entrepreneurship scholar.

Anurag joined my research group two years ago as a PhD student, having already completed his Master's degree and having highly relevant work experience at the highest level of Innovation Policy in India, NITI Aayog. During the past 2 years, I have closely observed Anurag's passion for research, diligence, curiosity, high intelligence, exceptional written and oral communication skills, and commitment to advancing meaningful research. From the outset of the Ph.D. program, Anurag has demonstrated a deep commitment to understanding the dynamics of innovation and entrepreneurship. Anurag's coursework has been focused on topics that lie at the intersection of entrepreneurship, innovation, economics and policy. Despite the challenging nature of graduate-level coursework, Anurag consistently ranks at the top of his cohort, and fosters a collaborative learning environment through active peer engagement.

Anurag's research agenda interrogates foundational questions at the intersection of innovation ecosystems and entrepreneurial strategy. In our first study together, Anurag focused on how actors' value chain positioning and leadership roles shape the emergence and scaling of complementary ecosystems, particularly in the context of global energy transitions. Anurag spearheaded a mixed-methods analysis of 78 firms in Canada's green hydrogen innovation ecosystem. Leveraging patent data from Derwent Innovation, PitchBook financial records, and expert interviews, he mapped the evolution of firms' value chain positioning and leadership roles over a period of four decades. His patent analysis revealed a striking divergence: de novo startups concentrated innovation in production technologies, while incumbent multinationals dominated patents for storage and end-use applications. By tracing how distinct actor types (such as de novo firms and legacy energy conglomerates) ascend to ecosystem leadership, Anurag identified mechanisms driving ecosystem complementarity and co-evolution. What impresses me most is Anurag's ability to move from a deep immersion in a phenomenon to identifying underexplored gaps in the literature, such as the role of complementarity between innovation ecosystems which might drive their co-evolution and accelerate their scaling. Anurag's findings on the interplay between

complementary ecosystems and scaling pathways have already been presented at a joint webinar by the Canadian Hydrogen Association and the Hydrogen Association of India, which have sparked discussions with industry players and policymakers in both countries, reflecting his commitment to actionable, policy-relevant scholarship. From my understanding, this blend of academic precision and real-world relevance exemplifies the kind of transformative research the NBER Boot Camp seeks to nurture.

Beyond strong research methodological capabilities, Anurag brings a wealth of over seven years of industrial experience in the field of Strategy Management Consulting and Innovation policy consulting. Anurag's prior experience as the Innovation Lead at the Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog, is a great asset for a scholar in the Innovation Management literature. He has solid ties with innovation stakeholders be it in the government, industry or academia. I was particularly impressed by his role in the AIM-PRIME (Program for Researchers in Innovation and Entrepreneurship) initiative which focused on science commercialization in India.

At a personal level, Anurag possesses the humility, creativity, and collaborative spirit essential for a program of this nature. He exhibits a level of maturity and professionalism that is quite rare among junior graduate students. He is consistently respectful, reliable, and courteous in his dealings with faculty and peers alike. He has deep respect for academic scientists and wants to champion the cause of technology commercialization. Colleagues frequently describe Anurag as "the kind of scholar who asks questions that push everyone's thinking forward."

Anurag is well-prepared to shoulder the demanding requirements of the boot camp. Having completed his master's degree and 18 months of rigorous Ph.D. coursework, he has already delved into advanced microeconomic theory, econometrics, and specialized coursework in finance, innovation and entrepreneurship. The NBER Boot Camp's emphasis on mentorship, interdisciplinary dialogue, and frontier research makes it an ideal venue for Anurag to refine his dissertation trajectory. Exposure to scholars such as Scott Stern, Josh Lerner, and Jorge Guzman, among others, will deepen his understanding of contextual factors shaping entrepreneurial success. Anurag will begin shaping his dissertation this coming autumn. The context will be the emerging Green Hydrogen Innovation Ecosystem in India. The methodological approach could well be influenced by the scholars leading sessions at the NBER Research Boot Camp.

In summary, Anurag is precisely the type of emerging scholar the NBER Research Boot Camp aims to empower: a rigorous, inventive, and socially conscious researcher poised to advance entrepreneurship research with rigorous examination of actors driving the clean energy transition. I urge you to welcome him to the 2025 cohort with the fullest confidence that he will leverage this opportunity to its utmost potential. Please do not hesitate to contact me at avpkmi@sfu.ca or emaine@sfu.ca with any questions.

Sincerely,

Elicia Maine

Elicia Maine, PhD
W.J. VanDusen Professor of Innovation & Entrepreneurship
Associate Vice-President, Knowledge Mobilization & Innovation
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