Applicant: Renjie Bao (Princeton Economics, G4)
Email: renjie.bao@princeton.edu
Personal webpage: www.renjiebao.com

Dear Prof. Beraja, Prof. Goldfarb, and Prof. Tucker,

I am Renjie Bao, a fourth-year Economics PhD student at Princeton University, writing to express my keen interest in the NBER Digital Economics and AI tutorial. For a comprehensive view of my qualifications, please refer to my attached CV and my webpage.

Coursework. As a fourth-year PhD candidate, I have completed two years of coursework, including the first-year core and second-year field sequences in Industrial Organization, Behavioral Economics, and International Trade. My training in IO and Behavioral equips me with structural and experimental tools suited to analyzing questions in digital economics.

Research interests and projects. My research agenda combines IO methods with behavioral economics to study consumer's biased behaviors and evaluate policy interventions in digital markets. My third-year paper, *"Just One More Clip": Short Videos, Big Self-Control Problems*, investigates how short-form media triggers repeated self-control problems. Using a non-linear pricing scheme from a U.S. short drama series, I document overpayment in short-video consumption, identify behavioral preferences through a structural model, and assess counterfactual policies such as default time limits. Extrapolating the results to TikTok, I estimate monthly consumer welfare losses of $10.2 billion due to self-control problems, and show that a 12-minute default time limit could recoup $6.8 billion. The paper has been selected for presentation at SITE and the TSE Digital Economics Conference.

My ongoing job-market paper studies behavioral patterns in workplace mobile-phone time allocation. Given that the average American spends over five hours per day on their phone, the results aim to speak to welfare, productivity, and the design of policies such as workplace social-media restrictions.

List of advisors and/or committee members. My advisors are Prof. Sylvain Chassang and Prof. Kate Ho. I have not yet finalized my committee members.

In conclusion, I am highly enthusiastic about the opportunity to join the Digital Economics and AI Tutorial. Participation would significantly advance my academic journey and provide valuable intellectual enrichment. Thank you very much for your consideration. I look forward to the possibility of contributing to and learning from this stimulating experience.

Best regards,
Renjie

RENJIE BAO

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Julis Romo Rabinowitz Building, 20 Washington Rd, Princeton, NJ 08540, United States

Education

Princeton University
Ph.D. Economics — 2022 ∼ present
M.A. Economics — 2024

Renmin University of China
M.A. Economics — 2023
B.A. Economics & B.S. Mathematics — 2019

Employment

ERC Predoctoral Research Associate, Universitat Pompeu Fabra — 2020 ∼ 2022

Publications

3. Can Specialization be Optimal when Tasks are Complementary?
with Sanxi Li and Jun Yu, *Games and Economic Behavior*, 2020

Chinese publications

2. Big Data, Personal Information Protection and Price Discrimination
大数据、个人信息保护和价格歧视——基于垂直差异化双寡头模型的分析
with Sanxi Li and Yufan Wu, *Economic Research Journal*, 2021 / 与李三希和武玙璠，《经济研究》，2021
Award: Outstanding Research Award, Ministry of Education / 第九届教育部高等学校科学研究优秀成果奖

1. Sorting Menus, Product Quality and Platform Ecosystems
组合排序规则、产品质量与平台生态
with Xiaolu Liu, *Economic Research Journal*, 2020 / 与刘小鲁，《经济研究》，2020

Working Papers

3. "Just One More Clip": Short Videos, Big Self-Control Problems

2. Manager Pay Inequality and Market Power
with Jan De Loecker and Jan Eeckhout, Revise and Resubmit at *Review of Economic Studies*

1. Strategic Innovation and Entry
with Jan Eeckhout

Research Assistant

Princeton University
IES Research Assistant for Eduardo Morales — 2024 ∼ 2025
Research Assistant for Jakub Kastl — 2024
Summer Research Assistant for Stephen Redding — 2023

Universitat Pompeu Fabra
Part-time Research Assistant for Jan Eeckhout 2022 ∼ 2025
Predoctoral Research Assistant for Jan Eeckhout 2020 ∼ 2022

Teaching Assistant

Princeton University
ECO 300, Microeconomic Theory 2025
↪ Evaluation: 4.5/5.0 (department-wide average 3.8)
ECO 981, Junior Independent Workshop 2024
↪ Evaluation: 4.8/5.0 (department-wide average 4.4)

Renmin University of China
Introduction to Game Theory 2019 ∼ 2020
Advanced Microeconomics II (Ph.D. level) 2019
Real Mathematical Analysis III 2018

Academic Activities

Paper presentation at (* for scheduled)

2026	TSE Digital Economics Conference*
2025	TSE Economics of Platform Seminar, SITE (Psychology and Economics), BSE Summer Forum, Tsinghua, Princeton, KU Leuven, China Agricultural University
2024	AEA/ASSA, SED, ESEM, EAYE, Princeton, Renmin University of China, Zhongnan University of Economics and Law, Wuhan University
2023	SOLE, EEA, Camphor Annual Meeting (Beijing), Renmin University of China
2022	SED, EEA, UPenn, Camphor Workshop (Chengdu, Fujian)

Referee for *Econometrica*, *Review of Economic Studies*, *Journal of Economic Theory*, *Review of Industrial Organization*

Selected Awards and Fellowships

Princeton Program for Research on Inequality Grant ($10,000) 2025
Richard S. Simmons '51 Graduate Fellowship, Princeton University 2023
Graduate Fellowship, Princeton University 2022 ∼ 2027
Graduate with Distinction, Renmin University of China 2019
National Scholarship, Renmin University of China 2017, 2020

Skills and Interests

Softwares	Matlab, Julia, Python, R, Stata, QGIS, LaTeX
Language	Chinese (native), English (fluent), Spanish (beginner)
Interests	Tennis, Photography

Updated on November 6, 2025