Cover Letter

Hong Chen

School of Information, University of Michigan

2200 Hayward St.

Ann Arbor, MI, 48109,

7347300393 | hongcc@umich.edu | hongcc@umich.edu

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Dear Members of the Selection Committee,

I am a 4th-year PhD candidate in the School of Information at the University of Michigan and am currently visiting Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management as a research fellow. I work at the intersection of the science of science and the economics of innovation, and I am applying to the Research Boot Camp to deepen my training in innovation theory.

My research examines how the institutions that govern scientific and technological progress–such as peer review, evaluation and networks—shape who persists, what knowledge enters the record, and which domains advance. My current project focuses on how disparate attrition of scientists drives the inequality in scientific knowledge production.

While my formal training is not in an economics department, my doctoral work has been built around innovation-adjacent theory and empirical methods used in economics and strategy, and my first major paper has been shaped through close engagement with the management and innovation literature (currently under review in Administrative Science Quarterly).

I am now at the point where rigorous exposure to the canonical theories and empirical traditions in innovation economics will materially improve how I frame my questions, design experiments, and translate findings into implications interesting to this research community. I believe NBER Boot Camp is exactly the environment I need to further develop my research agenda in science and innovation.

Recommendation letter writer: Misha Teplitskiy, Assistant Professor, University of Michigan School of Information, tepl@umich.edu

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Hong Chen

Research Statement

Current research.

My current project, through collaboration with my advisors, addresses a central puzzle in the sociology of science and organizational theory: why does the production of scientific knowledge remain geographically stratified despite institutional commitments to "universalist" norms? While existing research has largely focused on demand-side "valuative bias" among gatekeepers and certain supply-side constraints such as unequal resources, we investigate a complementary but overlooked supply-side mechanism: "disparate attrition."

We propose that the inequality in scientific knowledge production is driven not only by who gets accepted for publication or funding, but also by who is able to persist after rejection. We test this argument using large-scale administrative peer-review records that track over 126,000 manuscripts rejected by 62 peer-reviewed STEM journals published by the Institute of Physics Publishing. We find compelling evidence that authors affiliated with institutions in the Global South are 6.6 percentage points less likely to ultimately publish their rejected work than their Global North peers, even when controlling for submission quality using peer review recommendations received during rejection.

This theoretical framework utilizes a social capital lens to unpack this phenomenon. We show that the attrition gap is significantly attenuated when Global South authors possess ties to the Global North either through current co-authors or prior training/affiliation, consistent with network-embedded access to instrumental and informational support that sustains persistence through multi-stage evaluations.

Future research.

My research examines how institutions—peer review, evaluation and networks—shape scientific and technological progress. Building on my current project, my agenda develops in two directions. First, I study the geography of science and innovation, asking how institutional rules and evaluation designs (for example, anonymity and disclosure policies in peer review) can have unequal effects across regions and thereby reinforce global stratification in knowledge production. Second, I examine how the adoption of new technologies and information infrastructures changes the rate and direction of scientific innovation—for instance, whether specific AI tools accelerate diffusion or shift research trajectories toward more novel or more incremental work.

Why Innovation Research Boot Camp.

To develop as an innovation scholar, I want a stronger, more systematic command of the field's canonical theories and empirical strategies. The NBER Innovation Research Boot Camp is the best opportunity for me to build that foundation, through its focused curriculum and great community, and to more clearly position my research within core debates in innovation economics.

Hong Chen

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hongcchen.com
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Ann Arbor, MI 48109

Education

2022–	**Ph.D.**, Information, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor Advisors: Misha Teplitskiy, David Jurgens Area: *Computational Social Science, Science of Science and Innovation*
2019-21	**M.S.**, Electrical and Computer Engineering, Carnegie Mellon University
2015-19	**B.Sc.** Mechatronic Engineering, Zhejiang University

Research Experience

2025–	**Visiting Research Fellow**, Northwestern University Kellogg Center for Science of Science and Innovation Mentor: Dashun Wang
2022–	**Graduate Student Research Assistant**, University of Michigan Discovery Lab & Blablablab Lab at School of Information Mentor: Misha Teplitskiy and David Jurgens
2021–22	**Research Assistant**, Peking University Department of Information Management Mentor: Ying Ding and Yi Bu
2020–21	**Research Assistant**, Carnegie Mellon University Human-Computer Interaction Institute Mentor: Hirokazu Shirado

Publications

Google Scholar, † → Equal contribution

Working papers

W1. **Chen, Hong**, Teplitskiy, M. & Jurgens, D. *Science Communication in Off-Channel.* 2026.

W2. **Chen**†**, Hong**, Bu†, Y., Du, C., Meyer, E., Ding, Y. & Gao, J. *Science Resilience Hinges on Persistent Collaboration.* 2025.

W3. **Chen, Hong**, Rider, C. I., Jurgens, D. & Teplitskiy, M. *Disparate Attrition of Global South Authors Following Manuscript Rejection.* 2024.
– Media Coverage: Nature.
– Abstract published in 2025 Academy of Management Proceedings.

Peer-reviewed Conference Proceedings

C1. Qiu, J., **Chen, Hong** & Li, Z. *Counterfactual LLM-based Framework for Measuring Rhetorical Style.* in ***ICLR*** (2026).
– Also accepted at LAW Workshop, Neurips, 2025.

C2. **Chen, Hong**, Teplitskiy, M. & Jurgens, D. *The Noisy Path from Source to Citation: Measuring How Scholars Engage with Past Research* in ***ACL*** (2025).

C3. Xu†, Y., **Chen†, Hong**, Rakshit†, S., Ananthasubramaniam†, A., Yadav†, O., Zheng†, M., Jiang†, M., Zhang†, L., Yi†, B., Alkiek†, K., Israeli†, A., Shu†, B., Shen†, H., Pei†, J., Zhang†, H., Schirmer†, M. & Jurgens, D. *Causally Modeling the Linguistic and Social Factors that Predict Email Response* in ***NAACL*** (2025).

C4. Ananthasubramaniam†, A., **Chen†, Hong**, Yan†, J., Alkiek†, K., Pei†, J., Seth†, A., Dunagan†, L., Choi†, M., Litterer†, B. & Jurgens, D. *Exploring Linguistic Style Matching in Online Communities: The Role of Social Context and Conversation Dynamics* in ***The 1st Workshop on Social Influence in Conversations, ACL*** (2023).
– Best Paper Award.

Journal Articles

J1. Liu, M., Zhang, N., Hu, X., Jaiswal, A., Xu, J., **Chen, Hong**, Ding, Y. & Bu, Y. Further divided gender gaps in research productivity and collaboration during the COVID-19 pandemic: Evidence from coronavirus-related literature. *Journal of informetrics* **16,** 101295 (2022).

Awards & Honors

2025	Rackham Graduate Student Research Grant
2023–2025	UMSI Travel Award
2023–2024	ICSSI Travel Award
2023	Metascience 2023 Conference Travel Award
2019	First-Class Scholarship for Outstanding Merits
2018–2019	First-Class Academic Scholarship of Cao Qizhen
2018	Morningside Cultural China Scholarship
2017–2018	First-class Undergraduate Academic Scholarship

Teaching

University of Michigan

2025-26	Graduate Student Instructor, Intermediate Programming (SI 507)
2024	Graduate Student Instructor, Applied Machine Learning (SI 670)

Academic Service

Organizer

2024-26 UMSI Computational Social Science Lunchtime Working Group Co-organizer

Reviewer

2024- ARR Rolling Review
2024 METSTI; 10th International Congress on Peer Review and Scientific Publication

Conferences and Workshops

2025 International Congress on Peer Review and Scientific Publication
2024 Strategy Science Doctoral Workshop (UM ROSS); 3rd International Conference on Science of Science and Innovation (ICSSI, DC)
2023 TOM PhD Summer School in Computational Organization Science (HBS); The Summer Institutes in Computational Social Science (SICSS, NYU); MetaScience Coference (DC); International Conference on Computational Social Science

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Last updated: January 25, 2026