Atta Gyasi Domson

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January 30, 2026

Selection Committee
NBER Innovation Research Boot Camp 2026
National Bureau of Economic Research
Cambridge, MA 02138

Dear Selection Committee,

I am a second-year PhD student in Economics at Emory University, and I am writing to apply for the 2026 NBER Innovation Research Boot Camp. I am completing two years of coursework in my PhD program, which I would have completed by May 2026, before the start of the Boot Camp. My advisor, Professor Jillian Grennan, will submit a letter of recommendation on my behalf.

My research examines how innovations shape economic decisions at the firm and household levels. I am particularly interested in the emergence of general-purpose technologies such as artificial intelligence. My current work examines how investment in AI for predictive analytics affects firms' traditional brand-building decisions.

I would appreciate the opportunity to be selected for this Boot Camp, given my ***deep*** interest in the economics of innovation.

Sincerely,

Atta Gyasi Domson

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Research Interests

- Economics of innovation
- Firm Strategy and Market Dynamics
- Applied Microeconomics

Education

Emory University, PhD in Economics — Aug 2024 – Present

- **Coursework:** Macroeconomics I and II, Microeconomics I and II, Probability Theory and Statistical Inference, Econometric Methods I and II, Advanced Topics in Econometrics, Market Structures and Imperfect Competition, Health Economics II, Causal Inference: Panel Data

University of Ghana, BA in Economics and Mathematics — Sept 2019 – Aug 2023

- **Coursework:** Advanced Calculus, Linear Algebra, Real Analysis, Complex Analysis, Differential Equations, Integration Theory and Measure, Econometrics, Macroeconomics, Microeconomics, etc

Experience

Teaching Assistant, Economics of AI, Emory Economics — Jan 2026 – Present

- To assist students in understanding course content
- To grade students' assignments
- Organize office hours to attend to students' academic needs

Teaching Assistant, Development Issues in Africa, Emory Economics — Sept 2025 – Dec 2025

- Assisted in the teaching of the course
- Assisted students in brainstorming for their research projects
- Assisted in grading
- Provided news updates on contemporary issues to help in the student learning experience

Teaching Assistant, University of Ghana (UG) Mathematics Department — Oct 2023 – Jul 2024

- Held office hours and tutorial sessions for students to aid their understanding of course materials
- Assisted in grading of assignments and tests
- Helped in typing lecture notes
- Assisted the Head of Department with some administrative duties

Academic/Research Committee Deputy Head, UG Econ Students' Society(UGESS) — Nov 2022 – Aug 2023

- Introduced the UGESS Riddle of the Week
- Introduced a system to collate information on Economic students' academic challenges

Emory Ethics and Servant Leadership Forum Scholar — Sept 2025 – Present

- Join a team of students to discuss issues of leadership
- Contribute to organizing a key project within the Emory and Atlanta communities

Early Awards

- Best Economics student in WASSCE (Mfantsipim School, Ghana)
- Frederick Hans Ampiah MOBA 88 Prize for the Best General Arts student at WASSCE 2019 (Mfantsipim School)
- Best General Arts student in Elective Mathematics (Mfantsipim School)
- Best General Arts student in Integrated Science (Mfantsipim School)
- Leadership Award (Mfantsipim School Head Boy)

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Conferences

- Citizens' Convention - Ghana Compact Partners (Invited)

Projects

- Collaborated with a team to design and model a Hyperbolic Slot structure. We used the principles of hyperbolic geometry to explore workable designs and spatial optimization. This structure was exhibited at the Department of Mathematics of the University of Ghana, during the African Renaissance Day celebration in April 2024

Professional Development and Training

2024

Ghana 1000 Program - Industry Immersion Africa (iiAfrica): A business analytics and data visualisation course offered by Industry Immersion Africa in collaboration with the European School of Management and Technology (ESMT) Berlin, Harvard Business Publishing and the University of Victoria in Canada

Skills

LaTeX, Adobe Premiere Pro, Adobe Audition, Filmora, Python, Github

AI and Brand

My research focuses on how innovations shape economic decisions at the firm and household levels. With the emergence of GPTs in today's society, it is important to understand the dynamics of their adoption in production and the associated costs. My current focus is on understanding Artificial Intelligence within the GPT framework. My research seeks to understand how investment in AI technologies as prediction machines is distorting investment in the firm's traditional brand capital. I introduce a theoretical model to develop a framework for answering when and why AI, as a low-cost predictive tool, becomes a complement or substitute in the firm's brand-building process. This will be the first model to theoretically explain the variation in firm-level AI adoption and its impact on firm traditional brand investment decisions. With the empirical application of this model, I hope to provide the first evidence of the AI-brand tradeoffs at the firm level.

After answering my current research question, which explores when AI prediction capability is used as a complement to traditional brand capital or when it is used as a substitute, the next question I will seek to answer is how investment in AI technologies for non-brand building activities is affecting investments in total brand capital at the firm level. This might also require a structural approach, in which I would develop a model to explain the dynamics and apply it to an empirical framework.

After answering these questions, I will then examine how brand value investment affects brand value itself in an era of widespread adoption of AI technologies, and compare this with an era when firms did not adopt AI in their production processes. I will compare pre-AI and post-AI mechanisms to derive a possible causal effect of AI adoption.

My research aligns well with the economics of innovation, and many of my subsequent ideas since the start of the current project have centred on how Artificial Intelligence is shaping our economic landscape. I am also interested in learning how past innovations have evolved over time, shaped economic thinking, and relate to the current AI era. These are exactly the things the NBER Innovation Research Boot Camp will give me a head start on. The tools and ideas that I will assimilate from this Boot Camp will become integral to developing clean research ideas that not only remain ideas but also become policy-relevant contributions. I am particularly excited about the opportunity to meet and work with a team of emerging scholars who are also interested in advancing their research. Meeting other "innovation-minded" individuals confirms that I am not alone in my desire to become an innovation researcher, and this would certainly give me the confidence I need to take my next significant step. The opportunity to be part of a team willing to contribute to the significant transformation we see in our economies today is a compelling opportunity, and I want to seize it!