Sukhun Kang
Technology Management
University of California, Santa Barbara
Phelps 2323, Santa Barbara, CA 93106

Dear Selection Committee,

I am writing to apply for the NBER Innovation Research Boot Camp. I received my PhD in 2023 and am currently an Assistant Professor in the Technology Management at UC Santa Barbara. My research examines how strategic decisions and regulatory institutions shape innovation in pharmaceutical and technology industries.

I previously attended the NBER Entrepreneurship Boot Camp in 2019, which was one of the most formative experiences of my academic career. It changed how I think about research and connected me to a community of scholars whose work continues to influence my own. My research agenda has shifted substantially toward pharmaceutical innovation and regulatory policy over last few years. I now study questions about why firms underinvest in socially valuable R&D, how regulatory mandates shape access to experimental drugs, and how data privacy regulations alter the direction of innovation. These questions invite me to engage deeply with the economics of innovation literature. The Boot Camp would address this directly, grounding me in the theoretical foundations that are central to the questions I study.

My application includes a CV, a one-page research statement, and a letter of recommendation from Professor Mary Tripsas (UC Santa Barbara) will be submitted separately.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Sukhun Kang
sukhunkang@ucsb.edu



SUKHUN KANG

sukhunkang@ucsb.edu
www.sukhunkang.com

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENT

University of California Santa Barbara *2023–Present*

Assistant Professor of Technology Management

EDUCATION

London Business School *2023*

Ph.D. in Strategy and Entrepreneurship

Dissertation: Essays on Innovation Commercialization

Committee: Gary Dushnitsky (chair), Sungyong Chang, Sendil Ethiraj, Olenka Kacperczyk, Abhishek Nagaraj

University of Southern California

M.S. in Entrepreneurship and Innovation (*Focus*: Entrepreneurial strategy) *2016*

M.S. in Computer Engineering (*Focus*: Computer architecture) *2010*

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign *2007*

B.S. in Computer Engineering

PUBLICATIONS

2. **Implementation of 21st Century Cures Act Expanded Access Policies Requirement** (with Sungyong Chang, Joseph Ross, and Jennifer Miller)
Clinical Pharmacology & Therapeutics (2021) [link]

1. **Entrepreneurship, Innovation, and Political Competition: How the Public Sector Helps the Sharing Economy Create Value** (with Yongwook Paik and Rob Seamans)
Strategic Management Journal (2019) [link]

WORKING PAPERS

When Do Firms Provide Early Access Prior to Commercialization? Evidence From Expanded Access Programs in the Oncology Drug Market (with Sungyong Chang)
(*2nd Round Revise & Resubmit*)

From Outward to Inward: Reframing Search with New Mapping Criteria
(*1st Round Revise & Resubmit*)

- 2023 Academy of Management Annual Meeting Best Paper Proceedings
- 2024 Runner-up for ISA Giarrantani Rising Star Award

Whitespace in Drug Development: Quantifying the Inter-trial Intervals Between Clinical Trials (with Sandra Barbosu, Sungyong Chang, and Fan Ye)
(*1st Round Revise & Resubmit*)

Uncovering Seeding Trials: Examining non-scientific Purposes in Clinical Trials (with Ivan Lin and Sungyong Chang)
(*1st Round Revise & Resubmit*)

Do Biomedical Researchers Study Topics Related to Their Own Ethnicities? Evidence from NIH (with Wesley Greenblatt and Young Hou)
(*Under Review*)

How Do Investors Shape Startups' Response to New Market Opportunities? (with Sarath Balachandran and Sungyong Chang)
- 2025 AOM Annual Meeting Best Paper Proceedings
- 2025 AOM The Sumantra Ghoshal Research and Practice Award
- 2025 AOM The STR Distinguished Paper Award in Corporate and International Strategy

SELECTED WORK IN PROGRESS

Data Privacy Regulation and Innovation (with Jennifer Kao)

Shattering Ceilings While Opening Doors: The Symbolic Effect of the First Female Political Leader on the Mobility Outcomes of Female Employees (with Aleksandra Kacperczyk and Yongwook Paik)

Orchestrating an Ecosystem of Innovative Startups: Ex-Ante and Ex-Post Actions and Orchestrator's Performance (with Gary Dushnitsky)

INVITED PRESENTATIONS

2025-26: UC Merced Yosemite Retreat in Entrepreneurship and Innovation (scheduled); Entrepreneurship & Innovation Policy Virtual Seminar Series (scheduled); Utah Winter Strategy Conference (scheduled); UT Austin Technology and Entrepreneurship Conference (scheduled); Duke Fuqua Strategy Junior Faculty Conference; SMS San Francisco; IQVIA Institute Research Forum; University of Washington, West Coast Research Symposium; FDA's Economics Brownbag; HIWG Research Chat; AOM Copenhagen

2024-25: Harvard Medical School, Program On Regulation, Therapeutics, and Law (POR-TAL) Guest Lecture Series; ISA Boston; UCLA, Seminar on Pharmaceutical Economics and Policy; UC Merced, Economics Department Seminar; SoCal Strategy/OT Workshop; Korea University, International Business Department Seminar; Troesh Entrepreneurship Conference; USC, Research Roundtable on Platform Dynamics; International Conference on Entrepreneurship Ecosystem; UCLA, Price Center Workshop in Entrepreneurship and Innovation; University of Oregon, West Coast Research Symposium; AOM Chicago

2023-24: HIWG Research Chat; ISA Sacramento; UCLA, Price Center Workshop in Entrepreneurship and Innovation; University of Maryland, Smith Entrepreneurship Research Conference; Korea Institute of Science and Technology (KAIST) College of Business, Technology/Organization/Strategy Department Seminar; USC, SoCal Strategy/OT Workshop; University of California Riverside, Management Department Seminar; University of California Santa Barbara, Technology Management TORS; SMS Toronto; AOM Boston

2022-23: Max Planck Institute for Innovation and Competition, The Workshop on The Organisation, Economics and Policy of Scientific Research; University of Sussex Business School, SPRU Freeman Friday Seminar; University of California Santa Barbara, Technology Management Seminar; National University of Singapore (NUS), Strategy and Policy Seminar; HIWG Research Chat; Global Conference on Regulatory Science; SMS London; AOM Seattle

2021-2022: CCC Doctoral Conference; Trans-Atlantic Doctoral Conference; IP & Innovation PhD Seminar; East Coast Doctoral Conference; Wharton Innovation Doctoral Symposium SMS Virtual; Research Policy Conference; DRUID Annual Meeting; AOM Virtual; IP & Innovation PhD Seminar; Trans-Atlantic Doctoral Conference

2020-21 and earlier: SMS Virtual; People and Organization Conference; Trans-Atlantic Doctoral Conference; West Coast Research Symposium

GRANTS *indicates co-investigator

- University of California Regents' Junior Faculty Fellowship, 2025 ($7.5K)
- Faculty Travel Grant, UCSB, 2023, 2024, 2025
- Proposal Writing for Success (PROWESS) Grant, UCSB, 2024
- Strategy Research Foundation (SRF) Dissertation Research Grant, SMS, 2022–2023 ($4K)
- Wheeler Institute for Business and Development Research Grant, LBS, 2021 ($10K)
- Wheeler Institute for Business and Development Research Grant, LBS, 2020*
- Institute of Entrepreneurship and Innovation Research Grant, LBS, 2020*
- Wheeler Institute for Business and Development Research Grant, LBS, 2019*
- Institute of Entrepreneurship and Innovation Research Grant, LBS, 2019 ($5K)
- Fellowship for Doctoral Students, LBS, 2016–2023

AWARDS & HONORS

- AOM The Sumantra Goshal Research and Practice Award, 2025
- AOM The STR Distinguished Paper Award in Corporate and International Strategy, 2025
- ISA Giarrantani Rising Star Award, Runner-up, 2024
- AOM TIM Dissertation Award, Finalist, 2024
- AOM STR Dissertation Award, Finalist, 2024
- Sir James Ball PhD Award, LBS, 2022
- Organization Science/INFORMS Dissertation Proposal Competition Finalist (Selected from 8 of 100+ proposals), 2022
- Best Reviewer Award, AOM (TIM), 2021
- Best Reviewer Award, AOM (ENT), 2019

OTHER PUBLICATIONS, CASES, AND MEDIA

Behind the Scenes of a YouTube Mega-Hit: Baby Shark, The Pinkfong Company, and What's Next (with A. Nagaraj)
Berkeley Haas Case (2025) [link]

Measuring Biopharmaceutical Innovation in the Modern Era (with S. Barbosu, S. Chang, and F. David)
The Incidental Economist (2025) [link]

Conversation with Sukhun Kang on access to medicines
The PI-Squared Initiative (The Burnes Center for Social Change at Northeastern University Podcast) (2025) [link]

Why should collaboration enhance oncology drug innovation?
The Think at London Business School (The Why Podcast) (2023) [link]

WearMon: Reliability Monitoring Using Adaptive Critical Path Testing (with B. Zandian, W. Dweik, T. Punihaole, M. Annavaram)
IEEE/IFIP International Conference on Dependable Systems and Networks (2010)

Magellan: A Search and Machine Learning-Based Framework for Fast Multi-Core Design Space Exploration and Optimization (with R. Kumar)
Design, Automation and Test in Europe (2008)

TEACHING

UC Santa Barbara, Technology Management:
Instructor, TMP412, "Technology Strategy", Master-level course, 2025-Present
Instructor, TMP120, "Strategy", Undergraduate-level course, 2023-Present
Rating: 4.5/5 (Winter 2024); 4.8/5 (Winter 2025)

London Business School, Strategy and Entrepreneurship:
Teaching Assistant, Executive Education, "Developing Strategy for Value Creation," 2021
Grader, C002, "Strategic Management," 2017

University of Southern California:
Instructor, EE201, "Introduction to Digital Design," 2008–2010
Teaching Assistant, ACAD182, "Case Studies in Innovation," 2015
Teaching Assistant, EE560, "Digital System Design," 2009–2010
Teaching Assistant, EE557, "Advanced Computer Architecture," 2008
Grader, GSBA550, "Entrepreneurship," 2016

SERVICE

Editorial Review Board:
Organization Science (2025-Present)

Ad-hoc Refereeing:
California Management Review; Clinical Pharmacology & Therapeutics; Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice; Journal of Business Venturing; Journal of Management Studies; Management Science; National Science Foundation; Research Policy; Strategic Management Journal; Strategy Science; Socio-Economic Review

(Conferences) AOM Annual Meetings; AOM TIM Best Paper Award; AOM TIM Best Dissertation Award; INFORMS/Organization Science Dissertation Competition; SMS Conferences

Affiliations:
- Health Innovation Lab (HIL), Founder and Co-director, 2024-Present
- Health Innovation Working Group (HIWG), Co-founder and Organizer, 2021-Present
- Working Group on Compassionate Use & Preapproval Access (CUPA) at NYU, Member, 2021-Present

Professional Service:
- *Strategic Management Society*, Rep-at-Large of Knowledge and Innovation IG, 2026-Present
- *Academy of Management*, Research Committee of STR Division, 2025-Present
- *Strategic Management Society*, Rep-at-Large of Research Methods IG, 2025-Present
- *Industries Studies Association*, Giarrantani Rising Star Award Committee, 2025
- *West Coast Research Symposium*, Doctoral Consortium Mentor, 2024-25
- *CancerX*, Accelerator Mentor, 2024-25
- *International Rare Diseases Research Consortium (IRDiRC)*, Member of Task Force on Funding Models to Support the Rare Disease Research and Development, 2023-2024
- *Working Group on Compassionate Use & Preapproval Access (CUPA) at NYU*, Speaker
  - A panel on Expanded Access at CUPACON, 2022
  - A panel on Expanded Access at CUPA Webinar, 2023
  - A panel on Advanced Topic on Expanded Access at CUPA Webinar, 2023
- *LBS*, Strategy and Entrepreneurship Area PhD Committee, 2018

Conference Organization:
- Co-organizer, West Coast Research Symposium, Doctoral Consortium, 2025
- Co-organizer, Conference Extension on Strategy and Innovation in Pharmaceutical Industry, SMS, 2025
- Co-organizer, Managing Your Dissertation Workshop, AOM, 2025
- Co-organizer, PDW on Strategy and Innovation in Pharmaceutical Industry, AOM, 2025
- Co-organizer, PDW on Strategy and Innovation in Pharmaceutical Industry, AOM, 2024
- Co-organizer, PDW on the Empirical Research on Organization Search, AOM, 2024
- Co-organizer, PDW on Strategy and Innovation in Pharmaceutical Industry, AOM, 2023
- Co-organizer, PDW on the Landscape of Research on Organization Search, AOM, 2022
- Co-organizer, Presenter symposium on Strategy in Pharmaceutical Industry, AOM, 2022
- Co-organizer, Panel symposium on Science and Firm Strategy, AOM, 2021
- Co-organizer, Presenter symposium on Where do Ecosystems Come From, AOM, 2021

Service to UCSB:
- College of Engineering, Faculty Search Committee, 2023-24
- Technology Management Department, Social Committee, 2023-Present
- UCSB, Faculty Legislature (Senate) Representative, 2024-Present

Mentoring:
- The Research Mentorship Program, UCSB, 2025
- The McNair Scholars Program, UCSB, 2025-Present

STUDENTS ADVISED

Current PhD:
- Zerin Dong (UC Merced PhD): External Committee Member for Oral Examination

Undergraduates:
- Kuan-I (Brian) Lu (UCSB), MIT Master's in Business Analytics
- Pramukh Shankar (UCSB), Americorps Forest Corps
- Carter Kulum (UCSB), UT Austin Master's in Data Science
- Amy Ji (UCSB), IQVIA

INDUSTRY EXPERIENCE

Primer Accelerator *2016*
Intern, Los Angeles, CA, USA

City of Glendale *2015*
MBA Intern, Glendale, CA, USA

Samsung Electronics *2012–2014*
Engineer, Yong-In, South Korea

I&C Technology *2010–2012*
Research Engineer, Seoul, South Korea

Egghead *2010*
Founder, Seoul, South Korea

LG Electronics *2007*
Intern, Seoul, South Korea

PERSONAL

- Languages: English (fluent); Korean (native)
- Citizenships: United States; Republic of Korea

Professional Memberships:
- Academy of Management, Member, 2017-Present
- Strategic Management Society, Member, 2017-Present

Last Updated: January 2026

Research Statement

My research explores the ways in which technology influences innovation, aiming to identify the key drivers and obstacles to technology adoption and its effects on individuals, firms, and society. My goal is to deepen our understanding of how to effectively use technology to foster innovation within a business context. I hope to bridge strategy and economics of innovation, bringing the institutional richness and firm-level mechanisms that characterize strategy research to answer questions of innovation policy.

A central question in economics of innovation concerns the fundamental challenges of directing innovation toward social value. Public science generates substantial spillovers to private-sector innovation, yet private returns fail to capture full social returns (Azoulay et al., 2019). The accumulating burden of knowledge forces increasing specialization and teamwork, constraining individual innovative capacity (Jones, 2009). Redirecting scientific effort is costly (Myers, 2020), and institutional structures systematically distort R&D toward privately profitable rather than socially valuable areas (Budish, Roin, and Williams, 2015). My research examines two sets of forces that shape this direction: strategic decisions by firms, investors, and individuals; and regulatory institutions.

One stream of my research examines how strategic actors shape the direction of innovation. In work that received the 2025 AOM STR Distinguished Paper Award, I use the staggered release of Cancer Genome Atlas data as exogenous variation to study how venture capital shapes startups' responses to new scientific opportunities. We find that startups pursue novel opportunities when their investors already have portfolio companies in the target market, suggesting that VC serves as a conduit for knowledge spillovers from public science to entrepreneurial activity. In my research on expanded access in oncology, I examine when and why pharmaceutical firms provide pre-approval access to experimental drugs. Using twenty years of pharmaceutical R&D data, I find that firms use these programs to manage uncertainty in late-stage trials and generate early market insights, reflecting strategic choices that shape which patients gain access to emerging therapies. In related work with Wesley Greenblatt, I examine how the composition of the scientific workforce shapes innovation direction, finding that NIH investigators are more likely to study diseases linked to their own ethnic background.

A second stream examines how regulatory institutions alter firm behavior and innovation outcomes. My ongoing work with Jennifer Kao on GDPR examines data privacy regulation as a dual lever that imposes compliance costs while enabling trust in technology adoption. We find that such regulation reduces research intensity and narrows R&D scope, but firms with established networks rely more heavily on existing relationships after enactment. In another project on sharing economy, I examined how political competition weakened incumbents' ability to block technologically enabled entrants, creating openings for new business models. Finally, in a work related to FDA regulation, I documented substantial variation in firm compliance with the 21st Century Cures Act's expanded access mandate, showing how the same regulation produces divergent responses depending on organizational capabilities.

The NBER Entrepreneurship Boot Camp was one of the most formative experiences of my academic career. It changed how I think about research and connected me to a community of scholars whose work continues to shape my own. As my research has shifted toward pharmaceutical innovation and regulatory policy, I have increasingly engaged with the innovation literature. The Innovation Boot Camp would address this directly, grounding me in the theoretical frameworks on market failures, social returns, and innovation policy that are central to the questions I study. I am eager to learn from the scholars whose work has guided my research and to contribute my perspective as a strategy scholar working on these shared problems.

References

Azoulay, Pierre, et al. "Public R&D Investments and Private-sector Patenting: Evidence from NIH Funding Rules." Review of Economic Studies, vol. 86, no. 1, 2019, pp. 117-152.

Budish, Eric, Benjamin Roin, and Heidi Williams. "Do Firms Underinvest in Long-Term Research? Evidence from Cancer Clinical Trials." American Economic Review, vol. 105, no. 7, 2015, pp. 2044-2085.

Jones, Benjamin. "The Burden of Knowledge and the 'Death of the Renaissance Man': Is Innovation Getting Harder?" Review of Economic Studies, vol. 76, no. 1, 2009, pp. 283-317.

Myers, Kyle. "The Elasticity of Science." American Economic Journal: Applied Economics, vol. 12, no. 4, 2020, pp. 103-134.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA BARBARA

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TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM
COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

SANTA BARBARA, CA 93106-5129

MARY TRIPSAS
PROFESSOR of TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT

January 30, 2026

Dear NBER Innovation Bootcamp Panel,

It is my pleasure to enthusiastically recommend my colleague Sukhun Kang for the NBER Innovation Research Boot Camp. I have known Sukhun since his doctoral days and have watched his research program develop into one of the strongest in strategy, with deep relevance for innovation. His research agenda has evolved toward pharmaceutical innovation and regulatory policy, and I believe his work speaks directly to the core themes of the Innovation Boot Camp.

What distinguishes Sukhun is how seriously he engages with both the strategy and economics of innovation literatures and how deeply he understands the phenomenon, which, combined, give him an instinct for identifying interesting empirical puzzles. For instance, his research on FDA expanded access asks questions closely related to Professor Williams's work on how institutional structures shape pharmaceutical R&D incentives. His research using the Cancer Genome Atlas to study firm's innovation activities connects to Professor Azoulay's work on spillovers from public science investments. These are not superficial connections; I believe Sukhun's research genuinely advances our understanding of the mechanisms these scholars have identified.

Sukhun previously attended the NBER Entrepreneurship Boot Camp, which I know was formative for his intellectual development. In his own words, that experience shaped how he approaches research questions and connected him to a community he continues to engage with. His evolution since then, from entrepreneurship toward innovation policy, reflects genuine intellectual growth. He has done the reading, thought carefully about how his work contributes to ongoing managerial and policy-relevant conversations, and has positioned his research to speak to scholars in both strategy and economics. The Innovation Boot Camp would deepen this engagement and equip him with theoretical frameworks and tools that are central to his current research agenda.

His research sits at the intersection of strategy and innovation economics, and he is committed to contributing to both. He would arrive at the Boot Camp prepared to learn and equipped to contribute. Sukhun is exactly the kind of scholar this program was designed for, and I give him my highest recommendation. If you have any additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best regards,



Mary Tripsas