Yujing Huang
PhD Student in Economics
UCLA Anderson School of Management
Phone: +1 (872) 219-7898
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February 12, 2026

Dear Members of the Selection Committee,

I am writing to apply to the 2026 NBER Innovation Research Boot Camp. I am a third-year PhD student in economics at the UCLA Anderson School of Management. My research lies at the intersection of economics of innovation, labor economics, and economic history, and studies how institutional structures and human capital allocation shape the organization and geography of scientific production.

My work examines how policy-driven reallocations of resources and talent influence innovation capacity and long-run economic mobility. One project studies the long-run effects of WWII surplus property transfers to U.S. universities on research infrastructure and institutional development. A second project analyzes knowledge diffusion through high-skilled migration, focusing on U.S.-trained Chinese scientists in the mid-twentieth century and the role of frontier training in shaping scientific productivity and institutional spillovers. Together, these projects seek to understand how institutional environments shape the formation and persistence of innovative activity.

The Innovation Research Boot Camp would be particularly valuable at this stage of my training. While my coursework spans applied microeconometrics, labor economics, and economic history, innovation is rarely taught as a unified field. Exposure to frameworks on the organization of science, measurement of innovation, and innovation policy would help me more directly connect historically grounded empirical work to frontier debates on innovation-driven growth and inequality. I am especially interested in engaging with scholars working on the economics of science and innovation policy and in situating my research within these broader conversations.

A confidential letter of recommendation will be submitted by **Michela Giorcelli**, who is my supervisor and familiar with my research. I meet the eligibility requirements, having completed more than two years of PhD coursework in economics.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Yujing Huang

Yujing Huang

Last updated: January 2026

CONTACT INFORMATION

UCLA Anderson School of Management
Entrepreneurs Hall C501
110 Westwood Plaza
Los Angeles, CA 90095

Phone: +1 (872) 219-7898
Email: yujingh@g.ucla.edu

EDUCATION

Ph.D. in Economics, UCLA Anderson School of Management — Expected 2028
M.A. in Computational Social Science (Economics), University of Chicago — 2023
Bachelor of Economics and Finance, University of Hong Kong (First Honors) — 2021

REFERENCES

Paola Giuliano
Professor of Economics
UCLA Anderson School of Management
paola.giuliano@anderson.ucla.edu

Michela Giorcelli
Professor of Economics
Dept. of Economics, UCLA
mgiorcelli@econ.ucla.edu

Nico Voigtländer
Professor of Economics
UCLA Anderson School of Management
nico.v@anderson.ucla.edu

Romain Wacziarg
Professor of Economics
UCLA Anderson School of Management
wacziarg@ucla.edu

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Primary: Economic History, Political Economy
Secondary: Public Economics, Labor Economics

WORKING PAPER

Religion and Conflict: Evidence from China, 1860 – 1911
(with *Chicheng Ma* and *Felipe Valencia Caicedo*)
This paper examines the economic origins and impacts of religious conflicts in the context of late Qing China (1860–1911). While the literature has attributed the anti-missionary violence to the cultural clash between Confucianism and Christianity, we show that the missionaries' economic contributions to China through the treaty ports and public goods provision, rather than the strength of Confucianism, significantly attenuated Chinese anti-missionary movements. We then assess the impacts of the anti-missionary episode on China's economic development. We find the conflicts discouraged Western merchants from investing in China, evidenced by fewer modern industrial firms and banks. This negative effect also spilled over Chinese domestic modern growth till 1930. The consequences persisted to the present time with conservatism towards international trade, and consequently, fewer foreign investments in regions with more historical conflicts.

WORK IN PROGRESS

1. What does not kill you makes you happier: the long-term effects of recessions on wellbeing (with *Paola Giuliano*)
2. Building Opportunity: The Long-term Effects of Post-WWII Surplus Property Transfers (with *Jay Tan*)
3. The Return(s) of Superstar Scientists (with *Michela Giorcelli* and *Bo Li*)

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Research Assistant for Prof. Paola Giuliano, UCLA — 2022 – 2026
Research Assistant for Prof. Richard Hornbeck, University of Chicago — 2021 – 2022
Research Assistant for Prof. Shaoda Wang, University of Chicago — 2021 – 2022
Research Assistant for Prof. Chicheng Ma, University of Hong Kong — 2019 – 2021

INDUSTRY EXPERIENCE

AEGON-INDUSTRIAL Fund Management Co., Ltd. 2019
Summer Intern, Equity Capital Market Analyst

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Teaching Assistant for Prof. Clemence Tricaud and Paola Giuliano, UCLA Fall 2024, 2025
MGMTFT 405 Managerial Economics (MBA), Median rating: Excellent

Teaching Assistant for Prof. Harald Uhlig, University of Chicago Fall 2022
ECON 230 Money and Banking (Undergraduate), Median rating: 5.0/5.0

PRESENTATIONS

Religion and Conflict: Evidence from China, 1860 – 1911
Mountain West Economic History Conference, Utah (2025)
AEA/ASSA 2025 Conference, San Francisco (2025)
ESOC 2024 conference, Los Angeles (2024)
WEAI 2024 Conference, Seattle (2024)
SIOE 2024 Conference, University of Chicago (2024)
AEA/ASSA 2024 Conference, San Antonio (2024)
ASREC 2023 Conference, Harvard University (2023)
UCLA Anderson GEM PhD Seminar (2023)

Building Opportunity: The Long-term Effects of Post-WWII Surplus Property Transfers
UCLA Economic History Seminar (2025)

The Return(s) of Superstar Scientists
UCLA Anderson GEM PhD Seminar (2025)

Kinship Networks and Decisions to Insure
UCLA Anderson GEM PhD Seminar (2024)

PAPER DISCUSSIONS

1. "Prison Norms and Society Beyond Bars", Michael Poyker, Maxim Ananyev, Western Economic Association International (WEAI), 2024

AWARDS, GRANTS, AND FELLOWSHIPS

Awards

Merit-based Social Sciences Scholarship (US$43,430), UChicago 2022
Maroon Scholar Research Award Scholarship (US$30,000), UChicago 2021
Divisional Fund for Applied Research Scholarship (US$10,000), UChicago 2021
Dean's Honors List, HKU 2017 – 2021
URFP Poster Session – Best Presentation Award (HK$500), HKU 2021
University Research Internship Award (HK$10,000), HKU 2020
C.V. Starr Scholarships (HK$2,000), HKU 2019
Reaching Out Award under the HKSAR Government Scholarship Fund (HK$10,000) 2018

Research Grants

UCLA Center for Global Management PhD Global Research Award (US$4,000) 2026
UCLA Ziman Center for Real Estate (US$3,500) 2025
UCLA Price Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation (US$10,000) 2025
UCLA Luskin Center for History and Policy (US$5,000) 2025
Templeton Religion Trust Grants in Religion and Economic Development (US$10,000) 2024

Fellowships

NBER Fellow of the Innovation Information Initiative (i3) (US$1,500) 2026
UCLA Anderson Fellowship 2023 – 2028
Jeff Metcalf Summer Fellowship, Becker Friedman Institute for Economics (US$5,000) 2022
Undergraduate Research Fellowship (URFP), HKU 2020

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Refereeing
Journal of the European Economic Association (ad hoc)

Presentations and Seminars (Including Scheduled)
2025: AEA/ASSA meetings 2025 (San Francisco); Mountain West Economic History Conference 2025
2024: AEA/ASSA meetings 2024 (San Antonio); PacDev 2024 (Stanford); SIOE 2024 (Chicago); WEAI 2024 (Seattle)
2023: ASREC Boston and Graduate Student Workshop (Harvard); UChicago Micro Graduate Student Workshop; The New Economic History of China Conference (Northwestern); The 9th International Symposium on Quantitative History (SJTU)

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Programming	Stata, Python, R, MATLAB, Julia, LaTeX
CSS	Machine Learning, Web-scraping, Large-Scale Computing, Neo4j
GIS	QGIS, R, GeoDa
Languages	English (fluent), Mandarin (native)

Others

University of Southern California 2020
Spring Exchange Student, GPA 4.0/4.0

Exeter College, University of Oxford 2018
Summer Visiting Student

University of California, Los Angeles

GRADUATE Student Copy Transcript Report

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This is an **unofficial/student copy** of an academic transcript and therefore does not contain the university seal and Registrar's signature. Students who attempt to alter or tamper with this document will be subject to disciplinary action, including possible dismissal, and prosecution permissible by law.

Student Information

Name: HUANG, YUJING
UCLA ID: 405852610
Date of Birth: 07/04/XXXX
Version: 08/2014 | SAITONE
Generation Date: February 10, 2026 | 02:26:47 PM
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Program of Study

Admit Date: 09/25/2023
GRADUATE DIVISION

Major:
MANAGEMENT

Degrees | Certificates Awarded

None Awarded

Previous Degrees

None Reported

California Residence Status

Nonresident

Fall Quarter 2023

Major:
MANAGEMENT

MATH METHODS-ECON	ECON 200	4.0	0.0	S
THEORY-FIRM&CONSUMR	ECON 201A	4.0	14.8	A-
DYNMICS&GRWTH THRY	ECON 202A	4.0	13.2	B+
TA TRAINING SEMINAR	MGMT 495	4.0	0.0	S
METHDS-ECONOMETRICS	MGMTPHD 201A	4.0	16.0	A
GLOBAL ECON&MANGMNT	MGMTPHD 208A	1.0	0.0	S

	Atm	Psd	Pts	GPA
Term Total	21.0	21.0	44.0	3.667

Winter Quarter 2024

GAME THRY&INFO ECON	ECON 201B	4.0	14.8	A-
BUSINESS CYCLES	ECON 202B	4.0	16.0	A
REGRESSION ANALYSIS	MGMTPHD 201B	4.0	16.0	A+
GLOBAL ECON&MANGMNT	MGMTPHD 208B	1.0	0.0	S

	Atm	Psd	Pts	GPA
Term Total	13.0	13.0	46.8	3.900

Spring Quarter 2024

GAME THRY ASYM INFO	ECON 201C	4.0	13.2	B+
TPCS-MACROECONOMICS	ECON 202C	4.0	13.2	B+
GLOBAL ECON&MANGMNT	MGMTPHD 208C	2.0	0.0	S
POL ECON-ECONMC DEV	MGMTPHD 270	4.0	16.0	A

	Atm	Psd	Pts	GPA
Term Total	14.0	14.0	42.4	3.533

Fall Quarter 2024

ECON HIST-W EUROPE	ECON 241	4.0	16.0	A+
ECONOMIC HISTORY	ECON 248A	4.0	0.0	S
IND ORG&PRC PLC&REG	ECON 271A	4.0	16.0	A
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMNT	ECON 287C	4.0	16.0	A+

	Atm	Psd	Pts	GPA
Term Total	16.0	16.0	48.0	4.000

Winter Quarter 2025

ECON HIST OF THE US	ECON 242	4.0	16.0	A+
ECONOMIC HISTORY	ECON 248B	4.0	0.0	S
TPCS-PUBLIC FINANCE	ECON 253A	4.0	16.0	A
LABOR ECONOMICS II	ECON 261B	4.0	16.0	A
GLOBAL ECON&MANGMNT	MGMTPHD 208B	1.0	0.0	S

	Atm	Psd	Pts	GPA
Term Total	17.0	17.0	48.0	4.000

Spring Quarter 2025

US LABOR MARKETS	ECON 244	4.0	16.0	A
ECONOMIC HISTORY	ECON 248C	4.0	0.0	S
TPCS-PUBLIC FINANCE	ECON 253B	4.0	16.0	A+
DEVELOPMENT ECONMCS	ECON 262D	4.0	16.0	A
GLOBAL ECON&MANGMNT	MGMTPHD 208C	2.0	0.0	S

	Atm	Psd	Pts	GPA
Term Total	18.0	18.0	48.0	4.000

Fall Quarter 2025

PHD RES SEMINAR	ECON 209A	4.0	0.0	S
PREP-QUAL EXAMINATN	MGMT 597	12.0	0.0	S
GLOBAL ECON&MANGMNT	MGMTPHD 208A	1.0	0.0	NR

	Atm	Psd	Pts	GPA
Term Total	16.0	16.0	0.0	0.000

Winter Quarter 2026

*** Courses In Progress ***

PHD RES SEMINAR	ECON 209B	4.0
PREP-QUAL EXAMINATN	MGMT 597	12.0
GLOBAL ECON&MANGMNT	MGMTPHD 208B	1.0

	Atm	Psd	Pts	GPA
Term Total	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.000

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GRADUATE Totals

	Atm	Psd	Pts	GPA
Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory Total	43.0	43.0	N/a	N/a
Graded Total	72.0	72.0	N/a	N/a
Cumulative Total	115.0	115.0	277.2	3.850

Total Completed Units 115.0

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Research Statement

Yujing Huang

My research studies how institutions shape the organization of science and the accumulation of innovation capacity. I focus on settings where policy-induced reallocations of infrastructure or scientific talent generate plausibly exogenous variation, allowing causal analysis of how research ecosystems evolve and how innovation advantages persist across regions and organizations. Across projects, I combine large-scale archival data construction, modern bibliometric sources, and applied microeconometric designs to study the long-run dynamics of scientific production.

My primary project (joint with Jay Tan) examines the long-run effects of WWII surplus property transfers to U.S. universities on institutional expansion, research activity, and intergenerational mobility. Under the Surplus Property Act, the federal government redistributed land, buildings, and equipment to universities, with allocation decisions largely constrained by proximity and logistical considerations. This setting provides quasi-experimental variation in higher-education infrastructure. We assemble new archival data on these transfers and link them to university growth, scientific output, and individual outcomes. The project contributes to the economics of innovation by providing evidence on how supply-side shocks to institutional inputs shape the spatial organization of research and the persistence of innovative advantages.

A second line of research (joint with Michela Giorcelli and Bo Li) studies international knowledge diffusion through high-skilled migration. Using newly digitized training records and bibliometric data, we analyze U.S.-trained Chinese scientists in the mid-twentieth century, comparing those who returned to China with those who remained abroad and estimating how return migration affected China's scientific development. This project addresses core questions in the economics of science regarding the transmission of tacit knowledge, the allocation of scientific labor, and the long-run innovation consequences of migration constraints.

Looking forward, my broader research agenda connects historical policy shocks to contemporary innovation dynamics. I aim to study how institutional investments, mobility of scientific talent, and organizational design jointly shape the evolution of research ecosystems and the distribution of innovative capacity. By integrating historically grounded identification strategies with modern innovation frameworks, my work seeks to bridge economic history and the economics of science, contributing new evidence on how innovation systems emerge, scale, and persist over time.

The NBER Innovation Research Boot Camp would be particularly valuable for advancing this agenda. While my training spans economic history, labor economics, and applied microeconometrics, innovation is rarely taught as a unified field. The boot camp's emphasis on the organization of science, measurement of innovation, and innovation policy would sharpen both the conceptual framing and empirical design of my work, and help position my research within frontier debates on innovation-driven growth and inequality.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES **UCLA**

BERKELEY • DAVIS • IRVINE • LOS ANGELES • MERCED • RIVERSIDE • SAN DIEGO • SAN FRANCISCO SANTA BARBARA • SANTA CRUZ

MICHELA GIORCELLI

PROFESSOR OF ECONOMICS
UCLA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS
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February 11, 2026

Yujing Huang – Recommendation Letter for NBER Innovation Research Boot Camp 2026

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing with the strongest possible enthusiasm to recommend **Yujing Huang** for the NBER Innovation Research Boot Camp 2026. I have known Yujing for two years, since she took my Ph.D. courses in European and U.S. Economic History, and I have served on her dissertation committee since then. We meet regularly to discuss her research progress, I have attended all of her presentations at UCLA, and she has worked as my research assistant continuously since the summer of 2024. Based on this close and sustained interaction, I can state without hesitation that **Yujing is the most outstanding graduate student I have encountered in my ten years at UCLA**.

Yujing's dissertation plans to investigate the transfer of surplus military infrastructure to U.S. universities between 1944 and 1947—a pivotal yet remarkably understudied moment in the expansion of American higher education. Whereas the existing literature has focused overwhelmingly on demand-side interventions such as financial aid, enrollment policy, and student incentives, Yujing's work breaks new ground by examining supply-side investments in educational capacity**.** By analyzing how the physical expansion of universities reshaped institutional scale, student access, and regional development, the project offers a fundamentally new perspective on how public policy influences education and economic opportunity.

The dissertation is centered around three chapters. The first chapter estimates the causal effects of surplus property transfers on university growth, including enrollment, faculty size, and program offerings. The second chapter traces these institutional expansions to individual-level outcomes such as college attendance and long-run earnings, thereby establishing a direct link between infrastructure investment and economic mobility. The third chapter examines broader local spillovers, analyzing effects on population growth, innovation, and regional economic activity. Taken together, these chapters form a coherent and compelling narrative of how postwar public investments reshaped both higher education and the economic geography of the United States.

Yujing's intellectual ability, originality, and research maturity are truly exceptional. Her dissertation project is not only ambitious and carefully designed, but also poised to make a major contribution across multiple fields, including economic history, business history, labor economics, and public economics. It is rare to encounter a project at such an early stage that is simultaneously conceptually innovative, empirically rigorous, and highly feasible.

One of the most impressive aspects of this project is Yujing's commitment to original data construction. She is assembling a comprehensive dataset from archival sources, including the *Directory of Surplus Property* and administrative records from postwar federal programs. This work requires extensive digitization, transcription, coding of facility types, and geocoding of transfer locations to link universities with surrounding labor markets. The resulting dataset will be a major scholarly contribution in its own right and will enable future research far beyond the scope of this dissertation. Yujing has already demonstrated the technical skill, persistence, and judgment required to carry out this demanding archival work at a very high level.

In sum, this dissertation has exceptional potential to shape scholarly debates on education, infrastructure, and long-run economic development. It combines meticulous archival research with modern empirical methods to address questions of enduring importance about public investment, institutional growth, and economic opportunity. Participating to the NBER Innovation Research Boot Camp 2026 would give an incredible opportunity to engage with top notch researchers and state-of-the-art papers. **I therefore recommend Yujing Huang's application in the strongest terms possible.**

Please do not hesitate to contact me by email (mgiorcelli@econ.ucla.edu) or by phone (+1 650-630-9648) should you require any additional information.

Sincerely yours,



Michela Giorcelli
Professor of Economics
University of California, Los Angeles