Asher Lasday

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EDUCATION

PhD in Management and Organizations In Progress
New York University, Stern School of Business
BA in Political Science 2022
Williams College

CURRENT PROJECTS

Corporate Political Spending and Common Ownership: Mitigating Systemic Political Risks After January 6 (*Revision requested at Management Science*)
with Zhao Li

License to Drill: Support and Opposition for Shale Development in the U.S.
with Sinziana Dorobantu and Christopher Poliquin

AWARDS

National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship (NSF-GRFP) 2024

Departmental Honors 2022
Williams College, Department of Political Science

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

2025

- Political Economy of Business and Government Conference

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Research Associate and Gordon Family Research Fellow 2022-2024
Harvard Business School, Professors William Kerr and Joseph Fuller
Managing the Future of Work Project

Research Assistant 2019
Williams College, Department of Political Science

SKILLS

Technical: R, Python, SQL, High Performance Computing
Languages: English (Native), French (Proficient)

NON-ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

Semler Brossy Consulting Group 2022
Associate Consultant

OC&C Strategy Consultants 2021
Associate Consultant Intern

NYU STERN

ASHER LASDAY
PhD Student

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Dear Members of the NBER Innovation Research Boot Camp Panel,

I am eager to apply for the NBER's Innovation Research Boot Camp 2026. I am a PhD student in NYU Stern's Department of Management and Organizations, where my research broadly studies the interaction of firm and state-level governance mechanisms. My commitment to careful research, coupled with my growing interest in studying innovation, make me well positioned to benefit greatly from further formal training in innovation at the boot camp. Conversely, I hope my expertise in researching institutional and organizational governance will allow me to contribute a useful perspective to the study of innovation generally, and to interactions with fellow boot camp attendees in particular.

My existing research has largely focused on firms' political behavior — particularly as related to corporate governance. In my most advanced-stage work (R&R at Management Science), I study whether diversified institutional owners encourage their portfolio firms to internalize the externalities of supporting anti-democratic politicians (by ending these ties). Individual firms may do well during times of democratic backsliding as a result of their political connections, but the broader economy (and thus highly diversified investors) is likely to suffer. In an early-stage project, I study whether local public sentiment, and the ability of the public to change policy via local government, impacts companies' decisions to extract oil and gas from already permitted well sites. In both of these projects, I use novel textual datasets and natural language processing techniques to capture these phenomena in greater detail than would be possible using traditional tabular data alone.

I am now using my experience studying the impact of institutional and organizational governance on firm-level outcomes to study innovation. In one project, I will estimate the effect of firm-level automation on immigration-related lobbying, evaluating how automation might affect labor demand and supply. I also hope to understand how the political connections of firms' owners influences government support for these firms' innovation.

Included in this file are my curriculum vitae and an essay detailing my reasons for wanting to attend the boot camp. I have requested that Professor Robert Seamans send a recommendation letter on my behalf. I am happy to provide additional supporting materials upon request. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Asher Lasday

Broadly, my research studies firm and state-level governance mechanisms, the interactions between these mechanisms, and the effect of these interactions on firm-level outcomes. Though my advanced stage research and background is primarily at the intersection of corporate political activity (CPA) and corporate governance, I have become increasingly interested in innovation. I believe my experience studying the effects of institutional environment and corporate governance structure on firms' outcomes provides me with a useful perspective from which to examine how firms innovate and are affected by innovation.

In "Corporate Political Activities and Common Ownership: Mitigating Systemic Political Risks After January 6" (R&R at Management Science), I suggest large institutional owners may solve a collective action problem among their portfolio firms. Though individual firms may do well during times of democratic backsliding as a result of their political connections, the broader economy (and thus highly diversified investors) is likely to suffer. We find that firms under greater common ownership reduced campaign contributions to Objectors (members of Congress who voted against certifying the results of the 2020 election). Using post-2010 shareholder proposals from proxy statements, we test whether there was a rise in proposals related to limiting CPA that reference policy (as opposed to reputational) risk after January 6th 2020. We also evaluate whether (controlling for their partisanship) more diversified institutional owners were more likely to vote in favor of these CPA-related shareholder proposals after January 6th.

In another project, I use Twitter and local newspapers to evaluate the influence of public sentiment on fracking companies' decisions to extract oil and gas from already permitted well sites. I use local partisanship and government structure to study how firms interpret the risk of negative public sentiment as a function of the likelihood this sentiment influences policy.

This fall, I took a course in Applied Microeconomics taught by Petra Moser -- this course's emphasis on innovation had a major influence on my early-stage research.

First, I hope to build on work that evaluates the effect of policies that reduce immigration on automation. I study the converse: how does automation (and other innovation), by shifting the inputs on which firms rely, change lobbying behavior on immigration? I will evaluate associations between the Annual Business Survey's module on firm-level adoption of automation technologies and issue-level lobbying data. By examining the lobbying behavior of meat producers that became less reliant on chickens (for which husbandry is comparatively more automated) as a result of bird-flu, I hope to evaluate this question in a causal setting.

Second, and more abstractly, I am interested in the role of investors' political connections in both their portfolio firms' innovative capacity, as well as state support for these firms' technologies. Though some research has studied innovation and managers' political connections, I believe differences in managerial and owner incentives create distinct dynamics that merit further research.

Attending the NBER Innovation Research Boot Camp would provide me not only with formal training in innovation research through lectures, but the chance to better understand the contemporary landscape of research in this area through access to the innovation summer institute. Professor Moser's course (and my own reading) introduced me to the innovation literature, but a more focused study through innovation-dedicated coursework would supply me with additional context. Interacting with innovation researchers would help me understand the current landscape of the field, but also allow me to discuss and develop my own research ideas with instructors and classmates alike. In sum, I believe the boot camp would help me place my own interests within existing innovation research, and ultimately make a more valuable contribution to the field.

Microeconomics -- Lawrence J. White
Applied Microeconomics -- Petra Moser
Strategy -- Sinziana Dorobantu
Political Economy -- Tiberiu Dragu and Alastair Smith

Econometrics I -- Paul T. Scott
Econometrics II -- Xiye Yang
Quant Methods II (Causal Inference) -- Cyrus Samii
Quantitative Methods III (Maximum Likelihood Estimation, Bayesian Inference, Machine Learning) -- Cassandra Handan-Nader
Text as Data -- Byung-Doh Oh

Organization Theory -- Frances Milliken
Organizational Behavior -- Gavin J. Kilduff

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February 10, 2026

Dear Ina, Kevin and Kyle,

I am writing this letter of recommendation for Asher Lasday, a 2nd year PhD student at NYU Stern School of Business. In short, I know Asher quite well, think very highly of him, think he'd benefit greatly from the bootcamp, and that others would benefit from having him around. More on each below.

Asher has a background in political science and came to NYU in large part to work with folks who do research at the intersection of business, strategy and policy. To date, this has mostly entailed him working with my two colleagues Sinzi Dorobantu and Zhao Li (both of whom were trained in political economy before moving to strategy), while taking all possible econ and causal inference classes, including from Chris Conlon and Petra Moser. Asher has done well in all his classes, and has been productive on the research front, including receiving an R&R on a paper he sent to *Management Science*.

Asher and I have not yet worked together on research, though we frequently meet to discuss his research and classes. Our meeting frequency has increased given his interest on the link between automation and corporate political activity. Asher has a new project that will likely form the core of his dissertation that will involve accessing restricted U.S. Census Bureau data to study the link between automation in a specific industry and changes to lobbying behavior (a particular interest of Asher's) in that industry around immigration reform.

Asher is therefore at the perfect stage to take advantage of all that the NBER innovation bootcamp offers. Asher will benefit from reading the papers and interacting with others with similar interests. From my interactions with him at departmental seminars and meetings, I can assure you that Asher is a "good citizen" who will ask thoughtful questions both during the bootcamp sessions as well as during coffee breaks. He is a person who cares deeply about the research enterprise, and has all the makings of a serious scholar. Asher would benefit greatly from attending the bootcamp, and I am confident that his engagement and slightly different background (political science) will enhance the workshop for others.

Please reach out if you have any questions.

Best,

Rob