Meghna Baskar

Curriculum Vitae
April 2026

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Education

University of Chicago Booth School of Business Expected 2031
PhD in Economics

Duke University 2024
Masters, Economics & Political Science
Top Student in Cohort
Select Courses: Microeconomics, Advanced Microeconomic Theory, Game Theory, Econometrics, Real Analysis, Probability, Mathematical Statistics, Linear Algebra

Carnegie Mellon University 2017
Bachelors, Economics

Articles and Working Papers

Understanding Demand for Police Alternatives, with Bocar Ba, Tony Cheng, Rei Mariman and Maxime Menuet. *Reject & Resumbit,* ***Journal of Political Economy***

Start-up Financing and Ideas: How venture capital impacts strategic pivoting, *work in progress*

Research Experience

Pre-doctoral Fellow at Yale Tobin Center 2023–2025
PI: Barbara Biasi

- Conducted in-depth econometric analysis on Texas administrative data to study how exposure to frontier knowledge in universities affects labor market outcomes for the paper *"The Education-Innovation Gap"*.

Research Assistant at Duke Economics Department 2022–2024
PI: Bocar Ba

- Co-developed and co-authored a study using experiments to analyze bipartisan public support for police alternatives.

Awards, Conference Presentations, Grants

Best Economics Paper at Rice Gulf Coast Research Seminar Nov 2024
Duke Masters Student Award ($1,000) Jan 2023
Duke India Initiative Fellowship ($1,650) Jan 2023
Duke Political Science Grant ($2,500) Feb 2024

My name is Meghna Baskar and I am currently a second-year Economics PhD student at Chicago Booth. My research focuses on innovation in both the public and private sectors, and I aim to use tools from IO and microeconomic theory to understand how new technologies are developed, adopted, and diffused in the economy. In particular, I am interested in how new technologies and information change decision-making and resource allocation. Below, I describe two of my ongoing projects.

In one project with Anne Fogarty (UC Berkeley), I have established a partnership with the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services to evaluate the introduction of a machine-learning decision-support tool for SNAP caseworkers. Using a proposed randomized, staggered rollout across counties, we study how predictive information affects worker decisions, administrative efficiency, and the accuracy of public benefit delivery. Beyond evaluating the effectiveness of the technology, we aim to understand how access to predictive information changes the allocation of worker attention and interacts with existing human judgment.

In a second ongoing project, I study how startups respond to information about competitors and how these responses shape innovation, strategic pivots, and financing decisions. Using novel data linking private-firm news, venture capital investments, and job postings, I examine how idiosyncratic news about competing firms influences firms' strategic choices, including hiring and the allocation of resources across products and technologies.

Both projects are at relatively early stages, and I believe I would greatly benefit from participating in the Digital Economics and AI conference and tutorial. In particular, I hope to learn from researchers working on related questions about technology adoption, information, and firm behavior, both to advance my current projects and to develop new research ideas at the intersection of digital economics and innovation.