

KRIS GULATI

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EDUCATION

University of California, Merced <i>Ph.D. in Economics and Business Management, Expected May 2027</i>	2021–Present
University of Nottingham <i>M.Sc. in Econometrics and Economics</i>	2015–2017
Goldsmiths, University of London <i>B.A. (Honours) in Politics, Philosophy, and Economics</i>	2012–2015

VISITING APPOINTMENTS

Berkeley Haas <i>Visiting Ph.D. Student; faculty hosts: Abhishek Nagaraj and Solène Delecourt</i>	2023–Present
Dartmouth College <i>Visiting Ph.D. Student; faculty host: Heidi Williams</i>	January 2024–April 2024
Harvard Business School <i>Visiting Ph.D. Student; faculty hosts: Kyle Myers and Rem Koning</i>	2022–2023

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Strategy and Innovation, Organizational Behavior, Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Work

JOB MARKET PAPER

The Professional Costs of Speech Sanctioning Events: Evidence from Academia
(with Lorenzo Palladini, American University of Beirut, Cyprus)

How do organizations respond when an employee is publicly sanctioned for speech? Using a novel dataset of U.S.-based scholars and a staggered difference-in-differences design, we find that sanctioned scholars publish approximately 20% fewer papers and receive 4.8% fewer citations to their prior work. Their close prior coauthors also publish 12.5% fewer papers. Citation declines are concentrated among prior coauthors and same-institution colleagues and persist when the contested speech falls outside the scholar's area of expertise. These patterns are consistent with professional distancing and show how reputational shocks propagate through scientific teams and organizations.

- Steven Klepper Award for Best Young Scholar Paper, DRUID 2024
- Nominated for the Best PhD Student Paper Prize, Strategic Management Society 2026
- Competitive fellowships awarded for this research:
 - The Institute for Humane Studies Research Award Fellowship, 2024
 - The Institute for Humane Studies Junior Fellowship, 2026
 - Mellong Foundation Fellowship, 2026

When Government Shuts Down Science: Evidence from U.S. Antarctic Research

(with Christian Helmers, Santa Clara University)

Forthcoming in Research Policy

Media coverage: *Nature*

Can brief political disruptions have lasting effects on scientific production? Exploiting the 2013 U.S. federal government shutdown in a difference-in-differences design, we find that affected scientists' subsequent publication output fell by approximately 11%. Although researchers partially adapted by changing their collaboration patterns and reallocating effort, these adjustments were insufficient to offset the loss. The findings show that even brief disruptions can generate persistent declines in knowledge production when research depends on time-sensitive, geographically fixed, and difficult-to-substitute inputs.

RESEARCH UNDER REVIEW

The Gender Ask Gap in Science

(with Astrid Ulv Thomsen, Copenhagen Business School; Lorenzo Palladini, American University of Beirut, Cyprus; Hans Christian Kongsted, Copenhagen Business School; and Valentina Tartari, Stockholm School of Economics)

Reject and Resubmit at Nature; last author

Media coverage: *Times Higher Education*

Do gender disparities in scientific funding emerge before proposals are evaluated? Using the universe of approximately 8,600 funded and unfunded applications submitted to two large European science funders, we find that female principal investigators request 5.0–5.4% less funding than comparable male applicants, accounting for approximately 70–80% of the corresponding gap in awarded funding. Smaller requests do not increase the probability of success, suggesting that the gap does not reflect strategic under-requesting. The gap persists in team-based applications, even when female PIs apply with male co-applicants, although mixed-gender teams partially attenuate it. It is concentrated among early-career and first-time applicants and disappears with repeated applications, consistent with learning and information frictions in how researchers calibrate the resources needed to pursue their ideas.

Benchmarking the Future of Work: From AI Progress to Economic Capabilities

(with Jake Prokopets, independent researcher)

Under review at Management Science

AI benchmarks measure what models can do, but not where those capabilities will matter economically. This paper reinterprets computer-science benchmarks - the technical scoreboards of AI progress - as economic indicators of where frontier capabilities are becoming relevant to work. We construct the Benchmark-Anchored Index of Occupational Exposure by mapping time-stamped benchmark performance to O*NET abilities and occupations. The index also predicts subsequent patterns of realized AI use measured by Anthropic's Economic Index, providing a forward-looking signal of where technological pressure is building and where organizations may need to redesign workflows and invest in complementary capabilities.

Historical and Modern Legacies of the Centrality Gradient

(with Justin Cook, Tulane University; Raymond Kim, Westmont College)

Under review at Economic Inquiry

How does historical political centrality shape the contemporary distribution of population and economic activity? Using a novel geolocalized dataset of approximately 500 civilizations spanning 3200 BCE to 1500 CE, we find that regions closer to polity centers accumulated higher population densities, including in panel specifications that exploit within-cell changes in centrality induced by shifting historical borders. Evidence from Roman roads suggests that public investment was disproportionately concentrated near civilizational cores. Historical centrality also predicts the location of modern national capitals and contemporary economic activity, revealing persistent effects on political and economic geography.

WORKING PAPERS

CentaurBench: Benchmarking LLM Assistance on Real-World Work

(with Pattaraphon Kenny Wongchamcharoen, Berkeley Haas; Min Min Fong, Berkeley Haas; and Abhishek Nagaraj, Berkeley Haas and NBER)

NBER Working Paper No. 35663

Accepted, NeurIPS 2026 Workshop on Agentic AI Benchmarks and Applications for Enterprise Tasks

Are the large language models that perform best autonomously also the most effective at assisting workers? Across seven economically grounded tasks, we compare models completing work independently with models providing guidance to a fixed lower-capacity worker model. Automation and augmentation rankings differ substantially, and assistance does not consistently improve performance, showing that organizations should evaluate AI models according to the specific roles and tasks in which they will be deployed.

Does AI Replace Human Colleagues? Generative AI and Informal Collaboration in Science

(with Jake Prokopets, independent researcher)

Submitting to Management Science

Does generative AI substitute for informal human collaboration in scientific research? Using over 9,000 economics working-paper records from NBER and arXiv, we combine AI-text detection via Pangram with acknowledgments to measure informal intellectual contributions. We find that papers displaying signs of AI assistance acknowledge approximately 40% fewer individuals, controlling for novelty and authors' prior publications and citations. New ties are thanked less, as are academics outside of the same institution. These findings suggest that AI may reshape not only how researchers produce knowledge, but also the informal professional networks through which ideas and feedback are exchanged.

Does Politics Permeate Science? Evidence from a Field Experiment on Political Bias in Academic Opportunity

(with Jessica Khan, Northwest Florida State College)

Presented at NBER Investments in Early Career Scientists, 2026

In preparation for submission

Critics frequently allege political discrimination in academia, but does it actually shape access to academic opportunities? Across three audit experiments involving approximately 10,000 U.S. professors, we randomly vary the political orientation signaled by fictitious prospective students. We find no evidence of differential treatment among STEM professors, but document bias against conservative applicants in the social sciences and humanities. The findings show that political gatekeeping is field-specific and informs current debates over federal funding interventions in higher education: broad university-wide funding cuts may not be warranted.

WORKS IN PROGRESS

The Impact of AI on Science: Evidence from a Randomized Controlled Trial

(with Rem Koning, Harvard Business School)

Scheduled to launch in Fall 2026

How does access to frontier artificial intelligence affect the process and outcomes of scientific discovery? In a randomized controlled trial, early-career scientists will receive access to and training in frontier AI tools while completing new research projects. We will measure how AI affects the speed, quality, novelty, and direction of scientific work across stages of the research process, and whether its effects vary by researchers' prior expertise, career stage, institution, and previous AI experience.

Measuring Work for the AI Economy

(with Isaac Robinson, Mercor; and Abhishek Nagaraj, Berkeley Haas)

Scheduled to launch in Fall 2026

Existing occupational classifications obscure substantial variation in what workers do and how their work is organized. Using an AI-assisted interviewer, we will recruit approximately 10,000 workers across eight occupations to measure their primary work activities, task decompositions, workflow structures, and dependencies on collabora-

tors, upstream inputs, and downstream users. The resulting data will provide a scalable framework for measuring within-occupation heterogeneity and how AI adoption changes the organization of work.

TEACHING CASE STUDIES

Managing Science: Perspectives from Postdocs

(with Solène Delecourt, Berkeley Haas; Kyle Myers, Harvard Business School; Rem Koning, Harvard Business School; Katelyn Cranney, Stanford University; and Scott Sawaya, independent researcher)

Harvard Business School Case Study 625-048, 2024

SELECTED GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS

External and internal research funding: over \$700,000 total

2026: The Science for Progress Initiative (\$50,000); Pangram Research Collaboration Credits (\$5,000); UC Merced Department Fellowship (\$30,000); Institute for Humane Studies Junior Fellowship Award (\$7,000); Scholars at Risk Academic Freedom Fellowship (\$8,000)

2025: Schmidt Sciences Pilot Grant (\$165,000); UC Merced Department Fellowship (\$30,000); Innovation Growth Lab Seed Award (\$8,000)

2024: Sloan Foundation (\$250,000); Free Inquiry Grant Program (\$13,200); Institute for Humane Studies Research Award (\$13,200); Institute for Humane Studies Mentorship Grant (\$8,000); UC Merced Graduate Summer Fellowship (\$8,000); Dartmouth College Visiting Ph.D. Fellowship (\$7,500)

2023: Wikimedia Research & Technology Fund (\$50,000); Emergent Ventures Fellowship (\$20,000); Metascience Initiative (\$5,000)

Additional awards: Presentation, conference, and travel awards, 2022–2026 (\$23,175 total)

SERVICE

Ad hoc reviewer for:

Management Science; Review of Economics and Statistics; Research Policy; Telecommunications Policy; Journal of Open Inquiry in the Behavioral Sciences; European Association of Young Economists; DRUID 2026; DRUID 2025

- Co-organized Berkeley Haas's Technology, Entrepreneurship, and Innovation Seminar (2023–2026)
- Interviewer for the Center for AI Safety Economics Fellowship (April 2026)
- Mentor for Effective Thesis (2022–Present)
- Advisory Board, Progress Studies Journal (2022–2025)
- Advisory Board and Founding Committee, Unjournal (2022–2025)
- Ph.D. Student Representative, UC Merced (2021–2022)

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Teaching interests: Strategy; technology and innovation management; organizational behavior; artificial intelligence and the future of work; business analytics and causal inference.

Instructor of Record: Summer 2025, Introduction to Business and Finance, Online Class (6.5/7)

Teaching Assistant: Fall 2021, Statistical Inference (6.7/7); Fall 2022, Statistical Inference (6.05/7); Fall 2023, Game Theory (5.9/7); Fall 2024, Introduction to Business and Finance (5.9/7); Fall 2025, Statistical Inference (5.9/7); Spring 2026, Econometrics (6.45/7)

Guest Lecturer: Labor Economics; Economics of Immigration

PRESENTATIONS

2026: NBER Productivity Seminar (November); NBER Investments in Early Career Scientists; Institute for Humane Studies Junior Conference; Academy of Management; Columbia Management, Analytics, and Data Conference; Wharton Innovation Doctoral Symposium; Research Policy Online Conference; Behavioral Science Conference; MetaSTEM Seminar (Cognitive Science Department), University of California, Merced; Berkeley Haas Macro Research Seminar

2025: Conference in Field Experiments in Strategy; MetaSTEM Seminar (Cognitive Science Department), University of California, Merced; Berkeley Haas Macro Research Seminar; All California Labour Economics Conference; UC Merced Political Science Works in Progress Seminar; University of Southern California, Censorship in the Sciences: Interdisciplinary Perspectives

2024: Technology and Policy Research Initiative, Questrom School of Business, Boston University; Berkeley Haas Macro Research Seminar; UC Merced Economics Brown Bag Seminar; MetaSTEM Seminar (Cognitive Science

Department), University of California, Merced; FIRE Faculty Conference; International Conference on Science of Science and Innovation; Research Policy Early Careers Conference; Behavioral Science Conference

2023: Research Policy Early Careers Conference; Max Planck RISE Conference; FIRE Faculty Conference

2022: Southern Economic Association Conference

ADDITIONAL TRAINING

NBER Digital Economics and AI Tutorial (2025 and 2026); Institute for Humane Studies Media Training; NBER Entrepreneurship Bootcamp (2023); Global Priorities Research Workshop, University of Oxford (2022 and 2023); Economics of Science and Innovation Ph.D. Course, Institute for Progress (2022); EA Econ Retreat, Oxford (2022); First year of B.Sc. Mathematics, Distinction, The Open University (2018–2019)

REFERENCES

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WORK AUTHORIZATION

Work authorization: Eligible for O-1A status through an independent U.S. petitioner; university sponsorship not required.