SODI

Science of Diversity & Inclusion Initiative

RESEARCHER PROFILES





Mallory Avery
Post Doctoral Researcher
Monash University

I am an experimental and applied micro economist working primarily in the area of diversity and inclusion. My work centers around the impact of public or corporate policies on gender and racial diversity in the workplace. I am currently working on a series of field experiments looking at how the "future of work", specifically remote work and AI integration, impacts the diversity of job applicants and hired workers.

Selected Findings from Past Work

A Hidden Cost of Affirmative Action: Muddying Signals about Women's Ability

Using a lab experiment, I find that:

- When there is no affirmative action, women who are successful in an earlier, male-type task are employed at a higher rate than similarly successful men
- When there is affirmative action, this benefit for successful women is removed, and successful men and women are hired at the same rate
- This cost decreases the benefit of affirmative action for women's employment by 2/3 of its original effect

Does AI-assisted recruiting encourage or discourage minority job seekers? Evidence from a natural field experiment on job entry decisions (with Andreas Leibbrandt & Joseph Vecci). Using a large-scale natural field experiment, we find that:

- Informing applicants that they will be evaluated by an AI program, rather than human evaluators, increases the proportion of women in the final applicant pool from 22% to 30%
- This result emerges from both an increase in women completing applications and a decrease for men
- These changes in application rates are driven by beliefs about bias: women believe humans or more biased against them than AI, whereas men believe the opposite
- We find no change in the qualifications of the final applicant pool, either in terms of AI scores or qualifications



Sofia Bapna
Assistant Professor
Carlson School of Management, University of MN

My research interests lie at the intersection of gender gaps, digital platforms, and entrepreneurship. I investigate these topics through the lens of organization theory and utilize randomized field experiments. I am a strong believer in engaged scholarship and have partnered with various organizations to conduct research that contributes to literature and at the same time is consequential for my partner organizations. The industry partners that I have worked with include an equity crowdfunding platform, one of the largest employers in India, an establishment that organizes professional conferences in tech, and one of the largest funders of innovation in Austria. My work has been funded by the Kauffman Foundation, Innovation Growth Lab, and the National Science Foundation.

Selected Findings from Past Work

Interventions For Improving Professional Networking For Women: Experimental Evidence From The It Sector

Professional networks are vital for individuals' career advancement; however, research suggests that women are often disadvantaged in their access to such networks. We find that a simple intervention of providing nonreciprocal recommendations to conference participants can improve women's networking outcomes including increases in:

- Number of new contacts women met by 57%;
- Time women spent talking with new contacts by 90%;
- Number of LinkedIn connections they added by 29%; and
- Their odds of changing jobs by a factor of 1.6.

Our results show that simple interventions can help women grow their networks and find jobs. A two-minute video summary of the study can be found here: https://vimeo.com/586830529.

Scholars have documented significant gender gaps in traditional equity financing through angel investors and venture capitalists. Through a randomized field experiment we find that the emerging context of equity crowdfunding is a promising avenue for women to raise capital. A two-minute video summary of the study can be found here: https://vimeo.com/589572332.



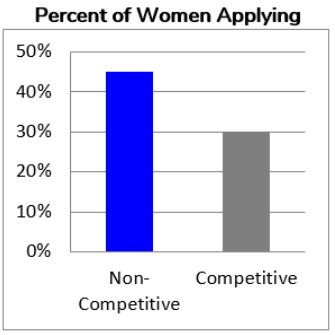
Jeffrey Flory
Assistant Professor
Claremont McKenna College

As an applied economist, I use experiments to test economic theory, generate new insights into key policy questions, and design practical solutions to complex problems. My recent work focuses on diversity in the workplace, salary and employment inequalities among underrepresented groups, and impacts of different pay structures on employee behaviors. I am driven by the desire to uncover hidden relationships not evident in existing theory and to help practitioners achieve their objectives through rigorous evidenced-based research. My research has been featured in media outlets such as Time Magazine, ABC News, Science Daily, and Freakonomics.

Selected Findings from Past Work

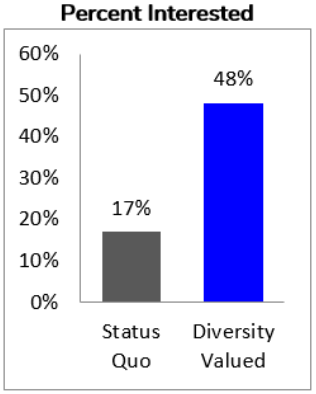
Competitive Workplaces Push Some Women Away

- Competitive workplaces can sharply reduce applications by women to a job, raising the gender gap by as much as 125%.
- Making competition team-based can eliminate this effect.
- Lowering the degree of competition also helps reduce this effect and eliminate the gender gap in application rates



Stating Diversity as a Company Value Raises Minority Applications

- Signaling explicit interest in employee diversity dramatically raises interest and applications by ethnic minorities to a high-profile career development opportunity.
- It does not harm interest or applications from ethnic majority individuals (in fact, slightly raises).





Edwin Ip
Lecturer (Assistant Professor) of Economics
University of Exeter

I am a behavioural economist who uses experiments, economic theory and econometrics to study a wide range of questions on 1) decision making, 2) affirmative action policies and discrimination. Some of my previous work analyses the impact of implementing gender quotas on subsequent manager-worker relationship.

Selected Findings from Past Work

How Do Gender Quotas Affect Workplace Relations? Evidence from a representative survey and an experiment

If you think that your boss is only there because of a gender quota, it can affect the way you work for her. We conducted a survey with 1,011 US adults to find out their attitude towards using gender quotas to promote females into leadership positions. We find that opinions on gender quotas in general are very divided. However, once we specify the circumstances in which the quotas are implemented, there is a lot more consensus. When there is no justification or when there is a gender skill gap in favour of males (where the average male candidate is more suitable for the job than the average female candidate), then most people disagree with the use of gender quotas. However, when there is bias against females in the selection process (e.g. due to discrimination or other circumstances), then most people agree with the use of gender quotas.

We use a laboratory experiment to see whether these attitudes translate into behaviour. The experiment involves first a task that measures performance, and second a task that involves manager-worker cooperation. The score in the first task is used to select managers in the second task. We vary the implementation of quotas as well as the circumstances. We find that, as in the survey, when there is no difference between males and females, or when there is an average skill difference, the implementation of quotas causes less cooperative behaviour between managers and workers. On the other hand, when it is known that there is a bias against females in the selection process, then implementing quotas increases cooperative behaviour between managers and workers.

Our results show that the impact of gender quotas on hierarchical relationships crucially depends on the circumstances under which they are implemented. However, how people perceive these circumstances (gender skill gap and discrimination) may not be accurate. So if an organisation wants to impose gender quotas then it should first educate its employees about whether any gender skill gap in the field is actually justified in the first place, and whether there is gender discrimination in the sector. Otherwise, without this understanding, implementing gender quotas could backfire.



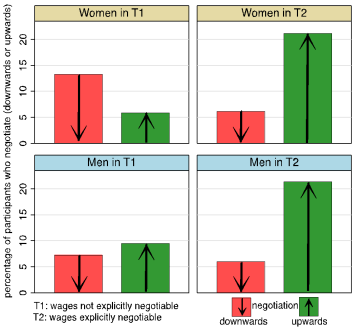
Andreas Leibbrandt

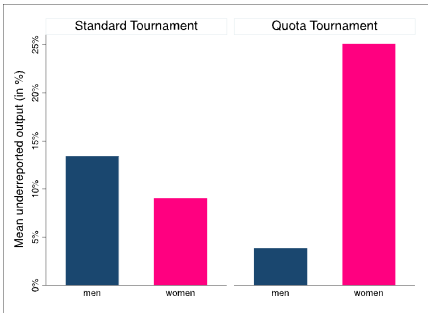
Professor of Economics, Monash University
Co-founder, SODI

As an applied experimental economist, I combine different methodologies to investigate their applications in organizations. Much of my research is related to diversity and inclusion: I have investigated salary negotiations, quotas, selection into variable payment schemes, affirmative action statements and discrimination. My studies have been featured in media outlets such as Time, The Wall Street Journal, and Huffington Post and are published in journals such as the Review of Economic Studies, Management Science and the Economic Journal.

Selected Findings from Past Work

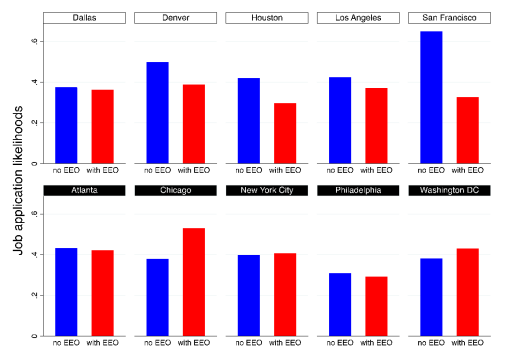
Gender differences in salary negotiations can be removed if it is made explicit that salaries are negotiable (Leibbrandt & List, 2014)





Gender quotas can lead to sabotage. In particular, we find that women's performance is underreported by other women in competitive workplaces (Leibbrandt et al., 2017).

Equal Opportunity Employment (EEO) statements in job advertisements can discourage racial minorities to apply for a job. The negative impact is especially pronounced for educated racial minorities in cities with white majority populations (Leibbrandt and List, 2019).





Conrad Miller
Assistant Professor
University of California

Conrad is an assistant professor at the University of California, Berkeley in the Haas School of Business and a Faculty Research Fellow at the National Bureau of Economic Research. He has received his PhD in economics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Conrad's research focuses on two general questions: (1) what determines the matches formed between workers and firms in the labor market? (2) what is the role of descrimination in determining economic outcomes? The latter strand includes research on labor markets, criminal justice, and online platforms.

Selected Findings from Past Work

The Persistent Effect of Temporary Affirmative Action

Conrad studies the effect of federal affirmative regulation on the racial composition of firms that are *temporarily* regulated and finds that:

- Affirmative action increases the black share of employees over time
- The black share continues to grow at a similar pace even after an *establishment is deregulated*
- Evidence suggests this persistence is driven in part by affirmative action inducing employers to improve their methods for screening potential hires

The Dynamics of Referral Hiring and Racial Inequality

We study whether referral hiring exacerbates racial inequality in firm labor demand.

- We argue that the answer depends on where a firm is in its life cycle
- Early referral hires are disproportionately drawn from the founder's racial group
- But some hires are not referrals, and those external market hires eventually make referrals of their own
- As the firm makes more hires, referral hiring eventually does not favor any group relative to hiring from the external market

We document evidence consistent with this using detailed data from Brazil.



Dr. Emerson Murphy-Hill
Staff Research Scientist
Google

Dr. Emerson Murphy-Hill is a Staff Research Scientist with Product Inclusion at Google, leading an effort on improving diversity and inclusion for software developers. Before Google, he was an Associate Professor at North Carolina State University. His research spans human-computer interaction and software engineering, and has been awarded five ACM SIGSOFT Distinguished Paper Awards, an NSF CAREER Award, a VL/HCC Best Paper Award, and a Microsoft Software Engineering Innovation Foundation award.

Selected Findings from Past Work

The pushback effects of race, ethnicity, gender, and age in code review

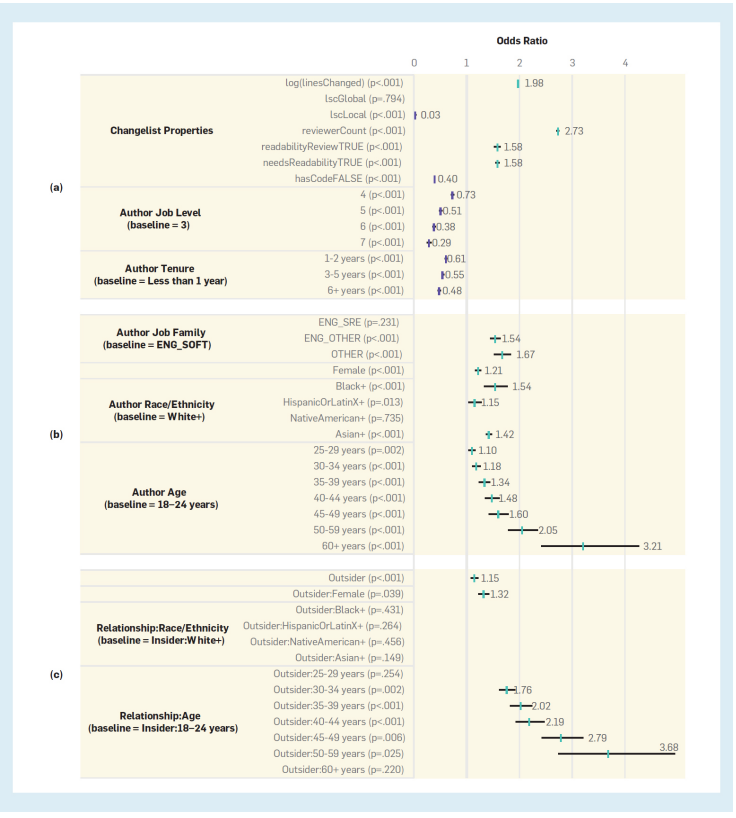
- The amount of pushback that code authors receive varies based on their gender, race/ethnicity, and age

Is programming Knowledge Related To Age?

- Contrary to popular belief, older software developers are more knowledgeable than younger software developers about new technologies

An Exploratory Study of Blind Software Developers

- Blind software developers face unique challenges compared to their sighted peers





Xiaoyue Shan
Postdoctoral Researcher
The Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania

My main research fields are Labor Economics, Behavioral Economics, and Applied Microeconomics. I primarily use experimental approaches to study topics related to disparities, biases, social interactions, and human capital. I obtained my PhD in Economics from the University of Zurich in 2021.

Selected Findings from Past Work

The Minority Trap: Minority Status Drives Women Out of Male-Dominated Fields

- I conduct a field experiment in a large male-dominated course in university where I randomize students into small study groups with different gender compositions
- Women assigned to female-minority groups become more likely to drop out of the course than women assigned to gender-balanced or female-majority groups
- I find evidence on three potential mechanisms: raised salience of women's minority status, decreased academic self-confidence, and reduced social integration

Lowering the Playing Field: Discrimination through Contrast Effects

- In an incentivized resume rating experiment, employers evaluate hypothetical candidates with randomly assigned characteristics
- Candidates are rated worse when immediately following a white man than when following women or minorities
- Employers directly favor white men when resumes are high quality, but when evaluating low quality white men, they instead indirectly favor them through a contrast effect



Olga Stoddard
Assistant Professor, Brigham Young University
Senior Research Affiliate, SODI

I use experimental methods to study underrepresentation of women and ethnic minorities in fields like business, politics, and STEM. My research focuses on understanding the effects of various diversity interventions and policies on recruitment, retention, and success of minority employees.

Selected Findings from Past Work

- Communicating the firm's value of diversity to prospective job candidates raises applications by ethnic minorities and women.
- Contrary to conventional wisdom, elite political recruitment increases the gender gap in political ambition as men are disproportionately more responsive to recruitment efforts than women.
- Women are deterred by competitive environments. Specifically, priming politically active individuals to consider the competitive nature of politics has a strong negative effect on women's interest in political office, but not on men's.
- Priming gender identity in a cooperative task in the laboratory causes men to communicate more and women to become less vocal in mixed-gender interactions.
- Gender composition has significant effects on group dynamics and women's ability to be influential. When women are a minority in a group, they face a severe deficit in influence. This gap does not decline as a result of repeated interactions by group members.