

**YATANG LIN**

**LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS & POLITICAL SCIENCE**

**Department of Economics**

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**GENDER:** Female

**CITIZENSHIP:** Chinese

**PRE-DOCTORAL STUDIES:**

2012-2014 MRes in Economics (with Distinction), London School of Economics  
2008-2012 BA in Economics and Finance, Tsinghua University, China

**DOCTORAL STUDIES:** London School of Economics

DATES: 2014 - present

THESIS TITLE: Essays in Environmental and Urban Economics

EXPECTED COMPLETION DATE: 2017

THESIS ADVISOR AND REFERENCES:

Professor Robin Burgess (Advisor)  
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**DESIRED TEACHING AND RESEARCH:**

Primary Fields: Environmental and Energy Economics, Urban Economics

Secondary Fields: International Trade, Development Economics

**TEACHING EXPERIENCE:**

2016	Class Teacher, Introduction to Stata (Graduate)
2015	Class Teacher, EC351 International Economics summer session
2014-2016	Class Teacher, EC315 International Economics
2013-2014	Class Teacher, EC201 Microeconomics

**LANGUAGES**

Languages: Mandarin Chinese (Native), English (Fluent), Cantonese (Basic)  
Software: Stata, ArcGIS, Matlab, LaTeX

**HONORS, SCHOLARSHIPS AND FELLOWSHIPS:**

2016	Royal Economic Society (RES) Conference Travel Grant
2015	North American Regional Science Council (NARSC) Graduate Student Paper Competition, Runner-up
2015, 2016	Postgraduate Travel Grant, LSE
2012-2016	Economic Department Award, LSE
2011	Scholarship of Huang Yujia for academic merit, Tsinghua University
2010	Scholarship of Liu Tianhong for academic merit, Tsinghua University
2008	Freshmen Scholarship, Tsinghua University

**COMPLETED PAPERS:**

***Job Market Paper:***

[\*"The Long Shadow of Industrial Pollution: Environmental Amenities and the Distribution of Skills"\*](#)

This paper presents theory and evidence on the role of environmental amenities in shaping the competitiveness of post-industrial cities. I assemble a rich database at a fine spatial resolution to examine the impact of historical pollution on the distribution of skilled workers and residents within cities today. I find that census tracts downwind of highly polluted 1970s industrial sites are associated with lower housing prices and a smaller share of skilled employment three decades later, a pattern which has been reinforced from 1980 to 2000. These findings suggest the presence of skill sorting on pollution and strong subsequent agglomeration effects. To quantify the contribution of different mechanisms, I build and estimate a multi-sector spatial equilibrium framework that introduces heterogeneity in local productivity and workers' valuation for local amenities across sectors, and allows initial sorting to be magnified by production and residential externalities. Estimation of the model suggests that historical pollution is associated with lower current productivity and amenity levels. The effects are more pronounced for productivity, more skilled sectors and central tracts. I use the framework to evaluate the impact of

counterfactual pollution cuts in different parts of cities on nationwide welfare and the cross-city skill distribution.

**Other Papers:**

[\*"Travel Costs and Urban Employment Patterns: Evidence from China's High Speed Railway"\*](#)

(Accepted at *Journal of Urban Economics*)

How does intercity passenger transportation shape urban employment and specialization patterns? To shed light on this question I study China's High Speed Railway (HSR), an unprecedentedly large-scale network that connected 81 cities from 2003 to 2014 with trains running at speeds over 200 km/h. using a difference-in-differences approach, I find that an HSR connection increases city-wide passenger flows by 10% and employment by 7%. To deal with the issues of endogenous railway placement and simultaneous public investments accompanying HSR connection, I examine the impact of a city's market access changes purely driven by the HSR connection of other cities. The estimates suggest that HSR-induced expansion in market access increases urban employment with an elasticity between 2 and 2.5. Further evidence on sectoral employment suggests that industries with a higher reliance on nonroutine cognitive skills benefit more from HSR-induced market access to other cities.

[\*"Where does the wind blow? Green preferences and spatial misallocation in the renewable energy sector"\*](#)

(CEP Discussion Paper No 1424)

Are "greener" investments less efficient? This paper looks at the location choices of wind power investors. I measure the efficiency loss in this sector due to wrong project location and explore the factors contributing to it. Using extensive information on wind resources, transmission, electricity prices and other restrictions that are relevant for the siting choices of wind farms, I calculate the predicted profitability of wind power projects for all the possible places across the contiguous US. I use the distribution of this profitability as a counterfactual for profit-maximizing wind power investments and compare it to the actual placement of wind farms. The average predicted profit of wind projects would have risen by 47.1% had the 1770 current projects in the continental US been moved to the best 1770 sites. I also show that 80% and 42% respectively of this observed deviation can be accounted for by within-state and within-county distortions. I show further evidence that a large proportion of the within-state spatial misallocation is attributable to green investors' "conspicuous generation" behaviour: wind farms in more environmental-friendly counties are more likely to be financed by local and non-profit investors, are closer to cities, are much less responsive to local fundamentals and have worse performance ex-post. The implementation of state policies such as Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) and price-based subsidies are related to better within-state locational choices through attracting more for-profit investments to the "brown" counties, while lump-sum subsidies have the opposite or no effects. My findings have salient implications for environmental and energy policy: policy makers should take account of the non-monetary incentives of renewable investors when determining the allocative efficiency of policies.

[\*"Technology Transfer and Domestic Innovation: Evidence from the High-Speed Rail Sector in China"\*](#)

(CEP Discussion Paper No 1393)

Joint with Yu Qin (National University of Singapore) and Zhuan Xie (Peking University)

This paper investigates China's high-speed railway (HSR) technology introduction to show how it spurs innovation in local regions and in relevant industries. The large-scale technology introduction, covering specific technology categories and directly benefiting railway-related firms from various cities, enables us to specifically depict how foreign technology is digested and spurs follow-up innovation in and out of directly receiving firms. We find that technology transfer leads to a 42% significant increase in HSR-related patents granted in cities with direct technology receivers. In addition, we also find evidence on sizable spillovers to firms that are not directly related to the railway industry, whereas technology similarity and the existence of relevant research institutions play important roles.

**CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS:**

- 2016     European Winter Meeting of the Econometric Society, Edinburgh (Scheduled)  
           The Northeast Universities Development Consortium (NEUDC) Conference, Boston  
           Heartland Environmental and Resource Economics Workshop, Champaign-Urbana  
           11th Meeting of the Urban Economics Association, Minneapolis  
           China Economic Summer Institute, Hong Kong (Presented by coauthor)  
           Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (LKYSPP) Development Economics and Policy  
           (DeEP) Conference, Singapore  
           Spatial Economics Research Centre (SERC) Annual Meeting, London  
           4th Workshop in Urban Economics IEB-UB, Barcelona  
           Royal Economic Society (RES) Annual Meeting, Brighton
- 2015     10th Meeting of the Urban Economics Association, Portland  
           ZEW/MaCCI innovation and patenting workshop, Mannheim  
           European Doctorate Programme (EDP) Jamboree, PSE, Paris
- 2014     3rd Workshop in Urban Economics IEB-UB, Barcelona