Shaoda Wang

1307 E 60th St., office 2055
The University of Chicago
Chicago, IL 60637

Phone: (773) 236-9614
Email: shaoda@uchicago.edu
Homepage: http://www.sdwang.org

Academic Appointments

University of Chicago

Associate Professor (with tenure), Harris School of Public Policy, 2026–

Assistant Professor, Harris School of Public Policy, 2021–2026

Deputy Faculty Director, Becker Friedman Institute-China (BFI-China), 2024–

Deputy Faculty Director, Energy Policy Institute at UChicago-China (EPIC-China), 2022–

Postdoctoral Scholar, Department of Economics and EPIC, 2019–2021

Stanford University

Visiting Assistant Professor in Economics, SIEPR, 2024–2025

Professional Affiliations

Guest Co-Editor, *Journal of Development Economics* (Special Issue), 2026

Associate Editor, *Review of Economics and Statistics*, 2025–

Affiliate, Bureau for Research and Economic Analysis of Development (BREAD), 2024–

Member, Center for East Asian Studies at UChicago (CEAS) Committee on Chinese Studies, 2024–

Affiliated Faculty, UChicago PhD program in Political Economy, 2023–

Faculty Research Fellow (DEV, EEE, POL), National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER), 2022–

Fellow, The Coase Project, 2021–

Invited Researcher (K-CAI), Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (JPAL), 2020–

Affiliated Faculty, Energy Policy Institute at the University of Chicago (EPIC), 2019–

Guest Researcher, Alibaba Research Center for Rural Dynamics, 2019–

Short-Term Visits

University of Hong Kong, Faculty of Business and Economics (2025)

Chinese University of Hong Kong, Department of Economics (2024, 2025)

Tsinghua University, School of Economics and Management (2021)

Education

Ph.D., Agricultural and Resource Economics, UC Berkeley, 2019

B.A., Economics, Peking University, 2014

Research Interests

Political Economy, Environmental Economics, Development Economics

Publications

"Court Capture, Local Protectionism, and Economic Integration: Evidence from China," (with Ernest Liu, Yi Lu, and Wenwei Peng)
Review of Economics and Statistics, Forthcoming

"Policy Experimentation in China: The Political Economy of Policy Learning," (with David Y. Yang)
Journal of Political Economy, 2025, vol. 133(7), pp. 2180–2228.

"Courting a Blue Sky: Understanding the Constrained Judicialization of Environmental Governance in China" (with Zhuang Liu, and Wenwei Peng)
Journal of Contemporary China, 2024, pp. 1–22. (*invited paper for special issue on China's Green Transition*)

"English Curriculum and Educational Inequality: Evidence from 16 Million College Entrance Exam Takers in China" (with Hongbin Li, Lingsheng Meng, and Kai Mu)
Journal of Development Economics, 2024, vol. 168, 103271.

"Does the Squeaky Wheel Get More Grease? The Direct and Indirect Effects of Citizen Participation on Environmental Governance in China," (with Mark Buntaine, Michael Greenstone, Guojun He, Mengdi Liu, and Bing Zhang)
American Economic Review, 2024, 114(3), pp. 815–850.

"Buddha's Grace Illuminates All: Temple Destruction, School Construction, and Modernization in 20th Century China," (with Boxiao Zhang)
Economica, 2023, 90(360), pp. 1335–1361.

"When Information Conflicts with Obligations: The Role of Motivated Cognition," (with Ao Wang, and Xiaoyang Ye)
Economic Journal, 2023, 133(654), pp. 2533–2552.

"Subjective Performance Evaluation, Influence Activities, and Bureaucratic Work Behavior: Evidence from China" (with Alain de Janvry, Elisabeth Sadoulet, Guojun He, and Qiong Zhang)
American Economic Review, 2023, 113(3), pp. 766–799.

"Watering Down Environmental Regulation in China" (with Guojun He and Bing Zhang)
Quarterly Journal of Economics, 2020, 135(4), pp. 2135–2185.

"Do College Graduates Serving as Village Officials Help Rural China?" (with Guojun He)
American Economic Journal: Applied Economics, 2017, 9(4), pp. 186–215.

Working Papers

"Laboratories of Autocracy: Landscape of Central-Local Dynamics in China's Policy Universe" (with Kaicheng Luo and David Yang)
Reject and Resubmit, *American Economic Review*

"Option Value Neglect: Evidence from Centralized College Admission," (with Ao Wang, and Xiaoyang Ye)
Revise and Resubmit, *Review of Economic Studies*

"Campaigning for Extinction: Eradication of Sparrows and the Great Famine in China," (with Eyal Frank, Xuebin Wang, Qinyun Wang, and Yang You)
Revise and Resubmit, *Quarterly Journal of Economics*

"A Few Bad Apples? Academic Dishonesty, Political Selection, and Institutional Performance in China" (with Zhuang Liu, and Wenwei Peng)

"China's Silver Linings Playbook: Evidence from 27,000 Cloud Seeding Operations," (with Zichen Deng and Michael Greenstone)

"The Societal Impacts of the Legal Profession: Evidence from Commercial Disputes in China," (with Zhuang Liu, Wenwei Peng, and Daniel Yi Xu)

"The Political Economic Determinants of Nuclear Power: Evidence from Chernobyl," (with Alexey Makarin, and Nancy Qian)

"The Environmental and Economic Consequences of Internalizing Border Spillovers," (with Zenan Wang)
Revise and Resubmit, *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*

"Fiscal Competition and Coordination: Evidence from China."

Selected Works in Progress

"Empowering Global Environmental Governance with Data" (with Michael Greenstone, Rajat Kochhar, and Sunny Sun)

"Green Technology Adoption in China" (with Wei Lin, Daniel Yi Xu, Yang Yi, and Tianyu Zhang)

"Cultivating Winners by Subsidizing Losers: Understanding Electric Vehicle Industrial Policies in China" (with Jianwei Xing, Daniel Yi Xu, and Yushuai Zhang)

"Legal Therapy: Coercion, the Courts, and Structural Transformation in China" (with Wenwei Peng, David Y. Yang, and Noam Yuchtman)

"The Morale of Chinese Entrepreneurs" (with Zhuang Liu, and Wenwei Peng)

"An Economic Theory of Salvation Religions" (with Weijia Li)

Awards

Sloan Research Fellowship, 2026

AEJ: Economic Policy Excellence in Refereeing Award, 2025

AER: Insights Excellence in Refereeing Award, 2023

Zhang Peigang Development Economics Outstanding Achievement Award, 2022

Gregory Chow Best Paper Award, Chinese Economists Society, 2018

Sidney Hoos Award for Best Second-Year Econometrics Paper, 2016

Gregory Chow Best Paper Award, Chinese Economists Society, 2015

Tai-Sun Chen Award for Academic Talents, Peking University, 2013

Chancellor's Undergrad Research Grant, Peking University, 2012

Yihai-Kerry Scholarship, Peking University, 2012

Outstanding Student, Peking University, 2012

Outstanding Winner, Challenge Cup Academic Competition, Peking University, 2012

Research Grants

Institute for Climate and Sustainable Growth Seed Fund ($149,993, with Michael Greenstone), 2025

HKU-UChicago Climate Research Fund ($50,000, with Michael Greenstone, and Guojun He), 2025

HKU-UChicago Climate Research Fund ($48,000, with Eyal Frank, and Guojun He), 2025

BFI Data Acquisition Award ($50,000), 2025

Malyi Research Award ($10,000), 2025

IGC Small Research Grant (£ 23,743, with Jacopo Ponticelli), 2025

IGC Small Research Grant (£ 29,464, with Michael Greenstone, Rajat Kochhar, and Sunny Sun), 2024

Weiss Family Program Fund ($14,536, with Michael Greenstone, Rajat Kochhar, and Sunny Sun), 2024

EPIC-China Grant ($52,500, with David Y. Yang), 2023

EPIC-China Grant ($65,000, with Allan Hsiao), 2023

Tsinghua–UChicago Joint Research Center for Economics and Finance ($30,000, with Hongbin Li, Yi Lu, and Binzhen Wu), 2022

Tsinghua–UChicago Joint Research Center for Economics and Finance ($20,000, with Ernest Liu, Yi Lu, and Wenwei Peng), 2022

Provost's Global Faculty Award ($25,000), 2022

Tsinghua–UChicago Joint Research Center for Economics and Finance ($40,000, with Yi Lu, and Wenwei Peng), 2021

Tsinghua–UChicago Joint Research Center for Economics and Finance ($40,000, with Bo Li), 2021

JPAL PPE Grant ($30,360, with Ao Wang), 2020

IGC State Effectiveness Grant (£ 70,000, with David Y. Yang), 2020

Tsinghua–UChicago Joint Research Center for Economics and Finance ($40,000, with Yi Lu, and Wenwei Peng), 2020

Tsinghua–UChicago Joint Research Center for Economics and Finance ($20,000, with Jing Cao), 2020

BFI Gender Initiative Grant ($17,000), 2020

BFI Political Economics Initiative Grant ($4,000), 2019

EPIC-UCAS Grant ($58,000, with Michael Greenstone, Guojun He, and Zifa Wang), 2019

EPIC-UCAS Grant ($41,500, with Michael Greenstone and Guojun He), 2019

EPIC-UCAS Grant ($58,400, with Fiona Burlig, Michael Greenstone, Guojun He, Koichiro Ito, and Zifa Wang), 2019

JPAL GI Pilot Grant ($49,797, with David Y. Yang), 2019

BFI Development Grant ($21,000), 2019

JPAL PPE Grant ($43,901, with Ao Wang), 2019

PEDL Exploratory Grant (£ 26,922, with Guojun He and Bing Zhang), 2017

HK UGC General Research Fund (HK$364,876, with Guojun He and Bing Zhang), 2017

All-UC Econ History Group Fellowship ($3,500), 2017

UC Berkeley Grad Division Summer Grant ($3,500), 2017

JPAL GI Full Grant ($200,000, with Alain de Janvry, Elisabeth Sadoulet, and Qiong Zhang), 2017

HKUST IEMS Grant (HK$150,500, with Guojun He, Alain de Janvry, Elisabeth Sadoulet, and Qiong Zhang), 2017

Weiss Family Program Fund ($11,200), 2016

UC Berkeley CCS Summer Grant ($2,500), 2016

JPAL GI Pilot Grant ($50,000, with Alain de Janvry and Elisabeth Sadoulet), 2015

Berkeley Economic History Lab Grant ($2,400), 2014

Professional Activities

Invited Talks

2026: AEA/ASSA, UPenn (CSCC), Virginia (Econ), Hoover Institution, Wuhan University, CAERE Annual Conference (Keynote), arcelona School of Economics Summer Forum, University of Tokyo – Harvard-Yenching Institute Joint Training Program, PE of Governance Conference (UChicago Beijing), Kiel-Göttingen-CEPR "China in the Global Economy" Conference (Berlin), China workshop (Göttingen), ACES Summer School (Kathmandu)

2025: AEA/ASSA, Harvard/MIT Development Seminar, Stanford University (Sustainability), Brown University (Econ), Vanderbilt China Week, University of Houston (Econ), Columbia University (SIPA), National University of Singapore (Econ), MIT Environmental Econ Seminar, UCSD-CUHK China Workshop, Stanford (SCCEI), Coase Conference, ABFER (discussant), Tsinghua Growth and Institutions Conference, LSE (Management), Peking U (NSE), HKU (Econ), Pittsburgh (Econ), Annual Bank of Canada & UofT Conference on the Chinese Economy, MIT (Sloan), UPenn (EEE), Harvard (Political Econ), UChicago (ICSG), NBER Chinese Economy Group, Wuhan U Growth Conference

2024: AEA/ASSA, Stanford University (SCCEI), UC Berkeley (ARE), ABFER, Northwestern University (Kellogg & Econ), Kellogg Conference on the Economics and Politics of China, UCSD (Econ & China center), GWU IIEP 16th Anniversary Conference, UIBE, NUFE, SED conference, World Bank, Georgetown University (Econ), Zhejiang University (Econ), IOG conference, Monash University (Econ), Melbourne Chinese Econ History Workshop, Econometric Society Meeting

2023: AEA/ASSA (Discussant), Harvard University (Law and Econ), ABFER, NBER Chinese Economy Group, University of Oregon (Econ), Renmin University (Finance), EPIC Junior Workshop, NUS (Business School), Tsinghua Growth and Institutions Conference, CCER Summer Institute, Barcelona School of Economics Summer Forum, China Economics Summer Institute, HKU Law and Organizational Econ Workshop, Chinese University of Hong Kong (Econ), LSE Environmental Week, China Europe

International Business School (Econ), Duke-Kunshan University (Econ), Fudan University (Econ), Queen Mary University of London (Econ), Princeton University (Econ & Politics), ESG Conference (Shenzhen), "Opportunities and Challenges for China and Beyond" Conference (HK), JEEM Conference (discussant), IESR Environmental Conference, Zhejiang University (Econ)

2022: AEA/ASSA, University of Hong Kong (Law), HKBU-NUS-CEIBS-NTU joint seminar (Econ), NBER EEE, NBER Organizational Economics, NBER Chinese Economy Group, CUHK-Shenzhen (Econ), BFI-China Conference, Poli Sci Speaker Series, University of Wisconsin-Madison (AAE), Norwegian School of Economics, Barcelona School of Economics Summer Forum, China Economics Summer Institute, UC Berkeley (Haas), University of Chicago (Poli Sci), LSE Environmental Week, Symposium on Natural Resource Governance for Young Scholars (Indiana University), Duke University (Econ), University of Chicago (Booth)

2021: AEA/ASSA, University of Virginia (Econ), Cambridge Society for Economic Pluralism, University of Southern California (Marshall), University of Chicago (EPIC), Xiamen University (WISE), UC Riverside (Econ), University of Munich (Econ), Tsinghua University (SEM), Environmental Workshop (XMU), NBER/BREAD Development Meeting, NEUDC (BU), Stanford University (GSB), University of Nottingham (NICEP), Ball State University (Econ), University of Chicago (Econ)

2020: Tsinghua Growth and Institutions Conference, NYU Politics China Workshop, NBER Chinese Economy Group (Discussant), ASHEcon (Discussant), GoSee (Discussant), Tsinghua University, Fudan Social Sciences Lab Webinar, University of Iowa (Econ), Zhongshan University, Renmin University, University of Idaho (Ag Econ)

2019: LSE (Management), University of Chicago (Harris), ASREC, UC Berkeley PE Lunch, Northwestern Development Rookiefest, Environmental Workshop (NJU), CAAS, Renmin University, China Economics Summer Institute, AFE (Chicago), NBER Chinese Economy Group, University of Tokyo, Hitotsubashi University, GRIPS, Purdue University (Ag Econ), Fudan University, Jinan University (IESR), Peking University (NSD)

2018: PEDL Conference (LSE); PEDL Workshop (Oxford), EMCON (Northwestern), Occasional Workshop (UCSB), AFE (BU), Heartland Workshop (UIUC), UC Berkeley Development Lunch, UC Berkeley ERE Seminar, Camp Resources, APSA (Boston), ABCDE (World Bank), Peking University, MIEDC (UMN), IPWSD (Columbia), CES North America, PacDev (UCD)

2017: PEDL Workshop (Oxford), CSES (Chengdu), Environmental Workshop (NJU), ES China, BCCDS (SJTU), YSC (UCSD), MIEDC (UWM), PacDev (UCR)

2016: All-UC Conference (UCD), NEUDC (MIT), UC Berkeley PE Lunch, PacDev (Stanford)

2015: NEUDC (Brown), All-UC Conference (UCB)

Referee

American Economic Journal: Applied Economics, American Economic Journal: Economic Policy, American Economic Review, American Economic Review: Insights, American Journal of Political Science, American Journal of Agricultural Economics, China Economic Review, Econometrica, Economica, Economic Development and Cultural Change, Economic Inquiry, Economic Journal, Energy Journal, Environmental and Resource Economics, Explorations in Economic History, Journal of Comparative Economics, Journal of Development Economics, Journal of Environmental Economics and Management, Journal of European Economic Association, Journal of Health Economics, Journal of Industrial Economics, Journal of International Economics, Journal of Law and Economics, Journal of Policy Analysis and Management, Journal of Political Economy, Journal of Public Economics, Journal of Urban Economics, National Science Foundation, Quarterly Journal of Economics, Review of Economics and Statistics, Review of Economic Studies, World Development

Services

Assistant Instructional Professor Recruitment Committee (Finance), UChicago Harris (2025–2026)

Scientific Committee, Asian Meeting of the Econometric Society (2026)

Scientific Committee, China Economics Summer Institute (2025–)

Executive program committee, SIOE annual conference (2025)

Faculty Steering Committee, UChicago Beijing Center (2024–2027)

BFI-China Seminar Series Co-Organizer, UChicago (2024–)

Organizer, BFI Law and Political Economy conference (2024)

Executive program committee, SIOE annual conference (2024)

Education Committee, UChicago Climate & Energy Institute (2023-2024)

Junior Faculty Recruitment Committee (EEE), UChicago Harris (2023–2024)

Junior Faculty Recruitment Committee (EEE), UChicago Harris (2022–2023)

Junior Faculty Recruitment Committee (PE of Dev), UChicago Harris (2021–2022)

EPIC Lunch Seminar Series Co-Organizer, UChicago (2021–2024; 2025–)

PhD Admissions Committee (student member), UC Berkeley ARE (2017–2018)

Freelance Columnist for CNPolitics.org (2013–2016)

Teaching and Advising

Teaching at UChicago:

Chinese Economy; 2022, 2023, 2024 (Average Rating: 4.6/5)

Environmental Economics; 2022, 2023, 2024 (Average Rating: 4.6/5)

PhD program placement of RAs

Chenyue Cao (UBC Econ), Qingyu Chen (Oxford Econ), Yuxuan Chen (UPenn Econ), Chi Cheng (Virginia Econ), Xiaohan Dong (Duke Nicholas), Siyuan Hu (Wisconsin AAE), Yujing Huang (UCLA Anderson GEM), Alex Xi Lan (UChicago Harris), Dingding Li (Berkeley ARE), Wenhao Li (UNC Econ), Ziyi Liu (Berkeley Haas BPP), Kaicheng Luo (MIT Econ), Bobing Qiu (Berkeley ARE), Zhenyu Shen (Princeton Econ), Anran Tan (Duke Econ), Fanyu Wang (Columbia SIPA), Yiyuan Wang (Yale SOM Finance), Yujia Wang (Harvard Econ), Wenqing Yu (Princeton Econ), Xinyi Zhang (Michigan Ross Operations), Runren Zhou (UT Austin Econ), Jintao Zhu (UChicago Political Econ), Zhenyu Zhu (HKU Econ), Yuerong Zhuang (Princeton Econ)

References

Available upon request

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