

NERSA / NARSC Program for Early Career Regional Science Scholars Migration and Regional Science

We are excited to invite early career regional scientists¹ to participate in the upcoming Northeastern Regional Science Association (NERSA) Workshop on Mobility, Migration, and Regional Science, which will explore key theories, methodologies, and applications related to human movement across geographic scales. This workshop program will feature keynote lectures on foundational theories while also addressing recent advances in data sources, analytical methods, and policy implications within diverse spatial and socio-economic contexts.

Experts will share insights on mobility, migration, and immigration dynamics, covering topics such as migration theories and concepts, geographic scales of movement, economic and social motivators, machine learning, network modeling, econometrics, agent-based models, input-output modeling, visualization techniques, and policy applications. A key focus of this workshop is fostering interdisciplinary collaboration, bringing together early career scholars, senior researchers, and practitioners in a dynamic, engaging, interactive environment.

Join us to participate in this 18-month cohort-based virtual or hybrid program that not only advances regional science but also builds a lasting community of scholars dedicated to addressing pressing socio-economic and policy challenges through innovative research. If you are passionate about being a part of the next generation of regional scientists, we encourage you to get involved, develop your ideas, and join the community of Regional Scientists!

¹ “Early career scholars in regional science” includes doctoral students, post-doctoral researchers, lecturers and junior faculty members, and professionals (e.g., agency staff) with terminal degrees. The phrase also refers to more senior scholars to whom regional science is new.

Objectives

Learning Objectives

The NERSA Workshop has two learning objectives for a migration studies course:

1. **Understand the social, economic, and political factors influencing migration:** Students will be able to critically examine and evaluate the various social, economic, and political drivers of migration, including the impacts of globalization, economic disparity, conflict, and environmental changes. They will also understand the ways in which these factors shape migration patterns and trends globally.
2. **Evaluate the impact of migration on origin and destination regions:** Students will gain the ability to assess the multifaceted effects of migration on both sending and receiving regions. This includes understanding how migration influences demographic changes, labor markets, social integration, cultural diversity, and policy development. Additionally, students will explore the challenges and opportunities that migration presents to societies and the individuals involved.
3. **Develop a research proposal:** By the end of the program, students will have had the opportunity to develop a research proposal that evaluates a component of migration. This includes identifying a relevant literature gap, formulating research questions, and proposing appropriate methodologies for analysis.
4. **Gain Hands-On Analytic Skills in Migration and Regional Science:** Students will be introduced to practical tools and techniques commonly used in regional science and migration analysis. Through applied exercises and mentorship, they will learn how to use data and regional science models to analyze migration flows, evaluate policy impacts, and visualize migration-related trends.

Community Objectives

While specific objectives will vary with the annual program topic and participant cohorts, the overall aim is to promote interaction and collaboration between participants representing different disciplines that regional science comprises. Interactions and collaborations are intended to be both scholarly and social in nature, to build a community of rigorous and mutually supportive Regional Science scholars interacting

with practitioners. Participants in the program will enjoy meetups at various conferences as well as mentoring opportunities for the following program cohorts.

Programming

The NERSA early career regional science scholar program is a cohort model with a kick-off meeting, a keynote lecture, and a series of virtual workshops. Participants will then present initial ideas at the NARSC annual conference before undertaking the research to be presented at NARSC the following year. Cohort participants are encouraged to recruit, volunteer, and provide feedback for subsequent cohorts to ensure long-term the viability of the program and grow the community.

Kickoff Meeting and Group Introductions – June 2025

The programming will lead with a kick-off meeting that will include all cohort members and the organizing committee. The meeting will include cohort member introductions regarding academic backgrounds, current positions, and primary fields of interest. Furthermore, participants will be asked to share their goals for the program, and they may be divided into breakout rooms for better interactions if needed. Introductions are intended to allow participants the opportunity to determine if there are fellow cohort members with whom they may benefit or enjoy collaborating.

In following years, volunteers from the existing cohort will be asked to lead these discussions, offering their own experience on the program.

Migration Keynote Lecture – June 26th 2025 3pm Eastern Time (Online)

Bruce Newbold

Advances and Issues in Migration

The online keynote lecture will be provided by Bruce Newbold, Professor of Geography at McMaster University. This lecture will provide an overview of migration and labor markets from a leading scholar on both issues. Dr. Newbold will provide an overview of the most pressing issues in migration and the cutting-edge techniques being used and

developed to tackle these issues. This lecture will be open to the broader Regional Science community.

Following the lecture, cohort participants may participate in a virtual breakout room to reflect and discuss aspects of the lecture they found interesting.



Virtual Workshops – July 2025 (Online)

The virtual workshops will cover data sources and recent empirical trends before covering several methodologies that participants can consider using for their projects. Finally, a lecture covering how to provide policy recommendations will be given. Workshops will be virtual and outcomes will be determined by speakers.

Note – Workshops will be recorded and made available to attendees.

Date	Time Eastern	Series	Topic	Speaker
6/26/2025	3pm ET	Keynote		Bruce Newbold <i>McMaster University</i>

7/1/2025	3pm ET	Data Sources and Recent Empirical Trends	U.S. migration overview	David Plane <i>University of Arizona</i>
7/8/2025	3pm ET (to be Confirmed)		International Perspectives	Nancy Lozano + Ana Isabel Aguilera <i>World Bank</i>
7/15/2025	3pm ET	Methodology	Micro-Modeling	Kyle Mangum <i>Philadelphia Federal Reserve</i>
7/18/2025	3pm ET		Economic impacts	Ashish Shenoy <i>UC Davis</i>
7/22/2025	3pm ET		Machine Learning	Kelsea Best <i>Ohio State University</i>
7/25/2025	3pm ET		Network Analysis	Elijah Knaap <i>UC Irvine</i>
7/29/2025	3pm ET (to be Confirmed)	Policy	Policy	Kevin Kane <i>S. California Association of Governments</i>
8/5/2025	3pm or Noon ET	Methodology	TBD	Francisco Rowe <i>University of Liverpool</i>

Confirmed Mentors: Geoffrey J. D. Hewings (UIUC), John Carruthers (Cornell), Minxuan Lan (University of Toledo), Keith Waters (George Mason University), Andrew Van Leuven (University of Vermont), Ting Zhang (University of Baltimore), Samir KC (Population and Statistics Research Hub). etc.

Initial Project Proposal Submission – End of July 2025

After the final virtual workshop, participants will finalize teams and develop an initial project proposal for working together over the following year.

Work on the Project Proposal-- August-October 2025 (Online)

The project teams will work on the project aiming to present progress, theoretical frameworks and/or preliminary findings in the annual NARSC meetings. Monthly follow-up virtual meetings will be held to exchange on progress and assistance needed. Monthly meetings are designed to encourage ongoing engagement, community building, resource-sharing, and long-term collaboration.

Complete Research Proposal Presentation-- November 2025

Team research project proposals will be presented and discussed at length at a day-long workshop on the Wednesday prior to the beginning of the annual NARSC meetings or on a day of linked sessions on Thursday and/or Friday of the meetings.

This workshop would allow participants to present research theoretical framework, preliminary findings, discuss challenges and opportunities they face, and obtain feedback and advice from senior scholars and fellow participants.

In subsequent years, it is expected that prior program participants will attend the workshop to provide feedback and advice on newly forming projects and make connections with the new cohort.

On the last day of the NARSC meetings, teams will make presentations on the state of their work, discuss how they will incorporate feedback and advice, and set expectations for the completion of their work.

There will be a social event organized for cohort participants to attend during NARSC.

Work on the Team Project-- Winter 2025-2026

Program participants will continue to work on their project papers, attend regional science and other academic conferences to present work, as well as advertise the program to potential cohort participants for the 2025-2027 cohort.

Recruitment of future participants and continued involvement are crucial for the success of the continuation of the program and the expansion of NERSA.

NERSA will help cohort participants coordinate social events at regional meetings.

Leading the 2026 Workshop-- Spring/Summer 2026

Volunteers from the cohort will be requested to lead introductions and discussions of the subsequent cohort. While the topic will change in the subsequent year, the structure of the program will remain consistent, allowing current participants the opportunity to offer suggestions on how future cohorts can get the most out of their participation.

Complete Project Presentation -- November 2026 (Hybrid)

Cohort participants will present research results at the 2025 NARSC annual meetings in a session or series of linked sessions for cohort members where cohort members will have an exclusive opportunity to network and socialize with fellow participants, speakers, and mentors of the program. Please note that physical attendance at the session(s) is NOT required for participation in this program. Senior researchers and others involved are encouraged to attend the session and provide feedback. Cohort members from prior and subsequent years are also encouraged to attend and provide input on cohort papers.

Following presentations, certificates of completion will be distributed to cohort members, followed by a social event for cohort members.

Completion

Completion of the program will require participants to produce a topical research paper that is either presented at the North American Regional Science Council annual meeting or submitted for publication in a Regional Science Journal. Papers or presentations may be solo authored or jointly authored with members of the cohort or senior scholars who participated in the program. Participants of the early career Regional Science scholars will receive a certificate of completion after submission or presentation. Senior scholars will receive honoraria for participation, separate from inclusion on any papers jointly authored with junior scholars.

How to Participate

In addition to calling for **participants**, we welcome **experts** to share interests and insights on mobility, migration, and immigration dynamics, covering topics such as concepts and cutting-edge methods used by regional scientists for the study of migration behavior. A key focus of this workshop is fostering interdisciplinary collaboration, bringing together early career scholars, senior researchers, and practitioners in a dynamic, engaging, interactive environment. We also welcome **mentors** to support early career scholars by providing research feedback, career guidance, and networking opportunities. Whether as a presenter, mentor, or both, this is an excellent opportunity to present cutting-edge research, engage with a diverse cohort, and contribute to critical discussions on emerging trends and policy frameworks that shape human mobility and migration.

Additionally, we invite **ideas** from the regional science community to enhance the program's impact—whether through innovative session formats, new research directions, or collaborative initiatives that bridge research and policy.

Join us in this **18-month cohort-based** program that not only advances regional science but also builds a lasting community of scholars dedicated to addressing pressing socio-economic and policy challenges through innovative research. If you are passionate about shaping the next generation of regional scientists, we encourage you to get involved, share your ideas, and help make this workshop a success!

If you are interested in being a **participant**, please submit your name, affiliation, contact information, and a short bio via <https://forms.gle/w5jqhiaPVD4WcCCA> and pay for the registration fee at <https://narsc.meetingsavvy.net> during the registration process. The program registration fee as a participant is \$100, which includes access to all workshop sessions and materials. Payment is required at the time of registration to secure your spot. You can register and pay the fee using a credit card using our secure registration portal at <https://narsc.meetingsavvy.net>. A certificate of completion and an award ceremony will follow upon successful completion of the program.

If you are interested in serving as a mentor or potential presenter, please let us know. You can direct any inquiries or express your interest by contacting Dr. Ting Zhang at tzhang@ubalt.edu and Dr. Keith Waters at kwaters2@gmu.edu. An honorarium will be provided in recognition of your valuable contribution.

Registration Deadline: May 15

Acceptance Notification: June 10

Speakers Bios

Bruce Newbold

- University of Arizona, plane@arizona.edu
- Dr. Bruce Newbold is a Professor in the School of Earth, Environment & Society (EES) at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario. He received his PhD in Geography from McMaster University in 1994, and worked at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign between 1994 and 2000 before returning to McMaster in 2000. Since returning to McMaster, he has held Guest Scholar positions at the Center for Comparative Immigration Studies, University of California San Diego (2004), and the Medical Research Council's Social and Public Health Sciences Unit at the University of Glasgow (2008), a position which included a Fellowship through the Department of Urban Studies, University of Glasgow. His research interests focus on population issues as they relate to immigration, migration, health, and aging. Recent research has focused on the nexus of mobility and health, commuting and sustainability questions, immigrant health, and the immigrant settlement process.



David Plane

- University of Arizona, plane@arizona.edu
- Dr. Plane focuses on population geography and regional science, U.S. migration and settlement patterns, the role of the life course in affecting mobility, and methods for modeling activity patterns and temporal change in spatial interaction systems. He has served as President and Chair of the North American Regional Science Council; President of the Association of Pacific Coast Geographers; President of the Pacific Regional Science Conference Organization and President of the Association of American Geographers Population Specialty Group; Editor-in-Chief of *Papers in Regional Science* and Co-Managing Editor of the *Journal of Regional Science*; as well as numerous panels and committees for the National Science Foundation, the National Academies, and the U.S. Census Bureau. He is a Fellow of the Regional Science Association and of the Western Regional Science Association and a 2014 recipient of the AAG's Population Specialty Group's Lifetime Achievement Award.



Nancy Lozano

- World Bank, nlozano@worldbank.org

- **Nancy Lozano Gracia** is the Lead Economist for Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, with over 20 years of experience in economic policy and research. She is also the co-lead for the Global Solutions Group on Spatial and Territorial Development. Nancy joined the Bank in 2009 and has worked extensively on designing and delivering major operationally relevant analytical pieces across all regions. Some of her recent work includes analysis at the intersection of pollution and competitiveness in cities with a focus on Africa, analysis on urban inequality in Mexico and Colombia, and ongoing work to help countries reorient their productive capacity to become more environmentally friendly and inclusive. She has worked extensively on designing and using diagnostic tools to improve the understanding of sustainable development challenges and help identify priorities for action. She holds a doctorate in applied economics from University of Illinois and masters in environmental and agricultural and resource economics from University of Maryland and Universidad de los Andes, Colombia.



Ana Isabel Aguilera

- World Bank, aaguileradellano@worldbank.org
- Ana has over 11 years of experience in international development, working in local governments, private consulting, and multilateral organizations across 20 countries in Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, and North America. Most of her analytical and operational work from her at the World Bank focuses on two areas: (i) migration and forced displacement, coordinating multi-sectoral responses for situations of fragility, conflict, and disasters; and (ii) local economic development through community-driven development and municipal management. She is responsible for strengthening the migration and social inclusion agenda in Central America, Mexico, and the Dominican Republic. She co-led the Colombia Social and Economic Integration of Migrants project, recognized by the Migration Policy Institute as the top 2 global innovation on migration in 2021. Prior to the Bank, Ana worked as an Operations Officer at the Direction of Competitiveness and Public Policy at CAF, and as a consultant for local governments in Latin America and the United States. Ana graduated as an Economist from Universidad Católica Andrés Bello in Caracas, and holds an MSc. in Public Policy from The University of Chicago and a certificate in Survey Methodology from the University of Maryland-University of Michigan Joint Program. She speaks Spanish, English, Portuguese, and French.



Kyle Mangum

- Philadelphia Federal Reserve, kyle.mangum@phil.frb.org
 - Specializing in regional economics, migration, and housing markets, Kyle Mangum focuses his research primarily on economic issues related to location. He is interested in understanding how markets work for specific physical locations, how people choose where to locate economic activities, and how locations themselves are priced.
 - Kyle enjoys the research environment at the Philadelphia Fed and how it gives him the opportunity to solve problems, both as an individual and on teams. Before joining the Fed, Kyle was an assistant professor in the Department of Economics at Georgia State University from 2012 to 2018.
 - Kyle has doctorate and master's degrees in economics from Duke University. He graduated summa cum laude from Taylor University with a bachelor's in economics and political science.



Ashish Shenoy

- UC Davis, shenoy@ucdavis.edu
- Dr. Shenoy is an Associate Professor of Agricultural and Resource Economics at UC Davis. He studies development economics with a focus on migration, labor markets, agricultural productivity, and policy implementation. He earned my PhD in economics from MIT in 2016, before which he worked as a research professional at the University of Chicago Booth School of Business.



Kelsea Best

- Ohio State University, best.309@osu.edu
- Dr. Best's research focuses on understanding how climate change interacts with human societies and infrastructure, how people may adapt to climate change effects, and how climate adaptation measures can be designed and implemented in a just and equitable way. Her work is highly interdisciplinary and strives to connect methods, disciplines, and researchers from across geographies and fields. Dr. Best's research is grounded in data-driven methods including machine learning and agent-based modeling, but also seeks to advance conventional modeling approaches by expanding the role of personal narrative and community participation in informing computational models. Some of her current projects include modeling individual and household migration decisions under climate change, assessing renters' vulnerability to natural disasters and implications for housing security, identifying infrastructure needs for climate-migrant-receiving communities, and understanding dynamics related to climate gentrification in coastal cities.



Elijah Knaap

- UC Irvine, ek@knaaptime.com

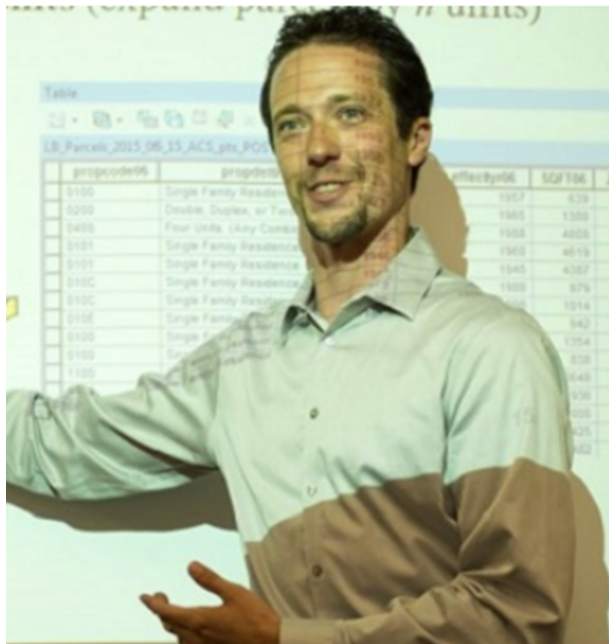
- Dr. Knapp is a spatial data scientist trained in stratification sociology, urban economics, and quantitative geography, and he studies social inequality and spatial structure in neighborhoods, cities, and regions.

- Dr. Knapp's research focuses on urban analytics, spatial policy analysis, and neighborhood dynamics, and his work in both methodological development and applied analytics has received financial support from the National Science Foundation, the National Institutes of Health, the U.S. Dept of Housing and Urban Development, the Urban Institute, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Enterprise Community Partners Inc., the Lincoln Institute for Land Policy, the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, and the National Cooperative Highway Research Program, among others.



Kevin Kane

- S. California Association of Governments, kevin@kevinkane.org
- Dr. Kane is a Regional Planner in the Research & Analysis department of the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). His PhD in Geography was completed at Arizona State University, followed by a Postdoc at the Metropolitan Futures Initiative at the University of California - Irvine. His research interests include urban land-use change, neighborhood change, regional economic development, demographic forecasting, spatial analysis and modeling, sustainable cities, and urban transportation.
- Dr. Kane's research methods involve GIS and statistics, and his published work includes analyses of land change in Arizona, development finance in Chicago, employment dynamics in Southern California, and regional innovation dynamics.



Francisco Rowe

- University of Liverpool, fcorowe@liverpool.ac.uk

- Francisco Rowe is a Professor in Population Data Science and the Lead of the Geographic Data Science Lab at the University of Liverpool. He is also member of the UN Committee of Experts on Big Data and Data Science for Official Statistics (UN-CEBD). He is the Co-Chair of the Mobile Phone Data Task Team at UN-CEBD and the Lead of the Migration Sub-group. His research focuses on human mobility and migration; geographic data science; and spatial inequalities. It seeks to advance our understanding of the causes and impacts of human movements for communities and individuals through the novel application of geographic data science methodologies and digital footprint data. His recent work has focused on changes to human mobility patterns during disasters, including climate, health hazards and conflict, and how urban form shapes mobility patterns and impacts climate. Francisco works closely with various sections of the UN, including the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, the International Organization for Migration and the Statistics Division. Francisco's research has been published in international journals of Population Geography, Transport, Migration, GIScience and Urban Planning, including Transportation Research Part C, Cities, Population Studies, Applied Geography, Landscape and Urban Planning, International Journal of Geographical Information Science, and Computers, Environment and Urban Systems. Francisco is Editor of REGION, the Journal of the European Regional Science Association, and member of the Editorial Board of Population, Space and Place, and Spatial Economic Analysis.



Mentor Bios



Dr Geoffrey J.D. Hewings is Director Emeritus of the Regional Economics Applications Laboratory at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign as well as an Emeritus Professor in the Departments of Economics, Agricultural and Consumer Economics, Urban and Regional Planning, Geography and in the Institute of Government and Public Affairs. His undergraduate degree is from University of Birmingham, England and masters and doctorate from the University of Washington, Seattle. Prior to joining the University of Illinois, he served on the faculties of the University of Kent (UK) and the University of Toronto. He has served as a visiting professor at universities in Australia, Israel, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Spain and China. Professor

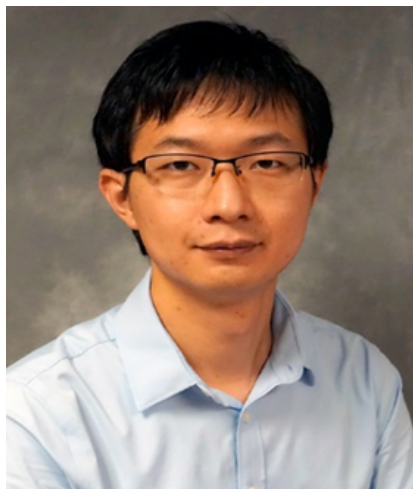
Hewings main research areas are in the fields of urban and regional analysis, with a strong emphasis on the development and application of large-scale models. His research activities were centered in the Regional Economics Applications Laboratory (REAL), a unit he co-founded in 1989 and directed until 2016.

His work has been recognized by the Regional Science Association International and the International Input-Output Association; he has served as President of both organizations. Other awards include Award for Service to Regional Science, 1995, Geoffrey J.D. Hewings Junior Scholar Award, Regional Science Association International, 1995- (annually awarded to exceptional scholars less than 10 years from

completion of his/her Ph.D.; visit <http://www.regionalscience.org/index.php/NARSC/>); University Scholar, University of Illinois, 1996-1997; Walter Isard Award for distinguished scholarly achievements in the field of Regional Science, 2003; Fellow, Regional Science Association International (2003), International Input-Output Association, 2010, Western Regional Science Association, 2010 and Sociedad Hispanoamericana de Análisis Input-Output, 2015; Award for Service to Regional Science, by Associação Brasileira de Estudos Regionais, 2004; Honorary Member, Japan Section, Regional Science Association International, 2008; Adjunct Professor, University of Indonesia, Jakarta, 2009-; Lifetime Achievement Award, British & Irish Section, Regional Science Association International, 2015 and Prize for Contributions to Regional Science in Spain, Spanish Regional Science Association, 2015. He received Honorary Doctoral Degrees from the University of Bourgogne (France) in 2002 and from the University of Extremadura (Spain) in 2016. In March 2023, he was made an Honorary Collaborating Professor by the University of Oviedo (Spain).

His publications include 16 books, 93 book chapters and 268 articles in major professional journals; he has supervised 64 doctoral dissertations.

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Dr. Minxuan Lan

Minxuan Lan, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Department of Geography and Planning
The University of Toledo

Dr. Lan is a human geographer with expertise in GIS, spatial statistics, crime science, public health, and big data mining. He is particularly interested in the use of interdisciplinary theories and methods to address real-world problems. He advocates for the active adoption of new data sources and data-driven approaches, while emphasizing that research should remain grounded in and guided by established theoretical frameworks. He serves as the director of the Spatial Social Science Research Lab at The University of Toledo. His publications primarily focus on the application of spatial analysis to spatiotemporal crime patterns, public health, and the substance abuse epidemic. His current research interests include:

- Spatiotemporal analysis and its applications in crime, public health, and human sustainability
- Data mining and natural language processing
- The substance abuse epidemic and related drug issues

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Dr. Andrew J. Van Leuven

Andrew J. Van Leuven, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Department of Community Development & Applied
Economics
University of Vermont

Dr. Van Leuven is an assistant professor at the University of Vermont in the Department of Community Development & Applied Economics. My research and teaching focus on community entrepreneurship, regional development, and revitalization efforts that strengthen local economies and foster sustainable growth.

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Prof. Ram B. Bhagat is currently a Visiting Professor, Institute for Human Development, New Delhi. Earlier he served as Professor and Head, Department of Migration and Urban Studies, International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS), Mumbai, until 2022. Prof. Bhagat's research interest includes migration and urbanization; environment and sustainable development; demography, ethnicity and politics. He has published eleven books and more than 200 research papers appeared in national and international journals of repute. (<https://www.researchgate.net/profile/R-Bhagat>). He also served as Chief Editor of Demography India- An official Journal of Indian Association for the study of Population (IASP) during 2018-2022 (<https://demographyindia.iasp.ac.in>).

Prof. Bhagat's publications include inter alia books namely 'Climate Change, Vulnerability and Migration', published by Routledge 2018; 'Migration and Urban Transition: A Development Perspective', Routledge 2020, and 'Migrants, Mobility and Citizenship in India', Routledge 2022. He has also authored a book on 'Population and Political Imagination: Census, Register and Citizenship in India', published by Routledge in 2022, and co-authored a textbook, 'Researching Internal Migration', by Routledge in 2023, and most recently co-authored a book 'Urbanisation and Urban Policies in India' by Springer, 2025.

Prof. Bhagat has served as a consultant to the UNESCO-UNICEF (India Initiative on Migration), International Organisation of Migration (IOM), and participated in an Expert Group Meeting organized by Population Division, United Nations, and several

consultations organized by the UN Migration Network. He was an advisor to Yale University's India Project on Climate Change and Communication. He has also served as an Advisory Committee Member in several governmental and non-governmental projects in India. He was Co-coordinator of the Environmental Information System (ENVIS) on population, settlement and environment at IIPS funded by the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India, 2007-12, and a senior Co-ordinator of Concurrent Evaluation of the National Rural Health Mission funded by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Govt. of India, 2009-2011. He was the founder convener of South Asia Centre for Labour Mobility and Migrants (SALAM) established with support from ILO, IOM and UN-Women at IIPS in collaboration with four South Asian Institutions. He has also delivered many invited lectures in India and abroad and chaired scientific sessions in conferences organized by IUSSP, IGU, APA, IASP etc.

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Dr. Keith Waters

Keith Waters, Ph.D.
Assistant Director,
Center for Regional Analysis, and
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George Mason University,
Arlington, Virginia

Dr. Waters is the Assistant Director of the Center for Regional Analysis and the Stephen S. Fuller Institute at George Mason University (GMU). His applied research centers on topics relevant to the Washington region such as the labor market, housing, and infrastructure issues. Academic work examines economies from a complexity perspective, most recently examining regional economies with network analysis. Dr. Waters earned his Ph.D. in Public Policy at GMU after receiving his master's degree from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte and his bachelor's from Western Michigan University. Before returning to GMU, he completed post-doctoral work at Indiana University and Arizona State University.

Areas of Research: Economic Development, Economic Policy, Quantitative Methods, Regional Development, Transportation Policy, Regional Economic Performance, Economic Forecasting, Economic and Fiscal Impacts

Contact information: kwaters2@gmu.edu

Dr. Samir KC

CEO and Initiator, Population and Statistics Research Hub, Nepal

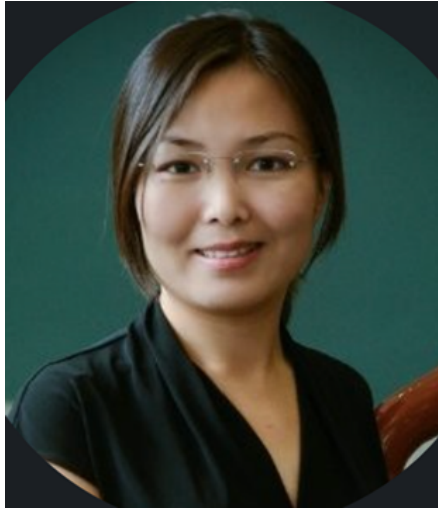
Senior Research Scholar, Multidimensional Demographic Modelling, IIASA, Austria (part-time)

Adjunct Professor and Leader, Human Capital and Development Pillar at Asian Demographic Research Institute, Shanghai University

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Dr. Ting Zhang is a Professor at the Merrick School of Business and Associate Director of the Jacob France Institute at the University of Baltimore. She holds the Harry Y. Wright Chair (since 2020) and has received numerous honors, including the University System of Maryland Board of Regents Faculty Award in Scholarship/Research (2023), the UB President's Award (2024), the T. Rowe Price Excellence in Teaching Award, and the Black and Decker Research Award (2025).

Her leadership roles include serving as Chair of the North American Regional Science Council, President of the Northeast Regional Science Association, Entrepreneurship Faculty Fellow at APPAM, Junior Faculty Consortium Chair for the Labor and Employment Relations Association, and appointments to the Maryland Governor's Equal Pay Commission and various national academic committees.

A prolific scholar, Dr. Zhang has authored several books and many articles. Her research focuses on human capital, employment, and entrepreneurship, with work published in *Small Business Economics*, *Journal of Small Business Management*, *Applied Economics*, *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, *Transportation Research Part A*, among others. She has secured over \$10 million in grants from agencies including the U.S. Departments of Labor, Agriculture, Education, Maryland government, and institutions such as the Gates and Kauffman Foundations.

Dr. Zhang has delivered keynote speeches at the Uddevalla Symposium, University of Lisbon, and national medical conferences, and has been invited to speak at Harvard, Cambridge, Tsinghua, Johns Hopkins, and other top institutions. Her expertise has informed the U.S. Congress Joint Economic Committee, the House Committee on Small Business, the U.S. Department of Labor, and more.

She serves on editorial boards for *Small Business Economics* and *Letters in Spatial and Resource Sciences*, is an associate editor of the *Journal of Urban Management*, and has guest-edited issues for *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development* and *Review of Regional Research*. Her work has been featured in *Forbes*, *Time*, *Bloomberg Businessweek*, *MarketWatch*, *Baltimore Sun*, and other major outlets.

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