

Meenal Banga

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EDUCATION

McCombs School of Business, The University of Texas at Austin	Austin, TX
Ph.D. Management (Concentration: Strategy), 3.91	Expected in 2026
M.S. Management (Concentration: Strategy)	2022
Brandeis University International Business School	Waltham, MA
Master of Arts in International Economics and Finance, 3.88	2020
Indian Institute of Foreign Trade	New Delhi, India
MBA (International Business)	2016
Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona	Barcelona, Spain
Exchange Program	01/2015 - 03/2015
University of Delhi, Indraprastha College for Women	New Delhi, India
Bachelor of Arts (Honors) Economics	2014

RESEARCH

My research sits at the intersection of strategy, entrepreneurship and cognition, and is unified by a focus on cognitive foundations—how cognition shapes strategy, innovation, and stakeholder engagement—with a particular interest in accessing cognition through language use. The intersection of cognition and language reflects a deeper interest in how mental processes surface in the discursive practices through which the future is imagined, evaluated, and acted upon.

Key Words: Strategic imagination, Narratives, Framing, Evaluation of novelty

Job Market Paper:

- **Creating a Road to Space: Counterfactual Imagination and the Creation of Futures in the Space Economy**
(Sole-authored; Dissertation Paper 2; Target Journal: *ASQ*)
 - o **Finalist, INFORMS/Organization Science Dissertation Proposal Competition, 2025–2026** (one of eight finalists; dissertation includes Job Market Paper)
 - o Currently developing a scale for *suspension of disbelief* (Dissertation Paper 3, early stage), a key construct in the Job Market Paper model, to enable a partial experimental test of the model

R&Rs and In-Preparation Manuscripts:

- **Why Entrepreneurs Need Fiction: How Fictional Framing Bridges the Imaginary and the Possible**
(with Luis Martins & Violina Rindova; Second author; Resubmitted: August 2025)
 - o **Revise & Resubmit**, *Strategic Entrepreneurship Journal* – Special Issue on Framing Novelty
- **Harnessing the Structure of Counterfactual Imagination to Shape the Future**
(Dissertation Paper 1; with Luis Martins & Violina Rindova; First author; Target Journal: *AMR*)
 - o Awarded “**Most Novel Proposal**,” Behavioral Strategy Interest Group, SMS 2024
 - o Selected as one of the eight most innovative and high interest papers by Managerial and Organizational Cognition (MOC) division, AOM Copenhagen, 2025
- **Projecting Imagined Value Games and the Shaping of Future Possibilities**
(with Luis Martins & Violina Rindova; Third author; Target Journal: *AMR*)

Working Papers:

- **Looking for Stars: How NASA Selects External Proposals for Innovation**
(with Ram Ranganathan; First author)
- **Organizational Intent to Learn: Harnessing Loss Frame and Social Proof for the Inflation Reduction Act**
(with John Patrick Akinyemi, Yunxiang Bai, Junyeon Rhee, Tianyu Zhou, and Daniel Nielson; equal authorship)

Work in Progress:

- **Counterpossible Imagination in the Space Economy: How Engagement with the Impossible Shapes Possibility**
(Data Collection)

Book Chapter:

- Petri, P. A., & Banga, M. 2021. The economic consequences of globalisation in the United States. In *Globalisation and its Economic Consequences* (pp. 192-213). Routledge.

RESEARCH GRANTS, AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

University Graduate Continuing fellowship in the amount of \$36000, 2024-2025

University of Texas at Austin

Graduate School Continuing Fellowship in the amount of \$11000, 2023

University of Texas at Austin

Herb Kelleher Entrepreneurship Center Research Fund Award, 2022

Research funding in the amount of \$10,000 for working paper co-authored with Ram Ranganathan

University of Texas at Austin

Provost Supplement Fellowship in the amount of \$5000, 2021, 2022, 2023

University of Texas at Austin

Graduate School Fellowship in the amount of \$18000, 2020-2021

University of Texas at Austin

McCombs School of Business Doctoral Fellowship, 2020-Present

University of Texas at Austin

Dean's Fellowship: 100% tuition, 2018-2020

Brandeis International Business School

Rosenberg Institute Grant in the amount of \$4500 for Independent Research, Summer 2019

Independent Study on *Economics of Space* under the guidance of Prof. Matthew Weinzierl, Harvard Business School

Brandeis International Business School

Professor Sumitra Chisti Memorial Award for 'Best Student in Economics and Trade Policy', 2016

Indian Institute of Foreign Trade

Professor Rawa Dhawan Memorial Fellowship for 'The Best All Round Student of Department of Economics', 2014

University of Delhi

Professor Ram Deo and Mrs. Swarna Chandra Memorial Award for 'The Student with All Round Excellence', 2014

University of Delhi

TEACHING

Instructor, McCombs School of Business, UT Austin

- General Management and Strategy (MAN 374), Summer 2023
 - Instructor Rating: **5.0/5.0** (20 students; 90% response rate)
 - Recognized with the ***Fred Moore Assistant Instructor Award for Teaching Excellence***, 2024

Inclusive Classroom Leadership Certificate for Excellence in Teaching, UT Austin

- Presented by the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement and the Graduate School, March 2023

SERVICE

- Reviewer, Academy of Management Annual Meeting, 2023, 2024, 2025
 - ***Outstanding Reviewer Award from the Managerial and Organizational Cognition Division***, 2025
 - ***Outstanding Reviewer Award from the Managerial and Organizational Cognition Division***, 2023
- Reviewer, Strategic Management Society Conference, 2024, 2025
- Student Appointee, MOC Division Executive Committee, Academy of Management, 2025-2026

- PhD Discussion Forum Organizer, Management Department, McCombs School of Business, 2024-2025
- PhD Student Council Representative, Management Department, McCombs School of Business, 2023-2024
- Organizer, PhD Management Social Events, McCombs School of Business, 2022-2023
- Contributor, Administrative Science Quarterly Blog, 2023

CONFERENCES, WORKSHOPS, AND PROGRAMS

INFORMS Annual Meeting, Atlanta, October 2025

- Scheduled to present: *Dissertation Proposal – INFORMS/Organization Science Dissertation Proposal Competition* (Finalist; one of eight selected)

Strategic Management Society (SMS) Conference, San Francisco, October 2025

- Scheduled to present: *Creating a Road to Space: Counterfactual Imagination and the Creation of Futures in the Space Economy* (Job Market Paper)

Academy of Management Conference, Copenhagen, July 2025

Presented/Organized:

- *Harnessing the Structure of Counterfactual Imagination to Shape the Future* (Dissertation Paper; with Luis Martins & Violina Rindova; Paper Session)
- *Creating a Road to Space: Counterfactual Imagination and the Creation of Futures in the Space Economy* (Job Market Paper; Poster Session)
- *Counterfactual Histories and Counterfactual Futures: A New Direction for Cognition* (Panel Symposium)

Strategic Management Society (SMS) Conference, Istanbul, October 2024

- Presented: *Harnessing the Structure of Counterfactual Imagination to Shape the Future* (co-authored with Violina Rindova & Luis Martins)
Awarded “**Most Novel Proposal**” by the Behavioral Strategy Interest Group

Academy of Management Conference, Chicago, August 2024

- Presented: *Organizational Intent to Learn: Harnessing Loss Frame and Social Proof for the Inflation Reduction Act* (co-authored with John Patrick Akinyemi, Yunxiang Bai, Junyeon Rhee, Tianyu Zhou, and Daniel Nielson)

European Group for Organizational Studies (EGOS) Colloquium, Milan, July 2024

- Presented: *Harnessing the Structure of Counterfactual Imagination to Shape the Future* (co-authored with Violina Rindova & Luis Martins)

SEJ Special Issue Workshop on Framing Novelty, Crete, July 2024

- Presented: *Why Entrepreneurs Need Fiction: How Fictional Framing Bridges the Imaginary and the Possible* (co-authored with Violina Rindova & Luis Martins)

PhD Conference, University of Texas at Austin, Austin, November 2024

- Presented: *Harnessing the Structure of Counterfactual Imagination to Shape the Future*

Strategic Management Society (SMS) Conference, Toronto, October 2023

Presented:

- *Looking for Stars: How NASA Selects External Proposals for Innovation* (co-authored with Ram Ranganathan)
- *Why Entrepreneurs Need Fiction: How Fictional Framing Bridges the Imaginary and the Possible* (co-authored with Luis Martins & Violina Rindova)
- Selected for SMS Doctoral Workshop

European Group for Organizational Studies (EGOS) Colloquium, 2023

- Presented by co-author: *Projecting Imagined Value Games and the shaping of future possibilities*

Doctoral Consortium at the West Coast Research Symposium (WCRS), Seattle, 2025

- Selected participant; received individual faculty feedback on job market paper during the consortium

HBS Paul R. Lawrence Conference Doctoral Consortium, 2024

Nominated for participation in the doctoral consortium

Markets and Management PhD Talent Development Program, 2023

Selected participant in the first cohort of the program

Co-organizer, Markets and Management Professional Development Workshop, AOM 2024, 2025

Kauffman Doctoral Consortium at the Smith Entrepreneurship Research Conference, 2023

Nominated for participation in the doctoral consortium

Carnegie School for Organizational Learning Summer School, 2023

Participant in the week-long summer school

Space Regulatory Bootcamp, Albuquerque, New Mexico, February 2023

Participated in the intensive program designed to deepen industry regulatory knowledge

APEC Roundtable on 'APEC's Challenges and Beyond 2020', Japan Institute of International Affairs, Tokyo, April 2019

Presented a paper co-authored with Peter A. Petri on Economic Consequences of Globalization in the United States

Symposium on 'Fostering Free Trade and Overcoming Its Challenges in ASEAN and East Asia', Tokyo, April 2019

Participant in the symposium

Economic Measurement Seminar, National Association for Business Economics, Washington DC, July 2019

Invited to participate as the NABE leader for Brandeis University

Certification in Economic Measurement

60th Annual Conference, National Association for Business Economics, Boston, October 2018

Invited to participate as the NABE leader for Brandeis University

RESEARCH AND TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIPS

McCombs School of Business, UT Austin

- Research Assistant for Luis Martins and Ram Ranganathan, 2022-2024
- Research Assistant for Shiva Agarwal and Bukky Akinsanmi, 2021-2022
- Research Assistant for Francisco Polidoro and Shiva Agarwal, 2020-2021

Brandeis International Business School, Brandeis University

- Research Assistant for Peter A. Petri and Aldo Musacchio, 2018-2020
- Teaching Assistant for Peter A. Petri, International Institutions Laboratory, 2019-2020
 - *Fall 2019: Involved in course development; Spring 2020: Course TA*
- Teaching Assistant for Peter A. Petri, Technological Rivalry, Spring 2020

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Time of Sports**New Delhi, India****Innovation Manager****04/2017 - 06/2018**

Time of Sports is a sports startup with the vision of a Fit Nation and a mission to create an ecosystem of Sports For All

- Led a countrywide project to facilitate sports careers for underprivileged sports prodigies
- Conducted liaison with the governments of Rajasthan and Odisha to initiate sports development projects
- Managed business development for 'F1 in Schools', the world's largest technology challenge for school students

Trident Group**Ludhiana, India****Key Account Manager****07/2016 - 03/2017**

- Managed second-biggest client in terry towel division with annual revenue of \$35mn
- Led business development, customer relationship management and supply sustenance for Scandinavia
- Designed a weekly supply planning tool for client; Insights from tool led to more efficient raw material planning

Nomura Services India Pvt. Ltd.**Investment Banking Intern****Mumbai, India****04/2015 - 06/2015**

- Analyzed alcoholic beverages industry for prospective opportunities for a global brewer
- Created pitch book for chosen target to assist client in making acquisition decision
- Created pitch book for chosen target to assist client in making acquisition decision

LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

PhD Council Representative for the Management Department, McCombs School of Business, 2023
President, Brandeis Chapter of National Association for Business Economics, 2019-20
President, Marketing Club, Indian Institute of Foreign Trade, 2014-15
Treasurer, Students' Union, Indraprastha College for Women, University of Delhi, 2012-13
Founder and Editor, Economics Newsletter, Indraprastha College for Women, University of Delhi, 2011-13
Captain, Throw Ball Team, Indian Institute of Foreign Trade, 2014-16
Head Girl, Dewan Public School, Meerut, 2010-11

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

Academy of Management
Strategic Management Society
European Group for Organizational Studies

OTHER

Technical Skills	R Studio, Stata, Python, SPSS, Topic Modeling
Languages	English (Fluent), Hindi (Fluent), French (Beginner), Spanish (Beginner)

REFERENCES

Dr. Luis D. L. Martins

Zlotnik Family Chair in Entrepreneurship

Professor of Management

McCombs School of Business, The University of Texas at Austin

luis.martins@mcombs.utexas.edu

Dr. Violina P. Rindova

Associate Dean for Research and PhD Program

Dean's Leadership Circle Chair

Professor of Strategy and Entrepreneurship

Paul Merage School of Business, University of California, Irvine

vrindova@uci.edu

Dr. Ramkumar Ranganathan

Associate Professor of Strategy

McCombs School of Business, The University of Texas at Austin

ram.ranganathan@mcombs.utexas.edu

Dr. Cha Li

Assistant Professor of Strategy

McCombs School of Business, The University of Texas at Austin

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