Stanford



Charles (Chuck) Eesley

Professor of Management Science and Engineering

Curriculum Vitae available Online

CONTACT INFORMATION

- **Administrator**

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Bio

BIO

Chuck Eesley is a Professor and W. M. Keck Foundation Faculty Scholar in the Department of Management Science and Engineering at Stanford University, where he studies and designs systems that enable high-quality entrepreneurship and innovation under uncertainty — including in emerging technologies, fragile institutional environments, and sustainability transitions. He is Faculty Co-Director of the Stanford Technology Ventures Program and a faculty affiliate at the Stanford Center for AI Safety.

His research focuses on how artificial intelligence, institutional design, education systems, and policy environments shape not just the quantity of entrepreneurship, but whether new ventures lead to durable economic and social outcomes. Recent work examines how AI-driven platforms influence opportunity access, entrepreneurial performance, and information integrity, as well as how organizations and governments can design innovation systems that perform under institutional constraint.

Eesley collaborates extensively with engineers, policymakers, development organizations, and practitioners to translate research into scalable programs, investment models, and policy frameworks. His fieldwork spans Sub-Saharan Africa, East Asia, Latin America, and the United States, including ongoing work on refugee entrepreneurship and frontier-market innovation systems.

His work has received awards from the Kauffman Foundation, the Schulze Foundation, and the Technical University of Munich and has been published in Nature, Strategic Management Journal, Organization Science, and other leading outlets. He serves on the Steering Committee of the Stanford King Center on Global Development and advisory boards spanning innovation policy, entrepreneurship, and global development.

A former entrepreneur and investor, Eesley advises startups, investors, governments, and development institutions on innovation strategy, organizational design, and scaling under uncertainty. He earned his PhD from MIT Sloan and a BS in neuroscience from Duke University.

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

- Professor, Management Science and Engineering

ADMINISTRATIVE APPOINTMENTS

- Steering Committee, King Center for Global Development, (2024- present)
- Director (International), Stanford Technology Ventures Program (STVP), (2024- present)
- Research Committee, STR Division. Academy of Management, (2022-2024)
- Chair, Pathways to Research and Opportunity Committee, (2020-2023)
- Organizer, Social Science & Technology Seminar (SIEPR), (2009-2018)
- Research Committee, TIM Division Academy of Management, (2015- present)
- Lead Steering Committee, West Coast Research Symposium Doctoral Consortium, (2011-2016)
- Advisory Board, United States Department of State - Global Innovation through Science and Technology (GIST Network), (2014- present)

HONORS AND AWARDS

- Social Impact Labs Design Fellowship, Stanford Social Impact Labs (2024)
- Stanford Teagle Fellow in Liberal Education, Stanford University (2022)
- Third Annual IACMR-RRBM Responsible Research in Management Award, IACMR-RRBM (2020)
- Institute for Advanced Studies Visiting Fellowship, Technical University of Munich (2019)
- Finalist, Best OMT Published Paper, Academy of Management (2018)
- TUM Research Excellence Award, Technical University of Munich (2018)
- Faculty Affiliate, Stanford Woods Institute for the Environment (2017-2019)
- Undergraduate Teaching Award, MS&E (2017)
- Richard Schulze Inaugural Distinguished Professorship Award, Richard Schulze Foundation (2015)
- Faculty Affiliate, Stanford Center for International Development (SCID) (2014-present)
- Kauffman-Nesta Research Grant winner - Randomized Controlled Trials in Entrepreneurship, Kauffman-NESTA (2014)
- Batten Institute Fellow, University of Virginia (UVA) Darden School of Business (2012)
- Research Fund for International Young Scientists, National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC) (2012)
- Lillie Award, Stanford University (2011, 2012)
- Technology and Innovation Management, IEEE International (2011)
- Best Dissertation Award Winner (Business Policy and Strategy Division), Academy of Management (2010)
- Dissertation Fellowship Award, Kauffman Foundation (2007)
- Best Paper Proceedings, Academy of Management (2005, 2006, 2010, 2012)

BOARDS, ADVISORY COMMITTEES, PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

- Advisory Board, Stanford Center at Peking University (SCPKU) (2024 - present)
- Steering Committee Member, King Center for Global Development (2024 - present)
- Faculty Affiliate, Stanford Center for AI Safety (2024 - present)
- Advisor, Stanford's Master's of Science in Clinical Informatics and Management Program (2021 - present)
- Academic Director, ITRI-Stanford Platform. Industrial Technology Research Institute in collaboration with the Department of Industrial Technology (DOIT) and the Ministry of Economic Affairs (MOEA) of Taiwan (2013 - present)
- Review Board Member, National Science Foundation. Future of Work at the Human-Technology Frontier. Grant Review Panel. Office of Emerging Frontiers and Multidisciplinary Activities. (2020 - 2020)
- Member, Strategic Management Society (2010 - present)
- Advisory Committee, Chile’s Ministry of the Economy (Production Development Corporation - CORFO). Startup Chile global accelerator program (2012 - 2017)

- Editorial Review Board, Strategic Entrepreneurship Journal (2021 - present)
- Editorial Board, Strategic Management Journal (2015 - present)
- Member, Academy of Management (2005 - present)

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

- PhD, MIT , Sloan School of Management (2009)
- BS, Duke University , Biological Basis of Behavior (2002)

LINKS

- Personal Site: https://chuckeesley.com
- Google Scholar: https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=ENeJ_gkAAAAJ&hl=en&oi=sra
- research statement: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ae-LNy3yjfmue5n8OFRaOKyPjknzBAWiOqjiYgXGKtk/edit?usp=sharing
- Advisory & Board Bio: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1s9hT_LNL92HsQ58sOtAMJR-ecun9kxZ3/view?usp=sharing

Research & Scholarship

RESEARCH INTERESTS

- Economics and Education
- Higher Education
- Leadership and Organization
- Poverty and Inequality
- Research Methods
- Technology and Education

CURRENT RESEARCH AND SCHOLARLY INTERESTS

My research examines how institutional environments shape entrepreneurial outcomes. I have introduced foundational concepts including institutional barriers to entry and growth, institutional inconsistency, and the role of platforms as private regulators of ventures. I have also pioneered studies of how digital platforms and, more recently, AI systems influence entrepreneurship — reshaping trust, consumer behavior, and the governance of economic activity.

Five themes organize the work:
(A) Institutional change and the quality of entrepreneurship. Using comparative settings across China, Japan, South Korea, Chile, and the U.S., I show that institutional reforms influence not only the quantity of new ventures but also who becomes an entrepreneur, which firms scale, and which ones survive. Recent projects extend this agenda to export controls and VC reallocation in China's semiconductor sector, IRA-induced allocation shifts in U.S. cleantech VC, and NEV subsidy design in China.

(B) Platforms and algorithms as institutions. My work with Wesley Koo (Strategic Management Journal, 2021; Organization Science, 2025) documents how platform search-ranking algorithms function as private governance systems with unintended distributional consequences. Digital inclusion, we find, is not digital empowerment: rural sellers on a major Chinese e-commerce platform experienced a 24% performance drop after the introduction of ML-based personalized ranking because they lacked the offline informational infrastructure to interpret algorithmic signals.

(C) AI, misinformation, and the digital public sphere. A recent study (Ahmad, Sen, Brynjolfsson & Eesley, Nature, 2024) combines large-scale observational analysis of 1,276 misinformation sites, 42,595 advertisers, and 9.5 million advertising instances with a field experiment and a survey experiment. The work documents pervasive inadvertent financing of misinformation through programmatic advertising systems, substantial consumer backlash once buyers are informed, and a striking managerial awareness gap. Our work suggests novel policy mechanisms to address AI-driven misinformation.

(D) AI as a new institutional actor in entrepreneurship. A growing body of my current work examines how generative AI and agentic AI systems are reshaping the opportunity set for new ventures — altering the economics of information search, early-stage prototyping, and mentorship. This includes ongoing projects on AI-mediated cognition in resource-constrained settings (including refugee entrepreneurs in Uganda), and on how AI agents change the underlying model of value creation and competitive advantage for technology ventures.

(E) Methodological rigor, including AI as a research tool. I have been among the early users of randomized controlled trials and rigorous causal identification in entrepreneurship research. "Social Influence in Entrepreneurial Career Choice" (Research Policy, 2017) was among the first RCTs examining how mentorship shapes entrepreneurial career decisions. My current RCT in Uganda — recognized with a Stanford Impact Labs Fellowship — uses AI-mediated mentoring both as an intervention and as a methodological scalpel to decompose information transfer from cognitive reframing in entrepreneurial mentoring. Across projects, I apply difference-in-differences, regression discontinuity, and RCT designs, and increasingly use LLM-based methods to classify investment deals, analyze interview and text data, and scale qualitative analysis.

In summary, my research advances understanding of how institutions, policies, digital platforms, and AI systems shape entrepreneurship — contributing both to academic knowledge and to actionable insights for policymakers and industry leaders. I am committed to extending this agenda as global challenges — migration, algorithmic governance, misinformation, and the rapid diffusion of AI — reshape the institutional landscape for entrepreneurship.

PROJECTS

- Startup Chile - Stanford University (2/1/2015 - present)
- ITRI - Stanford platform - ITRI (2/1/2015)

Teaching

COURSES

2026-27

- Entrepreneurship Doctoral Research Seminar: MS&E 372 (Aut)
- Entrepreneurship without Borders: MS&E 272 (Spr)
- Technology Entrepreneurship: ENGR 145 (Win)

2025-26

- Entrepreneurship without Borders: MS&E 272 (Spr)
- Shenzhen: From Fishing Village to Tech Powerhouse: OSPGEN 18 (Sum)
- Social Data Analysis: MS&E 379 (Aut)
- Technology Entrepreneurship: ENGR 145, ENGR 145S (Aut)

2024-25

- Entrepreneurship Doctoral Research Seminar: MS&E 372 (Aut)

- Entrepreneurship without Borders: MS&E 272 (Spr)
- Technology Entrepreneurship: ENGR 145, ENGR 145S (Aut)

2023-24

- Entrepreneurship without Borders: MS&E 272 (Spr)
- Fintech and Entrepreneurship in China: OSPHONGK 32 (Aut)
- Senior Project: MS&E 108 (Win)

STANFORD ADVISEES

Doctoral Dissertation Reader (AC)

Noah Benjamin-Pollak

Doctoral Dissertation Advisor (AC)

Yikai Cao, Xilan Zhang

Master's Program Advisor

Nuri Capanoglu, Ray Du, Jared Morrison, Seth Rhodes, Tan Tanthien, Sam Wang, Shang Zhu

Postdoctoral Research Mentor

Tess Lallemant

Doctoral (Program)

Bingsong Li, Joshua Lyman, Ronald Wang, Guankai Zhai

Publications

PUBLICATIONS

- **CROSSROADS-Designing Institutions for Applied Impact: Lessons from Engineering for Organizational Research** *ORGANIZATION SCIENCE*
  Eesley, C., Gerber, E.
  2025; 36 (5)
- **UNIVERSITY EDUCATION REFORM AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP** *Management and Organization Review*
  Eesley, C., Tian, X., Yang, D., Lee, Y. S.
  2025: 1-31
- **Take Me Home, Country Roads: Return Migration and Platform-Enabled Entrepreneurship** *Organization Science*
  Koo, W., Eesley, C.
  2025; 36 (3)
- **Companies inadvertently fund online misinformation despite consumer backlash.** *Nature*
  Ahmad, W., Sen, A., Eesley, C., Brynjolfsson, E.
  2024; 630 (8015): 123-131
- **Born into chaos: How founding conditions shape whether ventures survive or thrive when experiencing environmental change** *STRATEGIC ENTREPRENEURSHIP JOURNAL*
  Motley, D., Eesley, C. E., Koo, W.
  2023
- **In Institutions We Trust? Trust in Government and the Allocation of Entrepreneurial Intentions** *ORGANIZATION SCIENCE*
  Eesley, C., Lee, Y.
  2022: 1-25
- **Entrepreneurial strategies during institutional changes: Evidence from China's economic transition** *STRATEGIC ENTREPRENEURSHIP JOURNAL*

Wu, Y., Eesley, C. E., Yang, D.
2021

- **How Do Institutional Carriers Alleviate Normative and Cognitive Barriers to Regulatory Change?** *ORGANIZATION SCIENCE*
  Armanios, D., Eesley, E.
  2021
- **Regional Migration, Entrepreneurship and University Alumni** *Regional Studies*
  Wu, Y., Eesley, C.
  2021
- **Understanding the motivations for open-source hardware entrepreneurship** *Design Science*
  Li, Z., Seering, W., Yang, M., Eesley, C.
  2021; 7 (e19)
- **Do university entrepreneurship programs promote entrepreneurship?** *STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT JOURNAL*
  Eesley, C. E., Lee, Y.
  2020
- **FOR STARTUPS, ADAPTABILITY AND MENTOR NETWORK DIVERSITY CAN BE PIVOTAL: EVIDENCE FROM A RANDOMIZED EXPERIMENT ON A MOOC PLATFORM** *MIS QUARTERLY*
  Eesley, C., Wu, L.
  2020; 44 (2): 661–97
- **Entrepreneurship in dynamic environments: A comparison between the U.S. and China.** *Quarterly Journal of Management (######*
  Wu, Y., Eesley, C. E., Eisenhardt, K. E.
  2020; 5 (2): 1-17
- **Connected, But Still Lagging: Rural Sellers During Platform Change.** *Strategic Management Journal.*
  Koo, W., Eesley, C.
  2020
- **The dark side of institutional intermediaries: Junior stock exchanges and entrepreneurship** *STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT JOURNAL*
  Eberhart, R. N., Eesley, C. E.
  2018; 39 (10): 2643–65
- **The persistence of entrepreneurship and innovative immigrants** *RESEARCH POLICY*
  Lee, Y., Eesley, C.
  2018; 47 (6): 1032–44
- **Institutions and Entrenreneurial Activity: The Interactive Influence of Misaligned Formal and Informal Institutions** *STRATEGY SCIENCE*
  Eesley, C. E., Eberhart, R. N., Skousen, B. R., Cheng, J. L. C.
  2018; 3 (2): 393–407
- **Impact: Stanford University's Economic Impact via Innovation and Entrepreneurship** *FOUNDATIONS AND TRENDS IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP*
  Eesley, C. E., Miller, W. F.
  2018; 14 (2): 130–278
- **A comparative analysis of Asian versus Asian American entrepreneurship: Evidence from Stanford University alumni** *Strategic, Policy and Social Innovation for a Post-Industrial Korea*
  Lee, Y., Eesley, C.
  Routledge.2018: 132–146
- **Brain drain, circulation, and linkage: Sequence analysis of Korean nationals graduating from Stanford University.** *Strategic, Policy and Social Innovation for a Post-Industrial Korea*
  Choi, J., Eesley, C.
  Routledge.2018: 115–131
- **Social influence in career choice: Evidence from a randomized field experiment on entrepreneurial mentorship** *RESEARCH POLICY*
  Eesley, C., Wang, Y.

2017; 46 (3): 636-650

- **Failure Is an Option: Institutional Change, Entrepreneurial Risk, and New Firm Growth** *ORGANIZATION SCIENCE*
  Eberhart, R. N., Eesley, C. E., Eisenhardt, K. M.
  2017; 28 (1): 93-112
- **THROUGH THE MUD OR IN THE BOARDROOM: EXAMINING ACTIVIST TYPES AND THEIR STRATEGIES IN TARGETING FIRMS FOR SOCIAL CHANGE** *STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT JOURNAL*
  Eesley, C., DeCelles, K. A., Lenox, M.
  2016; 37 (12): 2425-2440
- **Institutional Barriers to Growth: Entrepreneurship, Human Capital and Institutional Change** *ORGANIZATION SCIENCE*
  Eesley, C.
  2016; 27 (5): 1290-1306
- **Does Institutional Change in Universities Influence High-Tech Entrepreneurship? Evidence from China's Project 985** *ORGANIZATION SCIENCE*
  Eesley, C., Li, J. B., Yang, D.
  2016; 27 (2): 446-461
- **Understanding Entrepreneurial Process and Performance: A Cross-National Comparison of Alumni Entrepreneurship Between MIT and Tsinghua University** *Asian Journal for Innovation and Policy*
  Eesley, C., Yang, D., Roberts, E., Li, T.
  2016; 5 (2): 146-184
- **How entrepreneurs leverage institutional intermediaries in emerging economies to acquire public resources** *Strategic Management Journal*
  Armanios, D., Eesley, C., Li, J., Eisenhardt, K.
  2016
- **THE CONTINGENT EFFECTS OF TOP MANAGEMENT TEAMS ON VENTURE PERFORMANCE: ALIGNING FOUNDING TEAM COMPOSITION WITH INNOVATION STRATEGY AND COMMERCIALIZATION ENVIRONMENT** *STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT JOURNAL*
  Eesley, C. E., Hsu, D. H., Roberts, E. B.
  2014; 35 (12): 1798-1817
- **Entrepreneurship Education Comes of Age on Campus: The Challenges and Rewards of Bringing Entrepreneurship to Higher Education**
  Torrance, W. E., Rauch, J., Aulet, W., Blum, L., Burke, B., D'Ambrosio, T., Eesley, C. E.
  2013
- **Are You Experienced or Are You Talented?: When Does Innate Talent versus Experience Explain Entrepreneurial Performance?** *STRATEGIC ENTREPRENEURSHIP JOURNAL*
  Eesley, C. E., Roberts, E. B.
  2012; 6 (3): 207-219
- **Review of: Winds of Change: The Environmental Movement and the Global Development of the Wind Energy Industry** *Administrative Science Quarterly*
  Eesley, C., E., Hannah, D., P.
  2012; 57: 359-362
- **Neurocognitive Impairments** *Essentials of Schizophrenia*
  Keefe, R., Eesley, C. E.
  American Psychiatric Publishing. Washington, DC, 2012..2012
- **Bringing Ideas to Life** *IEEE International Recent Advances in Technology and Innovation Management*
  Eesley, C. E., Hsu, D., Roberts, E. B.
  Wily Publications.2012: 40–60
- **Entrepreneurial Impact: The Role of MIT - An Updated Report** *Foundations and Trends in Entrepreneurship*
  Roberts, E., B., Eesley, C., E.
  2011; 7 (1-2): 1-149
- **Private Environmental Activism and the Selection and Response of Firm Targets.** *Journal of Economics Management and Strategy*

Lenox, M., Eesley, C., E.
2009; 18 (1): 45-73

- **Neurocognition in Schizophrenia** *Kaplan and Sadock's Comprehensive Textbook of Psychiatry*
  Keefe, R., Eesley, C. E.
  edited by Sadock, B., Sadock, V. A., Ruiz, P.
  Baltimore, MD: Lippincott, Williams, & Wilkins.2009

- **Entrepreneurs from technology-based universities: Evidence from MIT** *Research Policy*
  Hsu, D. H., Roberts, E. B., Eesley, C. E.
  2007; 5 (36): 768-788

- **Implementing a Public Subsidy for Vaccines** *Pharmaceutical Innovation: Incentives, Competition, and Cost-Benefit Analysis in International Perspective*
  Sloan, F. A., Eesley, C. E.
  edited by Sloan, F. A.
  New York: Cambridge University Press.2007: 107–126

- **Firm Responses to Secondary Stakeholder Action** *Strategic Management Journal*
  Eesley, C. E.
  2006; 27 (8): 765-782

- **Governments as Insurers in Professional and Hospital Liability Insurance Markets** *Medical Malpractice and the U.S. Health Care System--New Century, Different Issues*
  Sloan, F. A., Eesley, C. E.
  edited by Sage, W. M.
  New York: Cambridge University Press.2006: 291–317

- **Defining a cognitive function decrement in schizophrenia** *Biological psychiatry*
  Keefe, R. S., Eesley, C. E., Poe, M. P.
  2005; 6 (57): 688-691

- **Entrepreneurial Impact: The Role of MIT**
  Roberts, Edward, B., Eesley, Charles, E.