

October 30, 2025

Dear Members of the Search Committee,

I am writing to apply for the tenure-track position in your department. I am currently a Ph.D. candidate in Economics at the London School of Economics (expected June 2026), supervised by Professors Oriana Bandiera, Robin Burgess, Benjamin Moll, Nicholas Bloom, and Clare Balboni. My work lies at the intersection of development economics, macro-development, and trade.

In my job market paper, *"When Competition Compels Change: Trade, Management, and Firm Productivity,"* I exploit a previously unstudied WTO-mandated liberalization in India to show that import competition induces family-managed firms to professionalize their leadership by replacing family relatives with outside managers. Using new manager-firm linked data covering over 6 million company executives, I show that this reorganization raises productivity within firms, uncovering a new channel through which competition enhances aggregate efficiency—distinct from the between-firm reallocation emphasized in prior work. Embedding these findings in a structural model, I quantify how such within-organization responses to trade account for a substantial share of the aggregate productivity gains from trade. This paper is one of five ongoing projects that examine firm productivity and growth in developing countries, with a particular focus on the internal organization of firms.

A second line of my research studies how artificial intelligence can enhance state capacity in developing countries. In ongoing large-scale RCTs, I partner with [Adalat AI](#), a legal tech not-for-profit, to deploy AI-based tools across over 1,500 courtrooms and 500 customs offices in India. These field partnerships test whether and how AI can contribute to reducing India's backlog of 50+ million pending cases, improve reasoning quality in high-stakes bureaucratic decisions, and strengthen the efficiency of public institutions serving over a billion citizens.

These themes reflect a common motivation: understanding how organizational choices, markets, and state capacity determine productivity and long-run economic development. To support this research agenda, I founded and direct the [India Data Lab Initiative](#), which harmonizes unit-level microdata from over 50 Indian household and firm surveys from 1980 to the present into a unified platform, enabling researchers to seamlessly link over 4 million household \times year observations with over 2 million informal and formal firm \times year observations using harmonized location and industry codes across time.

Beyond research, teaching is a central part of my academic identity. At LSE, I have taught undergraduate and graduate courses in development and macroeconomics, including [Development Economics \(EC307\)](#) with Professors Oriana Bandiera and Robin Burgess, where I received outstanding student evaluations and the [LSE Teaching Award](#) (top 10% of TAs). I have also served as a TA to Professor Benjamin Moll for a [graduate course in heterogeneous-agent macroeconomics](#) through the STEG program, leading problem sets and a coding workshop on numerical solution techniques that arise in heterogeneous-agent models.

Thank you very much for considering my application. I would be delighted to contribute to both the research and teaching missions of your department.

Sincerely,



Ananya Kotia
www.ananyakotia.com | <https://idli.dev>
a.kotia1@lse.ac.uk
(+44) 749-567-6584