November 8, 2023

To Whom it May Concern:

I am applying to the Linde Postdoctoral Fellow at the California Institute of Technology’s Center for Social Information Sciences.

My research agenda, including my job market paper, published work, and work in progress, is comprised of work in applied microeconomics. My specific fields of interest are public economics, labor economics, applied econometrics, and urban economics. I am equipped to teach classes in these fields or others to respond to the needs of the department.

My job market paper, *Beyond the Local Impacts of Place-Based Policies: Spillovers through Latent Housing Markets*, proposes an approach to study spillover effects of local policies that propagate non-spatially through latent markets. The approach applies a community detection method (Stochastic Blockmodeling) to data on household moves to determine unobserved housing markets.

While the approach is particularly relevant for housing markets and place-based economic development, it can be adapted to other contexts. I exemplify the approach with a place-based policy and estimate spillover effects within latent housing markets. The empirical findings inform conclusions on overall effectiveness and redistribution that differ from analysis using only direct treatment effects.

**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

Universities are special institutions in which pluralism can thrive amidst intellectual pursuit and the expansion of opportunity. I aim to contribute to efforts to expand diversity and real inclusion with dedication, humility, and information on institution-specific resources. Once I join a new institution, I will familiarize myself with the policies and services of the international and disability offices, as well as other affinity organizations that provide support to those from different backgrounds.

As an undergraduate student in Chicago, I took coursework and sought out volunteer and work experience to expand my worldview on the realities of race, class, and other sources of social inequality, as well as to positively contribute to my new home. Through Women and Youth Supporting Each Other (WYSE), I volunteered for four years by mentoring middle school girls in a predominantly Chicano and low-income neighborhood. In addition, I interned at two homeless shelters in predominantly Black and low-income neighborhoods. As part of my internship, I traveled throughout the city to learn from politicians, social service providers, academics, and advocates on issues such as affordable housing or access to healthcare. Learning about the historical and political context of these issues and witnessing the widespread disregard (both unintentional and nefarious) for low-income, non-white neighborhoods and their residents underscored to me the necessity for effective policy toproduce societal progress and justice. These experiences inform my research agenda of studying the economics of place and place-based policies. I aim to approach this research with maximal seriousness and integrity out of respect for the people potentially affected by the conclusions of the work.

These experiences, as well as experiences in my family, underscore to me the potential for inter-personal connection in increasing inclusion and opportunity, dictating how I approach mentorship in a university setting. First, my experiences as a Latina Jewish woman (both my parents are Jewish and my mother is from Argentina), although not representative, provide some insight into problems that minorities can face in

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Anna Ziff