

Diversity Statement*

Nawaaz Khalfan[†]

Department of Economics, University of Pennsylvania

I am a product of my Australian heritage, the values expressed by the scientific community, and my experiences in pursuing higher education in the United States. At the core of my principles is a respect for diversity, a value for equity in opportunity and treatment, and an appreciation for individualism.

Australians highly value multiculturalism and egalitarianism, and I have been the beneficiary of this. I grew up in a Muslim family, in rural New South Wales, and from the age of 13, I attended an Anglican boarding school in Canberra. This quality involves a welcoming, inclusive, and overtly positive demeanour towards outsiders, and an insistence on sharing collective resources. With this endowment comes the responsibility to regularly reflect on and acknowledge the cost our proprietorship has come at, and to find ways of minimizing harm moving forward.

The academic values of honesty, openness and accountability are also features of my heritage. A goal of mine is to be a steward of the scientific tradition, from Socrates to Kant to Samuelson. Following this tradition in some respects is easy: be curious about the truth and question what we cannot satisfactorily explain. Advancing this tradition, however, involves opening doors to diverse perspectives and elevating quieter voices, a challenge that I'm excited to take on.

In my time pursuing a doctorate in the United States, I have also learnt the importance of encouraging individualism and independence. In an academic setting, this means opening access and allowing dissent in the service of innovation and breakthrough. In social settings, this means tolerance and patience in the service of colour and understanding.

It is this heritage and experience that has made me a relentlessly optimistic, honest and accepting person, whose core principles reflect the importance of diversity, equity and inclusion.

Updated: October 22, 2022

*Compiled in preparation for the 2022/2023 Academic Job Market.

[†]email: khalfan@sas.upenn.edu; website: www.nawaazkhalfan.com