

Statement of Diversity and Inclusion

I am deeply committed to encouraging and promoting diversity in the institution that I will represent over the course of my career. I was born and raised in the large metropolitan city of Kolkata, India, where I have been exposed to different languages and cultures from a very young age. After completing my undergraduate studies, I spent one year in Japan, where I met people not only from Japan but other exchange students from all over the world. This experience was extremely valuable as I realized how people from different cultures value certain things differently than I do. As a researcher, I believe that incorporating a variety of points of view is crucial to our understanding of economics. The economics profession is nowhere close to being a diverse and inclusive field. I would like to contribute in any capacity I can to help promote diversity in the field.

The first step I have taken towards this goal is to participate actively in the Women in Economics group at University of California Irvine, which was created in the Fall of 2018. Having a secure space to have conversations about issues that women face in this field has been extremely helpful for me in the past year. Every other week, our members hear from women who have received Ph.D's in Economics and have taken jobs within, and outside of, academia. I strongly believe that having access to such resources can be a good starting point for graduate, undergraduate and high school students. Our group was able to organize a workshop where both male and female graduate students and faculty members were able to participate in discussions on diversity. I would like to continue these efforts and I would also like to foster mentoring relationships that could encourage more women and under-represented minorities to pursue higher studies in Economics.

As an international student, I am aware of the differences in opportunities that students have. I was able to create a positive change in this regard by getting together with members of the Women's group and requesting the department to designate Economics as a STEM field, as it gives international students foraying into the private sector 3 chances at the H-1B visa lottery, which makes them more marketable to employers. After some grassroots organizing, UC Irvine has agreed to make the STEM designation.

My extensive teaching experience at UC Irvine has exposed me to the points of view of young women, minority and first-generation college students who are significantly under-represented in Economics. I believe that as a faculty member, one of the most effective steps that I can take in ensuring that students from all backgrounds and orientations thrive and succeed in my class is to be open, approachable and impartial. I aim to continue prioritizing the promotion of diversity as I advance in my own career.