I am highly committed to reach beyond academia for social impact. I have actively engaged in entrepreneurship, industry outreach and promoted diversity, throughout my academic career.

As part of the technology transfer, I co-founded the startup NowMoveMe during my PhD. Leveraging research advances in spatiotemporal analysis, the mission of NowMoveMe is to fundamentally change the way people move and travel. Due to globalization, millennials are struggling with where to live when moving to new cities for education or their career. NowMoveMe is a neighborhood discovery engine that matches user personalities with neighborhood profiles.

Together with my co-founder, a Wharton graduate and hedge fund manager, we established a team of both technical and business talents for which I was the CTO. We built an MVP within a week and completed the private beta-test in less than 2 months. Our private beta-test saw enormous user growth of more than 1.000 active users shortly after the launch. In early 2016, I led the team in entering the USC incubator program which only accepted 10 teams. Though I did not continue the program due to a career focus shift, I highly value entrepreneurship and am willing to contribute to related activities in the department and student startup initiatives.

As a girl that grew up in the rural area of a small town in China, people have told me that computer science is "not the path for a girl". Throughout my career, I have been encouraged and supported by great mentors and non-profit organizations that promote diversity, especially for women in computer science. Without their help and guidance, I might have abandoned my passion for computer science. My background thus drives me to improve diversity in STEM fields.

As part of my continuing service work, I have been co-organizing the PhD Woman in Computer Science social group in USC since 2013. We hold monthly social events such as group lunches or coffee meetings to share experiences and seek for mutual support.

In 2016, I co-organized the Women in Machine Learning (WiML) workshop at the Neural Information Processing Systems (NIPS) conference, one of the most prestigious international machine learning conferences. We organized a series of lectures, mentoring and poster sessions for an audience of more than 580 attendees. I served as the submissions and peer review process chair and organized two mentoring roundtable sessions with 120 industry and academic leaders serving as mentors on both research and career advice. The workshop was very well received, with many attendees and mentors giving highly positive feedback on the event. Further along in my academic career, I want to continue to provide these important opportunities to a much broader student population, as part of my service and outreach work.