

## Proposal: The China Business Research Conference at Marshall, USC in 2020

### Background

Since 2016, The USC China Research Group (the Group) has been actively gathering researchers in business, economics, political science, business history and public policies, to interact and share their work. The Group has hosted around eight workshops per semester and organized and co-organized three conferences (of which the iORB provided funding for the 2019 conference). Active members of the group come from USC Marshall (current participants come from the LSA, MOR, FBE, MKT, and DSO), and USC Dornsife (current participants come from economics, political science, international relations, history and public policies). The Group has built increasingly strong reputation on the USC campus and in adjacent schools in Southern California including the UCSD, UC Riverside, UCLA, the Claremont College, and the Loyal Marymount University. More details of the past and current activities can be found here (<https://www.marshall.usc.edu/faculty-research/labs-and-institutes/usc-marshall-china-research-group>).

Currently the Group is seeking funding opportunity to establish itself as a center of China business research and education. The mission of the China Business Center (CBC) is to advance understanding of the business environment of China and its relation to the global economy and international relations. The CBC aims to become a central intellectual hub for scholars, business leaders, and policymakers, and eventually to position USC as a central institution for the creation and discussion of knowledge concerning the Chinese business research and education.

The CBC will advance its mission in several ways:

- (1) Supporting research through workshops, conferences, development of databases and visiting scholars program;
- (2) Enhancing teaching through developing new courses and cases;
- (3) Bridging research and practice through practitioners-in-residence program and business forums that involve practitioners (business executives and journalists), researchers, alumni and students;
- (4) Connecting stakeholders in the U.S. and China through forums, workshops, conferences, blogs and visiting scholars and practitioners-in-residence programs.

During this process of forming the center, it is important for the Group to continue its scholarly activities to maintain and further strengthen its reputation of a platform to find high-quality research on businesses in China. Organizing conferences remains an important component of these scholarly activities. The Group plans to continue organizing conferences in two ways. The main channel is to host conferences sponsored by the Marshall School of Business, as was with the "USC Marshall China Research Day" in March 2018 and "The China Conference - institutions, markets and firms" in May 2019 which is funded by the iORB. The second channel is to co-host conferences that are funded by other institutions, such as the "Text Analysis for Asia and Beyond" in January 2019 sponsored by three centers in the Dornsife, and a joint conference which the Economics Department of Xiamen University offered to sponsor and co-

host with the Group in December, 2019. The Marshall-sponsored conference allows us to exert greater control and builds our brand name more effectively, and the co-hosted conference helps us reach out to a wider audience.

### **Goal and Future Funding**

To continue the annual conference in 2020, we would like to seek funding support from the iORB. We continue focusing on promoting academic research on institutions and business with a particular focus on China, and building and leading a community of researchers who are interested on related topics. The iORB funding for this conference serves as seed funds to help us maintain the momentum as the Group seeks to establish itself as a Center on campus.

In addition, the iORB funding for this conference also helps us attract external collaborators, such as the Dornsife centers and Xiamen University as discussed earlier, to sponsor and co-host future conferences. Other institutions which have expressed interests to fund and co-host with us in the future include the Guanghua-Rotman Center for Information and Market Research, a joint center of Peking University and University of Toronto, and Shenzhen Financial Institute, a finance institute sponsored by the Shenzhen government and the Chinese University of Hong Kong (Shenzhen) in China.

The Group is planning to apply for funding for joint research activities with the School of International Relations at USC and the Machine Learning Lab in the Computer Science department on a joint research agenda focusing on the impact of AI on business, government and society in autocracies. The sources include the 2018 Strategic Plan Initiative which was announced by the Provost office of allocating \$10 million per year for the next 5 years.

### **Scope**

The format of the conference would be a one-and-half-day conference featuring about 12 papers. The conference is open to all Marshall faculty. We would keep the conference size small (around 40-50 participants) so that we have more interaction and discussion among the participants.

With the iORB funding, we are able to organize a high-caliber conference in 2019 which includes the following scholars in multiple disciplines and fields:

- Management: Yasheng Huang (MIT Sloan, Keynote speaker); Valerie Karplus (MIT Sloan)
- Finance: Randall Morck (University of Alberta, Keynote speaker); Hong Ru (Nanyang Technology University)
- Accounting: Joseph Piotroski (Stanford University)
- Economics: David Yang (Harvard University); Yang Xie (UC Riverside)
- Political Science: Yuen Yuen Ang (University of Michigan), Jennifer Pan (Stanford University)

- Law: Rachel Stern (UC Berkeley, Law),
- Multiple faculty in Marshall and other departments in USC will serve as discussants and chairpersons, including: USC Marshall FBE: John Matsusaka, Yanhui Wu
- USC Marshall MOR: Nan Jia, Lori Yue
- USC Levinthal: T.J. Wong; Lorien Stice-Lawrence
- USC Dornsife political science: Erin Baggott
- USC Dornsife History: Joshua Goldstein

The focus of the 2020 conference will continue to advance research on business and institutions in China. We plan to adopt a particular emphasis on how new technologies including those enabled by Artificial Intelligence affect businesses in China. Businesses in China actively apply these technologies and China is one of the leaders in these technologies.

We believe that with the funding for the 2020 conference, we are able to continue engaging with top scholars in USC and across the country to build the Marshall brand in studying businesses and institutions in China. The possible speakers to be invited for presentation for the next conference would be Francis Fukuyama (Stanford University), Gerald Roland (UC Berkeley), Daron Acemoglu (MIT), Franklin Allen (Imperial), Ray Fisman (Boston University), Xueguang Zhou (Stanford), Andrew Walder (Stanford), Jordan Siegel (Michigan), Suraj Srinivasan (Harvard), Bernard Yeung (NUS), Barry Naughton (UCSD), Ruixue Jia (UCSD), Molly Roberts (UCSD), Minxin Pei (Claremont McKenna), and Curtis Milhaupt (Stanford University).

### **Scheduling**

We plan to have two calendar days of conference, starting in the morning of the first day and ending in the afternoon of the second day. We plan to invite 12 presenters, about half from outside USC and the remaining from USC. With an addition of two keynote speakers from outside USC, we will have 8 external speakers in total.

Each paper will be given 45 minutes: the presenter will have 25 minutes to present, followed by 10-15-minute discussion by a discussant, and the remaining time for open Q&A.

### **Budget**

\*Assumption: 40 participants in total, of which 8 presenters are from out of town

\*The costs are estimated based on the CalO2 conference of 40 participated hosted by the MOR in November 2017, catered by the University Club. Price information provided by the MOR administrators.

Expenses	Calculation	Total
Room	Book one classroom or seminar room at	\$0

	zero cost	
Day 1: Breakfast	40 people @\$17 per person, plus 18% service charge	\$802.4
Day 1: Morning break snack	40 people @\$10 per person, plus 18% service charge	\$472
Day 1: Boxed lunch	40 people @\$18 per person, plus 18% service charge	\$849.6
Day 1: Afternoon break snacks	40 people @\$10 per person, plus 18% service charge	\$472
Day 1: Delivery labor fee	About \$200	\$200
Day 1: Dinner	We refer to the cost of \$2,166.72 for dinner served at the University Club for a 40-people conference (the CalO2 conference in Nov 2017), which includes \$250 for reserving the biggest private room.	\$2,166.72
Day 2: Breakfast	40 people @\$17 per person, plus 18% service charge	\$802.4
Day 2: Morning break snack	40 people @\$10 per person, plus 18% service charge	\$472
Day 2: Boxed lunch	40 people @\$18 per person, plus 18% service charge	\$849.6
Day 2: Delivery labor fee	About \$200	\$200
Hotel for out-of-town presenters	Radisson hotel: 8 persons, 2 nights each, @ \$206.75 (tax included) per night	\$3,308
Hotel parking for out-of-town presenters	Radisson hotel: 8 persons, 2 night each, @ \$25 per night	\$400

Airfare for external speakers	8 persons @ an average of \$500 each	\$4,000
Total		\$14,995

**Further Information**

Please contact T.J. Wong ([tjwong@marshall.usc.edu](mailto:tjwong@marshall.usc.edu)) or Nan Jia ([Nan.Jia@marshall.usc.edu](mailto:Nan.Jia@marshall.usc.edu)).