

Yiru Cai, Ph.D.

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Biography

Yiru Cai is a Ph.D. student in the Department of Management and Entrepreneurship at the Raymond J. Harbert College of Business, Auburn University. She previously earned her Ph.D. in Business Administration at Jilin University. Her research interests focus on entrepreneurship, including entrepreneurial opportunities, entrepreneurial stakeholders, startup joiners, IPOs, and entrepreneurial ecosystems.

Research Fields

Entrepreneurship: Entrepreneurial Opportunities, Entrepreneurial Stakeholders, Startup Joiners, IPOs, and Entrepreneurial Ecosystem

Education

Auburn University

PH.D. STUDENT IN MANAGEMENT (HARBERT COLLEGE OF BUSINESS)

Auburn, USA

Aug. 2025 - Present

Jilin University

PH.D. IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Changchun, China

Sep. 2018 - Sep.2024

- **Advisor:** Dr. Li Cai
- **Dissertation:** Start-up Entrepreneurs' Skills, Opportunity Evaluation, and Entrepreneurial Action from the Opportunity Holistic View: The Moderating Role of Regulatory Modes

University of North Carolina at Charlotte

VISITING RESEARCHER AT DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT (BELK COLLEGE OF BUSINESS)

Charlotte, USA

Nov. 2021 - Jun. 2023

- **Advisor:** Dr. Franz W. Kellermanns
- **Research Topic:** The Role of Entrepreneurs' Skills on Entrepreneurial Opportunity Evaluation: From A Holistic View of Discovery, Creation, and Ambidexterity

Jilin University

MASTER IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (TRANSFERRED TO PH.D. PROGRAM IN 2018, DEGREE NOT CONFERRED)

Changchun, China

Sep. 2016 - Sep.2018

- **Advisor:** Dr. Li Cai

Jilin University

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN ARCHIVAL SCIENCE

Changchun, China

Sep. 2012 - Jul. 2016

Honors

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| 2026 | Feild-Armenakis Fellowship , awarded by Department of Management and Entrepreneurship, Auburn University |
| 2024 | 14th Jilin Province Social Science Outstanding Achievement Award (Paper Category) , Second prize awarded with Li Cai (Jilin Univeristy), Yuli Zhang (Naikai University), and Yaqian Yang (Jilin Univeristy), awarded by Jilin Provincial Government |
| 2023 | Graduate Academic Performance Scholarship awarded by Jilin University |
| 2019 | Graduate Academic Performance Scholarship awarded by Jilin University |
| 2017 | Graduate Academic Scholarship awarded by Jilin University. |
| 2015 | China National Scholarship (Top 0.2 %) awarded by Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China |
| 2014 | China National Scholarship (Top 0.2 %) awarded by Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China |
| 2014 | Outstanding Undergraduate of Jilin University awarded by Jilin University |
| 2013 | Undergraduate Merit Scholarship at Jilin University , Third prize awarded by Jilin University |

Publications

• Published and Accepted Papers

1. **Cai Y.**, Aldavei Y., Yu H. Making Promises: Entrepreneurs' Commissive Speech Acts Influencing Startup Talent Enrollment[C]. **Strategic Management Society Annual Conference**, 2026, Berlin, Germany.
2. **Cai Y.**, Cai L., Chen Z. Opportunity Evaluation, Regulatory Modes, and Entrepreneurial Action: An Empirical Study Based on the Opportunity Holistic View[J]. **Science & Technology Progress and Policy**, 2025, 42(21): 1-12.
3. **Cai Y.**, Cai L. The Role of Entrepreneurs' Skills on Opportunity Evaluation: Discovery, Creation, and Ambidexterity[C]. **Academy of Management Proceedings**, 2024, (1): 12151. Valhalla, NY: Academy of Management.
4. **Cai Y.**, Cai L., Chen Z., Yang Y. Entrepreneurial Opportunity and Entrepreneurial Context: An Integrated Framework[J]. **Foreign Economics & Management**, 2022, 44(04): 18-33. (Full text reprinted in *Xinhua Digest*, Issue 24, 2022).
5. **Cai Y.**, Cai L., Yang Y., Lu S. Characteristics and Evaluation Index System of Entrepreneurial Ecosystem — A Case Study on Zhongguancun from 2006 to 2015[J]. **Forum on Science and Technology in China**, 2018, (06): 133-142.
6. Chapman O., **Cai Y.**, Kellermanns F. W. Relationship between Entrepreneurial Orientation and the Intention to Pursue Digital Entrepreneurship: Opportunity Evaluation in Small and Medium-sized Enterprises[C]. **2023 Annual USASBE Conference: Driven By Dreams**, 2023, Tallahassee, FL, USA.
7. Cai L., Zhang Y., **Cai Y.**, Yang Y. Innovation-driven Entrepreneurship: A Core Academic Construct of Innovation and Entrepreneurship Research in the New Era[J]. **Nankai Business Review**, 2021, 24(04): 217-226. (Received Second Prize in 14th Jilin Province Social Science Outstanding Achievement Award).
8. Lu S., Cai L., Zhan T., **Cai Y.** A Review and Prospects of Inter-organizational Symbiosis[J]. **Foreign Economics & Management**, 2021, 43(10): 68-84.
9. Cai L., Ge B., **Cai Y.** Entrepreneurial Opportunity and Resource Development Behavior of Entrepreneurial Firms: A Study from China's Transitional Economy[J]. **Quarterly Journal of Management**, 2019, 4(02): 44-62+134.
10. Guo R., Chen H., **Cai Y.**, Lu S. Theoretical Background, Type Analysis, and Research Framework Construction of Strategic Entrepreneurial Decision-making Logic[J]. **Foreign Economics & Management**, 2017, 39(5): 33-45.
11. Peng X., Cai L., Lu S., **Cai Y.**, Gao Y. Antecedent and Dimension of Symbiotic Relationship in the Hub-based Entrepreneurial Ecosystem: Case Study of Alibaba[J]. **Journal of Industrial Integration and Management**, 2016, 1(04): 1650011.

• Working Papers

1. **Cai Y.**, Cai L., Kellermanns F. W. The Role of Entrepreneurs' Skills on Entrepreneurial Opportunity Evaluation: From a Holistic View of Discovery, Creation, and Ambidexterity.
2. **Cai Y.**, Zhou Y. Keeping the Entrepreneur in the Venture: Founder Control and Innovation Following IPO.
3. **Cai Y.**, Roccapiore A. Y. Startup Joiners: What We Know and What We Don't Know.

Research Experience

• Student Participant

1. Major Project of the National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC): *Research on Major Theoretical and Practice Issues in Innovation-Driven Entrepreneurship* (Grant No. 72091310), Project 1: *Developing Theory on Innovation-Driven Entrepreneurship in the Digital Economy* (Grant No. 72091315)
 - Principal Investigator: Dr. Li Cai | 2021.01 – 2024.09
2. Major International (Regional) Joint Research Project of the National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC): *Research on the Formation Mechanisms of Entrepreneurial Ecosystems Based on Opportunity View* (Grant No. 71620107001)
 - Principal Investigator: Dr. Li Cai | 2017.01 – 2021.12
3. Key Project of the National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC): *Research on Entrepreneurial Opportunities and Resource Development in the Context of the Transitional Economy of China* (Grant No. 71232011)
 - Principal Investigator: Dr. Li Cai | 2013.01 – 2017.12

• Academic Conference Secretary

1. Jilin University Innovation and Entrepreneurship International Conference
 - Conference Chair: Professor Li Cai | 2015.09 – 2019.09

Enterprise Engagement

During my doctoral studies, I conducted multiple case studies in China, including Beijing, Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Hangzhou, and Changchun, investigating nearly **60 entrepreneurial enterprises**, such as Lenovo, Yonyou, Liby, Baiyun Electric, and the Zhongguancun Management Committee. These visits involved semi-structured interviews, on-site observations, and open conversations with entrepreneurs and joiners, providing firsthand insights into entrepreneurial behaviors. I served as the **lead interviewer** for two multi-case studies.

- **Selected Projects:**

- **April 2021 | Guangzhou:** Student leader of a 9-person team in a joint research project with Nankai University and South China University of Technology, visiting 8 enterprises (e.g., Liby).
- **August 2019 | Hangzhou Qiantang Smart City (High-tech Industrial Park):** Lead interviewer of a 6-person team in a collaborative study with Tsinghua University, visiting 7 enterprises.
- **July 2019 | Beijing Zhongguancun Science Park (Z-Park):** Student leader of a 5-person team, visiting 10 enterprises.
- **June 2018 | China FAW Group Corp., Ltd. (First Automotive Works):** Student leader of a 6-person team.
- **February 2018 | Shenzhen Bay Eco-Tech Park:** Student leader of a 5-person team, visiting 7 enterprises.
- **July 2017 | Hangzhou Qiantang Smart City (High-tech Industrial Park):** Lead interviewer of a 6-person team in a collaborative study with Tsinghua University, visiting 6 enterprises.
- **September 2016 | Beijing Zhongguancun Science Park (Z-Park):** Student participant in a 9-person team, visiting 4 enterprises.
- **August 2016 | Changchun Technology Big Market Venture Capital Co., Ltd.:** Student participant in a 4-person team, visiting 6 enterprises.

- **Internship:**

- **July 2015 – August 2015 | Internship as Research Assistant, Institute of Scientific and Technical Information of China:** Assisted with data collection and analysis related to technological innovation and industry reports.