

# Research Assistant: Diaspora and Political Change in China

## Project Summary:

A group of PhD students in the Harvard economics department (**Matthew Lee Chen**, **Eu-Wayne Mok**, and **Yu-Jia Wang**) are looking for research assistants to help with data collection efforts for an early-stage project that explores how the Chinese diaspora in Southeast Asia conditioned political change in China over the course of the 20th century. This is a context in which we know very little quantitatively about the drivers of close political connections with their origin country, as well as their importance in shaping political change. To get at this empirically, we are working towards putting together business histories and directories of Chinese businesspeople operating in Southeast Asia from biographical dictionaries and firm-level records. We are also interested in whether the Chinese government exploits these diaspora connections to exert political influence, and are looking to compile rich textual data on Chinese government policies and announcements, official speeches, and propaganda. We are currently working with Harvard's Yenching Library and are in the process of requesting their cooperation for a longer-term data collection initiative. RAs will assist with the collection, documentation, and structuring of archival records found at Yenching. This will likely consist of three steps: (1) visiting the library to document reference material, and searching for books and manuscripts in person and via online catalogues; (2) creating image scans and document metadata of relevant library material; and (3) writing documentation and manifests for the unstructured data.

**Prerequisites:** Chinese fluency required.

**Pay rate:** \$17/hour

**Hours:** 7-10 per week

**Contact:** Please send Matthew ([seasia.data@gmail.com](mailto:seasia.data@gmail.com)) a CV and unofficial transcript.