Mana Heshmati

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University of Washington ◇ Foster School of Business

ACADEMIC POSITIONS

University of Washington, Foster School of Business
Assistant Professor of Management & Organization 2023–present
· Off tenure clock 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 academic years
Acting Assistant Professor of Management & Organization 2022–2023

EDUCATION

University of Michigan, Ross School of Business 2017–2022
PhD in Strategy
· Committee: Felipe Csaszar (chair), Brian Wu, Cheng Gao, Justin Frake, Jim Walsh, Scott Page
Cognitive Science Graduate Certificate, Computation & Cognition Track

Indiana University, Kelley School of Business 2013–2015
Master of Business Administration, Management
Master of Science, Supply Chain Management

Carnegie Mellon University 2007–2011
Bachelor of Science, Mechanical Engineering
Minor, Engineering Design

RESEARCH

· **Research Interests**
- **Substantive**: Managerial cognition, strategic decision making, artificial intelligence, competitive positioning
- **Methodological**: Natural language processing, econometric analysis with large datasets, experiments

· **Publications**
- Csaszar, F. A., Hinrichs, N., and Heshmati, M. (2024) "External representations in strategic decision making: Understanding strategy's reliance on visuals." *Strategic Management Journal* 45(11) 2191-2226
  – Finalist, 2020 Academy of Management STR Best Paper Award, Behavioral Strategy Track
- Heshmati, M. and Csaszar, F. A. (2024). "Learning strategic representations: Exploring the effects of taking a strategy course." *Organization Science* 35(2) 453-473.
  – Nominee, 2020 Strategic Management Society Conference Best PhD Paper Prize

· **Proceedings**
- Csaszar, F. A., Heshmati, M., and Rosenkranz, N. "External representations in strategic decision making: Understanding strategy's reliance on visuals." *Academy of Management 2020 Best Paper Proceedings.*

· **Manuscripts under review**

- Allen, R., Heshmati, M., Lenox, M., McDonald, R., and Perez, M.* "LLMs as belief reinforcers: How human mental representations shape AI-augmented strategy" Revise & Resubmit at *Strategic Management Journal*.
- Heshmati, M. and Wang, M. Z.* "Market responses to AI statements in creative domains" Revise & Resubmit at *Organization Science*.
- Li, C. and Heshmati, M.* "Borrowed cognition: The aftereffects of AI exposure on human decision-making" Under review at *Organization Science*.
- Heshmati, M. and Pahnke, E. C. "Firms as influencers: Shaping industries through competitive positioning." Under review at *Management Science*.
  - Runner-up, 2023 Strategic Management Society Conference Behavioral Strategy Interest Group Best Paper Prize

· **Working papers**

- Heshmati, M. and Yu, H. "Engineered agency: How human-AI interactions shape human strategic decision making"

*Indicates equal coauthorship.

PRESENTATIONS

- Academy of Management, Philadelphia, August 2026, Symposium Co-Organizer, "Unbounding Bounded Rationality: Reimagining Cognition and Strategic Decision Making with AI in Firms"
- Academy of Management, Philadelphia, August 2026, Distinguished Speaker, "GenAI and Managerial Cognition: Status Quo and Emerging Tensions on How AI Changes Human Thinking"
- Academy of Management, Philadelphia, August 2026, Symposium Co-Organizer,"Quo Vadis? Future Directions for Research on Industry Shaping"
- University of Washington, Foster School of Business AI Lunch & Learn, June 2026, "The unintended consequences of AI use"
- Strategy Science Conference, Boulder, CO, May 2026, "Market responses to AI statements in creative domains"
- University of Washington, Foster AI Spark Conference, May 2026, Moderator "Building AI-First Businesses Panel"
- Smith Entrepreneurship Research Conference, May 2026, "Market responses to AI statements in creative domains"
- Utah Strategy Conference, March 2026, "LLMs as belief reinforcers: How human mental representations shape AI-augmented strategy"
- Austin Technology and Entrepreneurship Conference, February 2026, Invited discussant.
- University of Washington, Foster School of Business, Seattle, February 2026, "Borrowed cognition: AI's influence on strategic role shifting in decision-making"
- Tuck School of Business, Strategy Department, November 2025, "LLMs as belief reinforcers: How human mental representations shape AI-augmented strategy"

- Strategic Management Society Annual Conference, San Francisco, October 2025, "Search and decision making flexibility in transient competitive contexts: Evidence from the NHL"
- West Coast Research Symposium, Seattle, September 2025, "LLMs as belief reinforcers: How human mental representations shape AI-augmented strategy"
- Academy of Management, Copenhagen, August 2025, Symposium Presenter "Opening the 'Black Box' of Algorithmic Management and Control: New Theory and Empirical Directions"
- Academy of Management, Copenhagen, August 2025, Symposium Discussant "Algorithms and Strategic Decision-Making"
- Academy of Management, Chicago, August 2024, Co-Organizer of Symposium "To Shape or Adapt? Strategy Making Under Uncertainty in Industry Emergence & Evolution"
- University of Washington, Foster School of Business, Seattle, May 2024, "From the office to the arena: Studying the effect of managerial expertise and exploration on organizational performance"
- Women in Strategy and Entrepreneurship (WiSER) Conference, University of Wisonsin-Madison, May 2024, "From the office to the arena: Studying the effect of managerial expertise and exploration on organizational performance"
- University of Washington, Bradford-Osborne Research Award Ceremony, Seattle, July 2024, "Hiding Their True Colors: Exploring the Interplay of Stigmatized Identity and Competitive Positioning"
- Austin Technology and Entrepreneurship Conference, University of Texas at Austin, February 2024, "Firms as influencers: Shaping industries through competitive positioning"
- Strategic Management Society Annual Conference, Toronto, October 2023, "Firms as influencers: Shaping industries through knowledge and collaboration"
- West Coast Research Symposium, Seattle, September 2023, "Firms as influencers: Shaping industries through knowledge and collaboration"
- Academy of Management Annual Meeting, Boston, August 2023, Symposium presenter in "Twists and Turns in Industry Evolution: The Link Between Uncertainty and Firm Strategies"
- University of Washington, Foster School of Business, Management & Organization Department, March 2023, "Firms as influencers: Shaping industries through knowledge and collaboration."
- Academy of Management, Seattle, August 2022, Co-organizer of Symposium "Shaping the Future: Past, Present, and Future Avenues for Research on Market Shaping"
- Academy of Management, Seattle, August 2022, Co-organizer of Symposium "Behavioral Strategy and Microfoundations"
- Academy of Management Conference, Seattle, August 2022, "Firms as influencers: Shaping industries through knowledge and collaboration."
- Strategy Science Conference, New York, June 2022, "Firms as influencers: Shaping industries through search and collaboration."
- University of Washington, Foster School of Business, Virtual, November 2021, "External representations in strategic decision making: Understanding strategy's reliance on visuals."

- Academy of Management, Virtual, August 2021, Co-organizer of Professional Development Workshop "Deciphering Managerial Cognition: New Methods & Opportunities for Studying Strategic Decision Making"
- Academy of Management Annual Meeting, Virtual, August 2021, "External representations in strategic decision making: Understanding strategy's reliance on visuals."
- Ross School of Business Strategy Brown Bag, Ann Arbor, July 2021, "Firms as influencers: Shaping industries through search and collaboration."
- Strategic Management Society Annual Conference, Virtual, October 2020 "External representations in strategic decision making: Understanding strategy's reliance on visuals."
- Organization Science Winter Conference, March 2020 (*conference cancelled*), "'Learning strategic representations: Exploring the effects of taking a strategy course."
- Academy of Management Annual Meeting, Virtual, August 2020, "External representations in strategic decision making: Understanding strategy's reliance on visuals."
- Ross School of Business Strategy Seminar, May 2019, "Learning strategic representations: Exploring the effects of taking a strategy course."

AWARDS, FELLOWSHIPS, & GRANTS

· **Awards**

- Summer Research Award, UW Consulting & Business Development Center 2026
- Foster School of Business, Lex N. Gamble Family Award for Curriculum Innovation 2026
- University of Washington, Foster School of Business AI Ambassador 2025
- Dean's Excellence Award for Undergraduate Teaching, Foster Business School 2024
- "Best 8:30am Class" Award, UW Undergraduate Business Council 2024
- Runner-Up, Strategic Management Society Conference Behavioral Strategy Interest Group Best Paper Prize 2023
- Summer DEI Research Award, UW Consulting & Business Development Center 2023
- "Star Teacher" Award, UW Management & Organization Department 2023
- Nominee, Strategic Management Society Conference Research Methods Paper Prize 2022
- Nominee, Strategic Management Society Conference Best Paper Prize 2022
- Outstanding Reviewer Award, Academy of Management Meeting STR Division 2021
- W. A. Spivey/Valerie and W. Hall Award for Academic and Research Excellence 2020
- Nominee, Strategic Management Society Conference Best PhD Paper Prize 2020
- Finalist, Academy of Management STR Best Paper Award, Behavioral Strategy Track 2020
- Ross Early Candidacy Award 2019
- Institute for Social Research-Rackham Summer Training Award 2019

· **Fellowships and Grants**

- University of Michigan, Gilbert and Ruth Whitaker Doctoral Fellowship 2022
- University of Michigan, Rackham Merit Fellowship 2017–2022
- University of Michigan, Ross Doctoral Fellowship 2017–2022
- University of Michigan, UROP Supplementary Research Funding Grant 2020
- University of Michigan, Rackham Candidacy Research Grant 2020
- University of Michigan, Ross PhD Research Grant 2020
- University of Michigan, Rackham Pre-Candidacy Research Grant 2018

- University of Michigan, Rackham Professional Development Grant 2018
- University of Michigan, Rackham Conference Travel Grant 2017, 2018, 2019, 2021

MEDIA COVERAGE

· Research featured in UW News
- "*UW research shows real-world value of strategy courses for MBA students*," UW News. (June 6, 2023). Link.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

· **Instructor**
- MGMT 430: Strategic Management (Capstone) Spring 2026
  - Teaching Evaluation: 5.0/5.0, 5.0/5.0, 4.9/5.0, 4.8/5.0
  - Students: 4 sections of 50 seniors at Foster
- MGMT 430: Strategic Management (Capstone) Spring 2025
  - Teaching Evaluation: 5.0/5.0, 4.6/5.0, 4.6/5.0
  - Students: 3 sections of 50 seniors at Foster
- MGMT 430: Strategic Management (Capstone) Winter/Spring 2024
  - Teaching Evaluation: 5.2/5.0, 4.9/5.0, 4.9/5.0, 4.9/5.0
  - Students: 4 sections of 50 seniors at Foster
  - Voted best 8:30am class by undergraduate student body
- MGMT 430: Strategic Management (Capstone) Winter/Spring 2023
  - Teaching Evaluation: 4.9/5.0, 4.8/5.0, 4.9/5.0
  - Students: 3 sections of 50 seniors at Foster
- STR 290: Business Strategy (BBA Core) Winter 2020
  - Teaching Evaluation: 4.8/5.0
  - Students: 79 sophomores at Ross
  - Selected by students for Women's History Month social media feature

· **Instructional Support Specialist**
- STR 533: Corporate Strategy (Online MBA Core) Winter 2021
  - Supported development of first online MBA strategy course & served as teaching assistant

· **Teaching Assistant**
- STR 682: Mergers, Acquisitions, & Corporate Development (MBA Elective) Winter 2019, 2020
- STR 637: Mergers, Acquisitions, & Corporate Development (WMBA Core) Summer 2019
- STR 636: Strategic Thinking & Competitive Analysis (EMBA Core) Winter 2019
- MO 503: Leading People & Organizations (MBA Core) Fall 2018, 2019
- BE/MO 619: Incentives & Productivity (MBA Elective) Winter 2019
- ICOS Big Data Summer Camp (Doctoral Workshop) Summer 2018

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE AND MEMBERSHIP

· **Ad hoc referee**
- Reviewer for *Organization Science*, *Strategic Management Journal*, *Strategy Science*

· **University of Washington, Foster School of Business**
- Strategic Management (MGMT 430) Course Coordinator 2023–present
- Management and Organization Speaker Series Organizer 2023–2025
- Member, Undergraduate Scholarship Review Committee 2022–2023
- Micro Hiring Committee Member 2022–2023

· **University of Michigan, Ross School of Business**
- PhD Forum President 2021–2022
- Strategy Doctoral Student Research Seminar Co-Coordinator 2018–2019
- PhD Committee Member for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion 2019–2020
- PhD Forum Grants Committee Member 2018–2019
- PhD Forum Social Co-Chair 2018–2019
- Ross School of Business Uplift Committee Member 2017–2018

· **Mentorship**
- Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program (UROP) Research Mentor 2020–2021
- Ross BBA Senior Thesis Mentor 2019–2020

INDUSTRY EXPERIENCE

· **Ford Motor Company** 2011–2017
- Product Planning & Strategy
  Developed business cases on advanced technologies for conventional and autonomous vehicles.
- Product Development Engineering
  Worked in a range of engineering divisions including Ford Performance Motorsports, crash safety, vehicle prototyping, and chassis engineering.

· **Peace Meal Kitchen** 2016–2017
- Founder & Owner
  Peace Meal Kitchen is a dinner pop-up dedicated to educating diners on regions that are either misrepresented by the U.S. media or are struggling with political conflict. Featured in Eater, Detroit Free Press, NPR, The New York Times, and The Washington Post, Peace Meal Kitchen uses the concept of gastrodiplomacy to educate diners on misrepresented cultures through food.