

Neil Lee

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Current positions

Professor of Economic Geography, London School of Economics and Political Science

LSE Affiliations: International Inequalities Institute, Centre for the Analysis of Social Exclusion, Centre for Economic Performance.

External affiliations and positions

Fellow, Canadian Institute for Advanced Research
Professor II, Inland University of Norway
Associate Member, Nuffield College, Oxford
Affiliate, Centre for Responsible Banking and Finance, St Andrews
Fellow, World Inequality Lab
Convenor, 'Cities network', International Inequalities Institute
Evidence Committee, The Scale Up Institute
Evidence Group, Transforming Places Programme, OECD

Visiting positions

2021 - 2022	Visiting Researcher, University of Oxford
2009	Visiting Fellow, Columbia University

Past positions

2022-2024	Chair, The Regional Studies Association
2017-2019	Associate Professor of Economic Geography, LSE
2013-2017	Assistant Professor of Economic Geography, LSE
2010-2013	Head of Socio-economic Research Centre, The Work Foundation
2005-2010	Senior Economist, The Work Foundation

Education

2011	PhD in Economic Geography (no corrections), LSE
2007	MSc in Human Geography Research (with distinction), LSE
2005	MSc in Local Economic Development (with distinction), LSE
2002	BSc in Geography (First Class), University College London

Publications & talks

BOOKS

- 2024 Lee, N. (2024). [Innovation for the masses: How to share the benefits of the high tech economy](#), San Francisco: University of California Press.

WORK IN PROGRESS

Wei, Z., Lee, N., and Iddawela, Y., Mobile internet access and spatial inequality in the Philippines, *Paper prepared for the Asian Development Bank Policy Review*

Wei, Z., Luca, D., and Lee, N., Local wealth inequality fuels political protests

Wang, H. and Lee, N. [Business networks and the persistence of entrepreneurship in China](#)

Lee, N., Pardy, M., and McNeil, A. [The political impact of inflation: A survey experiment](#), *International Inequalities Institute Working Paper*

Lee, N., Metta, N. and Boey, A. [The scale-up state: Singapore's industrial policy for the digital economy](#), *Southeast Asia Working Paper Series, LSE* (11)

Bauluz et al. [Spatial wage inequality in North America and Western Europe: changes between and within local labour markets 1975-2019](#) CEP Working Paper.

JOURNAL ARTICLES

- 2024 Lee, N., Fransham, M., and Bukowski, P. (2024). [Spatial inequality and social protection in the UK](#) *LSE Public Policy Review*, 3(2).

- 2023 McNeil, A., Luca, D., & Lee, N. (2023). [The long shadow of local decline: Birthplace economic adversity and long-term individual outcomes in the UK](#). *Journal of Urban Economics*, 136, 103571.

Rodríguez-Pose, A., Terrero-Dávila, J., & Lee, N. (2023). [Left-behind versus unequal places: Interpersonal inequality, economic decline and the rise of populism in the USA and Europe](#). *Journal of Economic Geography*, 23(5), 951-977.

Fransham, M., Herbertson, M., Pop, M., Bandeira Morais, M., & Lee, N. (2023). [Level best? The levelling up agenda and UK regional inequality](#) *Regional Studies*, 57(11), 2339-2352.

Luca, D., Terrero-Davila, J., Stein, J., & Lee, N. (2023). [Progressive Cities: Cultural attitudes and economic development around the world](#). *Urban Studies*.

Lee, N. (2023). [Inclusive Innovation in cities: From buzzword to policy](#). *Regional Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00343404.2023.2168637>

Casadei, P., Vanino, E., & Lee, N. (2023). [Trade in creative services: relatedness and regional specialization in the UK](#). *Regional Studies*, 57(7), 1349-1366.

- 2022 Arman, H., Iammarino, S., Lee, N., & Ibarro-Olivero, E. (2022). R&D, diversification and Kuwait's innovation trap. *Science and Public Policy*. <https://doi.org/10.1093/scipol/scabo73>
Report: <http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/109010/>
- 2021 Rodríguez-Pose, A., Lee, N., & Lipp, C. (2021). Golfing with Trump: Social capital, decline, inequality, and the rise of populism in the US. *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy, and Society*. <https://doi.org/10.1093/cjres/rsab026>
- Wang, H., Rodríguez-Pose, A., & Lee, N. (2021). The Long Shadow of History in China: Regional Governance Reform and Chinese Territorial Inequality. *Applied Geography*.
- Mitsch, F., Lee, N., & Morrow, L. (2021). Faith no more? Divergence of political trust between urban and rural Europe. *Political Geography*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2021.102426>
- Iddawela, Y., Lee, N., & Rodríguez-Pose, A. (2021). Quality of sub-national government and regional development in Africa. *Journal of Development Studies*.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00220388.2021.1873286>
- Cowling, M., Brown, R., & Lee, N. (2021). The geography of business angel investments in the UK: Does local bias (still) matter? *Environment and Planning A*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0308518X20984484>
- Evenhuis, E., Lee, N., Martin, R., & Tyler, P. (2021). Editorial: Rethinking the political economy of place: challenges of productivity and inclusion. *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy, and Society*. <https://doi.org/10.1093/cjres/rsaa043>
- Lee, N., & Rodríguez-Pose, A. (2021). Entrepreneurship and the fight against poverty in US cities. *Environment and Planning A*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0308518X20924422>
- 2020 Rodríguez-Pose, A., & Lee, N. (2020). Hipsters vs. Geeks? Creative workers, STEM and innovation in US cities. *Cities*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2020.102653>
- Casadei, P., & Lee, N. (2020). Global cities, creative industries and their representation on social media: A micro-data analysis of twitter data on the fashion industry. *Environment and Planning A*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0308518X20901585>
- Ughetto, E., Cowling, M., & Lee, N. (2020). The price of a disadvantaged location: Regional variation in the price and supply of short-term credit to SMEs in UK. *Journal of Small Business Management*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00472778.2019.1681195>
- 2019 Lee, N., & Clark, S. (2019). Do low-skilled workers gain from high-tech employment growth? High-technology multipliers, employment and wages in Britain. *Research Policy*.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.respol.2019.05.012>
- Ughetto, E., Cowling, M., & Lee, N. (2019). Editorial: The financing of small business and new ventures. *Regional Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00343404.2019.1601174>
- Lee, N. (2019). Inclusive Growth in cities: A sympathetic critique. *Regional Studies*.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00343404.2018.1476753>

Ughetto, E., Cowling, M., & Lee, N. (2019). Editorial: The financing of small business and new ventures. *Regional Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00343404.2019.1601174>

Brown, R., Mawson, S., & Lee, N. (2019). Start-up factories, transnational entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial ecosystems: Unpacking the lure of the start-up accelerator programmes. *European Planning Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09654313.2019.1588858>

2018

Obschonka, M., Lee, N., Rodríguez-Pose, A., Eichstaedt, J. C., & Ebert, T. (2018). Big data methods, social media, and the psychology of entrepreneurial regions: capturing cross-county personality traits and their impact on entrepreneurship in the US. *Small Business Economics*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11187-019-00204-2>

Brown, R., & Lee, N. (2018). Funding for UK high-growth SMEs since the Global Financial Crisis. *Journal of Business Research*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2019.02.001>

Von Berlepsch, V., Rodríguez-Pose, A., & Lee, N. (2018). Female migration and economic development in the United States. *Regional Studies*, 53(1), 131-145. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00343404.2018.1463092>

Obschonka, M., Stuetzer, M., Rentfrow, P. J., Lee, N., Potter, J., & Gosling, D. (2018). Fear, populism and the geopolitical landscape: On the effect of neurotic personality traits on regional voting behaviour in the 2016 Brexit and Trump votes. *Social Psychological & Personality Science*, 9(3), 285-298.

Lee, N., & Luca, D. (2018). The Big City Bias in Access to Finance: Evidence from firm perceptions in almost 100 countries. *Journal of Economic Geography*, 19(1), 199-224. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jeg/lbx047>

Lee, N., Morris, K., & Kemeny, T. (2018). Immobility and the Brexit vote. *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society*, 11(1), 143-163. // [Winner: Understanding Society Best Paper Prize]

Lee, N., Green, A., & Sissons, P. (2018). Low-pay, sectoral change and UK labour market policy. *Policy & Politics*, 46(3), 347-369.

2017

Ughetto, E., Cowling, M., & Lee, N. (2017). The innovation debt penalty: Cost of debt, loan default, and the effects of a public loan guarantee on high-tech firms. *Technological Forecasting & Social Change*, 127, 166-176.

Sissons, P., Green, A., & Lee, N. (2017). Employment structure, growth sectors and household poverty in the United Kingdom. *Work, Employment and Society*, 32(6), 1078-1098.

Lee, N. (2017). Psychology and the geography of innovation. *Economic Geography*, 93(2), 106-130.

Lee, N. (2017). Powerhouse of cards? Understanding the Northern Powerhouse. *Regional Studies*, 51(3), 478-489.

Lee, N., & Brown, R. (2017). Innovation, SMEs and the liability of distance: The demand and supply of bank funding in peripheral UK regions. *Journal of Economic Geography*, 17(1), 233-260.

- 2016 Lee, N., & Sissons, P. (2016). [Inclusive growth? Economic growth and poverty in British cities.](#) *Environment and Planning A*, 48(11), 2317-2339.
- Lee, N., & Rodríguez-Pose, A. (2016). [Is there trickle-down from tech? Poverty, employment and the high-technology multiplier in US cities.](#) *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 106(5), 1114-1134.
- Lee, N., Sissons, P., & Jones, K. (2016). [The geography of wage inequality in British cities.](#) *Regional Studies*, 50(10), 1714-1727.
- 2015 Lee, N., Cowling, M., & Sameen, H. (2015). [Access to finance for innovative SMEs since the financial crisis.](#) *Research Policy*, 44(2), 370-380.
- Lee, N. (2015). [Migrant and ethnic diversity, cities and innovation: Firm effects or city effects?](#) *Journal of Economic Geography*, 15(4), 769-796.
- Cowling, M., & Lee, N. (2015). [Do Rural Firms Perceive Different Problems? Geography, Sorting, and Barriers to Growth in UK SMEs.](#) *Environment & Planning C: Government and Policy*, 33(1), 25-42.
- 2014 Lee, N., & Drever, E. (2014). [Do SMEs in deprived areas find it harder to access finance? Evidence from the UK Small Business Survey.](#) *Entrepreneurship and Regional Development*, 26(3-4), 337-356.
- Lee, N. (2014). [What holds back high growth firms? Evidence from UK SMEs.](#) *Small Business Economics*, 43(1), 183-195.
- Lee, N., & Rodríguez-Pose, A. (2014). [Innovation in creative cities: Evidence from British small firms.](#) *Industry & Innovation*, 21(6), 494-512.
- 2013 Lee, N., & Rodríguez-Pose, A. (2013). [Creativity, cities and innovation.](#) *Environment and Planning A*, 46(5), 1139-1159.
- Lee, N. (2013). [The creative industries and urban economic growth in the UK.](#) *Environment and Planning A*, 46(2), 455-470.
- Lee, N., & Rodríguez-Pose, A. (2013). [Innovation and spatial inequality in Europe and the United States.](#) *Journal of Economic Geography*, 13(1), 1-22.
- Lee, N., & Rodríguez-Pose, A. (2013). [Original innovation, learnt innovation and cities: Evidence from UK SMEs.](#) *Urban Studies*, 50(9), 1742-1759.
- 2012 Nathan, M., & Lee, N. (2012). [Cultural diversity, innovation and entrepreneurship: Firm-level evidence from London.](#) *Economic Geography*, 89(4), 367-394.
- Hutton, W., & Lee, N. (2012). [The City and the cities: Finance, ownership and the geography of recession.](#) *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society*, 5(3),

- 2011 Lee, N. (2011). [Are innovative regions more unequal? Evidence from Europe](#). *Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy*, 29(1), 2-23. [Editors' choice]
- Lee, N. (2011). [Ethnic diversity and employment growth in English cities](#). *Urban Studies*, 48(2), 407-425.

Prizes

- 2020 Promotion Teaching Prize, London School of Economics
Best Paper Prize, Regional Studies
- 2019 Best Paper Prize, Understanding Society
- 2017 Major Review Teaching Prize, London School of Economics
- 2016 Highly Commended, LSE Student Union Teaching Excellence Awards
- 2015 Highly Commended, LSE Student Union Teaching Excellence Awards

Keynotes, panels, and invited talks (Since 2019)

- 2024 Regional Innovation Policy Conference, Lillehammer (Keynote)
Bessemer Symposium in the Economic Geography of Innovation, Sheffield (Keynote)
Kakanomics Festival, Stavanger (Public lecture)
Canada Blanche Forum, Valencia (Public lecture)
Why don't we Level Up? LSE Research Showcase (Public lecture)
Inclusive growth, Glasgow City Region Policy Lab (Invited lecture)
What next for devolution? Centre for Cities / LSE (Panel)
Does the UK have an industrial strategy?, UK in a Changing Europe (Panel)
Cohesive Capitalism Summit, LSE (Panel)
Insights North East, Newcastle University (Panel)
Science Policy Research Unit (SPRU), Sussex (Seminar)
Singapore's industrial policy for a digital economy, SEAC Centre LSE (Seminar)
- 2023 Labour market and social protection, LSE School of Public Policy (Lecture)
Regenerating coastal communities, LSE (Workshop)
- 2022 Political Science, University of Zurich (Seminar)
Inclusive innovation, Belfast (Public event)
- 2021 LSE Fringe, Conservative Party Conference (Panel)
Progressive cities?, Continuing Education, Oxford (Seminar)
CURDS-Cities and Local Growth Unit seminar (Panel)
- 2020 OECD workshop on political trust (Panel)
University of Bath (Seminar)
BEIS Industrial Strategy speaker series (Seminar)
Cities and local growth unit (Workshop)
- 2020 Geography of Innovation Conference, Stavanger (Keynote)
- 2019 Monk School of Global Affairs, University of Toronto (Seminar)
Financial geography conference, Gelsenkirchen (Keynote)

Innovation Growth Lab, Berlin (Panel)

GRANTS, SELECTED

[Sovereign wealth funds and economic diversification](#). LSE-Kuwait Programme. Co-PI with Husam Arman.

[Linking national and regional income inequality](#). ESRC. Co-PI with Pawel Bukowski and Mark Fransham.

[Promoting private R&D in Kuwait](#). LSE-Kuwait Programme. Co-PI with Husam Arman.

Conference organisation

2023-2025	Chair, LSE Festival Steering Committee
2024	Innovation and inequality in Europe and the United States (LSE Phelan Centre / III Conference, with David Soskice, Michael Storper, Max Herbertson)
	Organiser (With Davide Luca, Tom Kemeny, Mark Fransham): Spatial inequality, RSA Florence
2021	Theme organiser: Inequality track at Global Conference in Economic Geography, Dublin (with Sebastian Breau)

External engagement

POLICY REPORTS (SELECTED)

- Mulder, N., Bryan, G., Lee, N., Oliveira Cunha, J., Shawa, B., Wani, S., & Werker, E. (2024). [Unlocking economic prosperity in the Zambian Copperbelt](#). International Growth Centre, London.
- Bhattacharya, A., & Lee, N. (2024). Labour economics: thinking through Labour's economic agenda. Social Market Foundation, London. <https://www.smf.co.uk/publications/labour-economic-agenda-essays/>
- Lee, N. (2024). [Addressing spatial inequalities through innovation](#) Innovation and research caucus.
- Brown, R., & Lee, N. (2018). Financial instruments for regional development. OECD, Paris.
- Pike, A., Lee, N., MacKinnon, D., Kempton, L., & Iddawela, Y. (2017). Job creation for inclusive growth in cities. Joseph Rowntree Foundation, York.
- Lee, N., & Clarke, S. (2017). A rising tide lifts all boats? Advanced industries and their impact upon living standards. Resolution Foundation, London.
- Lee, N., Brown, R., & Schlueter, T. (2015). Modes of firm growth: A report for the Business Growth Service. Business Growth Service, London.
- Brown, R., & Lee, N. (2014). Funding issues confronting high growth SMEs in the UK. ICAS, Edinburgh.

- Lee, N., Sissons, P., Hughes, C., Green, A., Adam, D., Atfield, G., & Rodríguez-Pose, A. (2014). Cities, growth and poverty: A review of the evidence. Joseph Rowntree Foundation, York.

MEDIA & PODCASTS

- 2024 [Why we are seeing a boom in urban economics research](#), Centre for Cities (Podcast)
[Innovation for the masses](#), New Books Network (Podcast)
[Sharing the benefits of innovation](#), ABC "The Money" (Radio / Podcast)
[Best new books on economics](#), Financial Times (Review of book)
[How to share the benefits of the high-tech economy](#), Centre for Cities (Podcast)
[Regional inequality and inclusive growth](#), Glasgow Centre for Public Policy (Podcast)
- 2021 [Hipsters, Geeks, and the Future of Work](#), Centre for Cities (Podcast)

CONSULTANCIES

Technology and spatial inequality in the Philippines (with Zhiwu Wei, Cambridge), *Asian Development Bank*
 Inclusive innovation policy (with Metrodynamics), *Connected Places Catapult*
 Central London after COVID (with Arup), *GLA*
 Capacity building for the low carbon transition, *European Investment Bank*
 Economics of accessibility, *OECD*
 Cultural interventions and pride in place, *DCMS*
 Community Business and the High Street, *Power to change*
 Innovation testbeds, *NESTA*
 Community Development after Brexit, *DEFRA*
 Financial instruments for regional development, *OECD*
 Innovation collaborations, *OECD*
 Density and climate change in cities, *Coalition for Urban Transitions*
 Economic impact of the tech economy, *Resolution Foundation*
 Industrial policy for job creation, *Joseph Rowntree Foundation*
 Access to finance for high growth firms, *ICAS*

Teaching

POSITIONS

- 2024-2025 Departmental Tutor, Department of Geography & Environment, LSE
 2013- Director, BSc Geography with Economics, LSE
 2014-2020 Director, MSc Local Economic Development, LSE
- 2013- Convenor: GY404 - Inclusive Growth, LSE
 2013- Lecturer: GY103 - Contemporary Europe, LSE
 2013- Lecturer: EC235 - The economics of European integration, LSE
 2013-15 Lecturer: GY245 - Quantitative methods, LSE

EXTERNAL TEACHING

2024	EEED, Utrecht University
2023	Insepp PhD Course, Inland University of Norway
2022	ISEG Hannover Course, Leibniz University Hannover
2021	Sustainable Urban Development, University of Oxford
2021-2024	External examiner, Land Economy, University of Cambridge
2021-2024	London's place as a global financial centre, LSE
2020	Executive Education, Department of Economics, University of Oxford
2019	Masterclass in populism, Madrid

PHD'S SUPERVISED

Max Herbertson (2023 -) Innovation and diffusion, with Andrés Rodríguez-Pose

Leiboyu Xiang (2023 -) Local economic impact of star scientists, with Andrés Rodríguez-Pose

Javier Terrero Davila (2023 -) Economics, Paris-Saclay University, with Grégory Verdugo

Jingyuan Zeng (2021 -) Economics of breakthrough innovation, with Michael Storper

Pedro Llanos Paredes (2020 - 2023). Essays in industrial policy. Placed: University of Oxford.

Margarida Bandeira-Morais (2019 - 2023). Economic geography of complexity. With Simona Iammarino. Placed at NIESR.

Frieder Mitsch (2018 - 2023). Governance, economic geography and populism in Germany. With David Soskice. Placed: University of Cambridge.

Beatriz Jambrina Canseco (2018 - 2023). Temporary workers in Spain. With Andrés Rodríguez-Pose. Placed: LSE III.

Han Wang (2018 - 2022) Institutions and economic geography in China. Placed: University of Oxford, Blavatnik School.

Paul Yu (2018 - 2022). Geography and the returns to skills. With Vassillis Monastarios. Placed: OECD.

Augustin Boey (2017 - 2022). Social networks in economic geography. With Michael Storper. Placed: National University of Singapore.

Yohann Iddawela (2017 - 2021). Quality of government and aid effectiveness in Sub-Saharan Africa. With Andrés Rodríguez-Pose. Placed: Asian Development Bank.

Viola Von Berlepsch (2014 - 2018). The long-term impact of diversity on economic performance. With Andrés Rodríguez-Pose. Placed: Boston Consulting Group.