

Moran Koren

Assistant Professor (Tenure Track) | Game Theory & Market Design Researcher

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Research Interests: Operations & Economics; AI Economics; Agents and Incentive Design; Information/Mechanism Design; Market Platforms; Algorithmic Screening

RESEARCH PROFILE

Operations & Economics scholar studying how **screening/gatekeeping, allocation, and pricing** shape behavior of humans and/or agents and the **information** managers rely on. I build game-theoretic models and experiments to design **implementable mechanisms** for hiring and service systems, organ/platform allocation, and data-driven screening. Published in **Management Science, Theoretical Economics, Economic Theory, GEB**, with ML-incentives work in **ICML** and **NeurIPS**; supported by **ISF (personal & equipment)** and **MOST** grants.

Job talk: *The Gatekeeper Effect*—OM mechanisms for screening under uncertainty (*Management Science*, 2026).

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Senior Lecturer

Ben-Gurion University of the Negev

06.2025 – Present · Beer-Sheva, Israel

- Department of Industrial Engineering and Management; member, Statistics and Data Analysis Program
- Faculty lead for accelerated MSc programs; founded and led the 'Young Researchers (Hetz)' track (2024–2026)

Lecturer

Ben-Gurion University of the Negev

10/2022 – 06/2025 · Beer-Sheva, Israel

- Department of Industrial Engineering and Management

Postdoctoral Research Fellow

Tel Aviv University

2021 – 2022 · Tel Aviv, Israel

- School of Mathematical Sciences
- Hosts: Prof. Eilon Solan and Prof. Ehud Lehrer

Postdoctoral Research Fellow

Harvard University

2020 – 2021 · Cambridge, MA, USA

- Center of Mathematical Sciences and Applications
- Host: Prof. Scott Duke Kominers

Postdoctoral Research Fellow

Stanford University

2019 – 2020 · Stanford, CA, USA

- Fulbright Scholar
- Management Science and Engineering
- Host: Prof. Itai Ashlagi

Ph.D. Research Intern

Social Technologies Lab (Prof. Mor Naaman), Cornell Tech

Summer 2018 · New York, NY, USA

- Social computing research on crowd-based news evaluation and online behavior; collaboration leading to subsequent publication (TTO 2020).

PUBLICATIONS

EDUCATION

Ph.D. in Economics

Technion – IE&M (now Data and Decision Sciences) 2019

- Advisors: Prof. Rann Smorodinsky & Prof. Itai Arieli
- Dissertation: "Social Learning in Adaptive Environments"
- Keiden Prize for Graduate Students (2018)

M.A. in Economics

Hebrew University of Jerusalem

2015

- Research track (joint with TAU), GPA: 92
- Advisor: Dr. Liad Blumrosen
- Thesis: "To Pool or Not to Pool? On Mining Competition and Transfer Fees in Bitcoin"

B.A. in Economics & Business

Hebrew University of Jerusalem

2009

- Magna cum Laude
- Dean's List for Honors Students

AWARDS & FELLOWSHIPS

- ISF Shamir Fellowship for Returning Scientists (2021): "Market Design Under Uncertainty", 280,000 NIS
- Fulbright Post-doctoral Scholar (2019): \$47,500
- CMSA Fellowship, Harvard (2020): \$90,000
- Stanford Fellowship (2019): \$30,000
- Harold & Inge Marcus Fellowship (2017)
- Technion Ph.D. Stipend (2015–2019)

RESEARCH GRANTS & FELLOWSHIPS

COMPETITIVE RESEARCH GRANTS

- ISF Personal Grant (2025–2026): "Pre-Filtering Mechanisms and Self-Selection: Theoretical Insights into the Gatekeeper's Role under Uncertainty", 380,000 NIS
- ISF Equipment Grant (2025–2026): Research Equipment Support, 67,500 NIS
- MOST Security, Food and Food Tech Program (2023–2026): Joint with D. Nitzan, N. Talmon, S. Shapira, 750,000 NIS total (250,000 NIS share)

EXTERNAL NON-COMPETITIVE GRANTS

- IDSI Projects for Social Good (2024): 20,000 NIS

UNIVERSITY INTERNAL GRANTS

- BGU Research Group Grant (2025): "Experimental Investigation of Crowdfunding Mechanisms", Culture, Society, and Technology & Data Science Center, 12,000 NIS

JOURNAL ARTICLES

- **Koren, M.** (2026). "The Gatekeeper Effect: The Implications of Pre-Screening, Self-Selection, and Bias for Hiring Processes." *Management Science*, 72(1), 426–441.
- Danino, G., **Koren, M.**, & Madmon, O. (2026). "A Strategy-Proof Mechanism for Ownership Restructuring in Privately Owned Assets." *Journal of Economics & Management Strategy*, 35(1), 50–58.
- Berkovich, E., Shapira, S., **Koren, M.**, Talmon, N., & Nitzan, D. (2026). "Reimagining Israel's Food System: Balancing Mediterranean Diet Recommendations with National Food Security, Sovereignty and Resilience." *Israel Journal of Health Policy Research*, 15(1), Article 6.
- Arieli, I., **Koren, M.**, & Smorodinsky, R. (2024). "Information Aggregation in Large Collective Purchases." *Economic Theory*, 78(1), 295–345.
- Cohen, A., Deligkas, A., & **Koren, M.** (2023). "Learning Approximately Optimal Contracts." *Theoretical Computer Science*, 980, 114219.
- Arieli, I., **Koren, M.**, & Smorodinsky, R. (2022). "The Implication of Pricing on Social Learning." *Theoretical Economics*, 17(4), 1761–1802.
- **Koren, M.** & Mueller-Frank, M. (2022). "The Welfare Costs of Informationally Efficient Prices." *Games and Economic Behavior*, 131, 186–196.

REFEREED CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

- Amir, D., Hoter, B., & **Koren, M.** (2025). "Strategic Behavior in Crowdfunding: Insights from a Large-Scale Online Experiment." *WINE 2025*, New Brunswick, USA. (acceptance rate: 29.8%).
- Hoter, B., **Koren, M.**, Nitzan, D., Shapira, S., & Talmon, N. (2025). "Enhancing Food Security with Blockchain: Developing a Web3 Application." *IEEE ISCC 2025*, Bologna, Italy. (acceptance rate: 36.6%, CORE B).
- Havin, M., Wharton Kleinman, T., **Koren, M.**, Goldstein, A., & Dover, Y. (2025). "Can (A)I Change Your Mind?" *CogSci 2025*, San Francisco, CA. (acceptance rate: ~ 30%, CORE B).
- Horowitz, G., Sommer, Y., **Koren, M.**, & Rosenfeld, N. (2024). "Classification Under Strategic Self-Selection." *ICML 2024*, Vienna, Austria. (acceptance rate: 27.5%, CORE A*).
- Cohen, A., Deligkas, A., & **Koren, M.** (2022). "Learning Approximately Optimal Contracts." *SAGT 2022*, Colchester, UK. (acceptance rate: 41%, CORE B).
- Kang, J., **Koren, M.**, Monachou, F., & Ashlagi, I. (2021). "Counterbalancing Learning and Strategic Incentives in Allocation Markets." *NeurIPS 2021*. (acceptance rate: 26%, CORE A*).
- Ban, A., & **Koren, M.** (2020). "Sequential Fundraising and Social Insurance." *ACM EC 2020*. (acceptance rate: 20%, CORE A*).
- Jakesch, M., **Koren, M.**, Evtushenko, A., & Naaman, M. (2020). "How Partisan Crowds Affect News Evaluation." *TTO 2020*. (acceptance rate: 39%).
- Arieli, I., **Koren, M.**, & Smorodinsky, R. (2019). "The Implication of Pricing on Social Learning." *ACM EC 2019*, Phoenix, AZ. (acceptance rate: 27.7%, CORE A*).
- Arieli, I., **Koren, M.**, & Smorodinsky, R. (2018). "The One-Shot Crowdfunding Game." *ACM EC 2018*, Ithaca, NY. (acceptance rate: 26%, CORE A*).
- Arieli, I., **Koren, M.**, & Smorodinsky, R. (2017). "The Crowdfunding Game." *WINE 2017*, Bangalore, India.

SELECTED PIPELINE (R&R / MAJOR REVISION)

- **Theorist Toolbox: Tools for Agent-Based LLM-Assisted Economic Theory Research** — *working paper*; *arXiv:2606.22337* (2026). *Contribution*: proposes a verification-first protocol for doing economic theory with large language models, instantiated as three methods that differ in how the work is checked (a single disciplined pass; an adversarial prover-verifier pair; a structured multi-agent project with a reviewer gate); argues that external verification, not model capability, is the binding design variable.
- **Counterbalancing Learning and Strategic Incentives in Allocation Markets** — *Manufacturing & Service Operations Management*, **major revision**. *Contribution*: designs mechanisms that balance information acquisition and strategic incentives in dynamic allocation (e.g., organ/platform markets).
- **Sequential Fundraising and Mutual Insurance** — *JPE Micro (Journal of Political Economy: Microeconomics)*, **revise & resubmit**. *Contribution*: characterizes when sequential fundraising with risk-sharing generates inefficiency and provides implementable design fixes; delivers testable comparative statics.

- **Paul Ivanier Research Grant** (2025): "Adaptive Decentralized Two Regions Perimeter Control", Joint with A. Taitler, 7,500 USD
- **BGU-CHER Grant** (2025): "Market dynamics in organ procurement", Joint with I. Shurtz and N. Gershoni, 12,500 NIS

TEACHING

CURRENT COURSES (BGU)

- Game Theory and Applications in Engineering (Graduate)
- Game Theory and Agentic Design (Undergraduate)
- Estimation and Hypothesis Testing
- Introduction to Decision Theory (undergraduate, mandatory)

TEACHING INTERESTS & COVERAGE

- **Microeconomic Theory (UG/MA/PhD)**: static & dynamic games, information economics, contract theory
- **Market & Mechanism Design (UG/MA elective)**: auctions, matching markets, pricing & screening, platform design
- **Topics in Information & Learning (seminar)**: social learning, experimentation, gatekeeping/screening, allocation under uncertainty
- **Industrial Organization (theory-focused elective)**: market structure, strategic interaction, welfare & policy

PHD TEACHING & MENTORING

- **Seminars/mini-courses**: Information & Mechanism Design; Learning vs. Incentives; Matching & Auctions; Market Design for Platforms & Public Systems
- **Reading group (proposed)**: Market Design, Information, and Microeconomic Theory
- **Methods I can supervise**: game-theoretic modeling, mechanism design, theory-driven experiments (online/field), structural modeling when appropriate

STUDENT SUPERVISION

- **PhD**: Yuval Peled (from 2026); strategic decision-making in common-value markets
- **MSc graduates (2026)**: Bar Hoter, Ohad Kiperman, Oriya Sheetrit, Gal Ram, Yuval Doron
- **Topics**: organ allocation, blockchain systems, reinforcement learning, market design

CURRICULUM CONTRIBUTIONS

- Faculty lead for accelerated MSc programs; founded and led the "Young Researchers (Hetz)" track (2024–2026)

PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP

- **Cluster Co-Chair**, Auctions and Market Design (AMD) Section, **INFORMS Annual Meeting 2026**, San Francisco, CA.
- **Co-Founder & Organizing Committee**, **Mid-Chain 2026** (Conference on Blockchain and Decentralized Economics), BGU.
- **Organizing Committee**, **Data Science, Operations and Analytics** (Mind-IL 2026).
- **Organizing Committee**, **ORSIS 2024 Annual Meeting** (Operations Research Society of Israel).

- **Classification Under Strategic Self-Selection** — ICML 2024; journal extension in preparation, *target: Management Science / Information Systems Research*. *Contribution:* entry-aware classification under endogenous applicant pools; screening rules robust to self-selection.
- **A Graph-Based Mechanism for Assigning Displaced Individuals** (with Y. Doron & A. Kulik) — *working paper in preparation*; targets: *Management Science / Operations Research* (algorithms & simulations), *Economic Theory / GEB* (theory framework), *ACM EC / WINE* (tractable subclasses). *Contribution:* introduces a graph-theoretic resettlement mechanism that partitions a weighted social network into capacity-constrained groups while minimizing severed social ties; proves the cut-minimizing assignment is stable and develops a scalable cycle-based heuristic with strong empirical performance.
- **Placement Games with Threshold-Linear Congestion: A Graphical Potential-Game Approach to Decentralized Assignment** (with S. Horowitz & Y. Doron) — *working paper in preparation*; targets: *Management Science / Operations Research, Games and Economic Behavior*. *Contribution:* models decentralized assignment of agents to localities over a weighted social network as an exact potential game with threshold-linear congestion; establishes existence and convergence of pure Nash equilibria and tight price-of-anarchy bounds for socially-aware resettlement. Extends S. Horowitz's MSc thesis.
- **Experimental Investigation of information aggregation in common value contests** — *working paper in preparation*; targets: *M&SOM / ACM EC*. *Contribution:* We present a model of competition in common value markets, identify equilibrium and verify the model results using an online experiment.
- **Donor-Hospital Concentration and Acceptance Behavior After KAS250 in Kidney Allocation** (with S. Tzidkolov) — *working paper in preparation*; targets: *M&SOM / Health Care Management Science*. *Contribution:* center-level before/after study of the 2021 KAS250 U.S. kidney-allocation reform; measures how donor-hospital concentration (normalized HHI) shifted and links within-center diversification to declines in organ acceptance, using OPTN STAR offer data.
- **Batch Offering Under Uncertainty: A Common-Value Stopping Game Model for Organ Allocation** (with V. Bar Nir & Y. Cornfeld) — *working paper*; presented at ORSIS 2026, Technion; targets: *Theoretical Economics / Management Science*. *Contribution:* We study quitting games in a setting where partially informed agents compete over a single indivisible object. Agent valuations are correlated and the game ends whenever the first agent quits. We prove the existence of a threshold equilibrium and study its properties in the context of efficiency and correctness.
- **Build the Player: Teaching Game Theory by Designing Strategic Agents** — *INFORMS Transactions on Education*, **submitted**. *Contribution:* a pedagogical approach that teaches game theory by having students design and build strategic agents, turning abstract equilibrium concepts into hands-on engineering of the players themselves.
- **Fairness-Constrained Actor-Critic for Multi-Agent Reinforcement Learning** (with O. Sheerit & S. Shperberg) — *AAAI*, **submitted (under review)**. *Contribution:* develops a fairness-constrained actor-critic method for multi-agent reinforcement learning; Koren leads the economic-theory aspects of the work.

SELECTED INVITED TALKS & PRESENTATIONS

UPCOMING INVITED TALKS

- **Bar-Ilan University:** Economics Departmental Seminar, Ramat Gan, Israel. *Invited Speaker*

RECENT INVITED PRESENTATIONS

- **a16z Research Department** (July 2026): "LLM Based Workflow for Theory", Virtual. *Invited Speaker*
- **Bar-Ilan University Economics Seminar** (2026): "From Herding to Batching: Two Models of Common-Value Allocation", Ramat Gan, Israel
- **Ben-Gurion University Economics Seminar** (2026): "From Herding to Batching: Two Models of Common-Value Allocation", Beer-Sheva, Israel
- **University of York** (February 2026): "The Gatekeeper Effect", York, UK. *Invited Speaker*
- **INFORMS Annual Meeting** (October 2025): "Strategic Behavior in Allocation Markets", Atlanta, Georgia. *Invited Speaker*
- **Israeli Game Theory Day**
- **TUM School of Social Sciences and Technology** (2024): "The Gatekeeper Effect", Munich, Germany
- **TAU Operations Management Seminar** (2024): "Strategic Incentives in Deceased Donor Kidney Allocation Markets", Tel Aviv

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

EDITORIAL & REVIEWING (SELECTED)

Ad-hoc reviewer: *Review of Economics and Statistics*; *Review of Economic Studies*; *Journal of Economic Theory*; *Management Science*; *Theoretical Economics*; *Theory and Decision*; *International Journal of Game Theory*; *Artificial Intelligence*; *European Journal of Operational Research*; *Journal of Artificial Intelligence Research*.

PROGRAM COMMITTEES (SELECTED)

- The Web Conference (2026); ITCS (2026); ACM EC (2020, 2024–2025); IJCAI (2024); WINE (2021, 2024); SAGT (2023–2025); NeurIPS (2021).

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

EconLib — Axiom-AI-led community working towards the formalization of economic theory; The Econometric Society; The Game Theory Society; American Economic Association; INFORMS; ACM; Israeli Economics Society; ORSIS (Israeli OR Society).

ADDITIONAL

Prior industry experience: Data Scientist, Taboola (2013–2015).

RECOMMENDERS

Prof. Rann Smorodinsky

Professor, Faculty of Data and Decision Sciences, Technion – Israel Institute of Technology
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Prof. Itai Arieli

Associate Professor, Department of Economics, University of Toronto, Canada
• itai.arieli@utoronto.ca

Prof. Itai Ashlagi

Professor, Management Science and Engineering, Stanford University
• iashlagi@stanford.edu

Prof. Scott Duke Kominers

Professor, Harvard Business School
• skominers@hbs.edu

- **Bar Ilan Game Theory Seminar** (2023): "The Gatekeeper Effect", Ramat Gan, Israel
- **Technion Game Theory Seminar** (2022): "The Gatekeeper Effect", Haifa, Israel
- **Harvard CMSA Big Data Conference** (2021): "The Gatekeeper Effect", Virtual
- **Marketplace Innovation Workshop** (2021): "The Gatekeeper Effect", Virtual

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- **Stony Brook Annual Game Theory Festival** (2025): "Strategic Behavior in Crowdfunding: Insights from a Large-Scale Online Experiment", Stony Brook, NY
- **Mid-Chain 2026** (March 2026): Ben-Gurion University, Beer-Sheva, Israel
- **ORSIS Annual Meeting** (2026, 2025, 2024, 2023)
- **Israeli Industrial Engineering Day, BGU** (2024)
- **Stony Brook International Conference on Game Theory** (2022)
- **Games World Congress of the Game Theory Society** (2021, Virtual)
- **EC Workshop on Machine Learning in Strategic Behavior** (2019)
- **Israeli Chapter of the Game Theory Society** (2019)
- **Lisbon Meetings in Game Theory and Applications** (2017)
- **Games World Congress** (2016, Maastricht; 2020, Virtual)