



September 2020 Newsletter

*This is a monthly newsletter of updates from OpenRG Experts.
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Don Boyd

Don is Co-Director of the State and Local Government Finance Project at Rockefeller College, SUNY Albany, and a consultant, Open Source Policy Center.

- Moderated a Pew Charitable Trusts webinar on revenue forecasting in the age of Covid-19.
 - Prepared a draft report on possible tax base erosion in New York City in the wake of Covid-19.
 - Worked with colleagues at the University of Virginia on a model of potential implications for school districts of cuts in state aid due to current state budget problems.
 - Prepared a draft report for Arnold Ventures on public pension plan risk-sharing policies.
 - Completed an initial version of an R package, microweight, that estimates state weights for a nationally weighted tax microdata file.
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Jason DeBacker

Jason is an Associate Professor of economics at the University of South Carolina and a core maintainer of the open source models [Cost-of-Capital-Calculator](#) and [OG-USA](#), which model business taxes and macroeconomic effects of tax policy, respectively.

- Released [Cost-of-Capital-Calculator](#) v 1.2.0, with updates to the Compute Studio app and compatibility with Tax-Calculator 3.0.0.
- [Cost-of-Capital-Calculator](#) used for an analysis of former Vice President Joe Biden's tax proposals in [an AEI Report](#).

Richard Evans

Richard is Advisory Board Visiting Fellow at the Baker Institute for Public Policy at Rice University, Director of the Open Source Economics Laboratory, and President of OpenRG. He is also a core maintainer of [OG-USA](#), a macroeconomic model for fiscal policy analysis in the U.S.

- Continued collaboration with the Tax Policy Center (TPC) on integrating OG-USA macroeconomic model with TPC microsimulation model

Jonathan Pycroft

Jon is an economic modeler and public finance economist based in Seville, Spain. He has experience building and working with computable general equilibrium models, overlapping generations models, and microsimulation models of tax and pension policies in Europe and Africa.

- Joined a consortium investigating the nature of distributional impact assessment (DIA) of new budgetary measures in EU Member States.

Weifeng Zhong

Weifeng is a Senior Research Fellow at the Mercatus Center at George Mason University. Weifeng is a core maintainer of the open-source [PCI-China](#), [PCI-Crackdown](#), and [PCI-Outbreak](#) models.

- The PCI project was “up in the air again,” appearing on the John Batchelor Show and the [Data Exchange podcast](#) in discussions of its capabilities to predict Chinese behavior.
- PCI-Crackdown was [presented](#) at the American Political Science Association’s annual meeting.
- The PCI project will be presented next month at the [NLP Summit](#), [CyFy](#) conference, and the Association of Chinese Political Studies’ [annual meeting](#).
- Published op-eds “A ‘Nutrition Facts Label’ for the Chinese Government’s Thin Skin” in [Tribune News Service](#) and “The Curse of Engagement and China’s Global Influence” in [InsideSources Syndicate](#).
- Was cited in NPR, Fox Business, Politico, and Adweek, among others, on the issue of TikTok/WeChat bans.