The lack of legal status is the primary challenge for more than five thousand refugees and asylum seekers seeking refuge in Bangkok. A refugee is not a legal category under Thai laws as Thailand is a non-signatory state of the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol. Thailand is concerned that giving a refugee status will become a pull factor attracting new waves of forcibly displaced.

Based on empirical data from ethnographic fieldwork in Bangkok, this talk explores how the city strengthens refugee resilience. Professor Jittiang argues for the city’s three forms of power, including material, discursive, and environmental power, which have bolstered the resilience of refugees by providing them with three essential capacities for city navigation.