UCL DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS
GUILLERMO URIZ-UHARTE

My name is Guillermo Uriz-Uharte and I am a third-year PhD student in Economics at University College of London (UCL). Last year I attended the NBER Digitization Tutorial for the first time and it was a most fruitful experience both professionally and personally. It helped me to reshape and improve my research project thanks to the many comments and suggestions I received. It was also a great opportunity to get a comprehensive view of all the diverse work being done in the field and, looking at it with a fresh view, come up with new research ideas. And last, but not least, it allowed me to discover a community of people sharing my passion for all questions related to digitization, new technologies and their impact on the world. As result of this successful experience, I would love to participate in the next meeting on March 2018.

In the rest of this application letter I will try to convey a bit about my background, research interests and the projects I am currently working on.

BACKGROUNG

I am currently in my third year of PhD working under the supervision of Professor Imran Rasul. Apart from my PhD work, I am also involved in different research projects with Professors Ricard Gil (John Hopkins Carey Business School), Jose Enrique Galdon-Sanchez (Public University of Navarra) and Aureo de Paula (UCL).

Previously, I successfully completed two years of PhD courses at CEMFI and one year at UCL. In addition to the series of core courses I have taken courses on Empirical Industrial Organization, Labor Economics, Advanced Microeconometrics, Structural Econometrics, Banking, Development, Quantitative Macroeconomics, etc. I believe that this rigorous curriculum has prepared me effectively to undertake my research work. Furthermore, having studied a Double Degree in Business and Law has enabled me to have a wide perspective when tackling problems.

RESEARCH INTERESTS & PROJECTS

I am interested in both Applied Theory and Empirical Economics specifically with a focus on the fields of Digitization, Innovation and Organizational Economics. In my first project, I focused on studying the impact of internal firm communication on firm innovation using information about the adoption of corporate intranets during the late 90's. Using a panel of US corporations from 1988 to 2002 I find

evidence of an increase in firm patenting caused by intranet adoption. I am currently extending this work to study the effects of intranet adoption on firm productivity. Better internal firm communication derived from intranet adoption can result in firm productivity gains through two channels. First, it can directly increase firm productivity (e.g., through a better coordination of all different tasks conducted by the firm). Second, it can also affect firm productivity indirectly by improving firm innovation capacity. The purpose of my work is to identify and quantify this double channel.

I am also working in a project with Professors Ricard Gil and Jose Enrique Galdon-Sanchez. We are using a proprietary database with information about the adoption by Spanish retail establishments of a new technology providing Big Data information about the performance of the respective establishment and its closest competitors. We want to start by analysing the effect of the new technology on different measures of firm performance and the channels for these effects. Given that this project is still at an early stage, I am most interested in getting feedback about it during the Digitization meeting.

Finally, I am also starting to develop an interest on Network Econometrics. I am working with Professor Aureo de Paula in a project using data on networks of Ecuadorian firms. I am discovering that this young and exciting field has many applications to Digitization Economics.

INTEREST IN THE COURSE

Given my research interests and the current state of my PhD work I think the Tutorials on Digitization and the NBER winter meeting are the perfect opportunity for me. First, it will give me a great chance to discuss my current work with some of the most knowledgeable people in the field. Furthermore, it will allow me to decide in which specific topic to specialize and do my job market paper. All in all, I believe it would be an honour to have the chance to attend again this prestigious event. I thank you in advance for considering my application.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any further information.

Yours sincerely

UCL Department of Economics
University College London
Drayton House
30 Gordon Street
London WC1E 6BT
United Kingdom
Email: guillermo.uriz-uharte.15@ucl.ac.uk