NBER Entrepreneurship Research Boot Camp 2023 - Cover Letter

Andrew Funck

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Dear application committee,

I am writing this letter to support my application to the NBER Entrepreneurship Research Boot Camp 2023.

I am currently a second year PhD student in Economics at the Department of Economics and Decisions Sciences at HEC Paris. Before starting my doctorate, I worked as scientific expert at the European Commission and then as research assistant for professors Guido Tabellini (Bocconi University) and Marco Tabellini (Harvard Business School), and as a teaching assistant at Polytechnic University of Milan. I hold a bachelor's and master's degree in Economics from Bocconi University.

I have personalized my PhD curriculum with Econometrics, Microeconomics and Decision Theory courses, in order to study psychological determinants of economic behavior through the lens of rational decision making with a solid background in both theoretical and empirical methods. I am interested in particular in applications in the field of Entrepreneurhsip, Education and Labor.

This workshop is an excellent fit with my research interests. I am confident studying topics at the frontier of research in Entrepreneurship would help me produce new research ideas and improve my existing research projects, while interacting with fellow PhD students and established researchers with interests similar to mine would allow me to have a broader and more critical perspective on my own and other researchers' work, and potentially to build professional relationship for the development of joint projects.

Attached you can find my resume and a list of completed coursework (classes for the Fall 2022 semester have no grade specified as associated exams have not been graded yet) for your review. My current PhD advisor and recommendation letter writer is Prof. Thomas Astebro. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Andrew Funck

Andrew Henry Aurelio Funck
+ 39.338.3844163 (IT)
andrew.funck@hec.edu

Education

- **HEC Paris 2021 –**
  PhD Candidate in Economics

- **Department of Economics, Bocconi University, 2019**
  M.Sc. in Economics and Social Sciences; Graduation: 110/110
  Thesis: *«Trumpism». Understanding, measuring and evaluating American political rhetoric in Congress with Natural Language Processing*

- **Department of Economics, Bocconi University, 2016**
  B.Sc. in Economics and Social Sciences; Graduation: 110/110 cum laude
  Thesis: *Spread and politics. The impact of Italian government communication on sovereign rate, an empirical analysis.*

- **Department of Economics, NYU College of Arts and Sciences, 2016**
  Spring 2016, Exchange Program (GPA 3.9).
  Courses: International Economics, Labour Economics, Political Economy

Publications

- Katay, G., Funck, A., Grigoletto, M., Vollbracht, I. 2020. Quantitative analysis of the costs and benefits of delegating certain tasks regarding the implementation of Union Programmes 2021-2027 to the Executive Agencies. JRC Technical Report. (restricted access)

Work in progress

- Altmejd, A., Astebro, T., Funck, A., Mensman, M., Mohammadi, A., Wennberg, K. . 2022. The impact of role models on gender stereotypical beliefs about educational choices. AEA RCT Registry. November 18. https://doi.org/10.1257/rct.10411-1.0
- Astebro, T., Crepon, B., Funck, A., Mensman, M., Shulte, M. Employment Creation through Psychological-oriented Entrepreneurship Training.

Teaching

- **HEC Paris, France, 09/2022 – 12/2022**
  Lecturer – Microeconomics (Grand Ecole)

- **Polytechnic University of Milan, 09/2020 – 06/2021**
  Teaching Assistant – International Economics (Management Engineering MSc)
  Teaching Assistant – Microeconomics (Management Engineering BA)

Grants

- HEC Paris Foundation Scholarship for Excellence (2021–)
- HEC PhD Special Fellowship "The economic Impact of Entrepreneurship Training" (2021-)

Referees

- **Prof. Thomas Astebro**
  Department of Economics
  HEC Paris
  astebro@hec.fr

- **Prof. Marco Tabellini**
  Government and International Economy Unit,
  Harvard Business School
  mtabellini@hbs.edu

Work Experience

- **Harvard Business School, 09/2019 – 12/2022**
  Research assistant. Supervisor: M. Tabellini.
  Research projects: "Immigration Group size and Integration", "Political Coalitions and Social Hierarchy: Evidence from the First Great Migration" ,"Faith and Assimilation: Italian Immigrants in the US".
  Main Task: data pre-processing, regression analysis, results visualization.

- **Bocconi University, 09/2019 – 12/2022**
  Research assistant. Supervisor: G. Tabellini.
  Research projects: "Online Political Debates"
  Main Task: Big Data pre-processing, sparse data regression analysis, results visualization, Natural Language Processing Algorithms estimation.

- **European Commission, Joint Research Center, 01/2019 – 09/2019**
  Trainee, scientific expert. Supervisors: Gábor Kátay.
  Research projects: "Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA) for identification of optimal EU funds management externalization level"
  Main Task: identification of relevant output and productivity measures; data collection, merge, pre-processing, cleaning; estimation model's specification; exploratory statistical analysis and visualization of preliminary results; microsimulation model definition for evaluation of competitive externalization scenarios.

Conference Talks

- **1st Workshop on Field Experiments in Economics and Business, Heilbron, Germany, 2022**
  Title: Gender stereotypes and educational choices. The impact of role models in Sweeden.

Languages

- English (proficient), French (intermediate), Italian (native)

Computing

- Python, R, STATA

Grade Report

GPA : 3.93 / 4

Jouy-en-Josas, 02/09/2023



75388 - FUNCK, Andrew Henry Aurelio

(Average : .00 / 4)

Subject	Course	Offer	Label	Cc	Gr	Re	Ce
2022-2023DOC							
Language Courses							
	DOTCCFR116	2223	FRENCH LEVEL 2 **	0	X		0
			Number of courses : 1 Sub total ECTS	0			0
Methodology							
	DOCTMET029	2223	INTRODUCTION TO THE PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE	2	X		0
			Number of courses : 1 Sub total ECTS	2			0
Other							
	DOCCTHE016	2223	MASTER OF RESEARCH THESIS DEFENSE	30	X		0
	DOCCTHE017	2223	RESEARCH SEMINARS **	5	X		0
			Number of courses : 2 Sub total ECTS	35			0
Thematics							
	DOCTTHE008	2223	PUBLISHING WORKSHOP **	1	X		0
	DOCTTHE009	2223	WRITING WORKSHOP: CRAFTING ACADEMIC PAPERS **	3	X		0
	DOCTTHE010	2223	HOW TO SURVIVE IN ACADEMIA WITHOUT GIVING UP ON YOUR SIENTIFIC DREAMS	1	X		0
			Number of courses : 3 Sub total ECTS	5			0
			Period Average : 0 / 4 **Credits earned ECTS**	42			0
2022-2023GE							
Institut Polytechnique de Paris							
	IPM2QEFSME0	2223-A1-EN02	Statistical Methods of Econometrics	3	X		0
	IPM2QEFAEP0	2223-S1-EN02	Advanced Econometrics: Panel Data and Duration Models	4	X		0
	IPM2QEFAMR0	2223-S1-EN02	Advanced Macroeconomics: Recursive methods	4	X		0
			Number of courses : 3 Sub total ECTS	11			0
			Period Average : 0 / 4 **Credits earned ECTS**	11			0
			Total credits 53				
			Total credits earned 0				

A: Excellent, B: Very good, C: Good, D: Satisfactory, E: Adequate, Fx: Unsatisfactory, F: Very Unsatisfactory --- Gr: Grade, Re: Re-take grade, Cc: Course Credit, Ce: Credits earned

Waiting for grade or grade not approved ** : Grade not included in average

Grade Report

GPA : 3.93 / 4

Jouy-en-Josas, 02/09/2023



75388 - FUNCK, Andrew Henry Aurelio

Research Master in Management Science

(Average : 3.93 / 4)

Subject	Course	Offer	Label	Cc	Gr	Re	Ce
2021-2022DOC							
Core Courses							
	DOCTC00001	2122	MICROECONOMICS	5	A		5
			Number of courses : 1 Sub total ECTS	5			5
Language Courses							
	DOTCCFR116	2122	FRENCH LEVEL 2 **	0	P		0
			Number of courses : 1 Sub total ECTS	0			0
Methodology							
	DOCTMET027	2122	RESEARCH METHODS	5	B		5
			Number of courses : 1 Sub total ECTS	5			5
Other							
	DOCCTHE014	2122	RESEARCH TUTORIAL **	5	P		5
	DOCCTHE015	2122	SUMMER PAPER	10	A		10
			Number of courses : 2 Sub total ECTS	15			15
Specialization							
	DOSPDS005	2122	ADVANCED DECISION SCIENCES	4	A		4
	DOSPDS009	2122	DECISION MAKING UNDER UNCERTAINTY	4	A		4
	DOSPDS015	2122	ENTREPRENEURSHIP	3	A		3
	DOSPDS019	2122	RANDOMIZED METHODS AND POLICY EVALUATION	4	A		4
	DOSPDS129	2122	MACHINE LEARNING FOR ECONOMETRICS	4	B		4
			Number of courses : 5 Sub total ECTS	19			19
Thematics							
	DOCTTHE001	2122	REVERSE-ENGINEERING AN ACADEMIC CAREER **	0,5	P		0,5
	DOCTTHE007	2122	LIBRARY LITERACY **	0,5	P		0,5
			Number of courses : 2 Sub total ECTS	1			1
			Period Average : 3.88 / 4 **Credits earned ECTS**	45			45
2021-2022GE							
Quantitative Economics Major							
	GEM2QEFECO	2122-S1-EN01	Advanced Econometrics I	6	A		6
	GEM2QEFECO	2122-S2-EN01	Advanced Econometrics II	8	A		8
	GEM2QEFMIC0	2122-S2-EN01	Microeconomics II	8	A		8
			Number of courses : 3 Sub total ECTS	22			22
			Period Average : 4 / 4 **Credits earned ECTS**	22			22
			Total credits 67				
			Total credits earned 67				

A: Excellent, B: Very good, C: Good, D: Satisfactory, E: Adequate, Fx: Unsatisfactory, F: Very Unsatisfactory --- Gr: Grade, Re: Re-take grade, Cc: Course Credit, Ce: Credits earned

Waiting for grade or grade not approved ** : Grade not included in average

NBER Entrepreneurship Research Boot Camp 2023 - Application Essay

Andrew Funck *

February 13, 2023

Dear application committe,

I am a second year PhD student in Economics at HEC Paris. I am interested in investigating empirically the psychological determinants of economic behavior, in particular in the context of entrepreneurship and education, and how they are shaped by perceptions and habits. I am interested in causal evaluation as well, in order to translate robust empirical evidence into reliable policy reccomendations. I am currently working on three research projects tackling my research interests in different contexts.

There is currently a large interest in economics for soft skills and personality traits. In the field of entrepreneurship, great attention has been given to the relevance of adopting an entrepreneurial mindset for business success ((Frese and Gielnik, 2014)). However, little is known about whether it is possible to train the relevant mindset characteristics, and how. Some first attempts to answer this question give promising results ((Burnette et al., 2020; Campos et al., 2017)). Building on the seminal work of (Campos et al., 2017) my first project tests the idea that potential prospective entrepreneurs can be trained to develop an entrepreneurial mindset and investigates whether eventual induced changes in entrepreneurial skills and intentions have an impact on individuals' entrepreneurial behavior, labor market outcomes and well-being. In order to investigate this questions, together with my co-authors I am running an RCT evaluating the effects of two online courses designed by the research team teaching negotiation skills and personal initiative to jobseekers enrolled in the French public employment service. We are going to follow experiment participants for 18 months, measuring participants outcome variables (skills acquisition, entrepreneurial mindset, career intentions, job-search, status in the labor market, business creation) with both survey and administrative data. We plan to launch the experimentation at scale in fall 2023.

A growing number of research studies in economics, psychology and educational science indicate that important educational choices are affected by irrelevant or erroneous perceptions. A well known problem in this respect is that very few women choose to study science and engineering, even if career prospects are attractive and offer a high

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income (Hill et al., 2010).An emerging literature in economics seems to indicate that an important reason for this gap is gender stereotypical beliefs (Porter and Serra, 2020). Role models can affect individuals' choices by, among other things, changing their stereotypical beliefs (Morgenroth et al., 2015). However, little is known about the empirical relevance of this channel. In order to fill this gap, in my second project together with my co-authors I have designed a randomized field experiment to investigate how informational contents and role models tackling different types of gender stereotypes around work in STEM affect students' perceptions of different professions, their educational preferences and their de facto educational choices. We study this phenomenon in Sweden, a country often at the top of gender equality rankings but where gender segregation across occupations and education fields is still among the highest in the world (Hustad et al., 2020). The experiment has been pre-registered on the AEA RCT Registry, it has started in schools of the city of Malmo in autumn 2022, it is planned to continue for 3 years and then to be scaled up at the national level.

Digital technologies consumption occupy a large and growing share of people's time around the world. A growing literature in neuroscience and psychology has accumulated evidence on how the Internet environment has profoundly transformed individuals thoughts and behaviors. (Loh and Kanai, 2016) for example reports that "digital natives" (i) engage in "shallow" information processing behaviors characterized by rapid attention shifting and reduced deliberations; (ii) are more prone to multitasking behaviors linked to increased distractibility and poor executive control abilities; (iii) exhibit higher prevalence of Internet-related addictive behaviors reflecting altered reward-processing and self-control mechanisms. Based on this evidence, in my first solo project, still at a very preliminary stage, I would like to empirically investigate what consequences this evolutions have on the development of personal initiative, resilience and growth mindset, and, in turn, on human capital accumulation and labor productivity.

Attending the entrepreneurship boot camp would be a great learning experience. It would give me the opportunity to dig deep in the topics at the frontier of research in entrepreneurship, lead by global experts in the field, and provide me with ideas and insights for my own research agenda. It would allow me to learn new contributions in the field, both empirical and theoretical, and discuss them with brilliant researchers with research interests close to mine. I am looking forward to both receiving feedback on my on-going research projects and getting input for preliminary and new ones, from established researchers and fellow PhD students. By attending the bootcamp, I hope I could generate new research projects, potentially together with the other participants, and expand my research agenda with the insights coming from the frontier of research in entrepreneurship.

References

Jeni L Burnette, Jeffrey M Pollack, Rachel B Forsyth, Crystal L Hoyt, Alexandra D Babij, Fanice N Thomas, and Anthony E Coy. A growth mindset intervention: Enhancing stu-

dents' entrepreneurial self-efficacy and career development. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 44(5):878–908, 2020.

Francisco Campos, Michael Frese, Markus Goldstein, Leonardo Iacovone, Hillary C Johnson, David McKenzie, and Mona Mensmann. Teaching personal initiative beats traditional training in boosting small business in west africa. *Science*, 357(6357):1287–1290, 2017.

Michael Frese and Michael M Gielnik. The psychology of entrepreneurship. *Annu. Rev. Organ. Psychol. Organ. Behav.*, 1(1):413–438, 2014.

Catherine Hill, Christianne Corbett, and Andresse St Rose. *Why so few? Women in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.* ERIC, 2010.

Ingvill Bagøien Hustad, Johan Bandholtz, Agneta Herlitz, and Serhiy Dekhtyar. Occupational attributes and occupational gender segregation in sweden: Does it change over time? *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11:554, 2020.

Kep Kee Loh and Ryota Kanai. How has the internet reshaped human cognition? *The Neuroscientist*, 22(5):506–520, 2016.

Thekla Morgenroth, Michelle K Ryan, and Kim Peters. The motivational theory of role modeling: How role models influence role aspirants' goals. *Review of general psychology*, 19(4):465–483, 2015.

Catherine Porter and Danila Serra. Gender differences in the choice of major: The importance of female role models. *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, 12(3):226–254, 2020.

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Paris
February 10, 2023

Re: Recommendation letter for Andrew Funck to the 2023 NBER bootcamp

To the admissions committee for the bootcamp

Dear Sir/Madam,

It is with pleasure that I would like to **recommend Andrew Funck**'s admittance to the **2023 NBER bootcamp**.

In this recommendation letter I would like to comment on **Andrew Funck**'s intellectual potential, commitment, interest, maturity, and creativity. I would also like to describe his performance and accomplishments in two research projects that he has participated with me in.

Andrew has provided his grades in the Economics PhD program at HEC, with 6 A's and two B's. His grades from Bocconi are equally impressive, straight A's.

Let me explain my association with Andrew. I am conducting a two randomized controlled experiments at scale in Sweden and France. In the Swedish project we are asking whether one can impact young people's educational choices by having them interact with a role model for one hour.

Andrew has performed the power analysis, and described and submitted the experimental design to the AEAs pre-registry. He has also been helpful in designing the online questionnaire and the randomization machine.

In the French project we are interested in seeing whether taking an online course to build intra- and inter-personal skills will help job seekers to either get a job or to start a business. Andrew is again responsible for randomization, power calculations, and pre-registration, but also database construction, and IRB application. He here also functions as a bridge between our partner, the Public Employment Service, the funding agencies, data providers, and the research team. The project is very ambitious in merging job seeker data from the PES, data on course performance on the learning platform, and data on job seeking outcomes from two public sources, describing either employment (the LEED) or entrepreneurship (a new firm creation registry) and Andrew is taking a lead on this coordination.

As you may understand, Andrew is a true academic scholar with a deep interest in entrepreneurship.

Andrew is also interested in digitization and his solo paper for his second year is looking at how the abundance of internet backbone access to the home is affecting the attention span of youth, and how that in extension can have potentially serious effects on their future careers and earnings capabilities.

My assessment is that Andrew is a very suitable candidate for the **2023 NBER bootcamp**. He has strong social skills, but he also pays great attention to detail. He manages his time well, a very important skill for Ph.D. studies. He is intellectually curious, and a good listener. He is a very mature person who is excellent at handling people we must convince of doing various things for us in the RCTs.

Based on what I have observed I would strongly recommend N.B.E.R. to admit Andrew.

Short brief for those who do not know me. I am Chaired Professor of Entrepreneurship at the Department of Economics at HEC Paris. I received my Ph.D. from Carnegie Mellon University almost 30 years ago, and have worked at University of Waterloo, University of Toronto, KU Leuven, and HEC Paris. My publication count currently stands at 44 peer reviewed articles. My current work focuses on conducting massive RCTs in the area of entrepreneurship. I am an active participant at NBERs entrepreneurship and innovation workshops. You can find a brief description of me here.

Sincerely,



Thomas Åstebro
L'Oreal Professor of Entrepreneurship
Department of Economics and Decision Sciences
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