Application to the NBER Innovation Research Boot Camp 2025

Manfredi Aliberti, Rome Economics Doctorate (RED)

Contact Information:

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Recommendation Letter Writer:

Professor Fabiano Schivardi
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I am a fourth-year Ph.D. student at the Rome Economics Doctorate (RED), an Economics Ph.D. program jointly run by the Einaudi Institute for Economics and Finance (EIEF), LUISS University, and the University of Rome Tor Vergata. Below, I present my CV, including a list of all completed Ph.D. courses and an essay describing my research and the reasons for applying to the NBER Innovation Research Boot Camp.

Manfredi Aliberti

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Education

Tor Vergata University of Rome, Rome Economics Doctorate — **Rome, Italy**
PhD in *Economics & Finance* jointly run by Tor Vergata University of Rome, EIEF, and LUISS — 09/2021 - present
Supervisor: Fabiano Schivardi, Co-Supervisor: Barbara Biasi

University of California, Los Angeles — **Los Angeles, United States**
Visiting Graduate Researcher at the *Department of Economics* — 09/2024 - 12/2024
Host: Michela Giorcelli

University of Cambridge, Clare College — **Cambridge, United Kingdom**
Master of Philosophy in *Economic Research* — 09/2019 - 09/2020

Sapienza University of Rome — **Rome, Italy**
Bachelor's Degree in *International Economic Relations (L-33, Economic Sciences)* — 09/2017 - 07/2019

Sapienza University of Rome — **Rome, Italy**
Enrolled in the Bachelor's Degree in *Philosophy (L-18)* — 09/2016 - 07/2017

Work Experience

EIEF, Einaudi Institute for Economics & Finance — **Rome, Italy**
Research Assistant for *Fabiano Schivardi* — 01/2022 - present
Research Assistant for *Liangjie Wu* and *Claudio Michelacci* — 07/2021 - 11/2021

LUISS, Libera Università degli Studi Sociali Guido Carli — **Rome, Italy**
Teaching Assistant in *Micoreconomics* for *Matteo Escudé* and *Giulia Tura* — 02/2025 - 06/2025
Teaching Assistant in *Micoreconomics* for *Matteo Escudé* and *Emanuele Tarantino* — 02/2024 - 06/2024

UZH, University of Zurich — **Zurich, Switzerland**
Research Assistant for *Kai Gehring* — 09/2020 - 06/2021

Research

Working Papers

Workplace Training Unpacked: Labor Market Competition and Investment in General Skills (with Mattia Albanese)

Work in Progress

The Effects of PhD Programs on Innovation: Evidence from the 1980 University Reform in Italy

Presentations

2024: Economic History Association Meeting, UCLA Economic History Proseminar
2023: Rome PhD in Economics & Finance Conference (Tor Vergata), WICK#11 PhD Workshop (Collegio Carlo Alberto)
2022: Rome PhD in Economics & Finance Conference (LUISS)

Skills & Interests

Programming: Stata (proficient), Python (proficient), R (basic), Matlab (basic)
Languages: Italian (native), English (fluent), Spanish (basic), German (basic)
Interests: history, philosophy, rowing, rugby, rock music

Completed PhD Courses

Rome Economics Doctorate

- Advanced Microeconometrics	Lecturer: *Dmitry Arkhangelsky*
- Applied Macroeconomics	Lecturer: *Giorgio Primiceri*
- Dynamic Optimization	Lecturer: *Fausto Gozzi*
- Econometrics of Networks	Lecturer: *Stephane Bonhomme*
- Incentive Theory	Lecturer: *Andrea Kamal Attar*
- Industrial Organization	Lecturer: *Emanuele Tarantino*
- Labor Economics	Lecturer: *Liangjie Wu*
- Monetary Theory	Lecturer: *Fabrizio Mattesini*
- Optimal Policy	Lecturer: *Facundo Piguillem*
- Public Economics	Lecturer: *Matteo Paradisi*
- Statistical Learning	Lecturer: *Franco Peracchi*
- Text Analysis for Economics	Lecturer: *Ruben Durante*

Completed Graduate Summer Schools

Barcelona School of Economics - Summer School

- Difference-in-Differences with Panel Data	Lecturer: *Jeffrey Marc Woolridge*
- Dynamic and Non-linear Panel Data Models	Lecturer: *Sergi Jiménez-Martín*

Research Essay

Innovation is the primary driver of long-term economic growth and a key force shaping societal change. My research focuses on the determinants of innovation, with a particular emphasis on public policies in education, and the differential impact of technology adoption on labor markets. Given my research interests and discussions with past participants like Gaia Dossi and Bernardo Ribeiro, I see the NBER Innovation Research Boot Camp as an invaluable opportunity to be exposed to new ideas and relevant research questions while becoming part of a community that can significantly benefit and guide my future research.

My doctoral dissertation exploits the introduction of PhD programs in the Italian higher education system in 1983 to estimate their causal effect on innovation at both the aggregate and individual levels. While descriptive evidence suggests that PhD graduates are the most innovative segment of the population, the absence of comprehensive data and clear identification strategies has so far prevented causal analysis of their role in fostering patenting activity. To address this gap, I leverage the allocation mechanism that determined the establishment of PhD programs across universities to identify a suitable control group. My findings indicate that PhD programs positively influence local innovation. Furthermore, using a text-based measure of technological exposure to local PhD programs, I show that the increase in patenting activity is most pronounced in technologies closely related to the newly established PhD programs. To uncover the mechanisms driving these aggregate effects, I use individual-level data on PhD admission exams linked to patent production and graduation records to run a fuzzy regression discontinuity design. My estimates suggest that while earning a PhD increases individual patent production, PhD graduates account for less than half of the overall rise in patenting activity.

In an ongoing project with my supervisor, Fabiano Schivardi, we explore the heterogeneous effects of firms' technology adoption on workers' careers in Italy. This study highlights how innovation creates both winners and losers, while assessing its role in enhancing productivity and employment opportunities for young workers in Southern Europe. We analyze data on firms' adoption of eight different technologies, linked with matched employer-employee records, to evaluate the impact of technological adoption on firm performance and workforce composition. Our findings reveal that technology adoption consistently boosts firms' production and productivity across a wide range of technologies. However, its benefits are not evenly distributed: hiring and wage increases are primarily concentrated among young graduates.

As I near the completion of my PhD, I aim to further investigate the role of public policies in fostering and shaping innovation. With governments worldwide increasing their R&D investments, it is crucial to understand how different policy interventions affect the market for ideas and influence the direction of innovation. Additionally, I am interested in studying firms' decision-making processes regarding technology adoption. My current research on its effects has led me to explore the factors that drive firms to adopt new technologies, with a particular focus on supplier-firm networks and their role in shaping these decisions.

As I am eager to deepen my knowledge of the fundamental questions and issues in the economics of innovation, I am looking forward to participating in the NBER Innovation Research Boot Camp. This experience would not only let me improve my current projects but also explore new avenues for future research by exposing me to the latest developments at the research frontier of our field.

Prof. Fabiano Schivardi, Ph.D., Stanford University
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Rome, February 4, 2025

Re: Recommendation letter for Manfredi Aliberti's application to the NBER Innovation Boot Camp

It is with great pleasure that I write to recommend Mr. Manfredi Aliberti for the NBER Innovation Boot Camp. I am Manfredi's PhD dissertation advisor. Manfredi is an exceptionally promising student of innovation. He is enrolled in a new PhD program started in Rome three years ago jointly by Luiss University, Tor Vergata University and (EIEF). The aim is to join forces of scholars active in Rome to set up a competitive PhD program. Students are closely followed and receive a lot of feedback on their work. There is no track record of placement yet. However, Manfredi is the best student of his class, and, based on the status of his dissertation project, we predict that he will do well on the academic job market.

Manfredi's dissertation, titled *The Effect of PhD Programs on Innovation: Evidence from the 1980 University Reform in Italy*, is centered around the 1980 Italian university reform that introduced PhD programs for the first time. This historical setting allows him to explore the causal effects of PhD programs on innovation and other economic outcomes at the local level. The project is already well develop and ready to be presented at the Boot Camp.

Manfredi is a promising applied economist, with a talent for finding new data. He employs the most up-to-date econometric technics in a rapidly evolving field. He is very enthusiastic, eager to learn, and always ready to talk to people. He would both benefit a lot and contribute substantially to the NBER Innovation Boot Camp. I support his application enthusiastically.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at fschivardi@luiss.it or +39 340 4120546 if you require further information.

Sincerely,

Fabiano Schivardi
Professor of Economics
Luiss University and EIEF