Application for the NBER Innovation Research Boot Camp 2025

Cover Letter

Name	Pietro Bonaccorsi
Affiliation	Fourth-year PhD Candidate in Strategic Management at the University of Toronto – Rotman School of Management Committee: Bill McEvily (Chair), Alberto Galasso, Sarah Kaplan
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Pietro Bonaccorsi

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105 St George St, M5S 3E6
Rotman School of Management
Toronto, ON

Research Interests

Creativity, Innovation, Generation and Evaluation of Novelty, Networks and Culture.

Education

Sep 2021 -*present* PhD Student in Strategic Management
Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto, Toronto
Committee: Bill McEvily (Chair), Alberto Galasso, Sarah Kaplan

Oct 2014 – Oct 2019 Advanced Diploma in Economics & Management, *100/100*
Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies, Pisa

Oct 2017 – Oct 2019 MS in Economics, *110/110 cum Laude and Distinction*
Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies and University of Pisa, Pisa

Feb 2019 – Apr 2019 Visiting Student at the University of Oxford
Institute for New Economic Thinking at the Oxford Martin School, Oxford

Oct 2014 – Jul 2017 BS in Economics & Management, *110/110 cum Laude*
University of Pisa, Pisa

Mar 2017 – Jun 2017 Visiting Exchange Student at the École Normale Supérieure de la rue d'Ulm
Department of Economics - École Normale Supérieure, Paris

Works In Progress

Pietro Bonaccorsi. "Who can Afford to be Different? Social Structural Contingencies of Unconventionality Premia in the Feature Film Industry" [*Data analysis stage*]

- Presented at AOM Annual Meeting 2024 (Chicago)

Pietro Bonaccorsi. "Amphibious Social Identities and Novelty Evaluation in Screenwriting" [*Data collection stage*]

Research Experience

Oct 2024 – Nov 2024 Research Assistant to Alberto Galasso and El Hadi Caoui
Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto

Oct 2022 – Jun 2023 Research Assistant to Bill McEvily and Tiziana Casciaro
Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto

Oct 2019 – Aug 2021 Research Assistant to Giovanni Dosi and Andrea Mina
Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies, Pisa

Dec 2019 – Aug 2021 Research Intern (Dec '19 - Aug '20); Research Consultant (Oct '20 - Aug '21)
Westpole SpA, Rome

Nov 2018 – Jan 2019 Research Trainee
ISTAT (Italian National Institute of Statistics), Rome

Teaching Experience

Rotman School of Management (MBA)
Teaching Assistant to Bill McEvily: *Strategic Networks* (Fall 2023, Winter 2024; Winter 2025); *Strategic Change and Implementation* (Summer 2023, Summer 2024).

Teaching Assistant to Alberto Galasso: *Technology Strategy* (Winter 2025)

Rotman School of Management (Undegraduate)
Teaching Assistant to András Tilcsik: *Catastrophic Failure in Organizations* (Fall 2024)
Teaching Assistant to Alberto Galasso: *Technology Strategy* (Winter 2025)

University of Toronto (Master of Management of Innovation)
Teaching Assistant to Nicola Lacetera: *Technology Strategy and Policy* (Winter 2023, Winter 2024)

Further Education

Aug 2024 **Summer Institute in Computational Social Sciences (SICSS)**
Northwestern University, Evanston.

Jun 2024 **XVI Medici Summer School**
Bologna Business School, Bologna.

Jul 2019 **BGSE Summer School in Microeconometrics**
Barcelona Graduate School of Economics, Barcelona.

Jun 2018 **Oxford Summer School in Economic Networks**
Oxford Mathematical Institute and Oxford Martin School, University of Oxford.

Sep 2017 **Summer School of Mathematics for Economics and Social Sciences "Data Mining and Machine Learning for Business and Organizations"**
Scuola Normale Superiore - Ennio De Giorgi Research Centre, S. Miniato, Italy.

Scholarships, Grants, and Awards

Oct 2024 Rotman Data Matching Grant, $ 4000
Rotman School of Management, Toronto

Jul 2024 TD MDAL Research Grant, $ 5000
TD Management and Data Analytics Lab - Rotman School of Management, Toronto

2021-2026 Doctoral Scholarship
University of Toronto - Rotman School of Management, Toronto

Jun 2021 Ermenegildo Zegna Founder's Scholarship, € 5000
Ermenegildo Zegna Group

2014 - 2019 Honors Students' (*Allievo ordinario*) Five-year full tuition scholarship
Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies, Pisa

Nov 2018 Rhodes Global Scholarship Finalist
Rhodes Trust, Oxford

Feb 2018 Premio Samuel Picchi 2018 (*Samuel Picchi Award 2018*), € 1000
Sant'Anna School Alumni Association, Pisa

Oct 2014 Premio Tramontano 2014 (*Tramontano Prize 2014*), € 1000
Accademia della Crusca, Firenze

Professional Service

Refereeing:
Academy of Management Annual Meeting (2024, 2025)
Conference Organization:
AOM Symposium "New Perspectives on the Interplay of Networks and Culture" (2024)

Leadership, Volunteering & Other Activities

2024-2025: House & Student Spaces Coordinator (Rotman PhD Students' Association) • 2023-2024: Co-President (Rotman PhD Students' Association) • 2024: Volunteer (Winter Street Patrol - St. Patrick's Church, Toronto) • 2021: Writer and Consultant (Associazione M&M - Idee per un Paese migliore) • 2020: Contributor (Agenda Magazine | Treccani) • 2017-18: Representative of the Economics and Management Class (Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies, Pisa) • 2017-18: Representative of the Students of the M.Sc. in Economics (Sant'Anna School and University of Pisa, Pisa) • 2017-19: Auditor of the Sant'Anna School Students' Association • 2015-16: Member of the Governing Board of the Sant'Anna School Students' Association • 2016-2019: Volunteer and coordinator of "Laboratorio Fuori Classe", after-school educational support for children coming from disadvantaged backgrounds • 2014-2016: Tutor ("Social Mobility and Merit" Project, Italian Ministry of Education and Sant'Anna School)

Languages

Italian:	Mothertongue	French:	Upper Intermediate Feb. 2018: B2 DELF Certificate of French
English:	Proficient Nov. 2019:TOEFL iBT Certificate - 117/120	Spanish:	Basic

Computer Skills

R, Stata®, Python, LaTeX, Gephi, MATLAB® (basic), KNIME (basic)

Updated February 2025

PhD Coursework

First year

- Microeconomic Theory I/II
- Econometrics I
- Strategy and Economics
- Research Methods in Strategic Management
- Strategy and Economic Sociology
- Strategy and Corporate Social Responsibility
- Network Analysis II
- Reading Course: Structural and Cultural/Cognitive Perspectives on Creativity

Second year

- Models and Methods for Causal Inference in the Social Sciences
- Computer-Assisted Textual Analysis
- Strategy and Organizational Theory
- Strategy and Personnel Economics
- Sociology of Culture

Essay

My current research interests center on the social underpinnings of creativity and innovation – with particular attention to the generation and evaluation of novel ideas in creative industries. I am broadly interested in understanding (1) how new ideas emerge, both in terms of their underlying sources and the processes that drive their development; (2) how social audiences and market participants assess, evaluate and mobilize support and resources for them; and (3) how these evaluation processes shape the strategic choices of and the competition among the individuals and firms whose creative products incorporate those ideas. The empirical contexts I am most interested in are those in which creativity is especially salient and in which product quality is sometimes difficult to objectively assess (e.g., creative and cultural industries, academic and entrepreneurial contexts).

Theoretically, I aim at integrating perspectives from the economic, sociological, and managerial literatures on innovation to examine how social structural factors – such as the structure of the networks in which creative agents are embedded – interact with product-level features, such as knowledge recombination and "optimal" differentiation, in influencing the performance outcomes of creative products. Empirically, I look for settings where I can (1) analyze creative products' features alongside the network structures surrounding the individuals and firms producing them, or (2) track the creative process longitudinally, from ideation and elaboration to commercialization and diffusion.

In my current research projects, I am focusing on understanding the conditions under which novices and outsiders can successfully advance their ideas in the context of the feature film industry. In one project, I investigate how film awards' institutions evaluate instances of unconventionality in films' storytelling (operationalized using data on narrative "tropes" from the TvTropes wiki website). In another project (currently in the data collection stage), I examine the market for original screenplays in Hollywood, with the goal of understanding what innovations emerging screenwriters introduce in the field, and what drives the heterogeneity in the successful commercialization of their screenplays.

I would be thrilled to participate in the NBER Innovation Research Boot Camp for two main reasons.

First, many of the ideas I draw on for my dissertation directly or indirectly connect to research from the economics of innovation or adjacent subfields. These include contributions that look at (1) how the structure of social interactions can affect innovation (e.g. Bramoullé et al., 2014; Catalini, 2018; Lane et al., 2021; Borowiecki, 2022), (2) how socioeconomic and sociocultural factors influence the rate and direction of, and the participation in, innovation (e.g. Bell et al., 2019; Koning et al., 2021; Einiö et al., 2022; Abramitzky et al., 2024; Truffa & Wong, 2024), (3) how competition affects creative efforts and risk-taking (Gross, 2020; in theoretically adjacent contexts, see also Cabral, 2003, and Fang, Noe, & Strack, 2020); and (4) the market for ideas for novice vs. experienced sellers (Luo, 2014; Luo et al., 2021). Participating in the Boot Camp would be a fantastic opportunity to interact directly with some of the most prominent scholars working in this field and draw further inspiration for my dissertation.

Secondly, the Boot Camp would also expose me to the methodological frontier in the field, strengthening my empirical toolbox. I am particularly interested in learning about novel approaches to causal identification and the application of "text as data" natural language processing techniques to study novelty, change, distance, and differentiation, which have been successfully applied in economics, and the economics of innovation in particular (e.g. Hoberg & Phillips, 2016; Angrist et al., 2020; Bellstam et al., 2021; Kelly et al., 2021; Biasi & Ma, 2022).

For both these reasons, I would be honored to participate in the Boot Camp. Thank you for considering my application!

Pietro Bonaccorsi

References

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Bell, A., Chetty, R., Jaravel, X., Petkova, N., & Van Reenen, J. (2019). Who becomes an inventor in America? The importance of exposure to innovation. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, *134*(2), 647-713.

Bellstam, G., Bhagat, S., & Cookson, J. A. (2021). A text-based analysis of corporate innovation. *Management Science*, *67*(7), 4004-4031.

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Borowiecki, K. J. (2022). Good reverberations? Teacher influence in music composition since 1450. *Journal of Political Economy*, *130*(4), 991-1090.

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Cabral, L. M. (2003). R&D competition when firms choose variance. *Journal of Economics & Management Strategy*, *12*(1), 139-150.

Catalini, C. (2018). Microgeography and the direction of inventive activity. *Management Science*, *64*(9), 4348-4364.

Einiö, E., Feng J., & Jaravel X. (2022). Social push and the direction of innovation. *LSE Research Online Documents on Economics (Working Paper)*, London School of Economics and Political Science, LSE Library.

Fang, D., Noe, T., & Strack, P. (2020). Turning up the heat: The discouraging effect of competition in contests. *Journal of Political Economy*, *128*(5), 1940-1975.

Gross, D. P. (2020). Creativity under fire: The effects of competition on creative production. *Review of Economics and Statistics*, *102*(3), 583-599.

Kelly, B., Papanikolaou, D., Seru, A., & Taddy, M. (2021). Measuring technological innovation over the long run. *American Economic Review: Insights*, *3*(3), 303-320.

Koning, R., Samila, S., & Ferguson, J. P. (2021). Who do we invent for? Patents by women focus more on women's health, but few women get to invent. *Science*, *372*(6548), 1345-1348.

Lane, J. N., Ganguli, I., Gaule, P., Guinan, E., & Lakhani, K. R. (2021). Engineering serendipity: When does knowledge sharing lead to knowledge production? *Strategic Management Journal*, *42*(6), 1215-1244.

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Luo, H., Macher, J., & Wahlen, M. (2021). Judgment aggregation in creative production: Evidence from the movie industry. *Management Science*, *67*(10), 6358-6377.

Truffa, Francesca and Wong, Ashley, Undergraduate Gender Diversity and the Direction of Scientific Research (2024). *CESifo Working Paper No. 11294, Available at SSRN: https://ssrn.com/abstract=4991792*

Rotman

4 February 2025

Recommendation for Pietro Bonaccorsi –
2025 NBER Innovation Research Boot Camp

Dear Colleagues,

I am writing to strongly recommend Pietro Bonaccorsi for the 2025 NBER Innovation Research Boot Camp. Pietro is a PhD student in Strategic Management at the Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto. His primary advisor is Professor Bill McKevily, and I serve as a member of his PhD committee. Since joining our program in September 2021, Pietro has successfully completed his coursework and is now working full time on his thesis.

Pietro possesses the skills and expertise necessary to contribute to and benefit from the Innovation Boot Camp. He has taken PhD-level courses in microeconomics and econometrics in our Economics department, as well as several electives in our business school that cover foundational topics in innovation economics. For instance, in my course, Advanced Topics in Strategy and Economics, we covered several papers well known by the NBER innovation community, including work by Williams, Stern, Jones, and Lerner.

Pietro's research sits at the intersection of the economics of innovation and economic sociology. His first paper explored the determinants of creativity in the movie industry, and he is now engaged in multiple projects investigating the evaluation of innovative content and collaboration dynamics in creative sectors.

In summary, I believe Pietro is an excellent fit for the NBER Innovation Research Boot Camp, and I strongly recommend him for the program. Please feel free to contact me at a.galasso@rotman.utoronto.ca if you require any further information.

Best regards,

Alberto Galasso

Alberto Galasso,
University of Toronto and NBER