Application to NBER Innovation Research Boot Camp 2026

February 2026

Atte Pudas

PhD Candidate

Aalto University & Helsinki Graduate School of Economics

Department of Economics

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Recommendation letter writer: Professor Otto Toivanen (Aalto & Helsinki GSE)

Dear Members of the Selection Committee,

I am writing to apply to the NBER Innovation Research Boot Camp 2026. I am a fifth-year PhD student in Economics at Aalto University and Helsinki GSE, with research interests in labor and innovation economics. Participating in the boot camp would be an exceptional opportunity to engage with peers and leading researchers, attend top-tier lectures, and exchange ideas on research. I would be thrilled to contribute to and learn from the program.

The attached essay further outlines my research agenda and my motivation for attending the boot camp.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Atte Pudas

Atte Pudas

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Position

Doctoral Researcher *09.2021 -*
- Aalto University Department of Economics (Espoo, Finland)

Visiting Doctoral Researcher *08.2024 - 06.2025*
- Universitat Pompeu Fabra (Barcelona, Spain)

Education

PhD in Economics *09.2021 -*
- Aalto University. Supervisors: Kristiina Huttunen, Otto Toivanen

MSc in Economics and Business Administration (Economics) with Distinction *09.2019 - 07.2021*
- Aalto University

BSc in Economics and Business Administration (Economics) *09.2015 - 07.2019*
- Aalto University

Other Research Experience

Research Assistant *01.2021 - 08.2021*
- Helsinki GSE COVID-19 Situation Room

Research Assistant *06.2020 - 08.2020*
- Aalto University. Otto Toivanen's research projects in economics of inventors. I contributed to the following papers:

  Aghion, P., Akcigit, U., Hyytinen, A. and Toivanen, O. (2023), Parental Education and Invention: the Finnish Enigma. *International Economic Review*, 64: 453-490.

  Aghion, P., Akcigit, U., Hyytinen, A., & Toivanen, O. (2022). A Year Older, A Year Wiser (and Farther from Frontier): Invention Rents and Human Capital Depreciation. *Review of Economics and Statistics*, 1-31

Research Assistant *02.2019 - 08.2019*
- Description as above

Working Papers

Why Are There So Few Female Inventors?, Helsinki GSE Discussion Paper 51 (2025)

Research in Progress

Having It All? Gender Differences in the Returns and Trade-Offs of Inventor Careers

Patent Filing and Firm Performance (with Jarkko Harju)

Presentations

2026 (1) The Annual Meeting of the Finnish Economic Association (Vaasa); (2) EKH Seminar *scheduled* (Lund University)

2025 (1) The Annual Meeting of the Finnish Economic Association (Tallinn); (2) UPF Internal Applied Seminar (Universitat Pompeu Fabra); (3) BSE PhD Jamboree 2025 (Barcelona School of Economics); (4) FIT-UCFS PhD Workshop on Firms and Public Policy (Uppsala University); (5) Fourth Year Seminar (Aalto University); (6) Labor & Public PhD Seminar (Helsinki

GSE); (7) RISE – 8th Research on Innovation, Science and Entrepreneurship Workshop (Max Planck Institute, Munich); (8) Labor & Public PhD Workshop (Helsinki GSE)

2024 (1) WINST research group workshop; (2) The Annual Meeting of the Finnish Economic Association; (3) Helsinki GSE Labor & Public PhD Seminar; (4) Helsinki GSE Labor & Public PhD Workshop; (5) Helsinki GSE IO PhD Workshop; (6) Bristol Economics of Innovation Workshop 2024 (University of Bristol); (7) UPF PhD Student Seminar Series; (8) WINST research group workshop; (9) WIPO Global Research Experts Meeting on Improving Gender and Diversity in Intellectual Property and Innovation; (10) 19th BiGSEM Doctoral Workshop (University of Bielefeld)

2023 (1) Helsinki GSE Labor & Public PhD Seminar; (2) Second Year Paper Seminar (Aalto University); (3) Nordic PhD Workshop in the Economics of Education (Helsinki)

2022 (1) Second Year Paper Seminar (Aalto University); (2) Helsinki GSE Labor and Public PhD Workshop

Teaching Experience

Fall 2025	**Causal Analysis in Education Research (PhD level)**, Teaching Assistant
	Applied Microeconometrics I (Master level), Teaching Assistant
Fall 2023	**Applied Microeconometrics I (Master level)**, Teaching Assistant
Fall 2022	**Applied Microeconometrics I (Master level)**, Teaching Assistant
Fall 2020	**Principles of Economics (Bachelor level)**, Teaching Assistant

Grants Received

2025	**Grant for PhD Studies (No. 20257971)**, Yrjö Jahnsson Foundation
	Travel Grant (No. 23-4573), HSE Support Foundation
2024	**Grant for PhD Studies (No. 20247829)**, Yrjö Jahnsson Foundation
2023	**Grant for a visit to Universitat Pompeu Fabra (No. 20237688)**, Yrjö Jahnsson Foundation
2022	**Grant for PhD Studies (No. 20227559)**, Yrjö Jahnsson Foundation
2021	**Grant for PhD Studies (No. 20217375)**, Yrjö Jahnsson Foundation

Skills

Languages: Finnish (native), English (fluent), Swedish (basic)

Software: Stata, LaTeX, SQL

Activities

Organizer of the Helsinki GSE Labor & Public Economics PhD Seminar in 2023/2024 (with Ellen Sahlström)

PhD Courses and Grades

Course	*Grade*
Advanced Microeconomics 1 (ECON-L2100)	*5/5*
Advanced Microeconomics 2 (ECON-L2200)	*4/5*
Advanced Microeconomics 3 (ECON-L2300)	*4/5*
Advanced Microeconomics 4 (ECON-L2400)	*5/5*
Advanced Macroeconomics 1 (ECON-L3100)	*5/5*
Advanced Macroeconomics 2 (ECON-L3200)	*4/5*
Advanced Macroeconomics 3 (ECON-L3300)	*5/5*

Advanced Macroeconomics 4 (ECON-L3400)	*4/5*
Econometrics part 1 (31L30411)	*5/5*
Econometrics part 2 (31L30412)	*5/5*
Econometrics part 3 (31L30413)	*5/5*
Econometrics part 4 (31L30414)	*2/5*
PhD course in Applied Microeconometrics	*Pass*

+ I audited two courses, Applied Econometrics and Labor Economics, at UPF

February 2026

Research Statement and Motivation for NBER Innovation Research Boot Camp

I am Atte Pudas, a fifth-year PhD student in Economics at Aalto University, Finland. In this essay, I briefly describe my research agenda and outline my motivation to participate in the NBER Innovation Research Boot Camp 2026.

My main research interests lie at the intersection of labor economics and innovation economics. Two of my thesis papers study the gender gap in innovation, while the third examines how innovation affects firm performance. Looking ahead, I am working with my colleagues on projects that analyze the effects of foreign ownership on innovation and inventor careers, as well as how research managers' characteristics, particularly gender, affect the innovation activity of different worker groups within firms.

A common feature of my research is the use of empirical methods and approaches commonly applied in labor economics to address unanswered questions related to innovation and inventors. My current work utilizes rich individual- and firm-level administrative data combined with patent records, making it possible to identify patenting individuals and firms, observe their characteristics, and track their outcomes over time alongside the full population of other individuals and firms.

My motivation to participate in the Boot Camp stems from its unique potential to foster networking and intellectual exchange with peers and leading researchers at the frontier of innovation research. Building international connections is particularly valuable for me as a researcher based in Finland, where the innovation research community is strong but relatively small. While I have been primarily exposed to European innovation research, I have had limited opportunities to engage with U.S.-based researchers. The Boot Camp would therefore provide an exceptional opportunity to learn from leading scholars, gain exposure to frontier research questions and methods, and discuss both my own and others' ongoing and future projects in a stimulating environment. I view participation in the Boot Camp as an invaluable opportunity to refine my research and to learn from, and contribute to, the international innovation research community.

Dear Heidi and Ben

I am writing to support the participation of my student Atte Pudas in the NBER innovation boot camp. Atte is talented, industrious, and creative in coming up with excellent research questions. He has two more or less complete papers (the other is going to be his JMP when he goes on the market in the Fall of 2026) and is working on his third and last PhD thesis chapter.

Atte is at the crossroads of labor and innovation and has a particular interest in the educational and career paths of (missing) female inventors. He has been to a number of European events bringing together young researchers in his area of interest, but until now has not been exposed to US researchers. It would be an immense intellectual and moral boost for him to be able to participate in the boot camp, and I hope you take his application into serious consideration. Knowing Atte, he would be an active participant and would make the most of this opportunity.

Best

Otto

Otto Toivanen
Professor of Economics
Aalto Distinguished Professor
Aalto University School of Business