Dear NBER Innovation Research Boot Camp 2026 Committee,

My name is Domenika Uskova, and I am a fourth-year Cotutelle PhD student in Strategy at Warwick Business School (Strategy and International Business department) and at Nova School of Business and Economics (Strategy and Entrepreneurship department), under the EUTOPIA Universities Alliance Grant. I am submitting this cover letter as part of my application to the NBER Innovation Research Boot Camp 2026, as its goals are highly relevant to both my current PhD research and my future research trajectory.

Originally from Kyiv, Ukraine, I earned my Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Economics from Kyiv National Economic University. During my final year, I interned at the Ministry of Economy, where I was trained in WTO arbitration practices for international trade disputes. In this role, I performed analytical case reviews for domestic businesses appealing violations of international economic agreements or bilateral contracts. These cases typically involved non-compliance with national distribution agreements across a wide range of industry sectors. During my tenure at the Ministry, I also completed my Master's thesis, which was subsequently published in a peer-reviewed journal. I later served as a junior analyst at a leading national legislative research center, focusing on foreign economic practices and authoring contributions for White Paper reports. This process of navigating complex institutional questions inspired my decision to pursue a PhD in International Economic Relations. However, on February 24, 2022, the full-scale invasion of Ukraine fundamentally altered this trajectory. All national processes ceased to exist for a significant period, as the entire focus shifted to the defense of no longer the domestic manufacturers, but the right of a multi-million nation to live in its sovereign country.

Consequently, I relocated to Lisbon, Portugal, where I joined the Jerónimo Martins Distribution of Brands Ltd as a Product Manager Assistant, a subsidiary of Portugal's largest retail group with operations spanning Continental Portugal, the Atlantic islands, and Latin America. In this role, I collaborated with cross-functional teams on diverse projects involving market research, sales analytics, and customer strategy. Later, I applied to Nova SBE, where the faculty encouraged me to pivot my academic focus toward a PhD in Strategy. I remain deeply grateful for their support during such a decisive and challenging transition. I subsequently began my doctoral studies at Nova School of Business and Economics, completing the core coursework before being awarded a national research grant within the Alliance of Universities to pursue my PhD studies internationally. After two years at Nova, I relocated to England to complete the remainder of my PhD at Warwick Business School, where I am based now.

I am developing my doctoral thesis under the supervision of Giuliana Battisti, Professor of Economics of Innovations at Warwick Business School. The core concept of my research was inspired by my tenure at Ukraine's public policy institutions. In the months before the full-scale invasion, these institutions' servers were subjected to persistent cyberattacks. Witnessing these disruptions firsthand served as the genesis for my current research interests, compelling me to explore the antecedents and consequences of such technological disruptions. My work focuses on how technological disruptions, such as data breaches, act as strategic stimuli that compel U.S. publicly listed R&D-intensive firms to reconfigure their internal resources to R&D and patenting activities to safeguard their proprietary knowledge. Detailed overviews of my current projects and future research trajectory are provided in the following essay below.

This cover letter to my CV is a brief story of 6,452 km of perseverance spanning Kyiv, Lisbon, and Warwick. My journey has not been a straight line; rather, it has been a zigzag across three countries, two distinct disciplines, and multiple institutions, culminating in a major career pivot. My Cotutelle program, which balances the academic traditions of two distinct institutions, serves as a metaphor for my research: an exploration of life before and after a significant exogenous shock.

The letter of recommendation will be provided by Professor of Economics of Innovations Giuliana Battisti. I have not previously attended any NBER Boot Camp. For reference, I hold a valid B1/B2 visa, ensuring my eligibility for travel to the U.S. for the duration of the NBER Boot Camp. You are welcome to contact me via domenika.uskova@warwick.ac.uk or domenika.uskova@novasbe.pt

Kind regards,
Domenika Uskova

Domenika Uskova

● Warwick, England ✉ domenika.uskova@warwick.ac.uk

Domenika is a Cotutelle Ph.D. candidate in Strategy at Warwick Business School in the United Kingdom and Nova School of Business and Economics in Portugal, awarded by the EUTOPIA Universities Alliance Grant. Her research focuses on the technological disruptions, such as data breaches caused by cyberattacks, and how they shape R&D-intensive firms' innovation and economic efficiency. The list of completed Ph.D. courses is provided at the end.

EDUCATION

Warwick Business School | Coventry, the UK *Sept 2024 – ongoing*
Ph.D. in Strategy (Management)
Supervisors: Giuliana Battisti and Noni Symeonidou *(co-sup.)*

Nova School of Business and Economics | Lisbon, Portugal *Sept 2022 – ongoing*
Ph.D. in Strategy (Management)
Supervisor: Emanuel Gomes

Kyiv National Economic University | Kyiv, Ukraine *Sept 2021 – Feb 2022*
Ph.D. in International Economic Relations

Kyiv National Economic University | Kyiv, Ukraine *Sept 2019 – Dec 2020*
Master of Economics (with honours)

Kyiv National Economic University | Kyiv, Ukraine *Sept 2015 – Jun 2019*
Bachelor of International Economics

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Nova School of Business and Economics | Lisbon, Portugal *Sept 2023 – Aug 2024*
Teaching Assistant
Innovation for Impact course with the Dean Pedro Oliveira
Applied Entrepreneurship course with Miguel Muñoz Duarte

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Nova SBE Health Economics and Management Knowledge Center | Lisbon, Portugal *Sept 2022 – Aug 2023*
Research fellow

Research Center of the Ukrainian Parliament | Kyiv, Ukraine *Jan 2020 – Feb 2022*
Analyst of the economic implications of EU legislation for Ukraine (whitepaper reports)

Ministry of Economy of Ukraine | Kyiv, Ukraine *Sept 2019 – Dec 2020*
Intern in the Department of Foreign Economic Activity and Trade Protection (cooperation with the World Trade Organization)

CONFERENCES AND ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

UCL School of Management | London, England *Jan 2026*
Attended the London SEI Research Day doctoral conference

University of Oxford | Oxford, England *Sept 2025*
Attended the practical GCSCC AI Cybersecurity conference

85th Academy of Management Annual Meeting | Copenhagen, Denmark *July 2025*
Accepted to the paper session at the STR Division *(co-author presented)*

IE Business School | Madrid, Spain *Jun 2025*
Presented a research paper at the IE Doctoral Consortium

University of California Los Angeles, Anderson School of Management | California, the US *Feb 2025*
Presented a research paper at the 2025 INFORMS Organization Science Winter Conference and participated in the Doctoral Consortium

London Business School | London, England *Dec 2024*
Presented a research paper at London SEI Research Day doctoral conference

INSEAD | Fontainebleau, France *Dec 2024*
Attended the 2024 Conference on Field Experiments in Strategy and participated in the Doctoral Workshop

Copenhagen Business School | Copenhagen, Denmark *Jan 2024 – Feb 2024*
Completed the 'Foundations of Strategy' Ph.D. program course

Nova School of Business and Economics | Lisbon, Portugal *Jun 2023*
Attended the DRUID conference

ACADEMIC SERVICE

Administrative Science Quarterly (ASQ) Blog | online *Nov 2025 – Jan 2026*
Interview with Professor Mathijs De Vaan (UC Berkeley) for the ASQ Blog
Innovation Growth Lab | London, England *2025 – ongoing*
Member of the PhD Steering Board
Strategy and Entrepreneurship department at Nova SBE | Lisbon, Portugal *2024 – ongoing*
Assisted with the organization of faculty seminars (coordinated meetings with PhD students) and PhD brownbag seminars

RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS

Uskova, D., Battisti, G., Symeonidou, N. (2026). Data Breaches and Their Impact on Firms' Innovation Strategy: Evidence from U.S. Firms. *(preparing for the journal submission)*
Uskova, D., Battisti, G. (2026). When One Firm Falls: Economic Diffusion of Data Breaches Across Industries and States. *(working paper)*
Uskova, D., Battisti, G., Gomes, E. Learning from Data Breaches: Absorptive Capacity and Business Model Transformation. *(data collection)*
Yatsenko, O., Stasys, R., Tsygankova, T., Reznikova, N., & **Uskova, D.** (2021). Protectionism sources of trade disputes within international economic relations. *Management Theory and Studies for Rural Business and Infrastructure Development*, 42(4).

HONORS AND AWARDS

Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia, Portugal (2023). Grant for doctoral research within the EUTOPIA Universities Alliance
Kyiv National Economic University, Ukraine (2020). Merit Scholarship for a master's degree and Dean's Honor Diploma for university promotion in the All-Ukrainian research competition
Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine (2020). First place award from the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine in the All-Ukrainian research competition for students' scientific papers in the International Economic Relations research field

MEMBERSHIPS

Academy of Management *2025 – ongoing*
INFORMS *2025 – ongoing*

LIST OF COMPLETED PH.D. COURSES

Entrepreneurship and Innovation (Warwick Business School)
Causal Inference (Warwick Business School)
Foundation of Strategy (Copenhagen Business School)
Organizational Theory (Nova School of Business and Economics)
Hot Topics in Quantitative Methods (Nova School of Business and Economics)
Hot Topics in Qualitative Methods (Nova School of Business and Economics)
Qualitative Methods (Nova School of Business and Economics)
Social Behavior (Nova School of Business and Economics)
Statistics I (Nova School of Business and Economics)
Statistics II (Nova School of Business and Economics)
Exemplary Research (Nova School of Business and Economics)
Hot Topics in Exemplary Research (Nova School of Business and Economics)

Dear NBER Innovation Research Boot Camp 2026 Committee,

My name is Domenika Uskova, and I am submitting this essay as part of my application to Boot Camp, whose goals are highly relevant to my current PhD research trajectory as well as my future research plans. The announced faculty members align perfectly with my research interests, and I would be delighted to learn from them.

My research contributes to the economics of innovation by examining how technological disruptions, such as data breaches caused by cyberattacks, shape firms' innovation strategies and economic performance in R&D-intensive firms. Using a panel dataset of publicly listed U.S. firms, combined with confidential archives of officially reported breaches submitted to U.S. state agencies from 2006 to the present, my studies analyze how R&D-intensive firms activate dynamic capabilities and reconfigure internal resources to strengthen their innovation strategies. In particular, firms significantly increase R&D expenditure and its intensity relative to total assets in the year following a data breach, while simultaneously securing legal ownership over their intellectual assets through higher patent filings and increased grant ratios for pre-breach applications, thus protecting the novelty of their prior inventions before the underlying technology becomes publicly known. Additionally, by employing a novel instrumental variable for causal inference, I examine spillover effects, showing that data breaches at a focal firm are influenced by breaches experienced by industry peers within the same U.S. state. This provides evidence that geographically concentrated innovation ecosystems share technological vulnerabilities. From an innovation policy perspective, my research underscores the importance of prioritized patent filing examination programs, such as the USPTO's Track One, as key tools for protecting the novelty of both previously filed and new patent applications. Based on heterogeneity tests, I emphasize the need to expand capacity and subsidize access to these programs not only for financially unconstrained firms but also for the rest firms facing cyberattacks, to ensure the protection of their proprietary knowledge. To validate these empirical findings, I conducted interviews with IP attorneys from an international law firm.

My other research investigates how data breaches among industry peers reshape industry-wide economic efficiency. Using a multilevel empirical approach, I analyze the transmission of data breach incidents from focal firms to their industry peers and across industry-state clusters. Preliminary evidence suggests a significant competitive reallocation effect: while breached firms experience losses in profitability and market share and face increased costs of goods sold, "unaffected" industry peers often capture the displaced consumer demand. This work aims to provide policymakers with a systemic perspective on how localized data breach incidents generate broader economic diffusion across industries and U.S. states.

For future research pipelines, I am interested in exploring organizational absorptive capacity on why and how some firms reconfigure their business models following a data breach, ranging from sectoral product shifts, about 25% of cases in my current sample of firms, to service-oriented models, and their broader implications for industry dynamics. Another project is on how breaches affect a firm's human capital efficiency, specifically through executive turnover and R&D team restructuring, and how these internal shifts influence the subsequent nature of innovation, whether incremental or radical.

It will be a great honor to attend the 2026 NBER Innovation Research Boot Camp for the first time and at this stage of my PhD. I aim to transition my current PhD research from a firm-centric strategy perspective toward an economic framework of innovation and market-wide reallocation.

Specifically, for my current studies, I aim to apply Professor Kevin Bryan's frameworks on the micro- and macroeconomic consequences of diffusion to better understand how data breaches at a focal state led to varying market growth across industry peers in other U.S. states, particularly when non-breached industry peers capture displaced product demand. Additionally, I seek to learn from Professor Kyle Myers about the interaction between technological and geographic R&D spillovers, specifically on methods for distinguishing knowledge spillovers and product market rivalry. Finally, I am very interested in Professor Ina Ganguli's lecture on human capital and labor mobility, particularly in how R&D teams restructure their internal talent and executive turnover dictates shifts in innovation strategy, for instance, from incremental to radical innovation or vice versa, thereby reshaping firms' long-term innovation trajectories and economic growth.

If you require any additional information, please don't hesitate to reach out to me via domenika.uskova@warwick.ac.uk or domenika.uskova@novasbe.pt

Kind regards,
Domenika Uskova

Coventry, 09 February 2026

RE: Recommendation for Domenika Uskova, NBER Innovation Research Boot Camp 2026

To the Committee,

It is my pleasure to recommend **Domenika Uskova** for the NBER Innovation Research Boot Camp, July 17–23, 2026. Domenika is a 4th Year Co-tutelle PhD student in Strategy at Warwick Business School and Nova School of Business and Economics. As Domenika's supervisor, I have the pleasure of supporting her in developing her research pipeline that bridges the gap between the economics of innovation and organizational strategy.

Domenika's research on the response of R&D-intensive firms to technological disruptions and specifically cyberattacks is exceptionally timely. Her research utilizes U.S. archival data on reported data breaches from 2006 onwards to empirically examine how these events reshape firms' R&D investment and intellectual property strategies. This work moves beyond traditional management literature by addressing the broader economic implications of innovation policy, industry-wide spillovers, and market rivalry.

Domenika possesses the maturity required for the NBER environment. She has a background in economics and is deeply familiar with the advanced causal inference methods and experimental designs, and econometric techniques that I lecture on at the PhD level. She is also an active participant in academic discussions in the class and at seminars probing questions that stimulate the learning process.

I am confident that Domenika is at the ideal stage of her dissertation to benefit from the Boot Camp's focus on the frontier of innovation research. She will not only benefit from the coursework but will also contribute a fresh perspective to the cohort's discussions. I am confident that engaging with the primary scholars at this event will be a cornerstone of her personal and professional development.

On a personal level, Domenika is a kind and sociable person. She would make an excellent addition to any team/class. For all these reasons, I give my full support to her application, and I highly recommend her for this program.

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

Yours faithfully,



Dr Giuliana Battisti
Professor of the Economics of Innovation
Giuliana.Battisti@wbs.ac.uk