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February 10, 2026

NBER Innovation Research Boot Camp 2026
Selection Committee
National Bureau of Economic Research
1050 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02138

Dear Selection Committee Members,

I am writing to apply for the NBER Innovation Research Boot Camp 2026. I am a PhD candidate in economics at the Technical University of Munich (TUM), completing my dissertation on mission-oriented innovation policy and innovation ecosystems under the supervision of **Professor Hanna Hottenrott**.

My letter of recommendation will be submitted by Professor Hanna Hottenrott, Chair of Economics of Innovation at TUM and my doctoral advisor.

I have enclosed my curriculum vitae, with course list, and one-page essay as requested. Thank you for considering my application.

Sincerely,

Felix Kurz

Curriculum Vitae

Munich, February 10, 2026

Felix Kurz

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Research interests

My research interests lie in how actors shape innovation ecosystems, using quantitative methods to analyze dynamics, cluster evolution, and the societal impacts of technologies.

Academic Record

2022 – present	**Technical University of Munich (TUM)** Doctoral Researcher and Research Associate Chairs of Policy Analysis & Innovation Economics Munich School of Politics and Public Policy / IGSSE Supervisors: Prof. Dr. Stefan Wurster & Prof. Dr. Hanna Hottenrott Project: *Mission Orientation and Innovation Clusters*
Sep – Dec 2025	**Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)** Visiting Researcher at MIT Sloan School of Management, Cambridge, MA, US at the invitation of Prof. Dame Fiona Murray
2019 – 2022	**University of Stuttgart** M.A. in Empirical Political and Social Research
2014 – 2019	**University of Konstanz** B.A. in Politics, Public Administration and Management

Professional Experience

2019 – 2022	**Fraunhofer Institute for Industrial Engineering IAO (Stuttgart)** Student Assistant, Advanced Systems Engineering
2019	**Bosch Packaging Services AG (Beringen, CH)** Intern, Assistant to the Executive Manager
2017 – 2018	**FAKT Consultancy (Stuttgart)** Intern, Development Aid and Project Support

Publications

Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles

2025 Kurz, F. (2025). *Enhancing environmental sustainability: the impact of mission-oriented innovation policies on green innovation and patent trends*. *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society*, 18(3), 553–567.

2022 Siewert, M. B., & Kurz, F. (2022). Mixed-Methods-Designs in der Policy-Forschung. In *Handbuch Policy-Forschung* (pp. 1–25). Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden.

Working Papers and Preprints

2025 Kurz, F. (2025). *Draft Innovation Ecosystem Lifecycle*. Available at SSRN 5799803.

2025 Kurz, F., Bartscherer, F., Wurster, S., & Hottenrott, H. (2025). *Patterns and determinants of technological innovation clusters*. Available at SSRN 5287489.

2024 Bartscherer, F., Kurz, F., Wurster, S., & Hottenrott, H. (2024). *Conceptualising and mapping mission-oriented innovation policy*. Available at SSRN 4845519.

2024 Bukchin-Peles, S., Wurster, S., Justo-Hanani, R., & Kurz, F. (2024). *Understanding regulatory preferences for GMOs and nanotechnology: A cross-national analysis of the USA, Israel, and Germany*. Working paper.

Presentations and Conferences

2025 **MIT Murray Lab**, November 19, 2025
Presentation: *Innovation Ecosystem Lifecycles*.

2024 **RegIS Workshop**, November 29, 2024
Presentation: Discussion of Donges, A., Meier, J. M., & Silva, R. C. (2023). *The impact of institutions on innovation*. Management Science, 69(4), 1951–1974.

2024 **Technology, Management, and Policy (TMP) Consortium 2024**
Presentation on mission orientation and green patent trends in Europe.

Teaching

Teaching Assistant: Advanced Seminar Economics, Policy & Econometrics: Politics of Innovation & Technology

PhD Coursework, Research Training, and Professional Development

2023–2025 REGIS Summer School on Science, Technology and Innovation (attended annually)

2025 Financial Economics of Climate and Sustainability

2023 Econometrics III: Advanced Econometrics

2023 Web Scraping for Scientists: An Introduction with Python

2023 Introduction to Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis

Transferable Skills

2023 Get Resilient! Certificate

2023 Agile project management – How to Scrum in research

Languages

English: C1 level

French: B1 level

Skills

R, Python, SQL, Version control systems (Git), Latex, MS Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint)

Application for NBER Innovation Research Boot Camp 2026:

Felix Kurz – Essay on Institutional Design and Innovation Ecosystem Performance

Why do some regions turn scientific breakthroughs into thriving industries while others fail despite similar investments?

The transformation of knowledge into technological and economic outcomes is neither automatic nor linear. It depends on institutions, governance structures, and policies. Working at the Fraunhofer Institute before my PhD, I saw firsthand how institutional design determines whether public research translates into industrial innovation, or remains confined to academic journals. My doctoral research at TUM examines how innovation ecosystems and mission-oriented policies affect the processes through which knowledge becomes economically relevant innovation. My goal is to understand why policy actions lead to positive effects across firms, regions, and organizations.

My research addresses this by studying how innovation policies and ecosystem structures shape innovation outcomes over time. Rather than treating these policies as uniform, I study how specific designs, such as goal definition, funding arrangements, and governance structures, affect actor behavior, collaboration patterns, and innovation outcomes across regional contexts and across different stages of ecosystems. Using quantitative methods and system-level data, I analyze how policy interventions influence knowledge sharing, collaborative activity, and the direction of innovative effort over time. This approach is informed by an evolutionary and systems perspective on innovation, which views outcomes as emerging from interactions among heterogeneous actors operating within institutional constraints and helps explain why simple input–output models often fail to capture variation in policy effects. Taken together, this work links mission-oriented designs to questions of coordination, governance, and performance in evolving innovation ecosystems.

Completing my dissertation this year, I am defining my research agenda on three fronts: ecosystem evolution across stages, governance transitions in maturing innovation systems, and the conditions under which mission policies steer innovation without constraining experimentation. These questions require advances in measuring ecosystem dynamics and establishing causal identification in system-level processes.

The **NBER Innovation Research Boot Camp 2026** comes at the right moment. I need engagement with frontier identification methods, feedback on positioning ecosystem research within growth and organizational economics, and exchange with scholars working on innovation system dynamics. The coursework and Innovation Policy meeting offer direct access to these resources. I will contribute actively to discussions on mission policy design, ecosystem governance, and innovation measurement.

To whom it may concern

Prof. Dr. Hanna Hottenrott
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Research Department Economics of Innovation and Industrial Dynamics
ZEW – Leibniz Centre for European Economic Research
and
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11 February 2026

Letter of recommendation for Felix Kurz

Dear Selection Committee Members,

I am pleased to recommend **Felix Kurz** for the *NBER Innovation Research Boot Camp 2026*. As his doctoral advisor at **the Technical University of Munich**, I have supervised his dissertation on mission-oriented innovation policy and innovation ecosystems for the past years.

Felix's research addresses highly relevant questions in the economics of innovation, focusing on how policy design and governance arrangements shape innovation outcomes across firms, regions, and organizational settings. His work is analytically rigorous and empirically grounded, with particular attention to coordination mechanisms and policy complementarities. Felix is a particularly talented young scholar who seeks ambitious research questions and applies multiple methods and approaches.

A key strength of Felix's research is the combination of different disciplinary backgrounds: innovation research, economics, management, and political science. This brings valuable insight into applied research environments while maintaining a clear focus on economic mechanisms and empirical identification.

I am confident Felix will be an active contributor to the Boot Camp. The program offers exactly what he needs: exposure to frontier methodologies, feedback on his research direction, and positioning within the field. I recommend him without reservation.

Sincerely,