Online Internet Appendix A that accompanies "Pitching Research"

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Internet Appendix A1: Illustrative Pitch Examples in Finance

This appendix presents two exemplar finance templates – the first on a capital structure topic and the second on Financial Flexibility, Credit Re-ratings and Corporate Decisions.

EG1: A Pitch on Capital Structure

A1.1 Preliminaries

Figure A1.1 presents a completed template for a hypothetical finance pitch, with a working title: "Explaining the Trade-off Theory Puzzle with a Unified Theory of Capital Structure" (Item (A)).[1] The title gives a reasonable insight into what the key thrust is – an ambitious plan to, in some way, combine competing theories on capital structure into a "unified" design. In terms of item (B), the basic research question is clearly articulated: "Can we meaningfully articulate and test a "unified" theory of the capital structure decision?" In terms of pitch item (C), three key papers are identified: Warr et al. (2012); Faulkender et al. (2012) and Dang et al. (2012). Given that this hypothetical pitch was devised in early 2013, the "currency" issue mentioned earlier is satisfied. Further, two of three papers are published in the Top 4 finance journals – one in *Journal of Financial Economics* and the other in *Journal of Financial and Quantitative Analysis*. As such, the notion of quality "foundational" papers is satisfied. In terms of pitch item (D), the motivation/puzzle is expressed as a quote from Hovakimian and Li (2011, p. 44):

> "In the context of dynamic tradeoff models of capital structure with fixed adjustment costs and infrequent rebalancing, the magnitudes of the estimates suggest that it takes *more than ten years* for a firm to adjust to its target capital structure. These long adjustment times suggest that either *adjusting to target*

[1] This choice of this example within finance, is not without controversy. As anonymously expressed to me in a private communication: "…My only concern is whether the unified capital structure example is the best way to illustrate your method. The current literature is divided on the correct dynamic panel techniques to test the speed of adjustment. Also, the jury is out on the pecking order. For example, many small tech companies don't hold debt. Overall, defining and testing a unified theory of capital structure seems extremely ambitious (and useful) research project, but possibly a more targeted topic would be better for PhD students…" While I recognise and understand the concerns raised, again I stress that there is no "right" or "wrong" answer. Most initial pitches will have (many?) weaknesses, but its more about the process going forward. The pitching exercise gives clear focus and sets an "agenda" for discussion between supervisor/student.

> *capital structure is not a high priority* goal for an average firm *or that the empirical models* currently used in the literature are *not well-suited* to identify the ways in which firms facing various tradeoffs manage their debt ratios. *Understanding the reasons* behind the relatively low economic importance of target debt ratios in partial-adjustment and debt-equity choice models *is a priority for future capital structure research*." [emphasis added]

The key elements of this quote are italicized, suggesting that a puzzle exits in the capital structure literature. Indeed, connecting to the working title of the pitch, the final entry in Item (D) of this pitch showcases the existence of the motivating "puzzle" with the question: "Why are there low SOAs (speeds of adjustment) when it seems that Target Leverage should and does matter?"

A1.2 IDioT

Item (E) of the completed template identifies the "Core" idea. Suppose that a typical firm follows tradeoff theory in the long run, but pecking order (PO) and/or market timing (MT) in the short term. In empirical work, if we ignore this possibility, the estimated (overall) speed of adjustment parameter is biased downwards towards zero since it is an average of the positive speed of adjustment that applies to the scenarios applicable for tradeoff theory and the zero speed of adjustment that applies to the scenarios applicable to pecking order/timing. When TO/PO/MT theories are blended into a "unified" model ("UTOPOT"), the puzzle might be resolved. Item (E) of the pitch concludes with (i) a broad statement regarding the nature of the central hypothesis(es), namely, that they would comprise of a range of conditional hypotheses that capture the unified nature of the UTOPOT model; and (ii) highlighting the theoretical "tension", namely, to exploit the differential predictions of TO/PO/MT theories to identify conditions when each prevail/dominate.

Item (F) of the completed pitch template address many dimensions of the data. (1) identifies the US as the chosen country/setting; individual firms as the unit of cross-sectional analysis and annual sampling as the unit of time series analysis. (2) suggests an expected unbalanced pooled sample size exceeding 50,000 firm years encompassing the period 1951-2012 (current at the time of writing the original pitch). (3) the data sources are the usual suspects for this type of research (Compustat/CRSP/…), with no hand-collection of any data envisaged, no major time delays and relatively minor research assistance. (4) notes that these data are "standard" and recognised as high quality. (5) notes no major challenges/problems with the data/sample, but identifies the standard filtering practices e.g. excluding banks, winsorising, standard merge issues. (6) anticipates adequate power of the tests, in line with a mature prior literature.

Item (G) of the completed pitch template comments on the anticipated toolkit. It begins by noting that a relatively basic empirical framework of regressions built around the partial adjustment model forms the foundation, as standard in the literature. Dummy-variable and non-linear modelling, possibly including switching and or threshold type models. In terms of econometric software SAS and/or Stata are identified. The entry for Item (G) also clearly acknowledges a challenging empirical setup e.g. panel data modelling, endogeneity and clustered standard errors. Moreover, a "learning curve" and/or collaboration is flagged. Finally, this template item claims a compatibility of data with planned empirical framework – since it builds on a rich recent empirical literature applying similar models.

A1.3 What's new? So what?

Item (H) in the completed pitch claims that the IDEA is novel by blending/unifying/integrating existing theories to explain Leverage Policy puzzle. The pitch further states that the data and Tools are standard. As such, the IDEA is claimed to be the "driver", while data/tools are STRONG passengers. Item (I) in the completed pitch responds to the "so what" question by arguing that getting a reliable answer to the chosen research question will help us better understand the behavior of firms in making their capital structure decisions – under what circumstances do the incentives/drivers lead to a particular theory dominating the others and so, be consistent with maximizing shareholder wealth. The claim is that the research proposal gives a realistic chance of resolving a major puzzle – and perhaps play a part in restoring faith in corporate finance theories – collectively. Of course, the latter claim is quite extreme, and unlikely to ever be delivered upon. Aspirational goals like this still have value, especially if they are acknowledged as such.

A1.4 Contribution

As already highlighted above, by the time we arrive at the "king" of all elements in the pitch template, Item (J), much of the hard work has been done with regard to spelling out the source/nature of the contribution. The contribution will have "DNA" links to the idea, to the Data, to the Tools. The contribution will be defined in terms of the novelty and the importance of the question posed. The contribution will not simply be the summation of all the parts – it will benefit from synergies maximized by a smart overall experimental design. In the completed pitch of Figure A1.1, the bottom line primary source of the contribution is claimed to be a simple idea that (helps) resolve(s) a big puzzle. If successful, this research will go a long way to "harmonising" the big 3 theories on the corporate financing decision.

A1.5 Other Considerations?

The final item in the completed pitch template is Item (K), looking for any forgotten "snags" or obstacles. Regarding the question of whether collaboration is needed/desirable?, the answers are – idea: no; – data: no; – tools: maybe, in relation to switching/threshold modelling and sophisticated panel data and endogeneity issues. Regarding the target journal(s), an ambitious goal of Tier 1 finance. How realistic or unrealistic this target is, becomes a matter of judgment. The final entries in item (K) relate to the “risk assessment” exercise. It is claimed; (i) “no result” risk is low – theoretical tension between three theories justifies most outcomes, though some will be more interesting than others; (ii) “competitor” risk is medium/high – capital structure research is a very topical and crowded space; and (iii) risk of “obsolescence” is low – since the financing decision is a key pillar of the finance discipline with a pedigree exceeding 50 years.

Figure A1.1: Example of "3-2-1" Pitching Template - Completed Pitch on a Capital Structure Topic

(A) Working Title	**"Explaining the Trade-off Theory Puzzle with a Unified Theory of Capital Structure"**
(B) Basic Research Question	Can we meaningfully articulate and test a "unified" theory of the capital structure decision?
(C) Key paper(s)	Warr, R., Elliot, W., Koeter-Kant, J. and Oztekin, O., (2012), Equity Mispricing and Leverage Adjustment Costs, Journal of Financial and Quantitative Analysis 47, 589-616. Faulkender, Flannery, Hankins & Smith (2012), Cash Flows and leverage Adjustments, Journal of Financial Economics, 103, 632-646. Dang, V., Kim, M. and Shin, Y., (2012), Asymmetric capital structure adjustments: New evidence from dynamic threshold models. Journal of Empirical Finance 19, 465-482.
(D) Motivation/Puzzle	Quoting Hovakimian and Li (2011, JCF, p. 44): "In the context of dynamic tradeoff models of capital structure with fixed adjustment costs and infrequent rebalancing, the magnitudes of the estimates suggest that it takes more than ten years for a firm to adjust to its target capital structure. These long adjustment times suggest that either adjusting to target capital structure is not a high priority goal for an average firm or that the empirical models currently used in the literature are not well-suited to identify the ways in which firms facing various tradeoffs manage their debt ratios. Understanding the reasons behind the relatively low economic importance of target debt ratios in partial-adjustment and debt-equity choice models is a priority for future capital structure research." **Puzzle:** Why are there low SOAs (speeds of adjustment) when it seems that Target Leverage should and does matter?
THREE	**Three** core aspects of any empirical research project i.e. the "**ID**io**T**s" guide
(E) Idea?	**"Core" idea:** Suppose that a typical firm follows tradeoff theory in the long run, but pecking order (PO) and/or market timing (MT) in the short term. In empirical work, if we ignore this possibility, the estimated (overall) speed of adjustment parameter is biased downwards towards zero since it is an average of the positive speed of adjustment that applies to the scenarios applicable for tradeoff theory and the zero speed of adjustment that applies to the scenarios applicable to pecking order/timing. When **TO**/**PO**/**MT** theories are blended into a "unified" model ("UTOPOT"), the puzzle might be resolved. **Central hypothesis(es):** a range of conditional hypotheses that capture the unified nature of the UTOPOT model **Theoretical "tension":** exploit the differential predictions of **TO**/**PO**/**MT** theories to identify conditions when each prevail/dominate
(F) Data?	(1) **Country/setting:** US,. Why? Because we can! Big bang for buck. **Unit of analysis:** individual firms. **Sampling:** annual. **Type:** mainly firm specific. (2) Expected **sample size:** > 50,000 firm years; **Cross-sectional:** several 1000's; **Sample period:** 1951-2012; unbalanced panel data (3) Data **source**(s): Compustat/CRSP/…? No hand-collecting required. **Timeframe:** given database subscriptions at UQ, no major time delays (1 week for core dataset); Research **assistance** needed?: "minor" assistance; Funding/**grants**?: not essential for viability, but potential opportunities; (4) Standard data – nothing novel, high **quality** data from Compustat/CRSP etc (5) Will there be any problem with **missing data**/observations?: nothing major, just standard issues – work through carefully eg banks exclusion, outliers & winsorising, standard merge issues etc (6) Will your **test variables** exhibit adequate ("meaningful") **variation** to give good power?: yes, since "blending" variables used in prior literature
(G) Tools?	Basic **empirical framework**: regression model approach focusing on partial adjustment, standard in the literature. Aim to enhance SOA model – via dummy-variable and non-linear modelling, possibly including switching and/or threshold models. Econometric **software** needed/appropriate for job?: SAS and/or Stata – licenses held at UQ. Panel data modelling, endogeneity and clustered standard errors etc make the setting complex BUT doable. Knowledge of **implementation** of appropriate or best statistical/econometric tests?: yes, but "learning curve" and/or collaboration **Compatibility** of data with planned empirical framework?: yes, building on rich recent empirical literature applying similar models

Figure A1.1 (continued)

TWO	**Two** key questions
(H) What's New?	**IDEA** is novel – blend/unify/integrate existing theories to explain Leverage Policy puzzle; data standard, tools standard IDEA is the "driver", and data/tools are the "passengers": US setting with half century of data – strong; leading edge application of panel data methods, probably encompassing switching/threshold methods – strong. Data/Tools are STRONG passengers.
(I) So What?	Getting a reliable answer to the question will help us better understand the behaviour of firms in making their capital structure decisions – in what circumstances the incentives/drivers lead to a particular theory dominating the others and so, consistent with maximizing shareholder wealth. It gives a realistic chance of resolving a major finance puzzle. Restores faith in corporate finance theories – collectively.
ONE	**One** bottom line
(J) Contribution?	**Primary source of the contribution:** simple idea that resolves a big puzzle. "Harmonises" big 3 financing decision theories.
(K) Other Considerations	Is **Collaboration** needed/desirable? – idea: no; – data: no; – tools: maybe, in relation to switching/threshold modelling and sophisticated panel data and endogeneity issues? Target Journal(s)? Tier 1 finance. Realistic? Yes, given Warr et al (2012, JFQA). "**Risk**" assessment: – "no result" risk: LOW – theoretical tension between three theories justifies most (all?) outcomes, though some will be more interesting than others; – "competitor" risk (ie being beaten by a competitor): MEDIUM/HIGH – is very topical and crowded research space – need to keep an eye out for key academics in this area eg authors of key papers above; – risk of "obsolescence": LOW – financing decision a key pillar of the finance discipline > 50 years since M&M gave birth to modern finance theory; – other risks?: too big? [solution – collaboration, PhD topics later?]

EG2: A Pitch on Financial Flexibility, Credit Re-ratings and Corporate Decisions

Figure A1.2: Example of "3-2-1" Pitching Template - Completed Pitch on Flexibility and Re-ratings Topic

N.B. this pitch was completed as a "reverse engineering" exercise, based on Agha & Faff (2014).

Pitcher's Name	Saphira Rekker
(A) Working Title	An investigation of the link between Credit Re-ratings and Corporate Financial Decisions; the effect of Financial Flexibility.
(B) Basic Research Question	Does the interaction of financial flexibility and credit re-ratings influence Corporate Financial Decisions?
(C) Key paper(s)	Graham, J.R., and C.R.Harvey, 2001: "The Theory and Practice of Corporate Finance: Evidence from the Field." *Journal of Financial Economics*, 60, 187-243.
(D) Motivation/Puzzle	Previous literature has studied the effects of credit (re-)ratings on corporate financial decisions. While the effect of credit ratings on capital structure are studied by Kisgen (2006) and Kisgen (2009), and the effects of credit ratings on investment decisions studied by Gul et al.(2011), an important factor seems to be ignored in these studies. The survey-study of Graham and Harvey (2011) report that financial flexibility is the most important factor affecting a firm's debt policy, followed by the desire to maintain a good credit rating. Therefore, integrating financial flexibility is likely to fill the gap in the previous studies and provide useful additional insights.
THREE	**Three** core aspects of any empirical research project i.e. the "**ID**io**T**s" guide
(E) Idea?	The core idea is to introduce the concept of financial flexibility to the existing literature on the impact of credit (re-)rating on corporate financial decisions. In short, does the financial flexibility of a firm impact the influence a credit re-rating has on Corporate Financial Decisions (CFD). First, the findings of the two previous studies by Kisgen(2009) and Gul et al.(2011) will be replicated. Then, financial flexibility will be introduces to see if the established relationships between credit rating and CFD change according to financial flexibility. Thus, based on the literature relating to financial flexibility, hypothesis will be developed to project the impact of financial flexibility, on the relationship between credit re-rating and the following Corporate Financial Decisions; cost of capital, capital expenditures and net debt vs net equity issuance. The central hypothesis would be: financial flexibility has an impact on the relationship of credit re-ratings to Corporate Financial Decisions.
(F) Data?	I propose to use credit-ratings provided by the Compustat database and financial data from the CRSP and Compustat merged database, which can be easily merged together. These databases are easily accessible through the UQ Business School. In line with previous studies, it is proposed to use all non-financial US firms with a credit rating in the *S&P 1500* index, for the years 1985-2009. The reason for starting at the year 1985 is because the Compustat database only started collecting data on corporate credit ratings in 1985. It will be a cross-sectional panel dataset. There should be no problems with missing data and since it is partly a replication of previous studies, except for the variable financial flexibility, no issues with the data or model are expected.
(G) Tools?	Overall the research uses a regression model approach. The first analysis will be replicating the regression analyses of the two previous studies by Kisgen(2009) and Gul et al.(2011) to compare our findings and set a baseline for the relationship between credit re-rating and Corporate Financial Decisions. To allow us to do both (compare and set a baseline), the three regressions of interest will be estimated using a full information maximum likelihood (FIML) model. OLS and 2SLS regressions will be ran for further analyses and robustness test will be performed. This can all be done in stata.
TWO	**Two** key questions
(H) What's New?	The novelty is in the introduction of a new variable, namely financial flexibility, that is likely to influence the relationship between credit re-rating and Corporate Financial Decisions. The driver is that there is an empirical evidence that the major factor affecting a firm's debt policy is financial flexibility , and the second important factor is maintaining a good credit rating. On the other hand, credit ratings have an empirically established effect on several Corporate Financial Decisions. As off yet, these three studies have not yet been combined and the likely essential link with financial flexibility is yet to be explored.
(I) So What?	If financial flexibility has a significant effect, the research will establish what financial decisions a firm is likely to make when a credit rating of a firm changes, given the level of financial flexibility of the firm. It would help financial institutions to make decisions on for example interest rates to create optimal outcomes to capital structure decisions of the firm.
ONE	**One** bottom line
(J) Contribution?	The contribution is in the introduction of financial flexibility to the current literature on the effect of credit ratings on corporate financial decisions. It will provide new and significant insights for researchers and investors what factors to take into account when analysing the effect of credit ratings on capital structure and investment decisions.
(K) Other Considerations	None

Reference

Agha, M. and Faff, R., (2014), "An Investigation of the Asymmetric link between Credit Re-ratings and Corporate Financial Decisions: "Flicking the Switch" with Financial Flexibility", *Journal of Corporate Finance*, forthcoming.

Internet Appendix A2: Illustrative Pitch Examples in Accounting

This appendix presents two exemplar accounting examples – in three versions: (a) original pitch; (b) original pitch with feedback; (c) revised pitch after feedback.

EG1: Financial Reporting and the GFC

(a) EG1 Original Pitch

Working Title	**"Financial Reporting of European Financial Institutions During the GFC" Raluca Ratiu**
Basic Research Question	What are the determinants and the effects/consequences of the massive intangible assets' impairments of European banks during the crisis?
Key papers	Mary E. Barth and Wayne R. Landsman (2010) How did Financial Reporting Contribute to the Financial Crisis?, European Accounting Review, 19:3, 399-423 Christian Laux and Christian Leux (2010) Did Fair Value Accounting Contribute to the Financial Crisis?, Journal of Economic Perspectives, 24:9, 93-118 (Dushyantkumar Vyas (2009) The Timeliness of Write-downs by U.S. Financial Institutions during the Financial Crisis of 2007-2008, Working Paper)
Motivation/Puzzle	**Motivation:** According to Shaffer (2010) the decrease in bank asset values necessitated recognition of impairments. The crisis has supposedly worsened due to a procyclical effect of impairing large amounts of bank assets, down to a perceived artificially low value. Allegedly auditors forced managers into impairing assets to unrealistically low values. Had managers been allowed to follow own judgment to better assess assets' value, the crisis may have been less severe. **Puzzle:** what were the real drivers of the bank assets' impairments? What were the consequences of these impairments?
THREE	
Idea?	Empirically test a few leads in the financial reporting+ financial crisis literature, which is almost exclusively focused on US banks, in the European setting. The crisis in Europe had different characteristics and timelines than the US, which allows for potential interesting results to surface. Among the tested determinants, fair value appears to be most discussed in the literature, but managerial discretion, corporate governance or value relevance of impairments are also potential determinants.
Data?	**(1) Setting:** EU, project requirements and novelty; **Unit of analysis:** individual financial companies; **Sampling:** annual; **Focus:** key intangible assets in financial institutions **(2) Expected sample size: Cross-sectional: Sample Period: 2007-2011** **(3) Data source:** COMPUSTAT Global/Bank Fundamentals Annual **(4) Data collections:** mostly automatic, careful manual adjustments may be needed to perfect the sample
Tools?	Pooled/ panel data regression model approach, Software: Eviews (one year license from UQ), Pooled/Panel Data modeling- Eviews Webinar will provide useful insights for this Knowledge of implementation: own+ collaborations
TWO	
What's New?	The idea has not yet been explored, to the best of my searches, in the accounting-finance empirical literature, is novel for the results it seeks to unveil and to the European focused papers as well.
So What?	Knowledge of bank asset impairment is crucial, because bank assets were at the center of the financial crisis. Massive impairments may have worsened the crisis, because they engaged in a procyclical effect. The answer to the research question is important for future accounting treatment of bank assets in time of economic distress and in order to take further necessary actions to recover from the consequences.
ONE	
Contribution?	New empirical research which covers bank asset impairment+financial crisis is needed and this paper will reveal answers to two main concerns: what to stay away from in time of distress and what are the effects which can be prevented when you have the answer to the research question.
Other Considerations	Collaboration: - 2 month mobility within EU country, compulsory in the postdoctoral program - Idea: yes, feedback for polishing the "core idea" - Data: yes - Tools: yes

(b) EG1 Original Pitch with feedback – via Word balloons

Working Title	**"Corporate Governance and Financial Reporting During the Global Financial Crisis: European Evidence"**
Basic Research Question	Is corporate governance a key factor in the development of the financial crisis in European banks?
Key papers	Mary E. Barth and Wayne R. Landsman (2010) How did Financial Reporting Contribute to the Financial Crisis?, European Accounting Review, 19:3, 399-423 Renee Adams (2012) Governance and the Financial Crisis, International Review of Finance, 12:1, 7-38
Motivation/Puzzle	**Motivation:** According to Shaffer (2010) the decrease in bank asset values necessitated recognition of impairments. Barth and Landsman (2010) discuss whether the crisis has supposedly worsened due to a procyclical effect of impairing large amounts of bank assets, down to a perceived artificially low value. Allegedly auditors forced managers into impairing assets to unrealistically low values. Had managers been allowed to follow own judgment to better assess assets' value, the crisis may have been less severe. There is a gap of empirical evidence in the literature to support this claim. This topic becomes more puzzling when Adams (2012) documents that banks and financial institutions have been better governed than non-financial institutions. **Puzzle:** was corporate governance the central driver of bank asset impairments? What were the consequences of these impairments?
THREE	
Idea?	Empirically test how corporate governance and its role in financial reporting- particularly asset impairment- reflected in the evolution of the financial crisis. The literature on the crisis determinants in Europe is scarce compared to US. Due to different characteristics and timelines than the US, studying the European setting allows for potential interesting results to surface. Among the determinants of the crisis, fair value appears to be the most studied in the literature. Corporate governance and the impact of managerial decisions may be another key factor in the evolution of the crisis.
Data?	**(5) Setting:** European Union countries- postdoctoral project requirements and novelty; **Unit of analysis:** individual financial companies; **Sampling:** annual/semi-annual; **Focus:** key asset impairments in financial institutions **(6) Expected sample size:** approx. 10,000 firm-year observations. **Sample Period: 2007-2011** **(7) Data source:** COMPUSTAT Global/Bank Fundamentals Annual **(8) Data collections:** mostly automatic, careful manual adjustments may be needed to perfect the sample
Tools?	Pooled/ panel data regression model approach, Software: Eviews or STATA, Pooled/Panel Data modeling- Eviews Webinar will provide useful insights for this Knowledge of implementation: own, supported by collaborations
TWO	
What's New?	The idea has been little studied in the accounting-finance empirical literature, is novel for the results it seeks to unveil

Comment [RF1]: Note: I have highlighted in yellow the words/phrases that "stuck out" to me. Some I have comments on, but as a package do these words represent the most important messages in your pitch?

Comment [RF2]: The title is a bit "neutral" – could be catchier

Comment [RF3]: This is a very ambitious and BIG question! Need to ensure that its not too big – or too overwhelming.

Comment [RF4]: 2010 is now beginning to look a little "old" – but OK

Comment [RF5]: EAR or IRF are both good journal BUT neither of the journals are Tier 1. Does this mean nothing in Tier 1 journals is very relevant?

Comment [RF6]: Not clear how you differ and enhance on B&L? Is it that they did US only? If so, you need to motivate why Europe is worth looking at – what new insights? Putting it another way, why is the US evidence "unreliable" in the Europe setting?

Comment [RF7]: One of your favourite words!

Comment [RF8]: Be careful of the "gap" mentality – has to be more than a gap

Comment [RF9]: Your questions are good – but not a "puzzle" in the sense I had in mind in my paper

Comment [RF10]: See comment #6 above

Comment [RF11]: Sounds a little strong – sounds like it "caused" the crisis

Comment [RF12]: Not early enough start? Need to see what the pre-crisis lo ...

Comment [RF13]: Nothing is perfect!

Comment [RF14]: See comments #6 & #10

	and to the European focused papers as well.
So What?	Knowledge of bank asset impairment is crucial, because bank assets were at the center of the financial crisis. Massive impairments may have worsened the crisis, because they engaged in a procyclical effect. The answer to the research question is important for future accounting treatment of bank assets in time of economic distress and in order to take further necessary actions to recover from the consequences.
ONE	
Contribution?	New empirical research which covers bank asset impairment and financial crisis is needed and this paper will reveal answers to the following issues: should corporate governance be blamed for the crisis and what are the major effects of corporate governance on the recent financial crisis, from a financial reporting perspective.
Other Considerations	Collaboration needed: - 2 month mobility within EU country, compulsory in the postdoctoral program - Idea: yes, feedback for polishing the "core idea" - Data: yes, local university does not have access to financial databases. - Tools: yes

Comment [RF15]: That a big question – very hard for one paper to give an answer

Comment [RF16]: Risk assessment?

Comment [RF17]: Strategy to overcome – collaborate?

Comment [RF18]: What does "yes" mean here? Yes you have the tools or yes tools are an issue/challenge that you need to resolve

(c) EG1 Revised pitch – yet to be completed

EG2: CEO Pay and Financial Performance

(a) Original pitch

(A) Working Title	"An Investigation of the Short and Long Run Relations Between Executive Cash Bonus Payments and Firm Financial Performance"
(B) Basic Research Question	Is there a short or long run relation between cash bonus payments to CEO's in Australian firms and measures of firm financial performance?
(C) Key paper(s)	Murphy, K. J. 1999. Executive Compensation. In O. a. C. Ashenfelter, D (Ed.), *Handbook of Labor Economics*, Vol. 3. B.V.: Elsevier Science. Clarkson, P., Van Bueren, A. L., & Walker, J. 2006. Chief Executive Officer Remuneration Disclosure Quality: Corporate Responses to an Evolving Disclosure Environment. *Accounting & Finance*, 46(5): 771-796.
(D) Motivation/Puzzle	Agency theory predicts that CEO remuneration contracts will be designed to incentivise CEO's to make decisions that are aligned with the principal's goals whilst minimising total contracting costs. Murphy (1999) suggests that the cash bonus portion of the contract should be linked to actual financial performance of the organisation. The logic is that if the cash bonus is a reward for CEO's effort alignment the 'bonus' payment should coincide with an improvement in financial performance of the firm. Prior literature does not find a strong pay for performance link in studies where current year cash bonus is measured against current year financial performance. The pay for performance link may not be supported in the current literature because of a potential timing difference between the board's observation of the manager's effort that they wish to reward and the financial performance outcome for the firm. This research investigates whether there is a persistent lag between the payment of cash bonus and firm financial performance.
THREE	**Three** core aspects of any empirical research project i.e. the "**ID**io**T**s" guide
(E) Idea?	Do cash bonus payments and accounting measures of firm performance adjust over the short run to give rise to a long-run equilibrium relation?
(F) Data?	(1) **Country/setting:** Australia because changes in the Australian legislation during the sample period provides increased disclosure of cash bonus specific information. **Unit of analysis:** Individual firms. **Sampling:** Annual remuneration reports and financial data from Top 200 ASX listed firms. **Type:** firm specific. (2) Expected **sample:** Approx. 1800 observations from top 200 ASX listed firms from 2004 – 2014 resulting in unbalanced panel data. (3) Data **source**(s): Aspect Huntly, Connect 4 **Timeframe:** given database subscriptions at UQ, no major time delays (1 week for core dataset); Research **assistance** needed?: "minor" assistance, if possible cluster RA to assist with hand collection; Funding/**grants**?: not essential for viability. (4) Standard data – High quality standard data from Aspect Huntly and Connect 4. (5) Will there be any problem with missing data/observations?: standard issues of missing firm years and survival biases as coverage includes GFC and our intention is to exclude failing firms thus reducing the number of firms in the data set. (6) Will your test variables exhibit adequate ("meaningful") variation to give good power?: yes.
(G) Tools?	E-Views - Panel least squares regression incorporating cross section and period fixed effects controls. Analysis of long-run equilibrium relation among CEO bonus and accounting performance measures using Cointegration analysis.
TWO	
(H) What's New?	There is currently mixed evidence on the relationship between cash bonuses and current year firm financial performance. New disclosure requirements for remuneration in publicly listed firms in Australia means that this study can now more closely examine the pay for performance links between cash bonus and firm financial performance. The Australian setting also differs from the US and UK because as yet no capping regulation exists around cash bonus payments. What is new is that we will empirically examine the possibility of a lag between payment of cash bonus and firm financial performance. The use of co-integration analysis to test the presence of a lagged relationship in this study is a novel addition to the literature.
(I) So What?	Policy makers, shareholders and board members are interested in whether there is a relation between CEO bonuses and firm financial performance and what this relationship looks like. Understanding if there are lags between the payment of cash bonuses and firm financial performance has the potential to mitigate the negative responses of shareholders to cash bonus payments when a company appears to be under-performing in a particular year.
ONE	
(J) Contribution?	More direct test of pay performance link as the cash bonus is a direct reward for past performance. Use of co-integration to examine whether the cash bonus and firm performance move together over time through short term adjustment processes that culminate in long run equilibrium relations.
(K) Other Considerations	Is **Collaboration** needed/desirable? – idea: yes internal collaboration; – data: no;

	– tools: yes internal collaboration with statistical expert. Target Journal(s)? ABDC A rank e.g. Accounting and Finance based on Clarkson et al. 2011. "**Risk**" assessment: – "no result" risk: LOW; – "competitor" risk (ie being beaten by a competitor): MEDIUM/HIGH – remuneration is very topical and crowded research space – need to keep an eye out for key academics in this area e.g. authors of key papers above; – risk of "obsolescence": LOW – executive remuneration is a hotly debated topic in the media and is a politically charged area, research into this area is expected to continue to inform this debate for many years; – other risks?: nil conceived

(b) Original pitch with feedback – yellow highlights (a private discussion ensued)

(A) Working Title	"An Investigation of the Short and Long Run Relations Between Executive Cash Bonus Payments and Firm Financial Performance"
(B) Basic Research Question	Is there a short or long run relation between cash bonus payments to CEO's in Australian firms and measures of firm financial performance?
(C) Key paper(s)	Murphy, K. J. 1999. Executive Compensation. In O. a. C. Ashenfelter, D (Ed.), *Handbook of Labor Economics*, Vol. 3. B.V.: Elsevier Science. Clarkson, P., Van Bueren, A. L., & Walker, J. 2006. Chief Executive Officer Remuneration Disclosure Quality: Corporate Responses to an Evolving Disclosure Environment. *Accounting & Finance*, 46(5): 771-796.
(D) Motivation/Puzzle	Agency theory predicts that CEO remuneration contracts will be designed to incentivise CEO's to make decisions that are aligned with the principal's goals whilst minimising total contracting costs. Murphy (1999) suggests that the cash bonus portion of the contract should be linked to actual financial performance of the organisation. The logic is that if the cash bonus is a reward for CEO's effort alignment the 'bonus' payment should coincide with an improvement in financial performance of the firm. Prior literature does not find a strong pay for performance link in studies where current year cash bonus is measured against current year financial performance. The pay for performance link may not be supported in the current literature because of a potential timing difference between the board's observation of the manager's effort that they wish to reward and the financial performance outcome for the firm. This research investigates whether there is a persistent lag between the payment of cash bonus and firm financial performance.
THREE	**Three** core aspects of any empirical research project i.e. the "**ID**io**T**s" guide
(E) Idea?	Do cash bonus payments and accounting measures of firm performance adjust over the short run to give rise to a long-run equilibrium relation?
(F) Data?	(1) **Country/setting:** Australia because changes in the Australian legislation during the sample period provides increased disclosure of cash bonus specific information. **Unit of analysis:** Individual firms. **Sampling:** Annual remuneration reports and financial data from Top 200 ASX listed firms. **Type:** firm specific. (2) Expected **sample:** Approx. 1800 observations from top 200 ASX listed firms from 2004 – 2014 resulting in unbalanced panel data. (3) Data **source**(s): Aspect Huntly, Connect 4 **Timeframe:** given database subscriptions at UQ, no major time delays (1 week for core dataset); Research **assistance** needed?: "minor" assistance, if possible cluster RA to assist with hand collection; Funding/**grants**?: not essential for viability. (4) Standard data – High quality standard data from Aspect Huntly and Connect 4. (5) Will there be any problem with missing data/observations?: standard issues of missing firm years and survival biases as coverage includes GFC and our intention is to exclude failing firms thus reducing the number of firms in the data set. (6) Will your test variables exhibit adequate ("meaningful") variation to give good power?: yes.
(G) Tools?	E-Views - Panel least squares regression incorporating cross section and period fixed effects controls. Analysis of long-run equilibrium relation among CEO bonus and accounting performance measures using Cointegration analysis.
TWO	**Two** key questions
(H) What's New?	There is currently mixed evidence on the relationship between cash bonuses and current year firm financial performance. New disclosure requirements for remuneration in publicly listed firms in Australia means that this study can now more closely examine the pay for performance links between cash bonus and firm financial performance. The Australian setting also differs from the US and UK because as yet no capping regulation exists around cash bonus payments. What is new is that we will empirically examine the possibility of a lag between payment of cash bonus and firm financial performance. The use of co-integration analysis to test the presence of a lagged relationship in this study is a novel addition to the literature.
(I) So What?	Policy makers, shareholders and board members are interested in whether there is a relation between CEO bonuses and firm financial performance and what this relationship looks like. Understanding if there are lags between the payment of cash bonuses and firm financial performance has the potential to mitigate the negative responses of shareholders to cash bonus payments when a company appears to be under-performing in a particular year.
ONE	**One** bottom line
(J) Contribution?	More direct test of pay performance link as the cash bonus is a direct reward for past performance. Use of co-integration to examine whether the cash bonus and firm performance move together over time through short term adjustment processes that culminate in long run equilibrium relations.

(K) Other Considerations	Is **Collaboration** needed/desirable? – idea: yes internal collaboration; – data: no; – tools: yes internal collaboration with statistical expert. Target Journal(s)? ABDC A rank e.g. Accounting and Finance based on Clarkson et al. 2011. "**Risk**" assessment: – "no result" risk: LOW; – "competitor" risk (ie being beaten by a competitor): MEDIUM/HIGH – remuneration is very topical and crowded research space – need to keep an eye out for key academics in this area e.g. authors of key papers above; – risk of "obsolescence": LOW – executive remuneration is a hotly debated topic in the media and is a politically charged area, research into this area is expected to continue to inform this debate for many years; – other risks?: nil conceived

(c) Revised pitch – yellow highlights identifying new bits

(A) Working Title	"An Investigation of the Short and Long Run Relations Between Executive Cash Bonus Payments and Firm Financial Performance"
(B) Basic Research Question	Is there a short or long run relation between cash bonus payments to CEO's in Australian firms and measures of firm financial performance?
(C) Key paper(s)	Murphy, K. J. 1999. Executive Compensation. In O. a. C. Ashenfelter, D (Ed.), *Handbook of Labor Economics*, Vol. 3. B.V.: Elsevier Science. Höppe, F. and F. Moers. 2011. "The Choice of Different Types of Subjectivity in CEO Annual Bonus Contracts." *The Accounting Review* 86(6): 2023-2046.
(D) Motivation/Puzzle	Agency theory predicts that CEO remuneration contracts will be designed to incentivise CEO's to make decisions that are aligned with the principal's goals whilst minimising total contracting costs. Murphy (1999) suggests that the cash bonus portion of the contract should be linked to actual financial performance of the organisation. The logic is that if the cash bonus is a reward for CEO's effort alignment the 'bonus' payment should coincide with an improvement in financial performance of the firm. Prior literature does not find a strong pay for performance link in studies where current year cash bonus is measured against current year financial performance. The pay for performance link may not be supported in the current literature because of a potential timing difference between the board's observation of the manager's effort that they wish to reward and the financial performance outcome for the firm. This means that the cash bonus payment may be a reward for financial performance achieved in an earlier period or a later period. This research investigates whether there is a persistent difference in timing of the payment of cash bonus and firm financial performance.
THREE	**Three** core aspects of any empirical research project i.e. the "**ID**io**T**s" guide
(E) Idea?	Do cash bonus payments and accounting measures of firm performance adjust over the short run to give rise to a long-run equilibrium relation?
(F) Data?	(1) **Country/setting:** Australia: because changes in the Australian legislation during the sample period provides increased disclosure of cash bonus specific information. In 2005, the amendments to AASB124 *Related Party Disclosures* provided guidelines that specific elements of executive remuneration were required to be disclosed, such as total salary, bonuses and equity components along with information regarding why and how the payments were made, and what level of detail is required. **Unit of analysis:** Individual firms. **Sampling:** Annual remuneration reports and financial data from Top 200 ASX listed firms. **Type:** firm specific. (2) Expected **sample:** Approx. 1800 observations from top 200 ASX listed firms from 2004 – 2014 resulting in unbalanced panel data. (3) Data **source**(s): Aspect Huntly, Connect 4 **Timeframe:** given database subscriptions at UQ, no major time delays (1 week for core dataset); Research **assistance** needed?: "minor" assistance, if possible cluster RA to assist with hand collection; Funding/**grants**?: not essential for viability. (4) Standard data – High quality standard data from Aspect Huntly and Connect 4. (5) Will there be any problem with missing data/observations?: standard issues of missing firm years and survival biases as coverage includes GFC and our intention is to exclude failing firms thus reducing the number of firms in the data set. (6) Will your test variables exhibit adequate ("meaningful") variation to give good power?: yes.
(G) Tools?	E-Views - Panel least squares regression incorporating cross section and period fixed effects controls. Analysis of long-run equilibrium relation among CEO bonus and accounting performance measures using correlation analysis to examine the lagged annual, lagged six monthly and contemporaneous correlations between bonus payments and financial indicators.
TWO	
(H) What's New?	There is currently mixed evidence on the relationship between cash bonuses and current year firm financial performance. New disclosure requirements for remuneration in publicly listed firms in Australia means that this study can now more closely examine the pay for performance links between cash bonus and firm financial performance. The Australian setting also differs from the US and UK because as yet no capping regulation exists around cash bonus payments. What is new is that we will empirically examine the possibility of a lag between payment of cash bonus and firm financial performance.
(I) So What?	Policy makers, shareholders and board members are interested in whether there is a relation between CEO bonuses and firm financial performance and what this relationship looks like. Understanding if there are lags between the payment of cash bonuses and firm financial performance has the potential to mitigate the negative responses of shareholders to cash bonus payments when a company appears to be under-performing in a particular year. <<<material deleted from here>>>
ONE	
(J) Contribution?	More direct test of pay performance link as the cash bonus is a direct reward for past performance. Use of correlation analysis to examine whether the cash bonus and firm performance move together over time through short term adjustment processes that culminate in long run equilibrium relations.
(K) Other Considerations	Is **Collaboration** needed/desirable? – idea: yes internal collaboration;

	– data: no; – tools: yes internal collaboration with statistical expert. Target Journal(s)? A* based on Höppe, F. and F. Moers. 2011. "**Risk**" assessment: – "no result" risk: LOW; – "competitor" risk (ie being beaten by a competitor): MEDIUM/HIGH – remuneration is very topical and crowded research space – need to keep an eye out for key academics in this area e.g. authors of key papers above; – risk of "obsolescence": LOW – executive remuneration is a hotly debated topic in the media and is a politically charged area, research into this area is expected to continue to inform this debate for many years; – other risks?: nil conceived

Internet Appendix A3: Illustrative Pitch Example in Corporate Social Responsibility

This appendix presents an exemplar CSR example – in three versions: (a) original pitch; (b) original pitch with feedback; (c) revised pitch after feedback.

Figure A3.1
(a) Original Pitch (Marion Dupire-Declerck, mentored by Bouchra M'Zali)

(A) Working Title	"CSR strategies in response to competitive pressure"
(B) Basic Research Question	How does product market competition affect CSR strategies?
(C) Key paper(s)	Fernández-Kranz, D. & Santaló, J., 2010. When Necessity Becomes a Virtue: The Effect of Product Market Competition on Corporate Social Responsibility. Journal of Economics & Management Strategy, 19(2), p.453–487. Flammer, C., 2012. Does Product Market Competition Foster Corporate Social Responsibility? Working Paper, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
(D) Motivation/Puzzle	The causes and effects of CSR may be subject to a debate, but the negative business shocks resulting from environmental disasters (e.g., Exxon Valdez crash in March 1989; BP Deepwater Horizon spill in April 2010) or poor labor protections (e.g., Rana Plaza building collapse in October 2013) are clearly harmful, with strong negative market reactions. Competitive pressures increase the need to address extra-financial risks, whose impacts have stronger negative consequences in competitive contexts than in monopolies. But the notion of CSR also includes many different dimensions that can be studied independently. With respect to competition, the multidimensionality of CSR is crucial, because the strategic interest of CSR is likely to vary across different dimensions. **Puzzle:** How do firms adapt their CSR strategies in response to competitive pressure?
THREE	**Three** core aspects of any empirical research project i.e. the "**ID**io**T**s" guide
(E) Idea?	**"Core" idea:** Competitive pressures lead firms to adapt their CSR strategies. While prior literature has raised an average positive effect of competition on social performance, the idea here is that the impact may actually vary with specific dimensions of CSR, and industry specificities may also play a role. **Central hypothesis(es):** Competitive pressures lead to changes in CSR strategies, and this change is highly dependent of industry specificities. **Theoretical "tension":** According to the strategic CSR view, firms in more competitive environments have more incentives to invest in social actions. However, CSR is also costly and competition may similarly alter the incentives to engage in social initiatives.
(F) Data?	(1) **Country/setting:** US to get comparable results with prior related studies. **Unit of analysis:** individual firms. **Sampling:** annual. **Type:** mainly firm specific. (2) Expected **sample size:** about 4000 firms on 15 years (1995-2009); unbalanced panel data (3) Data **source**(s): Compustat/CRSP/KLD ratings. No hand-collecting required. **Timeframe:** no major time delays; Research **assistance** needed?: no; Funding/**grants**?: no; (4) Standard data – nothing novel, high **quality** data from Compustat/CRSP/KLD (5) Will there be any problem with **missing data**/observations?: nothing major, just standard issues (6) Will your **test variables** exhibit adequate ("meaningful") **variation** to give good power?: plan to implement a methodology which will counteract the problem of having all firms in one industry with the same value for the competition variable, using a firm-level indicator of external competitive pressure.
(G) Tools?	Basic **empirical framework**: panel regressions with lagged variables (endogeneity) + Granger causality tests. Econometric **software** needed/appropriate for job?: Gauss and Stata Knowledge of **implementation** of appropriate or best statistical/econometric tests?: yes **Compatibility** of data with planned empirical framework?: yes, already used and admitted in the existing literature

TWO	**Two** key questions
(H) What's New?	**IDEA** is novel – the effect of competition on CSR strategies has never been studied in such terms. Prior research has documented a positive aggregate effect of competition on social performance but this study would be the first to consider the underlying mechanism that justifies this variation, and further explore how industry specificities play an important role.
(I) So What?	This research holds particular interest for investors and regulators who consider the implicit social contract between business and society. Investing in socially responsible organizations requires understanding the dynamics that prompt them to engage in social actions. Understanding which responsible actions result in response to external constraints, such as competitive pressure, offers a first step toward designing appropriate incentives to enhance social welfare. With our analysis of the relationship of CSR with competition, we focus on the strategic side, but we do not intend to exclude potential altruistic motives. Rather, we acknowledge the coexistence of strategic and altruistic motives and explain how they function as complements.
ONE	**One** bottom line
(J) Contribution?	**Primary source of the contribution:** The angle of approach of the competition-CSR relationship is our main contribution. We consider how CSR in its multidimensionality and account for industry specificities, while other studies rather focused on the aggregate effect of competition on CSR.
(K) Other Considerations	Is **Collaboration** needed/desirable? – idea: no; – data: yes, no personal access to KLD data, need collaboration with someone who is able to use these data; – tools: no Target Journal(s)? Journal of Business Ethics. Realistic? To be discussed. "**Risk**" assessment: – "no result" risk: LOW – the source of contribution rather comes from the angle of approach, any results can be interesting, although it will be easier to 'sell' the paper if we get significant coefficients; – "competitor" risk (ie being beaten by a competitor): MEDIUM/HIGH –A working paper at MIT is online, dealing with how social performance varies around import tariff reductions (used as exogenous shocks on competition) – risk of "obsolescence": LOW – CSR issues are attracting a growing interest, and markets are becoming more and more competitive, the subject is likely to remain topical for a while;

(b) Original Pitch with Feedback

(A) Working Title	"CSR strategies in response to competitive pressure"
(B) Basic Research Question	How does product market competition affect CSR strategies?
(C) Key paper(s)	Fernández-Kranz, D. & Santaló, J., 2010. When Necessity Becomes a Virtue: The Effect of Product Market Competition on Corporate Social Responsibility. Journal of Economics & Management Strategy, 19(2), p.453–487. Flammer, C., 2012. Does Product Market Competition Foster Corporate Social Responsibility? Working Paper, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
(D) Motivation/Puzzle	The causes and effects of CSR may be subject to a debate, but the negative business shocks resulting from environmental disasters (e.g., Exxon Valdez crash in March 1989; BP Deepwater Horizon spill in April 2010) or poor labor protections (e.g., Rana Plaza building collapse in October 2013) are clearly harmful, with strong negative market reactions. Competitive pressures increase the need to address extra-financial risks, whose impacts have stronger negative consequences in competitive contexts than in monopolies. But the notion of CSR also includes many different dimensions that can be studied independently. With respect to competition, the multidimensionality of CSR is crucial, because the strategic interest of CSR is likely to vary across different dimensions. **Puzzle:** How do firms adapt their CSR strategies in response to competitive pressure?
THREE	**Three** core aspects of any empirical research project i.e. the "**ID**io**T**s" guide
(E) Idea?	**"Core" idea:** Competitive pressures lead firms to adapt their CSR strategies. While prior literature has raised an average positive effect of competition on social performance, the idea here is that the impact may actually vary with specific dimensions of CSR, and industry specificities may also play a role. **Central hypothesis(es):** Competitive pressures lead to changes in CSR strategies, and this change is highly dependent of industry specificities. **Theoretical "tension":** According to the strategic CSR view, firms in more competitive environments have more incentives to invest in social actions. However, CSR is also costly and competition may similarly alter the incentives to engage in social initiatives.
(F) Data?	(1) **Country/setting:** US to get comparable results with prior related studies. **Unit of analysis:** individual firms. **Sampling:** annual. **Type:** mainly firm specific. (2) Expected **sample size:** about 4000 firms on 15 years (1995-2009); unbalanced panel data (3) Data **source**(s): Compustat/CRSP/KLD ratings. No hand-collecting required. **Timeframe:** no major time delays; Research **assistance** needed?: no; Funding/**grants**?: no; (4) Standard data – nothing novel, high **quality** data from Compustat/CRSP/KLD (5) Will there be any problem with **missing data**/observations?: nothing major, just standard issues (6) Will your **test variables** exhibit adequate ("meaningful") **variation** to give good power?: plan to implement a methodology which will counteract the problem of having all firms in one industry with the same value for the competition variable, using a firm-level indicator of external competitive pressure.
(G) Tools?	Basic **empirical framework**: panel regressions with lagged variables (endogeneity) + Granger causality tests. Econometric **software** needed/appropriate for job?: Gauss and Stata Knowledge of **implementation** of appropriate or best statistical/econometric tests?: yes **Compatibility** of data with planned empirical framework?: yes, already used and admitted in the existing literature

Comment [RF1]: Title and question are informative and concise – good for gaining attention

Comment [RF2]: I don't know this journal – is it high quality?

Comment [RF3]: Since it is only a working paper, I need to be convinced that this is an "influential" paper. Sourced from MIT helps.

Comment [RF4]: You don't really have a "puzzle" in the sense that I meant – refer back to the relevant discussion in the paper

Comment [RF5]: Strategies generally – but you are looking at CSR – which is good

Comment [RF6]: Seemingly contradicts what you say later about the novelty of your idea?

Comment [RF7]: Weak – do you have a (credible) directional prediction?

Comment [RF8]: I guess that you do have a theoretical tension here – but many good papers don't need to. Its just an extra thing to think about.

Comment [RF9]: Healthy sample size – but will the KLD "requirement" cut this back quite a bit?

Comment [RF10]: Why stop in 2009?

Comment [RF11]: Vague – is it a Herfindahl type measure?

TWO	**Two** key questions
(H) What's New?	**IDEA** is novel – the effect of competition on CSR strategies has never been studied in such terms. Prior research has documented a positive aggregate effect of competition on social performance but this study would be the first to consider the underlying mechanism that justifies this variation, and further explore how industry specificities play an important role.
(I) So What?	This research holds particular interest for investors and regulators who consider the implicit social contract between business and society. Investing in socially responsible organizations requires understanding the dynamics that prompt them to engage in social actions. Understanding which responsible actions result in response to external constraints, such as competitive pressure, offers a first step toward designing appropriate incentives to enhance social welfare. With our analysis of the relationship of CSR with competition, we focus on the strategic side, but we do not intend to exclude potential altruistic motives. Rather, we acknowledge the coexistence of strategic and altruistic motives and explain how they function as complements.
ONE	**One** bottom line
(J) Contribution?	**Primary source of the contribution:** The angle of approach of the competition-CSR relationship is our main contribution. We consider how CSR in its multidimensionality and account for industry specificities, while other studies rather focused on the aggregate effect of competition on CSR.
(K) Other Considerations	Is **Collaboration** needed/desirable? – idea: no; – data: yes, no personal access to KLD data, need collaboration with someone who is able to use these data; – tools: no Target Journal(s)? Journal of Business Ethics. Realistic? To be discussed. "**Risk**" assessment: – "no result" risk: LOW – the source of contribution rather comes from the angle of approach, any results can be interesting, although it will be easier to 'sell' the paper if we get significant coefficients; – "competitor" risk (ie being beaten by a competitor): MEDIUM/HIGH –A working paper at MIT is online, dealing with how social performance varies around import tariff reductions (used as exogenous shocks on competition) – risk of "obsolescence": LOW – CSR issues are attracting a growing interest, and markets are becoming more and more competitive, the subject is likely to remain topical for a while;

Comment [RF12]: See earlier comment – seems to be contradictory

Comment [RF13]: Sounds grand! Will be great if you can meaningfully pull this off!

Comment [RF14]: Sounds like you have a "tools" type contribution in mind – especially given the slight confusion above?

Comment [RF15]: Do you know anyone that has KLD data?

Comment [RF16]: Should/could you aim higher in the 1st instance?

(c) Revised Pitch – yellow highlights identifying new parts

(A) Working Title	"CSR strategies in response to competitive pressure"
(B) Basic Research Question	How does product market competition affect CSR strategies?
(C) Key paper(s)	Fernández-Kranz, D. & Santaló, J., 2010. When Necessity Becomes a Virtue: The Effect of Product Market Competition on Corporate Social Responsibility. Journal of Economics & Management Strategy[1], 19(2), p.453–487. Flammer, C., 2012. Does Product Market Competition Foster Corporate Social Responsibility? Working Paper, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
(D) Motivation/Puzzle	The causes and effects of CSR may be subject to a debate, but the negative business shocks resulting from environmental disasters (e.g., Exxon Valdez crash in March 1989; BP Deepwater Horizon spill in April 2010) or poor labor protections (e.g., Rana Plaza building collapse in October 2013) are clearly harmful, with strong negative market reactions. Competitive pressures increase the need to address extra-financial risks, whose impacts have stronger negative consequences in competitive contexts than in monopolies. But the notion of CSR also includes many different dimensions that can be studied independently. With respect to competition, the multidimensionality of CSR is crucial, because the strategic interest of CSR is likely to vary across different dimensions. How do firms adapt their CSR strategies in response to competitive pressures?
THREE	**Three** core aspects of any empirical research project i.e. the "**ID**io**T**s" guide
(E) Idea?	**"Core" idea:** The novel idea is that competitive pressures lead firms to engage in social initiatives with more strategic interest. While prior literature has raised an average positive effect of competition on social performance, the idea here is to investigate whether this effect is actually pulled by the fact that only CSR dimensions that are of strategic interest for the firm are fostered by competitive intensity. This is tested by looking at the effect of competition on CSR performance toward core stakeholders versus peripheral stakeholders, as well as investigating whether the degree of strategic interest of CSR with respect to the core activity of the industry makes it more or less sensitive to competitive intensity. **Central hypothesis(es):** Competitive pressures lead firms to engage in CSR initiatives with more strategic interest, and this is dependent of industry core activity: • Competitive pressure improves social performance targeting core stakeholders to a greater extent than social performance targeting peripheral stakeholders • Competitive pressures lead firms in 'dirty' industries to ignore environmental initiatives (environment is less likely to be a source of strategic competitive advantage in a pollution-intensive industry than in other industries) • Competitive intensity in B2C industries (a) fosters 'visible' social performance and (b) leads to a decline in 'less visible' social performance.
(F) Data?	(1) **Country/setting:** US to get comparable results with prior related studies. **Unit of analysis:** individual firms. **Sampling:** annual. **Type:** mainly firm specific. (2) Expected **sample size:** about 4000 firms on 15 years (1995-2009); unbalanced panel data (3) Data **source**(s): Compustat/CRSP/KLD ratings. No hand-collecting required. **Timeframe:** no major time delays; Research **assistance** needed?: no; Funding/**grants**?: no; (4) Standard data – nothing novel, high **quality** data from Compustat/CRSP/KLD (5) Will there be any problem with **missing data**/observations?: nothing major, just standard issues (6) Will your **test variables** exhibit adequate ("meaningful") **variation** to give good power?: plan to implement a methodology which will counteract the problem of having all firms in one industry with the same value for the competition variable, using a firm-level Herfindahl Hirschman index as indicator of firm-level external competitive pressure. More specifically, the idea is to use the industry concentration indicator provided by Hoberg and Phillips, the "fitted HHI" which counteracts many of the limitations of classical concentration ratios, accounting for the fact that a firm may operate on multiple segments by computing a weighted sum of the fitted-HHIs associated to each of the segments in which the firm is operating. Compustat segments ' database contains these data.

[1] The Journal of Economics and Management Strategy is a 'B' journal in Industrial Organization

(G) Tools?	Basic **empirical framework**: panel regressions with lagged variables (endogeneity) + Granger causality tests. Econometric **software** needed/appropriate for job?: Gauss and Stata Knowledge of **implementation** of appropriate or best statistical/econometric tests?: yes **Compatibility** of data with planned empirical framework?: yes, already used and admitted in the existing literature
TWO	**Two** key questions
(H) What's New?	**IDEA** is novel – The idea of "CSR strategies" to reach a competitive advantage is novel. While the (positive) effect of competition on aggregate indicators of social performance has been studied in prior research, the more specific effect on 'CSR strategies' has never been approached in such terms. The main novelty therefore lies into a focus on CSR strategies, accounting for -1- their multi-dimensionality and -2- their industry-specificity. Prior research has indeed already documented a positive aggregate effect of competition on social performance but this study's novelty would lie into the consideration of the underlying mechanisms as well as potential nuances of this variation, and further explore how industry specificities play an important role.
(I) So What?	Considering the competition-CSR relationship is of particular interest for regulatory authorities on one side, and socially responsible investors on the other side. Indeed, both need to understand the underlying mechanisms that prompt firms to engage in social actions. As our economies are becoming always more competitive, understanding how product market competition influences firms' CSR decision is a very important issue.
ONE	**One** bottom line
(J) Contribution?	**Primary source of the contribution:** The idea that firms focus more on strategic CSR under competitive pressure is our main contribution. We test this idea by considering CSR in its multidimensionality and accounting for sector specificities, while other studies rather focused on the aggregate effect of competition on CSR.
(K) Other Considerations	Is **Collaboration** needed/desirable? – idea: no; – data: yes, no personal access to KLD data, need collaboration with someone who is able to use these data; – tools: no Target Journal(s)? Journal of Business Ethics. Realistic? To be discussed. "**Risk**" assessment: – "no result" risk: LOW – the source of contribution rather comes from the angle of approach, any results can be interesting, although it will be easier to 'sell' the paper if we get significant coefficients; – "competitor" risk (ie being beaten by a competitor): MEDIUM/HIGH –A working paper at MIT is online, dealing with how social performance varies around import tariff reductions (used as exogenous shocks on competition) – risk of "obsolescence": LOW – CSR issues are attracting a growing interest, and markets are becoming more and more competitive, the subject is likely to remain topical for a while;

Internet Appendix A4: Illustrative Pitch Example in an inter-disciplinary setting

Figure A4.1 Topic: sustainable systems/consumer behaviour

Pitcher's Name	Saphira Rekker
(A) Working Title	"Converting planetary boundaries into action: A new approach to meeting global greenhouse gas targets"
(B) Basic Research Question	How can we use scientific planetary boundaries on greenhouse gas emissions as a tool to create guidelines for individuals to take action?
(C) Key paper(s)	Rockstrom, J., Steffen, W., Noone, K., Persson, A., Chapin, F. l., Lambin, E., et al. (2009). Planteary boundaries: exploring the safe operating space for humanity. Ecology and society , 14 (2).
(D) Motivation/Puzzle	Targets for global greenhouse gas emissions have been set by scientists, engineers and economists, to avoid the most severe consequences of climate change. However achieving these targets is a "wicked problem", i.e. a unique and complex problem, constantly changing, involving multiple stakeholders with conflicting interests and certitudes. Currently there is an essential link missing in the literature that translates theory into practice. While multiple schemes exist to engage industry and government, little recognition has been given to the role of individuals in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Hence, there is a need for practical tools that help individuals to reduce emissions to a 'fair-share' level. Herewith, this project addresses the global challenge of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction from a completely new angle. It uses a bottom up approach, using economic theory and scientific data.
THREE	**Three** core aspects of any empirical research project i.e. the "**ID**io**T**s" guide
(E) Idea?	This project addresses the global challenge of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction from a completely new angle. It uses a bottom up approach, using economic theory and scientific data. Ultimately the project develops a new tool to drive individuals to reduce GHG emissions associated with their consumption. Existing scientific knowledge is used to calculate individual quotas and lays the foundation of this research, currently missing in the literature. When this information is translated for individuals to use, it develops a practical solution to a complex problem, and thus filling a missing but essential piece to address this intractable global problem. By creating awareness about a range of actions that an individual could take-up, presenting the decision about what action to take as a game or app and linked to social networks/media, this research will develop an effective decision-support tool that could be commercialised. Also, the underlying model can be used to develop range of tools to fit different age groups and lifestyles.
(F) Data?	- Use available data on GHG emissions of production and consumption, and calculate individual GHG emission quotas (based on global emission targets) using GHG emission accounting techniques. The global Trade Analysts Project Database provides per capita CO_2 emissions of 8 different consumption categories for all countries. Prices of this database are $1080, should be able to get funding. Research by Rockstrom et al. (2009) provide calculations of global emission boundaries for our planet. - Ultimately the emissions per consumption category per capita would be calculated in a universal way, though as of yet this data varies per country, so as a starting point we would use Australian CO_2 emissions per consumption category.
(G) Tools?	An optimization model will be developed and applied to determine how the constraint of this individual quota can be met to reduce GHG emissions globally, given constraints and meaningful options for individuals. Economic modelling (including input---output techniques) and systems dynamics will be used to identify an (a most) optimal solution based on emission constraints. Development of software that utilizes the optimization model that can be 'played' by the individual according to his/her preferences, motivated by incentives and meeting the emission constraints. This final stage is constructed using economic theory (e.g. game theory) and psychology on consumer behaviour. The underlying model of the software, can be used to develop several applications to create a change in consumption behaviour.
TWO	**Two** key questions
(H) What's New?	The research will be distinctive in that carbon footprints of individuals are compared to scientifically determined limits to CO_2 emissions. These limits outline how much we can emit if we want to keep living in a 'safe human operating space' – and live life as we know it. These scientific limits are only known recently

	and there is no research as of yet that translates these planetary limits into individual’s consumption patterns and thus into how to take practical and effective action into meeting these targets (individuals being one of the multiple parties playing a role in meeting these targets). Economic theory and psychology on consumer behaviour provide insight on how to best design a practical tool to assist individual consumer’s decision--making. This will be a software game or an ‘app’, possibly linked to social networks/media, that takes into account the individuals’ planetary GHG constraints but honours the individuals’ freedom of choice to meet this constraint. The tool will aid people to monitor and reduce their emissions, motivated by meeting constraints. It ultimately draws upon natural human behaviour, such as competitive or financial incentives, to make it attractive to a wide range of individuals including those unaware or sceptical of climate change.
(I) So What?	Urgent action should be taken if humans want to avoid the most severe consequences of climate change and individual’s play a key role in meeting the CO_2 limits set by scientists.
ONE	**One** bottom line
(J) Contribution?	Using an interdisciplinary approach to calculate individuals’ GHG emission quotas and use economic theory and psychology on consumer behaviour to translate this into practical and effective action by individuals.
(K) Other Considerations	As it is very interdisciplinary, collaboration with experts in different fields is necessary. Knowledge needed of ecological processes (natural scientists), software development, programming, economic theory, and psychology. I have little knowledge of relevant journals. As it is interdisciplinary a wider range of journals might be interested. Probably journals in the natural sciences would be most interested.

Internet Appendix A5: Illustrative Pitch Example in Qualitative setting

Figure A5.1 Topic: Applicability of Pitch Template

Pitcher's Name	E.C. Researcher	**Date Completed**	17/8/14
(A) Working Title	Understanding why ECRs might use a Pitching Template		
(B) Basic Research Question	Are there discipline-based differences underlying why ECRs use a structured pitching template?		
(C) Key paper(s)	Faff (2014, SSRN)		
(D) Motivation/Puzzle	Structured templates to pitch research ideas, such as the "3-2-1" template presented in Faff (2014), have the capacity to assist novice researchers to clarify their thinking around a broad topic with the aim of isolating a key and novel research topic. The data in Faff (2014) show that to date, this template has been used predominantly among junior scholars in accounting and finance and exclusively to pitch ideas using quantitative methods. This study aims to explore why this template device is not being utilised to a greater extent outside accounting and finance; or by scholars who employ qualitative methods. As no quantitative data exist on the underlying motivations of those who have used the template, the study will employ multiple qualitative methods to unravel this puzzle.		
THREE	**Three** core aspects of any empirical research project i.e. the "**ID**io**T**s" guide		
(E) Idea?	In the past decade or so, academic researchers have come under increasing pressure to publish in the highest quality academic outlets. One result of this is that increasing emphasis has been placed on the development of junior researchers. Seminars and Workshops on how to publish well are commonplace in research focused universities and new tools are becoming available to assist junior researchers to develop their research ideas into solid, publishable projects. From a theoretical perspective, there seems no reason to speculate that opportunities to avail one's self of such new tools should be more attractive to scholars in particular disciplines, or to those with a particular ontological stance. One recent such tool is Faff's (2014) "3-2-1" template, which he presents as a structured process to develop a basic research question into a project that covers off the essential elements of a publishable paper, such as the contribution of the paper and its proposed impact (the "so what" question). Faff uses examples in finance, CSR and consumer behaviour to illustrate the template in action. One curious aspect of the Faff (2014) paper is the claim that the template has applications to other "fields of endeavour that take a quantitative/empirical approach", seemingly disregarding any application it might have outside the paradigm of positivism (and seemingly implying that an endeavor has to be quantitative to be empirical!). This is a shame, because as interpretive researchers will attest, the considerations that underlie the development of a research question and a research methodology using qualitative methods require equivalent rigour in the planning stage and equivalent pizazz in terms of the "so what" question. This study will use a combination of focus groups and semi-structured interviews to explore reactions of early career researchers in a range of traditionally quantitative and qualitative business disciplines to the "3-2-1" template, with the view to identifying and understanding differences in the proposed uptake of the template from both discipline and epistemological perspectives.		
(F) Data?	(1) What data do you propose to use? The template will be introduced to ECRs in a focus group setting to allow discussion of it usefulness. Semi---structured interviews will then be constructed to explore thoughts about the template and its proposed uptake. (2) What sample size do you expect? 20 ECRs across the business disciplines who use a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods. (3) Is it a panel dataset? No; but the same participants will take part in the focus groups and interviews. (4) Data Sources? There are no other such data available to my knowledge. I envisage two focus groups lasting one hour each and 20 interviews of 30 mins duration each. (5) Will there be any problem with missing data/observations? Database merge issues? Data manipulation/"cleansing" issues? No. Transcribing the data will be time consuming. (6) Will your "test" variables exhibit adequate ("meaningful") variation to give good power? Quality/reliability of data? The focus group and interview data will be rich with meaning. (7) Other data obstacles? E.g. external validity? construct validity? It would not be good if the digital recorder malfunctions!		

(G) Tools?	Basic empirical framework and research design? This is an interpretive study. Data from the focus groups and semi-structured interviews will be combined to provide an understanding of how ECRs with different ontological and epistemological stances react to the "3-2-1" template.
TWO	**Two** key questions
(H) What's New?	Is the novelty in the idea/data/tools? The novelty is in the idea. No study has looked at differences in proposed uptake of a tool such as the "3-2-1" template between scholars who employ qualitative and quantitative methods.
(I) So What?	Why is it important to know the answer? How will major decisions/behaviour/activity etc be influenced by the outcome of this research? At present, the template is claimed to be of use to scholars undertaking empirical quantitative research. It is important to know if qualitative scholars also view it as a useful tool because the template can potentially be employed to assist interpretive researchers to plan and clarify their research projects.
ONE	**One** bottom line
(J) Contribution?	What is the primary source of the contribution to the relevant research literature? Better understanding the applicability of the "3-2-1" template.
(K) Other Considerations	Is **Collaboration** needed/desirable? It is my understanding that I have to put the names of several people I know on any paper I write. Is that correct? **Target** Journal(s)? Realistic? Sufficiently ambitious? I am an Honours student. I missed your last Seminar, so I have no idea about academic journals. Sorry… "**Risk**" assessment: It is possible that Professor Faff may do the study before me.

Figure A5.2 Topic: Legitimacy of Current Corporate Tax Practices

<table>
<tr><td>Pitcher's Name</td><td>Mattia Anesa</td><td>Date Completed</td><td>15/09/2014</td></tr>
<tr><td>(A) Working Title</td><td colspan="3">Understanding the emergence, adoption and perceived impacts of corporate tax practices in Australia</td></tr>
<tr><td>(B) Basic Research Question</td><td colspan="3">How legitimate are current corporate tax practices in Australia?</td></tr>
<tr><td>(C) Key paper(s)</td><td colspan="3">• DOWLING, G. R. 2013. The curious case of corporate tax avoidance: Is it socially irresponsible? Journal of Business Ethics.
• GRACIA, L. & OATS, L. 2012. Boundary work and tax regulation: A Bourdieusian view. Accounting Organizations and Society, 37, 304-321.
• MALSCH, B. 2013. Politicizing the expertise of the accounting industry in the realm of corporate social responsibility. Accounting Organizations and Society, 38, 149-168.
• TING, A. 2014. iTax - Apple's International Tax Structure and the Double Non-Taxation Issue. British Tax Review, 1, 40-71.</td></tr>
<tr><td>(D) Motivation/Puzzle</td><td colspan="3">Tax practices have entered debates on business ethics and as a consequence, companies' tax conducts are not so much challenged on legal grounds but rather on their ethical content. While certain corporate tax practices sit in a gray-zone of ethical acceptability, practitioners and policy-makers need to take clear positions on what is an appropriate corporate tax conduct. This study will inform these actors by examining the legitimacy of current corporate tax practices as understood by the broad range of stakeholders constituting the Australian corporate tax system.</td></tr>
<tr><td>THREE</td><td colspan="3">Three core aspects of any empirical research project i.e. the "IDioTs" guide</td></tr>
<tr><td>(E) Idea?</td><td colspan="3">Taxation has been said to have particular connotations that makes it difficult to locate within CSR. However, there has been a mounting debate about the relevancy of tax issues within the CSR agenda. Different scholars offer diverse interpretations on what a legitimate corporate tax conduct may look like and what reasoning should inform ethical tax strategies. Extant empirical studies have been only able to examine one perspective at the time and therefore have missed field's variations, including how legitimacy is formed through social interactions. This study will bypass theoretical debates on legal vs. ethical boundaries of acceptability and instead will investigate how the legitimacy of corporate tax practices is constructed by the very actors which compose the Australian corporate tax field.</td></tr>
<tr><td>(F) Data?</td><td colspan="3">Data for this study will be excerpted from the understanding of four different stakeholder groups composing the Australian corporate tax field: i) Tax governance – i.e. ATO, ANAO, Parliament, Treasury and International Organizations; ii) Corporate tax payers – i.e. tax directors; iii) Professional tax advisers – including accrediting bodies; iv) Civil society – i.e. NGOs, Political think-tanks, journalists and academics</td></tr>
<tr><td>(G) Tools?</td><td colspan="3">Following a Bourdieusian approach, legitimacy will be analysed by: i) Identifying the actors composing the Australian corporate tax field; ii) Characterizing the perceived political hierarchy within the field; iii)Understanding which assumptions (i.e. doxa) drive the emergence of certain practices. These factors will substantiate the legitimacy/illegitimacy of corporate tax practices as perceived by the range of stakeholders identified above.
This study triangulates data acquired form interviews, documentary analysis and observations.</td></tr>
</table>

TWO	**Two** key questions
(H) What's New?	• Idea: The reason why taxation hardly fits into a CSR framework has been theorized but not yet explored empirically. This work will attempt to disclose underlying assumptions and contextual socially-constructed factors behind such claim. • Data: This work brings together the perspectives of a broad range of stakeholders including the views of civil society which has been traditionally disregarded in the analysis of tax practices. This is due to the fact that civil society is not identified as a stakeholder of the tax field by the legal system, nevertheless civil society is currently playing a role in the push towards responsible business practices. • Tools: Interviews and observations have rarely been used in the investigation of of corporate tax practices; in fact they have not been employed in combination for an analysis of tax practices within an ethical framework.
(I) So What?	While theoretical debates are inconclusive on whether corporations are contributing their fair share of tax to society, governance decisions are made accordingly to what seems to be the most compelling argument. Some decision-makers on one hand advocate for lower tax rates to foster investments while others suggest that increasing investments do not offset the negative impacts on social welfare that lower revenues of state budgets produce. Arguably, in a democratic system, policy makers need to be informed by a broad range of perspectives. This study contributes to the Australian debate and facilitates more informed decisions for policy-makers as well as practitioners.
ONE	**One** bottom line
(J) Contribution?	Potential contributions to the accounting literature include a mapping of the Australian tax system, including actors at play, perceived hierarchies and a detailed description of the assumptions driving the field. By looking into a specific context, this work will show how specific characteristics might enable/curb the legitimization/delegitimization of practices. The literature on professions will gain from the characterization of tax advisors understanding of CSR which is a neglected topic said to be of of critical importance due to the influence of professionals on corporate conducts. Again, with regards of tax advisory, this work answers the call for a more critical analysis of tax advisors' influence in shaping (social) institutions. This will also complement the CSR literature by showing whether tax advisors feel a 'shared responsibility' for the impacts that their services might impose on society. Also, emerging literature on institutional hybrids which have discussed how practitioners cope differently with conflicting logics in business settings will be integrated with insights how participants in the study deal with different institutional requirements (i.e. commercial vs social vs professional).
(K) Other Considerations	• Targets: Accounting, Organizations and Society, Journal of Business Ethics, Critical Perspectives on Accounting. • Risks: Access for observations might be denied; in that case the study will be based solely on interviews and documentary analysis. These are still appropriate and satisfactory methods of inquiry for the scope of the study. • Ethics: Anonymity and confidentiality will be guaranteed for all participants. • Scope: Admittedly broad but given the abductive nature of the study, it will gain more focus after the first inductive phase (i.e. preliminary analysis of interviews).

Internet Appendix A6: Illustrative Pitch Example in Management

Figure A6.1 Topic: University Engagement with Controversial Industries

Pitcher's Name	Liz Hardie **Date:** 29/8/14
(A) Working Title	How do universities engage with controversial industries? A case-study of onshore / unconventional gas research programs funded by industry.
(B) Basic Research Question	The primary research question is how do universities engage with controversial industries? The supporting questions are: • How do the critical organisational stakeholders for legitimacy (The State, the public, business, students, alumni and Media) <u>view</u> the credibility and legitimacy of the University-Business Collaborations (UBCs) focused on onshore unconventional gas research? • What strategies do UBCs pursue to create and maintain the UBC, university, company and industry legitimacy in the midst of the populist debate about unconventional gas?
(C) Key paper(s)	• Jain, Sanjay, and Gerard George. 2007. "Technology transfer offices as institutional entrepreneurs: the case of Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation and human embryonic stem cells." *Industrial and Corporate Change* 16(4):b535-67. • Lind, Frida, Alexander Styhre, and Lise Aaboen. 2013. "Exploring university-industry collaboration in research centres." *European Journal of Innovation Management* 16(1): 70-91.
(D) Motivation/Puzzle	In response to the emergence of a booming and controversial industries like onshore/unconventional gas, the strategies employed by UBCs transcend the traditional collaborative research and contracted research activities to form and reform the identity and legitimacy of the research centres, companies, industry and universities involved. The conundrums are as follows: When research centres engage with controversial industries, are the identities or legitimacy of the university being impacted? Is the university involvement with controversial industries indicative of the State's requirements for generating, collating and evaluating evidence for policy-making? Is the UBC research cooperation fulfilling State requirements for businesses to undertake local procurement? Through involvement with UBCs, are businesses gaining legitimacy and "social licence to operate"? When engaging with controversial industries, to what extent do universities need to participate in the strategies that controversial industries undertake to maintain their legitimacy?
THREE	**Three** core aspects of any empirical research project i.e. the "**ID**io**T**s" guide
(E) Idea?	The traditional roles of university research centres and technology transfer offices at some universities are merging as universities find new channels and organisational forms to engage more closely with industry partners. Literatures regarding how universities transfer technology, valorise research, manage research integrity and research ethics do not speak to the how universities position themselves within public debates about emerging and controversial industries. The research centres engaging with industry partners represent and reflect not only themselves but the collaborating university and companies' social and economic missions in the public record. The identity and the legitimacy of the UBC within the public debates surrounding the emerging, booming and controversial industry of onshore / unconventional gas provide insights into the ongoing identity and legitimacy of the universities. It also provides practical advice for university decision-makers engaging with controversial industries in the future.
(F) Data?	The setting for this project is onshore/unconventional gas research programs or centres, located at universities, funded partly or wholly by industry. The case study comprises ten sites. The universities are located in countries where large onshore/unconventional gas extraction projects have been proposed or commenced, and English is the dominant language. The initial period of time under analysis will be 2010-2014, but if the historical context for the establishment of the research programs becomes important, the time period will be extended backward. This qualitative case study employs three different types of collection techniques - observations, semi-structured interviews and document analysis. The sampling plan for observation includes attending the operational meetings of the Centre for Coal Seam Gas at the University of Queensland and any other meetings of research centres at other sites that I am able to. A "purposeful" sampling plan for interviews will be implemented as it is important to identify and speak with individuals who can shed the most light on the subjects of university-business collaboration and onshore/unconventional gas including university, government and industry representatives. As the topic of this study involves a major economic development and Queensland's largest university, these social actions warrant direct involvement and interest from current and former "elite" leaders who hold formal authority or are experts in the arena. The documents to be analysed include UBC websites, corporate communications from the collaborating university and business, university policies and procedures, government policies and statements, and media reports.

	It is anticipated that the documents will be publically available, but I may approach university records management section for access to internal documents if recommended by interviewees.
(G) Tools?	This grounded interpretive study will use an automated content analysis of documents in the public sphere (using Leximancer) augmented by the transcripts from interviews with informants from one or two of the sites.
TWO	**Two** key questions
(H) What's New?	The idea of universities threatening their current identity and legitimacy by engaging with controversial industries in novel. The opportunity of being a social science researcher imbedded within a research centre operating in this environment is rare.
(I) So What?	As universities engage more closely with industry partners, external stakeholders will expect not only transparency and accountability, but also adherence to the social and economic missions of the day. This research will illuminates and compares several examples of where the social and economics missions of a university are contested, providing evidence for future innovation policy-makers and university decision-makers.
ONE	**One** bottom line
(J) Contribution?	*Unique Contribution to theory* – Recent literature on organizational legitimacy suggests that for organizations operating in controversial industries the standards of scrutiny are higher. These organisations need to gain the endorsement of external stakeholders in order to successfully operate. Writing about a failed bid for a casino in the UK, Reast et al. (2013) devised a bi-dimensional model of legitimacy-seeking strategies. The model integrates various tactics into four generic strategies - construing, earning, bargaining, and capturing, as well as pathways that combine these strategies. Acknowledging the context-dependent nature of legitimacy, they call for additional research into organisations from other industries to extend knowledge of this issue. My study stands to expand their model. Research pertaining to the specific ways organizations in controversial industries seeks credibility and support is sparse. One of two exceptions is use by Patriotta, Gond and Schultz (2011) of Boltanski and Thévenot's theory of justification to account for how various stakeholder groups actively engage with discourses and objects to maintain the legitimacy of institutions. The site for analysis was a nuclear accident in Germany. The second example of previous research in this arena is the analysis of oil companies' websites for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategies, which was completed by Du and Vieira (2011). My intended contribution to the organisational legitimacy literature seeks to extend the insights of Jain & George (2006) on the role of technology transfer offices and universities in the promotion of controversial industries and technologies' legitimacy. My contribution to the University-Business collaboration literature will be to make explicit the issues surrounding both the university and the industry partners' legitimacy when universities engage with controversial industries and projects. Few studies have focused on organisational identity and legitimacy of universities. Until recently there has been limited focus on the identity of universities (Steiner, Sundström, & Sammalisto, 2013; Weerts, Freed, & Morphew, 2014) and an initial scan of the literature did not find any works related to UBCs. *Unique Contribution to practice* – Provides data and advice to the leadership of the universities about how their potential competitors or collaborators are operating and responding to public debates. *Unique Contribution to policy* – The benefits of university-industry engagement are frequently researched and debated but the risks and strategies for mitigating them are infrequently identified. This research will provide useful insights into UBC for Federal and State higher education and innovation policy at a time when the future of the higher education sector is being hotly debated.
(K) Other Considerations	Targets Journals - Strategic Management Journal, Research Policy, Cambridge Journal of Economics or Organisational Studies. Collaboration - With access to additional funding and through the connections of researchers at the Centre for Coal Seam Gas, there may be an opportunity to undertake another "deep-dive" case study at another research centre. Risk Assessment – low. I am not aware of anyone else researching in this arena. The issues surrounding universities' engagement with controversial industries will not disappear.

Internet Appendix A7: Illustrative Pitch Example in Chemistry

Figure A7.1 Topic: Paleobiogeochemistry/Geochemistry

Pitcher's name	Marita Smith
(A) Working Title	Molecular biomarker records of Australian sea-surface temperatures over the past five centuries
(B) Basic Research Question	What is the change in temperature of Australia's oceans using biomarker records?
(C) Key paper(s)	• Brassell, S. C., Eglinton, G., Marlowe, I. T., Pflaumann, U. & Sarnthein, M. (1986). Molecular stratigraphy: a new tool for climatic assessment. *Nature*, 320, 129 – 133. • Hendy, E. J., Gagan, M. K., Alibert, C. A., McCulloch, M. T., Lough, J. M. & Isdale, P. J. (2002). Abrupt Decrease in Tropical Pacific Sea Surface Salinity at End of Little Ice Age. *Science*, 295, 1511 – 1514. • Schouten, S., Hopmans, E. C., Schefuß, E. & Sinninghe Damsté, J. S. Distributional variations in marine crenarchaeotal membrane lipids: a new tool for reconstructing ancient sea water temperatures? *Earth and Planetary Science Letters*, 204, 265-274
(D) Motivation/Puzzle	The few climate records available show major differences in the timing of climate changes between the northern and southern hemispheres over the last millennium. Instrumental records in the southern hemisphere are only available for the last century, and reconstructed records are based on ancient core samples taken near Antarctica or the equator. None of these provide relevant climate information for the last several centuries. There is a distinct need to analyse new climate data for the Australian region to assess global climate changes.
THREE	Three core aspects of any empirical research project i.e. the "iDioTs" guide
(E) Idea?	The 'hockey-stick' temperature increase of the 20th century has instigated concern for a global warming trend. In order to investigate this temperature increase, it is necessary to derive high-resolution temperature records that span the last several centuries. Currently, data from this period is sourced almost exclusively from the Northern Hemisphere, predominantly from terrestrial records. There is a considerable lack of temperature records for the Southern Hemisphere, making analysis of hemispheric and global trends in temperature changes difficult. The lipids of specific haptophyte marine algae (alkenones) and marine Thaumarchaeota (glycerol dialkyl glycerol tetraethers) in the sedimentary record are biomarkers that may be converted to sea-surface temperature (SST) via the UK'37 and TEX86 proxies, respectively. Recently, the lipids of some eustigmatophyte algae (long chain diols) have been proposed as an additional measure of SST via the LDI proxy. These proxies have never been used together to provide new records of temperature. These records would provide an important means of palaeoenvironmental inference for hemispheric and global climatic trends during this period.
(F) Data?	- Data will be sourced from the continental sea-shelf around Australia using the CSIRO *RV Southern Surveyor* and a specially constructed multiple corer. A month-long voyage from Fremantle to Brisbane circumnavigating the southern part of Australia will be undertaken to sample the sea floor at key positions. - Samples will be analysed for specific organic composition and dated using radionuclides

	- Ultimately, a biomarker record of sea-surface temperature would be generated for south-east Australia using three independent biomarker records.
(G) Tools?	Physical apparatus will be necessary, including sampling equipment on-board ship (in particular, the multiple corer device) and analysis equipment (Gas Chromatogaph-Mass Spectrometer and Liquid Chromatograph-Mass Spectrometer). Records of specific organic compounds will be generated using laboratory work and chromatograph software used to provide raw data for generating biomarker records as per literature formulas.
TWO	Two key questions
(H) What's New?	There are no existing climate records for the Australian region over the last few centuries. This project will generate three independent measures of sea-surface temperature to provide important data for analysis of climate change to rectify this gap. This is the first project to combine these biomarker proxies. Thus, it provides an important means of palaeoenvironmental inference for h period. The DATA will be completely new, and provide avenues for further research that can be compared to the results of this project.
(I) So What?	Currently, data for climate change models is a hot commodity. New data, particularly in Australia, will provide completely novel records of temperature change to rectify a gap in the scientific literature. This data will inform future management of Australia's oceans and potentially affect policy on carbon emissions and trading.
ONE	One bottom line
(J) Contribution	Primary source of the contribution: Raw and processed data in the form of biomarker temperature records is the primary contribution. Changes in temperature over the past several centuries will be assessed from a climatic standpoint in relation to world-wide fluctuations.
(K) Other considerations	Is Collaboration needed/desirable? -Idea: no; -Data; yes – multi-disciplinary and multi-institutional -Tools; yes – CSIRO, representatives and funding from various institutions Target journals – *Nature*, *Nature Climate Change* "Risk" assessment: -"no result" risk: Extremely low. With three independent sources of biomarker records, it is extremely unlikely that no results would be obtained. Even if all three records indicated minimal temperature change, this would be an important result to indicate that northern hemisphere rates of warming are non-comparable to southern hemisphere -"competitor risk"(i.e. being beaten by a competitor): Low. Only the ANU has the facilities for this kind of research in Australia, and there is a distinct lack of Australian core samples. Thus, no available study material means no competition. -risk of "obsolescence": Low. Climate change is a hot topic, with demand for new, modern records of temperature change world-wide.

Internet Appendix A8: Mechanical Engineering

Figure A8.1 Generic Template Commentary: A Current Student's Perspective (Suyash Mahto)

Pitcher's Name	OK	**Date**	OK
(A) Working Title	OK: It is important to decide this early on if the student is proposing their own thesis topic. In certain cases, however, supervisors may give the working title to students.		
(B) Basic Research Question	OK: A good way for students to test themselves and see if they know what the 'core question' of their topic is.		
(C) Key paper(s)	OK: Can be a good way of motivating students to start researching literature early on.		
(D) Motivation/Puzzle	OK: Very useful for the introductory section of the thesis as it tells the reader why the thesis was undertaken in the first place.		
THREE	***Three core aspects of any empirical research project i.e. the "IDioTs" guide***		
(E) Idea	OK: Helpful for students to understand what the crux of their thesis topic is. As was mentioned in the comments for '(A) Working Title', this information may be provided by supervisors. In such circumstances, this section would largely be redundant. Of course, a supervisor could also use this as a check to see if their students are able to understand and explain the idea(s) behind the thesis, in their own words.		
(F) Data	HANDY TIP: A lot of the data used in Engineering theses is produced through physical testing or simulations (e.g. computer-based simulations). As a result, questions like "Country/setting" and "Data sources" may not be relevant. This section can still be of use as it can help students plan out what sort of data they are aiming to collect – e.g. variables they want to consider, size of the dataset, limitations with the data etc.		
(G) Tools	HANDY TIP: In a Mechanical Engineering setting, think of this as 'Resources' – including any physical tools/testing equipment required for use in experimentation. Will you need to book certain labs to perform testing? Have you considered the procedures required to do this and issues relating to the availability of these facilities?		
TWO	***Two key questions***		
(H) What's New?	OK: Good to include this in the introductory section of the thesis, as it would help clarify what the thesis is doing differently.		
(I) So What?	OK: Complements the 'What's New?' component.		
ONE	***One bottom line***		
(J) Contribution	OK: Useful as the contribution of the project is important to consider.		
(K) Other Consideration	HANDY TIP: Risk assessment, with regard to obsolescence, is usually not a concern. For Engineering Honours students, 'Target journal' is likely to be a non-issue, as the end goal of the thesis is usually not to publish the paper in a journal (this can vary between universities, however, so it is worth clarifying this for your case).		

Internet Appendix A8: Mechanical Engineering

Figure A8.2 Illustrative Pitch Template Example

Pitcher's Name	Suyash Mahto (13/9/14)
(A) Working Title	"Investigation of a theoretical function to describe damping in conveyor belts under non-steady state conditions"
(B) Basic Research Question	What methods exist to model damping in conveyor belts?
(C) Key paper(s)	(1) Lodewijks, G 1996, 'Dynamics of Belt Systems', Thesis, Delft University of Technology, Delft. (2) Nordell, LK & Ciozda, ZP 1984, 'Transient Belt Stresses During Starting and Stopping: Elastic Response Simulated by Finite Element Methods', Bulk Solids Handling, vol. 4, no. 1, p. 93. (3) Lodewijks, G 1997, 'Non-Linear Dynamics of Belt Conveyor Systems', Bulk Solids Handling, vol. 17, no. 1, p. 11. (4) Zienkiewicz, OC & Taylor, RL 2000, 'Finite Element Method Volume 1 – The Basis', Elsevier.
(D) Motivation/Puzzle	In industry, the majority of conveyors are currently designed using static analysis tools and the validity of using such methodologies, to analyse dynamic systems, must be questioned. During standard operating conditions, the dynamic properties of conveyor systems are relatively well understood. The necessity to study the dynamics associated with these systems, however, becomes increasingly important when long conveyors (lengths in excess of 1000m) are subjected to non-steady state conditions; such as emergency stops. The company currently uses an in-house dynamics software package to perform this dynamic analysis. While the software is operational, its damping module is incorrect and requires manual correction by the user to produce accurate results. This is not a major issue for those with extensive industry and modelling experience, however, becomes a significant problem for those without this knowledge. Failure to appropriately analyse these systems can result in poor engineering design; which as a consequence, may lead to premature failures of the systems and higher costs (both construction and maintenance costs).
THREE	***Three core aspects of any empirical research project i.e. the "IDioTs" guide***
(E) Idea	In dynamic analysis, the damping function is fundamental to obtaining accurate results. Particularly for long and/or complex conveyors, the lack of a suitable damping function will produce highly misleading results. Suppose these misleading results are used by company to design a conveyor system for a client – this will cause numerous problems. For example, the conveyor system may be overdesigned/over-engineered as a means of adding a 'safety margin' since its dynamic behaviour is not properly understood. This will not only cause the system to be more expensive; due to the overdesign, but there may also be high levels of component failures as these components cannot be optimally selected. Identifying factors which may assist in developing a function for damping can therefore allow the dynamic behaviour of the conveyor system to be understood more clearly.
(F) Data	The data required for this thesis will be site data obtained from current, operational conveyor systems and shall be sourced by the company. Ideally, the data should come from numerous different conveyor systems and should include the starting, stopping, and running cases. For each operating case, the following characteristics are needed: time,

	tension, velocity, and torque.
(G) Tools	Main resources expected to be used in the project include: Microsoft Office Suite and the company's Conveyor Dynamics Analysis Suite. No physical testing is expected to be required as site testing has been conducted previously.
TWO	***Two key questions***
(H) What's New?	The solution being developed will be novel. Literature and other publically available sources of information will be useful for guidance and ideas, however, there is no documented solution to this problem.
(I) So What?	Developing an improved damping module will allow for the software to be more refined and produce more accurate results. In turn, this will improve the overall design quality of these systems.
ONE	***One bottom line***
(J) Contribution	(1) Evaluating the existing damping module used in the software and assessing the limitations and flaws. (2) Proposing a refined method of modelling the damping in conveyor belts. This may build upon the existing method or may be an entirely new solution.
(K) Other Consideration	**Collaboration** and cooperation with UQ supervisor and work supervisors is highly desirable. Ideally, there should be a meeting once a week, with each party. **Scope** is well defined. The problem is specific to the extent that it provides a clear picture of the goal, however, is not too specific that it restricts any flexibility. **Risk** assessment. ▪ Competition is a non-issue. ▪ No-result is a strong possibility. There is a great degree of disagreement in industry regarding this topic and minimal collaborative efforts between organisations. As a result, the problem is highly complex and an ideal solution may not be achievable. It is, however, believed that an improved solution (even if not ideal) can be proposed.

Internet Appendix A9: Computer Science

Figure A9.1 Illustrative Pitch Template Example in Robotics

Pitcher's Name	Lexie Yao (date completed: 12/9/14)
(A) Working Title	Alternative way to play multi-robot games: implementing genetic algorithms in game theory
(B) Basic Research Question	Optimizing multi-robot path finding with game theory and genetic algorithms
(C) Key paper(s)	I.A.Ismail et al., 2007. Game Theory Using Genetic Algorithms. Proceedings of the World Congress on Engineering, 1. (Conference paper) Meng Yan. 2008. Multi-Robot Searching using Game-Theory Based Approach. International Journal of Advanced Robotics Systems, 5(4), p.341-350. Semsar-Kazerooni, E. & Khorasani, K., 2009. Multi-agent team cooperation: A game theory approach. Automatica, 45(10), p.2205-2213.
(D) Motivation/Puzzle	Compared to a single robot, the use of multi-robot has advantage in greater efficiency and less time consumption, with huge potential in assisting human beings with field exploration, rescue operations, or even in military operations. However, efficient cooperation with accuracy and scalability among all robots is an enormous barrier towards achieving these goals. Other than efficiency, reliability can also be promoted with the development of optimal strategy. Of all usages, path finding is the fundamental objective to be accomplished. For all robots, it is essential to select the optimal path without conflicting with each other.
THREE	
(E) Idea?	Treating each robot as a player in a game, the use of genetic algorithms will produce a range of optimized overall robot behaviors. A robot is expected to be able to choose optimal behavior based on the behavior of other robots.
(F) Data?	"Data" for this project are experimental and thus will be created as part of the project design itself. Initial data (chromosomes) processed by the algorithm are data collected by external sensors on robots, including but not limited to range, proximity or positioning. A result pool should be produced after a number of rounds of mutations, which, will subsequently be used in comparison to the outcome calculated in game theory to reveal the optimal strategy.
(G) Tools?	Basic algorithms: genetic algorithms. The algorithms imitate Darwinian natural selection, encode a potential solution to a specific problem on a simple chromosome-like data structure, and apply recombination operators to these structures in such a way as to preserve critical information. Method chosen for determining optimal strategy among robots in co-operation: game theory. It is a mathematical study of strategies of interaction between different parties. All parties are expected to choose the strategy with the optimized payoff, given the information they have. Software for plotting experiment results: MATLAB Programming language: C
TWO	
(H) What's New?	Prior researches have already investigated multi-robot operations by implementing the concept of game theory in order to yield desirable co-operation strategies, the introduction of genetic algorithms into the research is expected to produce not only optimal solutions in reliable manner, but also a pool of solutions for higher error tolerance and to refine robot performance and scalability.

(I) So What?	Under certain circumstances multi-robots systems are superior to single robot as they greatly improve the time needed, range covered, and possibilities to accomplish more complex tasks. Implementation of algorithms offers them the ability to “think” and “decide”, maximizing performance outcomes while minimizing conflicts during executions among the team.
ONE	
(J) Contribution?	Identifying the optimal genetic algorithm for application in multi-robot searching.
(K) Other Considerations	Time and space complexity with applying genetic algorithms can be less-than-ideal. Little control over the quantity of output data from mutation operation. An adequate amount of data must be gathered in the initial stage of research.

Internet Appendix A10: Mathematics

Figure A10.1 Illustrative Pitch Template Example in Sport

Pitcher's Name	Daniel Murray (Date completed: 8/9/14)
(A)Working Title	"Measuring efficiency in the National Rugby League"
(B)Basic Research Question	How well do teams in the National Rugby League play up to their potential?
(C)Key Papers	Anthony Bedford, James Baglin, 2008, Evaluating the performance of an ice hockey team using interactive phases of play, IMA **Journal of Management Mathematics**, no. 2, pg 159-166 Carlos Pestana Barros, Pedro Garcia-del-Barrio, 2008, Efficiency measurement of the English football Premier League with a random frontier model, **Economic Modelling,** no. 25, pp 994-1002 Afriat, S.N., 1972. Efficiency estimation of production frontiers. **International Economic Review** 13, 568-598 Richard A. Hofler, James E. Payne, 1997, Measuring efficiency in the National Basketball Association, **Economics Letters**, no. 55, pp 293-299 García, J., Ibáñez, S.J., Gómez, M.A., Sampaio, J, 2014, Basketball Game-related statistics discriminating ACB league teams according to game location, game outcome and final score difference, **International Journal of Performance Analysis in Sport**, no. 2, pp 443-452
(D)Motivation/Puzzle	Sports fans frequently debate about which team is the best, usually by quoting won-lost records. Conversely, many coaches talk less about won-lost records and more about their teams "playing up to their potential" **Puzzle:** Can stochastic production frontier models measure efficiency within a Sports League?
Three	Three core aspects of any empirical research project i.e. the "IDioTs" guide
(E)Idea?	**"Core" idea:** The novel idea is efficiency will be measured by the application of the stochastic frontier methodology developed by Aigener er al. (1977, Journal of Economic Studies). The stochastic frontier model which will be employed in this study was developed, and continues to be largely used, in a production context. It is natural to address efficiency in that case and easy to understand what it means. In the case of a sport, however, terms like production, frontier and efficiency may not have clear meanings. For this discussion, 'production' means a team's wins. The 'frontier' and 'frontier production' refer to the maximum attainable (potential) wins that a team can achieve, given its players, coaching and other circumstances. Finally, 'efficiency' describes how closely to its potential a team approaches. Central hypothesis(es): Teams will become more efficient at reaching their potential when: • *The ratios of tackles and missed tackles is hypothesised to have a positive impact on team wins when >0. These two variables measure the quality of a team's defensive ability.* • *The ratios associated with effective plays and ineffective plays is hypothesised to have a positive impact on team wins when >0. These two variables measure the quality of a team's ability to execute strategic decisions.* • *The ratios of Completions and Errors is hypothesised to assist increases in wins when >0. These two variables measure the ability of a team to effectively keep possession of the ball.*
(F)Data?	(1) **Country/setting:** Australia, National Rugby League **Unit of analysis:** Individual teams **Sampling:** Weekly **Type:** Game related (2) **Expected sample size:** 16 teams on 5 years (2009-2013) (3) **Data Source:** NRL.com. No hand-collecting required. **Timeframe:** No major time delays; **Research assistance needed?**: No; **Funding/grant?:** No; (4) **Standard data -** Nothing novel, high quality data from NRL.com

	(5) **Will there be any problem with missing data/observations?** Nothing major, just standard issues (6) **Will your test variables exhibit adequate(“meaningful” variation to give good power?**: Yes. Large and “meaningful” variation will be inherent in the results of NRL games.
(G)Tools	**Basic empirical framework:** Stochastic frontier model **Econometric software needed/appropriate for job?** Python **Knowledge of implementation of appropriate or best statistical/econometric tests?:** Yes **Compatibility of data with planned empirical framework?:** Yes, already used and admitted in the existing literature
Two	
(H)What’s New?	**Idea is novel –** The idea of “Measuring efficiency” to reach a competitive advantage in game results is novel. While the (positive) effect of measuring efficiency on the National Basketball Association, Major League Baseball and UK Premier League has been studied in prior research, the more specific effect of ‘measuring efficiency’ has never been applied to the National Rugby League. The main novelty therefore lies into a focus on measuring efficiency, accounting for -1- determining the NRL’s ability to measure potential predictions -2- analysing a team’s ability to improve and evaluate current inefficiencies
(I)So what?	Considering the measurement of efficiency in a team’s ability to maximise potential is of particular interest for NRL clubs and relevant associations on one side, and socially responsible investors on the other. Indeed, both need to understand the underlying mechanisms that prompt teams to increase winning potential. As each season is becoming more unpredictable, understanding how improvements in efficiency ratios can influence a team’s victory capability will play a crucial role in the success of a club.
One	
(J)Contribution?	**Primary source of the contribution:** The idea that teams focus more on increasing efficiency to reach their team’s potential under competitive pressure is our main contribution. We test this idea by considering efficiency is dependent on a number of factors intuitive to success, while other studies focus on a number of variables unrelated to direct success.
(K)Other Contributions	**Is collaboration needed/desirable?** -Idea: No -Data: No -Tools: No **Target Journal:** Journal of Mathematical Social Sciences, Journal of Mathematic Modelling, Journal of Economic Theory, Journal of Economic Behaviour and Organisation? To be discussed. **“Risk”** assessment**:** - “No result” risk: Low- the source of contribution rather comes from the angle of approach, any results can be interesting, although it will be easier to ‘sell’ the paper if we get significant coefficients: -“competitor” risk (ie being beaten by a competitor): LOW – No current papers are being written at the moment in relation to measuring efficiency against and Australian sports league -risk of “obsolescence”: LOW – efficiency issues are attracting a growing interest, and investors are becoming more and more competitive, the subject is likely to remain topical for a while;