AI.conometrics

Preliminary round

Deliverable rulebook

Time allowed
48 hours for every team

Paper length
max. 15 pages of main text; max. 30 pages in total

1 Timing and submission

Each team will produce a research paper. Teams will receive an email containing the prompt by the starting time specified in their reservation. See the Sample Prompt for an example. Papers must be submitted no later than the end time specified in the reservation. All teams will have exactly **48 hours** to complete their paper, regardless of the date chosen.

The deadline is firm. Late papers will not be judged. Teams should plan to submit at least 30 minutes before the official deadline.

Submissions that do not comply with the following requirements will not be sent to the judges:

1. **Submission email.** Reply to the email containing the prompt, sending the submission to ai.conometrics@unibocconi.it.
2. **Submission package.** Submit a ZIP archive named `Submission_[teamcode].zip`, containing the paper in PDF format and a complete replication package containing a README file and all the code and datasets used to produce all the paper's results. Papers will be penalized if the replication package does not work, produces different results, or is not submitted as instructed.
3. **Required template.** Use the standard LaTeX template supplied by the competition organizers.
4. **Required data.** The main analysis must use at least one of the datasets provided. The Data section must explicitly explain how the chosen dataset was used. See Section 7 for further rules.

2 Paper requirements

The main text must not exceed **15 pages** measured from the beginning of the introduction to the end of the conclusions, excluding the front page, table of contents, AI use, appendix, and references. The complete paper, including all material, must not exceed **30 pages**. Note that this is an upper limit, not a target. On the contrary, **we reward conciseness** and we expect something less then the upper bound. All tables and figures must be included **exclusively** in the appendix.

The paper should cover the following topics. These are indicative headings and do not have to be used verbatim as section headings:

- Introduction.
- Data.
- Theoretical framework, if applicable.
- Empirical methods.
- Results.
- Robustness checks, limitations, alternative designs, and possibilities for further research.
- Conclusions.
- AI use.
- An appendix containing all tables and figures.

AI disclosure. The extent of AI use will not be evaluated. This section is required solely for accountability and disclosure. Refer to the AI Rulebook for details of permitted and prohibited uses.

3 Evaluation criteria

Teams will be judged on the following criteria, in descending order of importance:

1. **A relevant economic question addressing the topic of the prompt**
   - Is the question original and economically interesting?
   - Is the research question clearly stated and well motivated?
   - To the extent possible, is it well positioned within the literature?
2. **An appropriate and rigorous econometric technique**
   - Is a formal model written down and explained? Are the coefficients of interest clearly identified?
   - Are the identification assumptions clearly stated?
   - Are results presented in clear tables with alternative specifications?
3. **Deep and thoughtful intuition behind the results**
   - How good is the explanation provided? Are limitations addressed?
   - Does the paper acknowledge alternative explanations consistent with the same pattern of evidence? How well are they explored?
   - How original is the explanation, and how does it contribute to the literature?
4. **Robustness and heterogeneity of results**
   - How do participants check for robustness?
   - Is heterogeneity of results explored?
5. **Quality of graphs and tables**
   - Are the graphs correct?
   - Are the graphs and tables informative and appropriate for the specific econometric technique?
   - Are they readable and visually clear?
6. **Quality and completeness of the replication package**
7. **Clear and concise writing**, conveying the paper's central message directly.

N.B. A clear and economically motivated question should be the end goal behind your submissions. Not finding statistically significant results will **NOT** be penalized. What we are interested in is the intuition, motivation, and rigor of the analysis. In contrast, a significant result derived through methods and specifications that are not clearly defensible will be judged negatively.

4 Anonymity and judging

The judging process is intended to be anonymous. Each team will be assigned a number that uniquely identifies it. The paper must not include any information identifying the team, including members' names, their university, or their country of origin. Focusing on the team's country of origin in a research question or dataset does not constitute a violation of this rule.

Each paper will be judged by multiple reviewers drawn from former master's students, PhD candidates, former members of the Economic Society of Bocconi Students, and Bocconi Economic Journal reviewers. Each reviewer will evaluate several papers and assign a score from 1 to 10 and teams will be ranked by the average of the scores (reviewer fixed effects will be taken into account).

5 Plagiarism and academic integrity

All submissions to the competition must represent the original work of the participating team. Teams may draw on ideas, methods, datasets, and prior literature from the econometrics and economics research communities. Any material derived from existing work must be properly acknowledged.

Teams must clearly cite all sources from which they borrow concepts, empirical strategies, econometric methods, data constructions, or written material. This requirement applies equally to published papers, working papers, textbooks, online resources, and other publicly available materials.

Participants must not use their own previously written work. Reusing text or results from prior projects or papers authored by team members violates these rules and will result in the team's disqualification. Appropriate background checks will be carried out for each participant to enforce this rule.

6 Use of generative AI

Refer to the AI Rulebook.

7 Use of datasets

All publicly available data may be used during the competition. For this purpose, publicly available data are data that can be found through an internet search and accessed without payment. Datasets accessible through a participant's universities' licenses may also be used.

Participants must comply with the terms governing any restricted data to which they have access. Questions about the use of restricted data should be referred to the competition organizers at ai.conometrics@unibocconi.it.