

Advice on Writing a Successful CDER Proposal

Kim P. Huynh¹

¹Bank of Canada
kim@huynh.tv

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*The views expressed in this discussion are those of the authors. No responsibility for them
should be attributed to the Bank of Canada.*

Caveat Emptor

My experience with Statistics Canada (STC):

- 11 years of using administrative files.
- Mostly T2LEAP, LEAP, and LWF files.
- Have published in JASA, JEDC, JIndEc, inter alia.
- Research and data development grants supported by SSHRC.
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I cannot guarantee that my advice will get you access.

Elements of the Proposal

STC sends me the following:

- Project proposal,
- CV of researchers associated with the project, and
- Possible reference letters for the researchers.

Based on this information, I assess the quality of the project and researchers based on six metrics provided by STC.

The Proposal

- 1 Is there a clear research question?
- 2 Is the question appropriately placed within a research context?
- 3 Is the proposed research method sound and appropriate?
- 4 Are the proposed data appropriate for the project?
Please note that whether the data exists or can be developed to support the project is out of scope for this review.
- 5 Is the proposal well written and easily understood?
- 6 Based on the information provided to you, do the researchers have the background and technical expertise to carry out the proposed project?

Figure 1: CDER/Statistics Canada



The screenshot shows the website for the Canadian Centre for Data Development and Economic Research (CDER) on the Statistics Canada portal. The browser address bar shows the URL www.statcan.gc.ca/eng/cder/index. The page header includes the Government of Canada logo and navigation links for Canada.ca, Services, Departments, and Français. The main navigation menu includes "Information for...", "Browse by subject", "Browse by key resource", and "Help". The breadcrumb trail reads "Home > The Canadian Centre for Data Development and Economic Research (CDER)".

The Canadian Centre for Data Development and Economic Research

- Application process and guidelines
- Proposal requirements
- Application for accreditation
- Data sets
- Pricing policy
- Microdata research contract
- Frequently asked questions
- Contact information

The Canadian Centre for Data Development and Economic Research (CDER)

Overview

The Canadian Centre for Data Development and Economic Research (CDER) has been established in order to allow Statistics Canada to fulfill its mandate "to collect, compile, analyse, abstract and publish statistical information relating to the commercial, industrial, financial, social, economic and general activities and condition of the people" by using business micro data and strategic partnerships that are entered into with highly trained economists to undertake important policy-relevant economic research on topics such as productivity, international trade, investment patterns and firm dynamics, while assuring the confidentiality and security of data.

The Canadian Centre for Data Development and Economic Research (CDER) is the repository for business and economic micro data files containing sufficient detail for researchers to undertake meaningful and complex analysis while at the same time safeguarding the confidentiality of the results and the privacy of business respondents and workers in these establishments.

CDER is designed to strengthen how Statistics Canada organizes its business micro-economic data resources to support the information needs of Statistics Canada, other federal government departments and the research community. The Centre increases the capability of Statistics Canada to serve the policy community, brings together a critical mass of resources to do so, established processes to guarantee the security and confidentiality of the data, and will improve Statistics Canada's ability to meet its mandate in the area of analysis.

Survival Tips

- 1 Before you start: large fixed costs to this **research programme!!!**
- 2 Proposal is on par with a SSHRC fellowship application!
- 3 Focus on a specific question that *requires* administrative data.
- 4 Work in teams. Complements AND substitutes...
- 5 Do not re-invent the wheel.
- 6 Do not drown in the data.
- 7 Modeling tradeoff: simple (faster) vs. complicated (slower).
Preferences, Technology, Endowments, and Information.
- 8 Join the Firm Level Productivity Network and interact.

Suggested readings

“Comparative Analysis of Enterprise Data (CAED): A Research and Data Agenda” by John S. Earle: http://research.upjohn.org/empl_research/vol15/iss3/2/

US Census Bureau how-to-apply: <https://www.census.gov/ces/rdcresearch/howtoapply.html>

“HOW TO DO EMPIRICAL ECONOMICS” by Kramarz, Angrist, Blau, Falk, Robin, and Taber: <https://ideas.repec.org/a/iec/inveco/v30y2006i2p179-206.html>

Figure 2: **Merci/Thanks!**

