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Vienna Center for Experimental Economics

Taking Experimental Economics to the Next Level



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Imprint

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Experimenting for Impact

This booklet introduces how VCEE, the Vienna Center for Experimental Economics, is taking experimental economics to the next level—and how this progress benefits both the University of Vienna and the broader scientific community.

When VCEE was founded 15 years ago, experimental economics was still emerging. Laboratory experiments were economists' cutting-edge tool for testing game-theoretic predictions, market mechanisms, and the drivers of cooperation.

Today, laboratory experiments are a standard part of the discipline, and the experimental toolbox has expanded. Field experiments, randomized controlled trials, and large-scale online experiments now complement traditional laboratory approaches. Experimentation has become a versatile method, used not only in economics but increasingly in marketing, psychology, and political science. Experimental economics has also secured a firm place in the education and training of future economists. In industry, experimentation is ubiquitous—companies such as Google and Amazon run hundreds of tests every day to refine their services and better meet customer needs.

A particularly exciting development is the integration of experimental techniques with other data sources, such as online surveys, AI-assisted interviews, and administrative registers, including population and tax records. Combining these sources—each with its strengths and limitations—enables researchers to shed new light on important questions, generates unprecedented research opportunities and insights into pressing economic and social issues, and strengthens the basis for evidence-based policy advice.

VCEE stands at the forefront of this evolution. By positioning itself as methodologically diverse, interdisciplinary, problem-driven, and service-oriented, VCEE equips researchers with cutting-edge tools and expertise. As a hub of innovation, it enables scholars at the University of Vienna—and far beyond—to ask bolder questions, generate richer evidence, and shape the future of economics.

Jean-Robert Tyran,
Managing Director of the VCEE



VCEE in numbers

1,024

sessions

run in the VCEE Lab

€2.8 million

third-party funding

19

affiliates

114

talks

in seminars or conferences

157

visitors

to the VCEE

8

lab assistants

34,520

participants in experiments

in the VCEE lab

113

publications

in international journals

20

grants

received by VCEE members

€668,000

User Fees

for conducting experiments in VCEE

At home in the world

VCEE faculty currently comprises **3 professors, 5 senior scientists/ postdocs, 8 student assistants from 10 countries**, and **19 affiliates** from universities like NYU Abu Dhabi, University of Tilburg, University of Lund, ULB Brussels.

VCEE is a highly international and networked center that has hosted more than **150 visitors** from leading institutions since its establishment.



The map illustrates the network of scholars who collaborate with the VCEE.

People at the VCEE



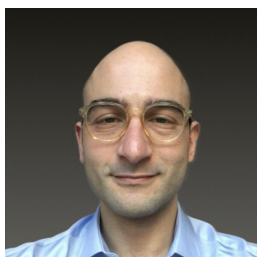
Jean-Robert Tyran
PhD, University of Zurich



Martin Kocher
PhD, University of Innsbruck



Wieland Müller
PhD, Humboldt University Berlin



Can Çelebi
PhD, University of Mannheim



Ada Kovaliukaite
PhD, Texas A&M University



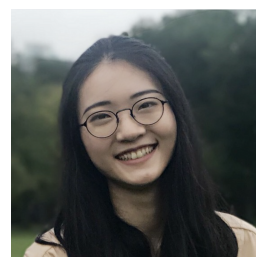
Christian Koch
PhD, University of Mannheim



Anand Murugesan
PhD, University of Maryland



Eva Spantidaki-Kyriazi
PhD, University Pompeu Fabra



Yaoyao Xu
PhD, University of Edinburgh



Sören Harrs
PhD, University of Cologne



Johannes Hoelzemann
PhD, UNSW Sydney



Moritz Loewenfeld
PhD, Toulouse School of Economics

Networked with University of Vienna

VCEE actively engages in **interdisciplinary collaboration**. We collaborate with scholars from political science, psychology, and marketing. We are proud to have outstanding affiliates from these disciplines, including internal colleagues such as Robert Böhm, Christoph Fuchs, and Bernhard Kittel. In addition, we collaborate with distinguished researchers from around the world, such as Sigrid Suetens and Ernesto Reuben.



Robert Böhm



Christoph Fuchs

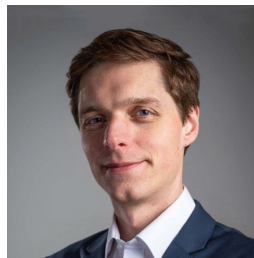


Bernhard Kittel

...and across the world



Ben Greiner



Oliver Hauser



Melis Kartal



Ernesto Reuben



Sigrid Suetens



Erik Wengström

Meet our Alumni



Miruna Cotet

Postdoc at the Complexity Science Hub, Vienna

"My training at the VCEE helped me develop my skills and taste for doing research. I took two classes with VCEE faculty in Behavioral and Experimental Economics, worked as a lab assistant at VCEE, and wrote an experimental Master's thesis. This set me on track for my academic career which led me to the University of Maastricht and Ohio State University. Today, I design experiments to study collective adaptation and provide insights to improve group decision-making and coordination in real-world contexts."



Ilona Reindl

Policy Officer at Global Responsibility

"Working as a policy officer at the Austrian national platform for development cooperation and humanitarian aid is deeply rewarding to me. My PhD thesis in experimental economics focused on climate change prevention, burden sharing, and economic inclusion—topics that remain highly relevant in my current work. This research not only sharpened my critical thinking but also equipped me with the analytical skills necessary to navigate the complex policy environments I engage with today."

For more information, visit the [Career](#) sections of our webpage.

Selected Publications



Cournot meets Bayes-Nash: A discontinuity in behavior in finitely repeated duopoly games, *Games and Economic Behavior*, 2024.



Fake News, Voter Overconfidence, and the Quality of Democratic Choice, *American Economic Review*, 2022.



Cross-game learning and cognitive ability in auctions, *Experimental Economics*, 2024.



The Price of Prejudice, *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, 2018.



An Experiment on Gender Representation in Majoritarian Bargaining, *Management Science*, 2023.



Who is (more) rational?, *The American Economic Review*, 2014.

Ranking

Our strong research agenda is reflected in the growing recognition of our work and impact. According to **IDEAS/RePEc**, the world's largest bibliographic database dedicated to economics, the **Vienna Center for Experimental Economics (VCEE)** currently ranks **11th** among 79 registered institutions in Economics in Austria, positioning us between IHS (rank 10) and **ahead of IIASA (rank 12)** as well as **three places ahead of the Complexity Science Hub (rank 14)** [source](#).



Recognition of Experimental Research

The Faculty of Business and Economics of the University of Vienna awarded the most prestigious prize, the Oskar-Morgenstern Medal, twice to honour experimental researchers.



Muriel Niederle (Stanford University) with Jean-Robert Tyran (2021).



Ernst Fehr (University of Zurich) with Heinz Engl (2017).

Laboratory

Sessions Run: 1,024

VCEE served Universities from 9 countries, including Australia and China.

Subject Participations: 34,520

The vast majority are students at the University of Vienna.



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The VCEE has hosted studies from researchers affiliated with



Seminars and Workshops

Visitors: 157

Including from prestigious places like Caltech, Chicago, Columbia, Harvard, NYU, and Stanford.



Stanford
University



**Università
Bocconi**
MILANO



NEW YORK UNIVERSITY



UCL



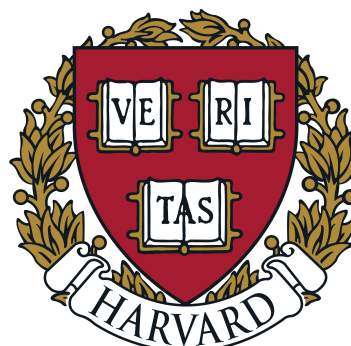
**Universitat
Pompeu Fabra**
Barcelona



**Universität
Zürich** ^{UZH}



**ALMA MATER STUDIORUM
UNIVERSITÀ DI BOLOGNA**



Funding

Our funding is based on three main pillars: University support, third-party grants, and revenues from user fees. In its first 15 years, the VCEE generated close to 4 million euros in total revenue, as follows:

- **University Funding:** Approximately **€400,000 (≈10% of total)**, including seed funding (€250,000 in 2011) and subsequent extensions (€149,000).
- **Third-party funding:** Approximately **€2.8 million (≈72%)**, from FWF, WWTF, FFG, OeNB, the Hardegg Foundation, EU Norface, EU Horizon, and the Norwegian Research Council.
- **User fees:** Approximately **€670,000 (≈ 17%)**, paid by external users of our facilities (e.g., University of Exeter, University of Uppsala, University of Lausanne).

All new and existing team members take an active role in developing and submitting grant proposals, contributing to the continued growth and excellence of our research environment. VCEE members currently have several significant funding applications under review or preparation, totaling around **€1,500,000**. These include two EU horizon projects, the **Twinning-WIDERA** (€300,000) and **the REPAIR** initiative (€500,000). We have also submitted a proposal to the **Austrian National Bank (OeNB)** (€300,000) and to the **Austrian Science Fund (FWF)** (€400,000). We take great pride in having earned the trust of prestigious international universities, who rely on us to conduct their studies, and leading funding agencies, whose support underscores the quality and impact of our work.



Strategy 2030

VCEE's Strategy 2030 is to **take experimental economics to the next level**. This strategy builds on the five pillars discussed below.

Research Excellence

VCEE supports world-class research in experimental and behavioral economics by providing access to state-of-the-art infrastructure. Our researchers explore a wide range of topics, including cooperation, competition, fairness, political economics, public policy, identity, personality traits, and social preferences. Our research provides insights into many social phenomena. For more information, see [VCEE Research](#) webpage.

Our research contributes to the strategic priorities of the University of Vienna, in particular aligning with overarching themes such as Culture, Education, and Democracy; Digital and Data-Driven Transformations; Climate, Environment, and Sustainability; and Global Health. See [VCEE Impact](#).

As part of its mission to “*discuss and reflect*”, the VCEE organizes a range of academic activities that foster exchange and critical engagement with new development of research. Our VCEE Research Seminar—whose format integrates both research and teaching—provides a platform for presenting and discussing cutting-edge work. We also host an internal brown-bag seminar designed for idea development and early-stage research, facilitating peer feedback. In collaboration with WU Vienna, researchers share and receive feedback on ongoing projects during the meetings of the Behavioral Circle. We hold workshops and an annual away day, creating spaces for deeper discussion, collaboration, and strategic planning. More details at [Seminars](#).

Teaching and Talent Development

The VCEE contributes significantly to the educational mission of the University of Vienna at all levels. We offer tailored teaching materials, provide direct supervision and mentorship for Master's theses and PhD research, and conduct specialized training for lab members in advanced experimental methodology ([see Study at VCEE](#)). This commitment ensures that the University of Vienna produces highly skilled graduates equipped to lead in their respective fields.

The impact of our approach is reflected in numerous testimonials from former students and researchers, who

highlight the valuable experience, skills, and professional growth gained through their time at the VCEE (see [Career](#)).

Collaboration and Services

The VCEE is a trusted partner for both internal and external researchers ([see also List of Collaborators](#)). Our services—including lab access, subject recruitment, and technical guidance—are available to the broader academic community, both within and beyond the University of Vienna. This collaborative model not only enhances the university's research profile but also strengthens its ties within the University of Vienna (e.g. affiliates from Marketing and Psychology, joint project with communication sciences, joint course philosophy and economics).

Innovation in Methodology

We are at the forefront of methodological innovation, integrating lab and field experiments with emerging technologies such as AI tools, registered data, and online experiments into our research practices. The VCEE provides expert guidance on experimental design and supports the adoption of cutting-edge tools for data collection, verification (e.g., bot detection), and analysis. This forward-looking approach positions the university as a leader in [pioneering research methods](#).

Values and Holistic Support

The VCEE operates on a foundation of core values that guide all our activities: integrity in research and reporting, collaboration across disciplines, curiosity as a driver of exploration, impact through evidence-based policy, and a commitment to inclusion and diversity. We are more than a lab; we are an academic home that provides comprehensive services, including teaching support, consulting, and training for research assistants.