

Everything you need to know about a PhD in Econ, and more

By Stefano Gagliarducci

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Why a PhD in Economics?

- Long: 4-7 years, depending on places
- Tough: courses/exams, research is stressful, scholarships lower than the wage you could get with a MSc
- But worth it: learn to do [frontier research](#), access more skilled jobs (through a centralized [job market](#)), long-run satisfaction (higher wages, recognition, make a difference)

Where

- US: international, competitive, tough
- Europe: international, very good programs (in UK might require an entry MSc program)
- Italy: shorter (max 4 years), many very good exceptions

How

- GPA: do your best!
- GRE (quantitative): expensive, not easy, practice, do it in time (possibly more than once)
- Reference letters: get to know your professors, especially those with more international exposure
- Personal/Research statement: sincere, not standard, not naive
- Some applications have a fee (especially in the US, 50/100\$)
- Some scholarships from outside: [UniCredit](#), [Bank of Italy](#)

Timing

- Have the GRE ready by September of the 2nd year (i.e., prepare it in the Summer), then repeat it by November (if necessary)
- September-November: talk to (your most beloved) professors about your grades and motivation
- Whole package ready by November-December, then send everywhere
- Deadlines: for the US is December, for Europe January-February, for Italy February-May (but check the webpage of each institution)
- Responses: late Winter/early Spring

Alternative 1: Research Assistantships

- One year of work as a RA with a renowned research group (e.g., Chicago, Zurich, UBC, [others](#))
- Pros: an international experience, get to know good professors who might help you in the job search, or write a reference letter for a PhD/Internship/Job
- Again: requires good GPA + reference letters + motivation letter
- Deadlines: start in December-January, through the Spring
- https://twitter.com/econ_ra

Alternative 2: Internships

- Preferential entry for jobs in many institutions (governments, international organizations, private sector, etc.)
- Again: requires good GPA + reference letters + motivation letter
- Deadlines: all year round

Questions!

- Am I worth a PhD? Apply, otherwise you don't know
- What if I am not sure? Again, apply! Then decide (you might change mind, might do better than expected, etc.)
- Can you help me? Of course (reference letters, circulate vacancies, one-to-one talks)
- More info?
 - aeaweb.org
 - Econjobrumors.com
 - thegradcafe.com

THANKS!

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