

# Michael E. Menietti

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Language English, Native Speaker

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## Academic Positions

- 2013-present **Research Scientist**, Crowd Innovation Laboratory, Cambridge, MA.  
Laboratory Directors: Prof(s). Karim Lakhani and Kevin Boudreau  
Projects include studying behavioral responses in tournaments, team formation, and the monetary and non-monetary incentives in tournaments.
- 2011-2013 **Post-Doctoral Fellow**, Harvard-NASA Tournament Laboratory, Cambridge, MA.  
Laboratory Directors: Prof(s). Karim Lakhani and Kevin Boudreau  
Projects include studying behavioral responses in tournaments, team formation, and the monetary and non-monetary incentives in tournaments.

## Education

- 2005 - 2011 **Ph.D. Economics**, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA.  
Dissertation: Investigations into Charitable Fundraising  
Committee Chair: Lise Vesterlund, Members: John Duffy, Jack Ochs, Bhattacharya Sourav, Roberto Weber
- 2001 - 2005 **BS**, Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL.  
Majoring in: Economics, Mathematics, and Statistics

## Publications

Riedl C. et al. **Detecting figures and part labels in patents: competition-based development of graphics recognition algorithms**. IJDAR, Published Online: 20 February 2016.  
DOI: 10.1007/s10032-016-0260-8.

Boudreau K.J., Lakhani K.R., Menietti M. **Performance Responses to Competition across Skill-Levels in Rank Order Tournaments: Field Evidence and Implications for Tournament Design**. RAND Journal of Economics, Vol. 47, No. 1, Spring 2016, pp. 140-165.  
DOI:10.1111/1756-2171.12121. <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1756-2171.12121/abstract>

Tournaments are widely used in the economy to organize production and innovation. We study individual data on 2,775 contestants in 755 software algorithm development contests with random assignment. The performance response to added contestants varies non-monotonically across contestants of different abilities, precisely conforming to theoretical predictions. Most participants respond negatively, while the highest-skilled contestants respond positively. In counterfactual simulations, we interpret a number of tournament design policies (number of competitors, prize allocation and structure, number of divisions, open entry) and assess their effectiveness in shaping optimal tournament outcomes for a designer.

Bracha, A., Menietti, M., Vesterlund, L., 2011. **Seeds to succeed?: Sequential giving to public projects**. Journal of Public Economics 95 (5-6), 416 – 427, Charitable Giving and Fundraising Special Issue.  
<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0047272710001507>

The public phase of a capital campaign is typically launched with the announcement of a large seed donation. Andreoni (1998)

argues that such a fundraising strategy may be particularly effective when funds are being raised for projects that have fixed production costs. The reason is that when there are fixed costs of production simultaneous giving may result in both positive and zero provision equilibria. Thus absent announcements donors may get stuck in an equilibrium that fails to provide a desirable public project. Andreoni (1998) demonstrates that such inferior outcomes can be eliminated when the fundraiser initially secures a sufficiently large seed donation. We investigate this model experimentally to determine whether announcements of seed money eliminate the inefficiencies that may result under fixed costs and simultaneous provision. To assess the strength of the theory we examine the effect of announcements in both the presence and absence of fixed costs. Our findings are supportive of the theory for sufficiently high fixed costs.

## Working Papers

Boudreau KJ, Lakhani KR, Menietti ME, Mueller AM. **Public Contests**. Working Paper.

[http://scholar.harvard.edu/files/mmenietti/files/public\\_contests.pdf](http://scholar.harvard.edu/files/mmenietti/files/public_contests.pdf)

Many tournaments take place in the public eye; imbuing the outcomes with signaling value. In this article, the results of an online field experiment on signaling incentives in these public tournaments are presented. In one treatment, tournament outcomes were made available to competitors' peers. In another treatment, outcomes were made available to potential employers. We find significant effects from both experimental variations, as well as heterogeneity in those affected. Increasing visibility to peers was valued by the most able competitors as much as increasing cash prizes by \$1000. Increasing visibility to potential employers was valued as much as increasing cash prizes by \$450, but only by those of moderate ability.

Menietti M. **Fundraising Goals**. Working Paper.

<http://scholar.harvard.edu/mmenietti/publications/fundraising-goals>

When beginning a new project charities typically appeal to donors with a fundraising goal and a description of the project. For example, an organization may announce a \$200 million campaign to construct a new hospital. While goals are commonly used by fundraisers, there is little theoretical understanding of why they should be successful. We argue that the success of goals may result from provision being more certain at the goal level. The goal induces a threshold like effect on the donors generating a subgame perfect equilibrium with larger total donations than the equivalent game without a goal. Experimental data suggests that announcing a goal does benefit fundraisers. Reducing the uncertainty at the goal does not further increase contributions to fundraisers, but does benefit donors. Simulations of large economies indicate the effect on the size of donations can be quite large, substantially increasing donations while simultaneously enlarging the set of contributors.

## Presentations

2014	Open and User Innovation Workshop	Boston, MA
2013	INFORMS Annual Meeting	Minnesota, MN
2013	Industry Studies Association Annual Meeting	Little Rock, MO
2012	Open and User Innovation Workshop	Boston, MA
2012	INFORMS Annual Meeting	Phoenix, AZ
2012	Experimental Economics Workshop	Mannheim, Germany
2012	University of Pittsburgh	Pittsburgh, PA
2011	North-American ESA Conference	Tucson, AZ
2009	ESA International Conference	Arlington, VA

## Fellowships and Awards

- 2010 Summer Research Fellowship, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA.
- 2009 Andrew Mellon Predoctoral Fellowship, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA.
- 2008 Summer Research Fellowship, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA.
- 2006 AESC, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA.  
Best Outside Statistics Teaching Assistant

## Professional Service and Memberships

### Service

Referee for:

- Management Science
- Organizational Science
- Journal of Public Economics
- Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization
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### Memberships

- 2012 - Present Informs: Institute for Operations and Management Sciences
- 2010 - Present American Economics Association.
- 2009 - Present Economic Science Association.
- 2007 - 2008 President of Economics Graduate Student Organization, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA.
- 2005 - 2006 Representative to A & S Graduate Student Organization, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA.

## References

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