ECON7950 Research Methods in Economics Assessment 3 – Research Proposal Instructions and Marking Criteria Overview Finally we are here! We have been spending time looking at the literature. We have pitched someone else’s research. This time, you will pitch your own research idea. Your Task Make a written research pitch, pitching your own research plan, using the template in the same folder as this instruction. Your reverse pitch should include: The Four – Framing the big picture A. Working Title Give a succinct/informative title of your research project. B. Basic research question In one (1) sentence, define the scope and terms of reference of your research project. C. Key papers Identify the three (3) keys paper which most critically underpins your project. Give their full reference details (again, APA, Chicago or Harvard style, your choice but please be consistent). D. Motivation/Puzzle In one (1) short paragraph (about 100 words), capture the core academic motivation – which may include identifying a “puzzle” that you hope to resolve. The Three basic building blocks – Project specifics E. Idea What specifically will you do? How do we go about getting an answer? Do you have a prediction or a hypothesis? In three (3) to six (6) bullet points (about 100—150 words): For theory research: - Note significant innovation in assumptions, if any. - Articulate the main conjecture and the main intuition/strategy of proof of it. For experimental research: - Articulate the central hypothesis(es). - Identify the key dependent (“explained”) variable(s) and describe the control and treatment(s). For research using secondary data: - Identify the key dependent (“explained”) variable and the key test/independent (“explanatory”) variable(s). - What is the identification strategy? (E.g., natural experiment, regression discontinuity, instrumental variables, structural estimation, etc.) If your research has a mix of the above, you should identify the core idea from each part. F. Data What are you going to put your ideas to? Describe, if appropriate, in three (3) to six (6) bullet points (about 100—150 words): For research with secondary data: - What data are you intending to use? Describe its nature: E.g., Country/setting; unit of analysis (e.g., individual/firms/sectors/countries, etc).; sampling period and sampling interval (e.g., daily, monthly, quarterly, etc.). - Sample size and sampling nature (e.g., cross-section, time-series, balanced/unbalanced panel, etc.) - Data sources – is the intended data publicly available? If not, what’s the plan of accessing it? Are you going to collect the data yourself? - Do you foresee potential problems with the data (e.g., missing data, database merging issues)? For research with experimental data: - When and where do you intend to run the experiments? Are they laboratory experiments, field experiments or others? - What is the intended subject pool? - How are the experiments run? Computer-based? Experimenter observations? Interviews? Are real effort tasks involved? - Are the experiments individual or do they involve group interactions? If the later, how are subjects matched? (E.g., do they stay in the same match throughout the same experiment, or are they rematched every period? How many matching groups are there?) - Is/are the treatment(s) within-subjects or between-subjects? If a subject experiences multiple treatments, how is the order of treatments determined? - Estimated cost of the experiment. For theory research (i.e., research with no “real” data): - Motivating examples for the theory model - Hypothetical examples to which existing theories provide unsatisfactory answer but could potentially be answered by the proposed research - Anecdotal or “stylised” observations that matches your hypothesis If the research is a mixed of the above, describe the part that contains actual data. (That is, if it is theoretical research with some actual data, describe the actual data.) G. Tools Describe, if appropriate, in three (3) to six (6) bullet points (about 100—150 words): For research with secondary data: - The basic econometric model you intend to use (e.g., linear regression, two-stage least squares, maximum likelihood, etc.) - Any econometric techniques you might need in over-coming data obstacles For research with experimental data: - Tools for eliciting certain information (e.g., Holt-Laury for risk preference) - Any experimental design that is specific to the type of experiments run - Statistical tools used for analysing the data For theory research (i.e., research with no “real” data): - The type of the proof (e.g., induction, construction, by contradiction). - Notable mathematical/statistical theorems used in the proof If the research study has a mix of the above, you should identify the core idea from each part. The Two Important Questions H. What’s New In two (2) to four (4) sentences (about 50—100 words), indicate the novelty of the research. Is the novelty in the idea/data/tools? Which is the main “driver” of the novelty? Is it being limited by some other elements? I. So what? In two (2) to four (4) sentences (about 50—100 words), state the “policy implications” of your research. Why is it important to know the answer? How will major decisions/behaviour/activity etc be influenced by the outcome of this research? The One Bottomline J. Contribution In two (2) to four (4) sentences (about 50—100 words), describe the main contribution of the research. What “new doors” may it open? You may wish to note what may happen in a “best case scenario” versus a “worst case scenario”. Plus One: Other considerations K. Other considerations In three sentences (or bullet points), note any concerns or considerations relating to your research plan. For examples, is there sufficient time to complete the research? Would you need ethics clearance? Are you aware of any funding sources (if funds are required)? Would you need specific programming skills to carry out the research?