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## How to choose a good dissertation topic? In 10 steps

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*Research & Innovation Consulting Hub, Academic Task webinar*

# How to choose a good dissertation topic ?

*In 10 steps*

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*Dr. Minh Ha-Duong, CIPRED/CNRS*

*Friday 1 Mar 2024*

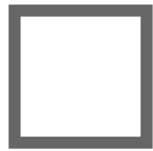


What is a *good* topic ?

# It aligns 4 stars



Student



Topic



Finance



Viewpoint A



The student

A good thesis is a finished thesis

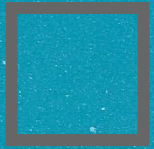
*Feasibility #1 criteria (time/budget/quality/scope trade-off)*

*Master-level topics can be risky*

*Motivation #1bis for PhD*

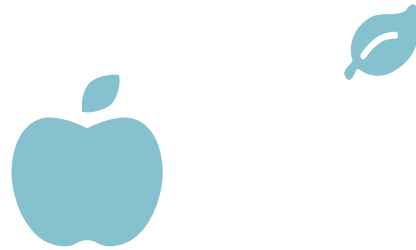
1. Reflect on personal interests and academic past

Viewpoint B

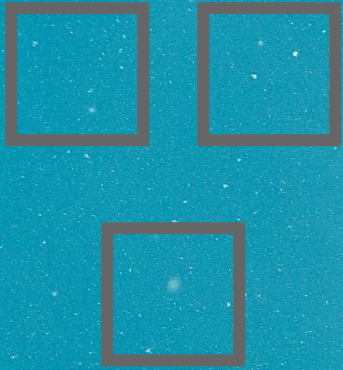


The science

# Position your contribution at the frontier of human knowledge



2. Read a lot *to know what has been done (results) and how (methods).*  
*Look at good dissertations.*
3. Find a gap. *Replication is contribution.*



The supervisor

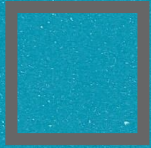
# Publish or perish

*Good Master thesis* → 1 article

*Good PhD thesis* → 3 articles

4. Quality is all about data (GIGO).

5. Get feedback. *Always looking for excellent collaborators (grades, publications). I can always find a tailor-made motivating research topic for you (it may take a few weeks)*



The funder

## Ressources

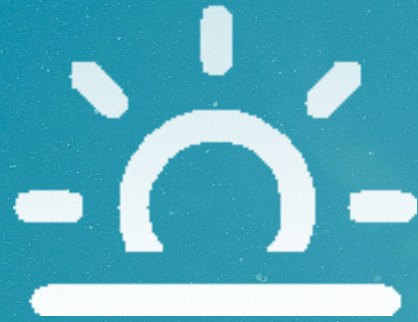
*Finance*

*Attention: it is worth my time?  
(will the paper get >h cites)*

*Office space: tight but not an issue*

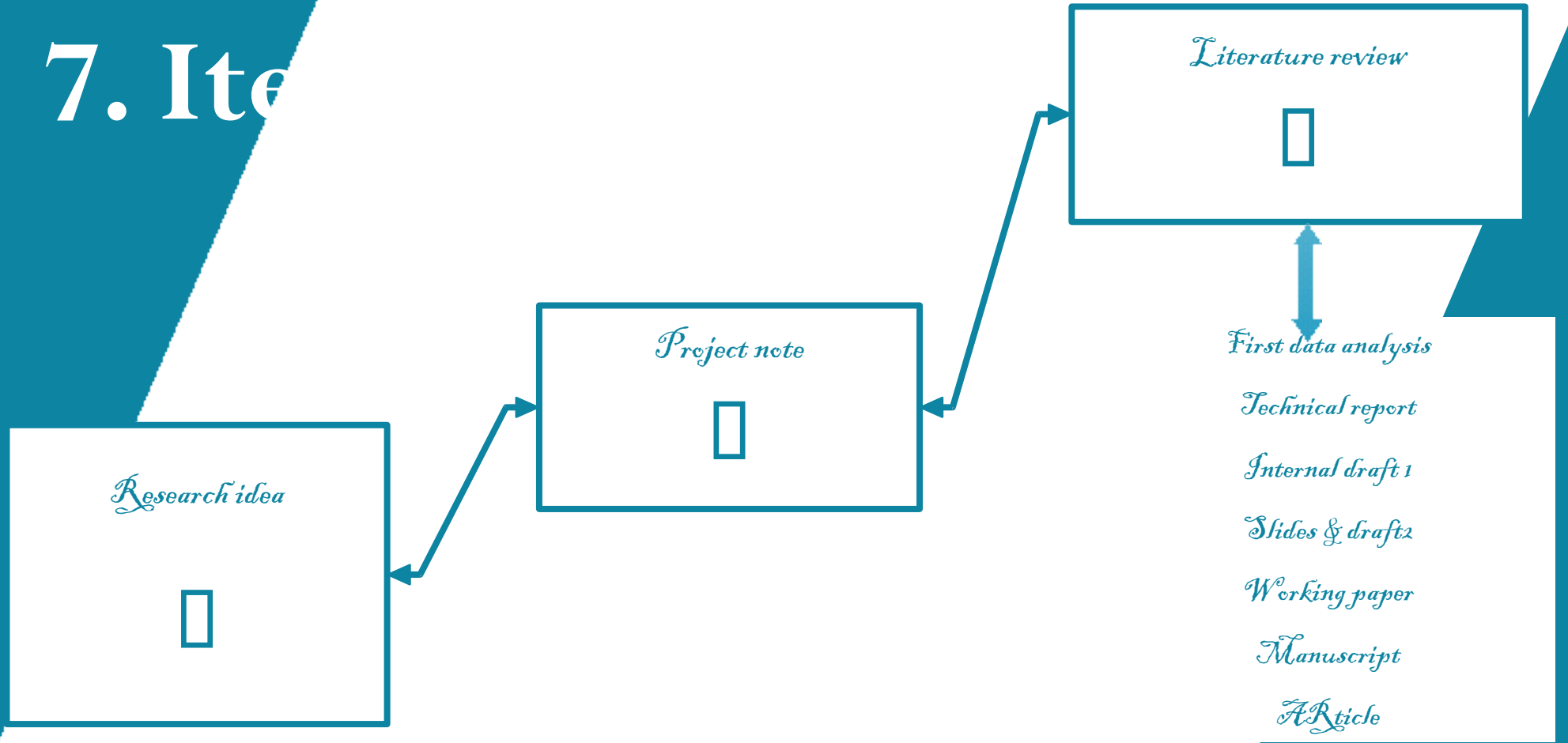
**6. Align funding with career goals. *Industry /  
academic funders have different programs***



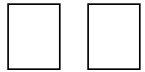


How to produce it ?

# 7. It

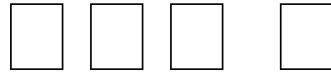


# Write proposal



## 8. Re-check novelty

*Grey literature*  
*Conferences & workshops*  
*New but connected*



## 9. Use academic style

*Research question / hypothesis*  
*Method*  
*Implications*



## 10. Get formal approval

*Departmental guidelines*  
*Funders conditions*  
*Signature*

# Time is in months

**1 month : funded research project  
seeking someone**

**6 months : Academic PhD funding for  
Master students**

