



Dear CRE Member:

As you know, this is the time of year when many of our students are beginning to think about potential thesis topics for research this coming summer. I would like to take this opportunity to ask if you might have a topic of interest that our faculty thesis committee could evaluate for our students.

Ideally, we need to receive these proposals by early March, so that the thesis faculty committee can review the proposals, provide information to students, and take the necessary steps to make the best possible match between student and Member. I would like to briefly review what a proposal should contain, and what kinds of topics and research have worked well in the past.

1). The masters thesis at MIT is a short and tightly-focused piece of research. The work must be completed in only 3 months (between May-July) and typically leads to a 60-100 page report. Therefore, topics researched need to be specific and well defined. It is important that a contact person (from your company) work with the student during the spring to set up a work schedule and arrange access to data, so that an effective piece of research can be completed during the short time available.

2). Research topics can require or incorporate member firm data, interviews with member firm clients and employees, prior projects, and other relevant sources. While the topic can focus on an issue of importance to the member firm, a good thesis also involves an issue that is of some more general interest to the industry. Your proposal should consist of a page containing the following:

- a). A clear idea of the question, problem or objective of the research topic that you would like us to consider.
- b). A proposed methodological approach, such as: interviewing, statistical analysis, interpretation.
- c). A realistic estimate of what kind of support you will provide for the student, so that the information to be used in the project can be made available or acquired within the time frame of the thesis.
- d). Identification of the contact person within the firm, and a rough idea of any travel or data acquisition expenses that the firm will have to cover.

A thesis may be written from a variety of perspectives, and in the past, we have seen successful products dealing with academic thesis, pedagogical thesis, case study, feasibility analysis, and the like.

Students are enthusiastic about the opportunity to work with our members and look forward to your participation in their thesis. I hope that you will take this opportunity to submit a proposal to our committee. Proposals should be sent to Maria Vieira, Associate Director of Education, 617-258-5672 (phone), mvieira@mit.edu, or fax to: 617-258-6991.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Tony Ciochetti". The signature is written in a cursive style with some loops and flourishes.

Tony Ciochetti
Chairman
MIT Center for Real Estate