



MIT
CENTER FOR
REAL ESTATE

From the Director

Dear CRE Members:

Turn an MIT Student Loose on that Research Project that's been nagging you!

As we approach the end of the Fall term, our students are beginning to think about potential thesis topics for the summer. This is the time that we ask our members and alumni to submit thesis project proposals. We need to receive these proposals between December and February, so that the students can sort through them, and line up academic advisors. I want 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 not a major piece of research. It involves only 3 months of work (between May-July) and typically leads to a 60-100 page report. Therefore, topics researched need to be specific and fairly focused. It is important that a contact person (from your company) work with the student during the spring, to set up a work schedule, arrange for data, etc. so that the research can be accomplished during the short summer months.

2). Topics ideally should involve the use of member firm data, or the interview of member firm clients, employees, projects, etc. While the topic can focus on the member firm, a good thesis also involves an issue that is of some more general interest to the industry as well. Your proposal should involve a page containing the following:

a). A clear idea of the question, problem or objective of the research.

b). A proposed methodological approach, such as: interviewing, statistical analysis, interpretation.

c). A realistic estimate of what kind of support you will need to provide 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). An idea of who will be the contact person within the firm, and a rough idea of any travel or data acquisition expenses that the firm will have to cover.

The students are enthusiastic about your participation in their thesis, and I have already received several proposals. I hope that you will take the time to submit a proposal. Proposals should be sent to Maria Vieira, Associate Director of Education, 617-258-5672 (phone), mvieira@mit.edu, or fax to: 617-258-6991. Please also feel free to contact me directly if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Geltner', with a stylized flourish at the end.

David Geltner
Professor of Real Estate Finance & Director
MIT Center for Real Estate