



CALL FOR PARTICIPATION 2025 Digital Finance Innovation PKU SHARK TANK CONFERENCE EVENT & PBFJ virtual Special Issue



General Background

Building on many very successful Shark Tank events around the world since 2019, and co-sponsored by the **InSPIR²eS Centre for Responsible Science (IC4RS)**,¹ Professor Robert Faff² is bringing an exciting and highly innovative *Pacific-Basin Finance Journal* (PBFJ) Shark Tank event to China. To be hosted by Peking University (PKU), the event will embrace the broad theme of Digital Finance Innovation and exclusively adopt the “pre-registered” pathway to publication at PBFJ (see Faff, 2023).³ The key focus of this greatly innovative initiative is to actively encourage, facilitate and sponsor careful “pre-registered pitch” practices by finance scholars in China. It is envisaged that Shark Tank program will be executed over two, separate, interlinked in-person conferences in Beijing. At the first event, to be held on **March 15-16 2025** selected research teams will be invited to pitch their **brand new idea** aligned with the conference theme.⁴ Guided by the principles of responsible science, it is a **strict condition** of Shark Tank entry, that the research has **not yet begun, no analysis** has yet taken place and, ideally, a **sample has not** yet been formed. In other words, we are only interested in seeing purely prospective research ideas being pitched at the conference. Upon careful assessment of written pitch submissions, selected teams will be invited to orally pitch their research idea to a PBFJ “shark panel” at the March 2025 conference in Beijing (as per the information and timelines provided below). Downstream (and probably during 2026), teams will have sufficiently progressed their research such that after appropriate review and revision, first, pre-registered “reports” and, then, companion “studies” will be published in regular issues of PBFJ. Over time, all such items will be collected virtually and updated regularly into an exciting PBFJ Special Issue on the conference theme.

Phases

Phase I – Pre-conference submission of a written (1,000 word) initial pitch based on a new “digital finance innovation” research idea in line with Faff’s (2024, SSRN) Pitching Research Framework (PRF).⁵

Phase II – During-conference Presenters will be required to deliver an oral pitch based on a carefully designed PPT slide deck faithful to their structured written pitch. They should aim to have slide content that can be covered in a presentation lasting no more than 12 minutes. Each oral pitch will be followed by Q&A led by the PBFJ editors (and from the audience, time permitting). The session will culminate with the Shark Panel giving a “green light” or “orange light” or a “red light” decision. Ultimately, subject to consensus support from the Shark Panel, pitches presented at the **SHARK TANK SPECIAL CONFERENCE**, will be invited to pursue a pathway toward potential pre-registered publication in a future issue of PBFJ.⁶

Important Dates

- **Phase I (Written Pitch):** **Submission Deadline:** February 15, 2025.
Decision Notification: February 24, 2025.
- **Phase II (Shark Tank Oral Pitch):** **PKU-PBFJ SHARK TANK CONFERENCE Program:** March 15-16, 2024.

¹ See <https://pitchingresearch.com/ic4rs/>.

² Editor-in-Chief, *Pacific-Basin Finance Journal*; Research Professor at Corvinus University of Budapest, Hungary; Emeritus Professor University of Queensland, Australia; and Honorary Adjunct Professor Bond University, Australia.

³ Faff, R., (2023), “PBFJ Editorial ... Engaging with responsible science. “OPEN FOR BUSINESS” – Launching the PBFJ pre-registration publication initiative”, *Pacific-Basin Finance Journal* 79, 101837.

⁴ A second, follow-up conference will be hosted again by PKU sometime in December 2025 (TBA). This second conference caters for those teams invited to continue down the pathway of pre-registered publication at the initial meeting in March 2025. Specifically, they will be asked to provide an update at the second December conference of their progress on either completing a pre-registered report for PBFJ (without analysis) and/or an update on progress made toward the companion pre-registered study (with analysis).

⁵ Faff, R., (2024), “Pitching Research”, available at SSRN: <http://ssrn.com/abstract=2462059>.

⁶ The process will be clearly explained by the Editor of PBFJ during the conference.

Some Guidelines on the Pitching Task

- Topics must have a sufficient finance flavour linked to the conference theme, best reflected by a clear finance research question (leading to a good “fit” for PBFJ).
- Rather than pitch a “safe” mundane topic, teams are encouraged to strive to embrace an extra element of research “risk” hoping to engage in a meaningful topic that would not normally be pursued. This should be “smart” risk that does not undermine the ultimate feasibility of executing the final study.
- It is a mandatory and non-negotiable requirement that the project has NOT yet been executed and that data have NOT yet been analysed (in any serious manner).
- **Written pitch:**
 - should fall in the range 800 to 1,200 words;
 - be aimed at an expert in the field and so include technical content as deemed necessary; &
 - address viability & research timeline.
- Each invited team will be allotted a **30-minute** slot in the conference program.
- **Oral pitch:** one team member to deliver the oral pitch (12-minute PPT presentation) in an open forum to the Shark Tank panel, emphasising the most salient elements of the research proposal. Sharks and teams will openly engage in a process of Q&A (in the remaining time for each 30-minute slot).
- Sharks will make decisions based on the soundness of research plan, scholarly merit and how interesting is the underlying idea. Moreover, those teams accepting the PBFJ invitation to proceed with the pitched project, understand that the most important condition of ultimate publication in PBFJ is to produce high quality, credible and reliable results – irrespective of whether the findings turn out to be statistically significant or not!
- All submissions must be made via the dedicated section on the web portal:

PitchMyResearch.com.

The first step is to register as a user, then click on the button “pitching competitions” and follow the instructions. The web portal will open for 2025 PKU-PBFJ SHARK TANK SPECIAL CONFERENCE submissions early in January 2025.

Further Enquiries

For any clarifications/queries regarding this event, please email either:

- Professor Xie Xuanli: xxl@nsd.pku.edu.cn
- or
- Professor Robert Faff: rfaff@bond.edu.au