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Dear Members of the Search Committee,

I am writing to express my strong interest in the XXX position. I am currently pursuing a Ph.D. at the University of Amsterdam (UvA) and the Tinbergen Institute, under the guidance of Professors Sander Onderstal and Jan-Willem Stoelhorst. Moreover, during the fall semester of 2023, I had the privilege of being a visiting scholar at the University of Nottingham, where I was invited by Professor Silvia Sonderegger. I anticipate completing my dissertation by June 2024.

My primary research focus lies in the field of experimental economics and microeconomics. I specialize in designing experiments to test and refine economic models, while also developing innovative methodologies to gain fresh insights across a wide range of topics, including contract theory, incentives, industrial organization, sustainability, and gender differences. In my research, I extensively explore the intricate relationship between context and social norms, investigating how these factors can influence individual behaviors. Ultimately, my work aims to provide valuable insights for policy-making and informed decision-making.

My job market paper aims to investigate the impact of monetary penalties on behavior and achieves three key objectives:

Firstly, monetary penalties are frequently imposed across various cases, yet their real impact remains unclear due to contradictory theories associated with their effects. Some theories suggest that penalties may backfire, leading to crowding-out effects, while others propose that people tend to follow rules, suggesting that penalties can have additional beneficial effects. To address this uncertainty, we employ experiments to test these theories and demonstrate that such contradictory theories can be explained by the heterogeneous impacts of monetary penalties on different individuals.

Secondly, monetary penalties are often applied in various formats that, in economic terms, appear indistinguishable but can trigger different consequences. We shed light on this issue by comparing fines (imposed after the infraction) and fees (paid before the action). By highlighting these distinctions, we provide evidence that policymakers and other stakeholders must carefully consider the format of penalties in their interventions.

Thirdly, we explore how these behavioral changes can be partially attributed to shifts in social norms. The introduction of monetary penalties alters the perceived norm associated with the situation, prompting individuals to adapt their behavior to conform to these new norms.

The research undertaken in my Job Market Paper sets the stage for future and compelling investigations. By examining how various types of monetary penalties yield distinct impacts, we extend our inquiry to other scenarios and formats. At the beginning of this year, a fellow PhD candidate, Ruben Van Oosten, and I were awarded a grant to delve deeper into these consequences, with a more precise focus on the context of environmental legislation. Environmental legislation employs various forms of monetary penalties, including fines, licenses, and even 'carbon' markets, to mitigate environmental damage. While these penalties may have similar economic implications, they can trigger different behavioral responses. Our goal is to investigate these differences, ultimately enhancing our understanding of market designs and policy development.

As we explore how context influences social norms and behaviors, we've observed that it also impacts the motivations associated with behavior. Motivation is linked to various economic theories and behavioral observations, yet measuring it directly has been challenging. In a project recognized with an award at the RExSchool21 summer school, we developed a novel incentivized measure designed to yield insights in this regard. In this specific project, we employ this new measure to demonstrate how people attribute different motivations to individuals of different genders engaging in the same actions. This innovative measure can provide valuable insights not only into gender differences, as applied here, but also into other areas, including self-image concerns, motivated reasoning, and situations related to sustainability and political conflict.

[Next paragraph only to be added to positions that require teaching] Beyond my enthusiasm for research, my career has been marked by a strong commitment to teaching that dates back to its early stages. I have been involved in guiding tutorials for a variety of courses and supervising thesis projects. My CV reflects a diverse range of teaching experiences, equipping me to instruct both introductory and advanced courses, catering to both economics and business students.

My academic journey was profoundly influenced by mentors who, in part through their teaching, ignited my passion for research and encouraged me to pursue this career path. Consequently, I am enthusiastic about making a meaningful contribution to the academic community by inspiring and motivating young students. I firmly believe that nurturing the education of emerging generations of researchers, professionals, and the broader community is a fundamental duty within academia.

I eagerly anticipate the opportunity to discuss this position with you in the upcoming weeks. I am fully available for interviews during the American (ASSA) and European Job Market (EJME) meetings for the 2023/2024 job market, or at any other time that suits your convenience. In the meantime, I have included the following documents for your reference: my curriculum vitae, job market paper, research statement, teaching statement, and teaching evaluations. I would like to express my gratitude to Professors Sander Onderstal, Jan-Willem Stoelhorst, and Silvia Sonderegger, who have graciously agreed to provide separate reference letters on my behalf. Thank you for considering my application. I look forward to the opportunity to further discuss my qualifications.

Sincerely,

[add signature]

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