Plan Overview

A Data Management Plan created using DMPonline

Title: LEDGER: What company accounts reveal about the returns to R&D

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Project abstract:

LEDGER uses accounting expertise to measure R&D comparably and then re-estimates the returns that policy depends on. Using Companies House filings, commercial databases, patent records and published statistics, we will:

1. convert R&D reported in accounts into a comparable measure, and use firms' amortisation and write-offs of development costs to measure how quickly R&D loses value;
2. estimate the private and social returns to UK R&D with comparable measures, including gains that spill over to other firms, and show how much of the range of published estimates is explained by measurement; and
3. evaluate the April 2023 changes to R&D tax relief, which cut support for smaller companies and raised it for larger ones, using the R&D spending and tax relief that companies report in their accounts.

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LEDGER: What company accounts reveal about the returns to R&D

Data Collection

What data will you collect or create?

Companies House accounts, 2014–2025, collected three ways because no single route is complete. The free bulk product covers accounts filed electronically, over 90% of filings and rising to 100% when paper filing ends in April 2027, but holds only UK GAAP accounts, and tagging depth is set by the filer's software, so class-level items often sit only in note text. IFRS and FRS 101 filings and older paper accounts are retrieved as documents through the Companies House API. Full tagging exists but goes to HMRC, which requires it with the corporation tax return, while Companies House leaves tagging depth to the filer's software; the public route therefore relies on text extraction, and C1 would add better-tagged accounts alongside the claims. For listed groups, Datastream supplies a standardised R&D expense item and the EU Industrial R&D Investment Scoreboard published R&D. FAME supplies financials, size, sector and ownership, and Datastream market values, under institutional subscriptions. PATSTAT patent data is used with the concordance linking patent classes to industries (Lybbert and Zolas, 2014); published ONS BERD, HMRC R&D tax credit statistics and official deflators give aggregate benchmarks.
Conditional: HMRC Datalab tax returns and relief claims; ONS SRS BERD, IDBR and Annual Business Survey microdata.

How will the data be collected or created?

From online sources

Documentation and Metadata

What documentation and metadata will accompany the data?

Detailed data description

Ethics and Legal Compliance

How will you manage any ethical issues?

All data is publicly available.

How will you manage copyright and Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) issues?

All data is publicly available.

Storage and Backup

How will the data be stored and backed up during the research?

OneDrive

How will you manage access and security?

Password

Selection and Preservation

Which data are of long-term value and should be retained, shared, and/or preserved?

No need to destroy data

What is the long-term preservation plan for the dataset?

Online repository

Data Sharing

How will you share the data?

Detailed description of how data was collected

Are any restrictions on data sharing required?

No

Responsibilities and Resources

Who will be responsible for data management?

Research Assistant

What resources will you require to deliver your plan?

No additional expertise required.