



Lab Instructions 4.0:

Technical Information on the LEE's Labs and Procedural Steps to Run Experiments

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Used abbreviations

ID	Identification card
IRB	Internal Review Board
LEE	Laboratory of Experimental Economics
Lab	Laboratories of the LEE located at the University of Economics, Paradise building 337, 337a and 337b
LI	Liberal Institute
NF UEP	Faculty of Economics and Public Administration
ORSEE	Online Recruitment System for Economic Experiments
RB	Rajská budova (Paradise building) of the UEP campus
VB	Visual Basic
UEP	University of Economics in Prague (VŠE)

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General information

Status: The Laboratory of Experimental Economics (LEE) was established in August 2009 as a joint project of the Faculty of Economics and Public Administration of the University of Economics in Prague (UEP, nf.vse.cz) and the Liberální Institut (LI, www.libinst.cz), a Prague-based think-tank. The Academic senate of Faculty of Economics and Public Administration at the University of Economics in Prague approved its status in September 2009. By the LEE abbreviation we understand the institution. The “Lab” stands for physical facilities of the LEE. The Lab blueprints are available in Annexes.

Web-pages: The homepage of the LEE can be found at lee.vse.cz or alternatively www.vse-lee.cz. There are two language mutations of the LEE web-page – Czech and English. Both sites are of the same content.

The Lab instructions and Annexes are accessible and can be downloaded at lee.vse.cz.

The recruitment web-page (ORSEE) can be accessed via the LEE web-page (through the banner at the right hand upper corner of the screen) or directly at <http://www.experimenty.eu/public/>. Rules, privacy policy and FAQs can all be founded there.

Location of the Lab: The Lab is located on the campus of the UEP in the Rajska budova (Paradise building) on the 3rd Floor, room numbers 337, 337a and 337b.

Time to use the Lab: The Lab can be used any weekday from 6:00 AM till 10:00 PM and from 8:00 AM till 6:00 PM on Saturdays. The UEP premises and hence the Lab are closed on Sundays for public. However, it is possible to enter the Lab for development purposes even on Sundays – for teaching employees of the UEP or persons at company with a UEP teaching employee. It is not possible to invite subjects to the Lab on Sundays.

So far, there is no time management SW for the Lab. To reserve time in the Lab, simply write an e-mail to the Director using [lee\(at\)libinst.cz](mailto:lee@libinst.cz) or [lee\(at\)vse.cz](mailto:lee@vse.cz).

Entrance card: In order to get to the Lab, you need an entrance card. The card can be claimed at the following e-mails: [lee\(at\)libinst.cz](mailto:lee@libinst.cz) or [lee\(at\)vse.cz](mailto:lee@vse.cz)

User names and Passwords: All user names and passwords are displayed in the monitoring room, attached on the wall of the cabinet to the left from the monitor table.

Headsets: It is possible to use headsets if necessary in the course of the experiment. The LEE has 40 headsets to use and they can be found in the monitoring room.

General rules of the Lab

We welcome researchers to make use of the LEE laboratory and subject pool. However, the following general guidelines and instructions apply and must be adhered to.

Language: The official language of the Lab is ENGLISH. Experiments are run in English, instructions are given in English, questions are answered in English and all procedures are conducted in English.

Exceptions:

- Payment slips for the Liberální institute are in Czech for legal reasons.
- Experiments run by the third parties with the only role of the LEE being a host can be run in other languages according to the needs of those who run them.
- There is a scientific reason to use another language and it is a part of the experimental design.

No Deception rule: The LEE and subject pool cannot be affiliated with any experiment that involves any kind of deception. The LEE is very concerned about developing and maintaining a reputation among the student population for honesty. This is to ensure that subject actions are motivated by induced monetary rewards rather than by psychological reactions to suspected manipulation. Subjects may suspect deception if it is present. Moreover, even if subjects fail to detect deception within a session, it may jeopardize future experiments if the subjects ever find out that they were deceived and report this information to their friends. Experiments that involve deception and then later truth-telling (i.e. debriefing) are also proscribed.

Financial Reward: All experiments using the Lab or subject pool MUST involve a financial reward at a minimum rate of expected amount of 300 CZK/hour. This is our baseline incentive used to get subjects to sign up for experiments. Any lesser reward could cause attrition of our show-up rate and subject pool. Experiments in which payment is a function of the subjects' actions should still adhere to this baseline rate through the use of a show-up payment. If a subject is signed up for an experiment and shows up to the Lab, that subject must be paid a minimum of 150 CZK, even if the subject is not needed for the experiment. This is to reward subjects for taking the effort to come and participate, critical for fostering a better relationship and show-up rate with the subject pool.

IRB Approval: Generally, IRB Approval is NOT necessary. However, it is necessary under the following conditions:

- financing institution requires such an approval or
- internal rules of the LEE require such an approval (see below).

For more information on the IRB please refer to the Faculty of Economics and Public Administration website at: nf.vse.cz

Beverages: There are beverages available at the Lab refrigerator or in the cabinet. All researchers are invited to enjoy them under the condition of not spilling them anywhere. Beverages are complimentary. The usual set includes: coca-cola, orange juice, green tea, black tea, coffee, plain water and sparkling water. There is also a water tap in the small lab. Researchers are asked to wash glasses and cups after they use them.

It is absolutely forbidden to drink alcoholic beverages at any time before and during the experiment.

Exception: It may be that drinking of alcoholic beverages is a part of an experimental design. In such a case, the following regulations apply:

- The experiment, its structure and procedures must be approved by the Internal Review Board of the Faculty of Economics and Public Administration.
- There must be a full record of who and when was drinking and what amount of which alcoholic beverages.
- There must be a physician in place for the whole experiment.
- Drinking itself is NOT allowed in the Lab itself under any circumstances – it has to be conducted in the adjacent room.
- Researchers must not drink alcoholic beverages under any circumstances.
- All subjects must sign an informed consent form regarding the procedures and risks of the experiment BEFORE they are served any alcoholic beverages.
- The Director of the LEE or a person assigned by him with no connection to the experiment itself must be present for the whole experiment.

Cleanup: After using the Lab we expect all researchers to leave it in the state it was in upon arrival. No experiment-related papers should be left on any desk, and all experiment-specific software and files should be removed from the computers.

Technical assistance: Lab staff will help with technical problems encountered while using laboratory equipment or software. However, they will not assist in running any experiment.

Please address all questions regarding this document to Miroslav Zajicek at miroslav.zajicek@vse.cz.

Form of adherence: Everyone willing to run experiments at the LEE and use the Lab has to accept these Rules unconditionally and in the written form. By signing this document you verify that you have read and understand each of these Instructions and their Annexes. Usage of the lab will not be granted without this signed form. Failure to comply by these guidelines will result in future lab usage privileges being revoked. Usage agreement can be found in Annexes.

Detailed instructions for running experiments

I. Recruitment Phase

Number of recruits: Compared to the desired number of subjects, it is advised to recruit 20-25% more in order to offset the no-show rate realized in previous experiments. The no-show problem is usually less severe during non-early-morning hours of weekdays (early morning hours mean up to 9 AM incl.), but it gets more severe during other times. The worst possible time is on Monday morning. The no-show rate tends to diminish in relative terms with bigger numbers of invited subjects – in absolute terms it tends to stay the same. It is not advised to invite people on earlier time than 9:00 AM.

Time of arrival: Ask subjects to arrive at least 10 or 15 minutes before the scheduled start of each session. In case subjects arrive early they must wait at the waiting area with read chairs and sofas on the corridor leading to the Lab. Czechs are usually disciplined but not that timely.

Register subject upon arrival and check names on the ORSEE /other-database-or-recruiting-system-you-use list (see below).

Experimenters must be at the Lab at an hour before start time to make everything ready for experiment to run smoothly.

ORSEE: It is good to know that ORSEE allows inviting at max. 35 subjects per session. If you would need the whole capacity of the Lab (36 subjects) and over-recruit by 20-25%, it is necessary to create two sessions for the same time slot. Make sure to send REMINDER EMAILS to registered subjects 24 to 48 hours before the experiment. In order to do that, do not forget to process the email queue in ORSEE.

II. Things to prepare before an experiment

- Lists of subjects – print from ORSEE or other database or recruiting system you use.
- Lablog forms – forms available at the monitor room computer in the folder “Experiment templates”. The form can be also found as Annex of these Instructions.
- Consent forms (pre-numbered by terminals in use), 2 copies per subject – forms available at the monitor room computer in the folder “Experiment templates”. The form can be also found as Annex of these Instructions.
- Payment slips (pre-numbered by terminals in use), 1 copy per subject. There are two forms available – general one and LEE-specific one (in case subjects are paid by the LEE itself, i.e. Liberální institut). Both payment slip templates can be found in the folder “Experiment templates”. The forms can be also found as Annex of these Instructions.
- Cash for subject payments with sufficient change.
- Think about whether any questions will be answered publicly or privately.
- Think about whether instructions will be read outloud for all subjects or silently by subjects themselves.
- Make sure the program at the end displays subject cash earnings. It is recommended that these should be rounded (up) to the nearest 10 CZK to limit dealing with small change.
- If you use the exchange rates between experimental monetary unit and real monetary unit, communicate it to the subjects **before** the experiment starts. If you do not know the exact exchange rate (in case you have a fixed budget and the exact exchange rate is being determined according to the actual decisions made by subject during the experiment), then indicate at least an approximate estimate of the exchange rate.

III. Session preparation

- Arrive at least one hour before the first scheduled session in the morning.
- Start with all terminals being off. In case they are on, simply restart them.
- The server should be on at all times. In case it is not, start the server, and make a note for the Director about that fact.
- Start all the terminals that will be used.
- Log in the terminals to the “Experiment” account.
- For VB-based experiments: Start the launcher on the main computer. Start the launch receivers on all the desired terminals. Start the server part of the program. Select the desired terminals on the launcher and tick “Auto connect”. Select location of the program, check all the desired terminals and remotely launch the client part of the program on terminals.
- For z-Tree-based experiments: Open the Clients and Subjects tables and the Questionnaire window if applicable. Use the old-fashioned method of manually starting each terminal, i.e., start z-Tree at the server terminal and z-leafs at client terminals. Each z-leaf client should show up in the Clients Table.
- Leave one copy of the Consent Form, one copy of the Instructions (if not on-screen only) and one pen/pencil on each terminal desk to be used. Use LEE-pens from the box on the refrigerator. Number all forms in the upper right hand corner with the terminal number. If necessary, scratch paper may be provided as well.

IV. Greeting the subjects before entering the Lab

- Subjects are required to show up at least 10 or 15 minutes before the session. Perhaps leave at your discretion the possibility not to pay the show up fee if a subject comes later than 10 minutes before, or comes after the official session start time.
- Have the printed subject list ready. One researcher will check IDs and sign subjects up in the order of show up. The ordering of subjects is recorded on the list. The following official documents are accepted as an ID: “Občanský průkaz”/state ID, passport, ISIC card, driving license, university “Index”, university student card.
- Ask the subjects to wait in the waiting room (RB 338) next door if available, or otherwise in the rest area in the hallway.
- **Tip:** If too many (i.e. more than you need) subjects show up, instead of paying the show-up fee, ask the extra subjects to show up later against a promise of a guaranteed seating upon a timely arrival. If none of them can, ask if some among the core subjects can come later in exchange for two show-up fees.

V. Getting the subjects into the Lab and introduction

- Let the subjects draw their terminal number tokens from the chip bag before entering the Lab and ask them to take a seat at the respective terminals. Tokens with numbers and the bag are in the cabinet to the left from the monitoring table.
- Introduce all members of the team in the following order:
 1. Introduce yourself and your position and affiliation;
 2. Introduce your collaborators or co-researchers (even if they are NOT present);
 3. Introduce those who are helping you to administer the experiment;
 4. Introduce your research supervisor (only if he/she is present) if there is any;
 5. Introduce the Director of the Lab (only if he is present).
- Ask subjects to switch off their mobile phones and stress the “switch-off mode” as opposed to “tuned mode”. If it turns out that someone will not obey this requirement he/she will be excused and all his/her earnings will be forfeited. Also tell the subjects about the expected duration of the experiment and ask them to use the restroom at the moment if needed.
- Ask the subjects to sign the Consent Form and collect the signed copies before proceeding to the experiment.
- Order the forms in the order of terminal numbers and check if all of them are signed.

VI. Instructions and starting the session

- Read out the Instructions aloud or tell the subjects that the Instructions will be provided on their screen and read privately.
- Ask the subjects to raise their hand if they have a question and announce that questions will be answered either publicly or privately, as decided before. Answer any questions.
- If the experiment involves typing a text, there is an issue of which keyboard to use: Czech (default) or English. Tell the subjects that the default keyboard is Czech, but they can change it to English if they want to by pressing Alt-Shift. However, they have to do it **before** the experiment starts and should refrain from doing so **during** the experiment. Keyboard switched during the experiment typically make the z-leaf crash.
- When ready to run the treatment, click on “Run – Start Treatment” or press F5 on the server computer.

VII. During the experiment

- If one terminal freezes, simply shut down z-leaf manually at the terminal by pressing Alt-F4 and restart it remotely from the server, or manually from the terminal. The interface should restart from where it crashed. However, some elapsed time (in a chat window, say), may be lost in the process.
- Order the Consent Forms and payment slips from current and previous sessions by their respective terminal numbers and file them in an envelope or a folder.
- Start filling out the payment excel file in order to keep track of how much cash has been spent. The list of names can be copied and pasted from the html file in ORSEE.
- It is better when one researcher monitors the subjects in the Lab during the experiment to avoid any temptation to talk, send text messages or otherwise interfere with the experiment.
- If there is any attempt to interfere with the rules of conduct by a subject, he/she will be excused and all his/her earning will be forfeited.

VIII. End of the session

- When the payoff screen is reached, tell the subjects to **not** to click “ok”, but rather copy down the total cash payoff from the screen to their payment slip and to also write down their name and ID number (and address and other information if applicable) on the payment slip and to sign it.
- After filling out their payment slip, ask the subjects to click “ok” to move to the terminal screen.
- Ask the subjects to remain seated and then come one-by-one to collect their cash payment to the monitoring room. Tell them to have their payment slip and ID ready. One researcher is directing the traffic to the monitoring room and monitoring the Lab in the process. Explicitly ask subjects to leave LEE-pens on the keyboard.
- Run blank questionnaire if needed to generate the white screen.
- On the server, close the windows within z-Tree and open excel data file to double check on the data and to see the individual cash payoff amounts.
- Exercise the payments. Ideally, three people are needed: one person who checks the payoff amounts against the data on the monitoring room screen, checks IDs and checks signatures; one person who deals with the cash; and one person who organizes calling subjects in to collect their payoffs. Can possibly be done with two people only.
- To proceed faster, the smaller Lab can also be used for paying out subjects, under the condition there are enough researchers or assistants to serve the two pay-out points and also traffic in the Lab (ideally five people).
- If both labs are used for an experiment, then pay subjects from the smaller lab first and then use it as the second pay-out point if necessary.
- Before paying, check IDs and make sure all payment slips are signed!
- Remotely or locally shut down the z-leafs/VB-client stations on all the computers and z-Tree/VB-server station on the server.
- Before starting a new session, always back up the data that is generated on a USB drive (just in case the disk dies).

IX. End of an experimental day

- VB: Shut down the Receivers on the all terminals as well as the Launcher on the server.
- z-Tree: Make sure all the z-leafs are closed on all the terminals (Alt-F4). Make sure the z-Tree is closed on the server computer. Make sure that any used directories with the z-Tree program are “cleaned-up” by data files having been moved to appropriate subdirectories.
- Shut down all the terminals (preferred) but **not** the server.

X. Miscellaneous

- To shut down the Receivers in fast way, use Ctrl + K.
- To manually shut down blank z-leaf screens, use Alt + F4.
- In z-Tree, if a Terminal number in the Clients table is sandwiched by **, it means that the subject is still working on that task. When **s go away, it means that the subject has completed the task. If a Terminal number in the Clients table is in parentheses, it means that the terminal has a problem.
- If you want to upload some file from a thumb / CD / any other data source to each of lab computers, upload it to the monitoring computer first. Then make a copy of the file to the "Public" folder. The "Public" folder can be accessed from any computer in the Lab.