

Research and the Approval Process: The Organization of Persuasion  
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**B Supplementary Appendix B: Wald Benchmark Proofs**

**Proof of Lemma B0**

A direct computation yields the following expressions for the conditional probabilities

$$\begin{aligned}\Psi(\sigma, B) &= \frac{e^{R_2(\sigma-s)} - e^{R_1(\sigma-s)}}{e^{R_2(S-s)} - e^{R_1(S-s)}} = \frac{1}{e^{(S-s)}} \frac{e^{R_2(\sigma-s)} - e^{R_1(\sigma-s)}}{e^{(R_2-1)(S-s)} - e^{(R_1-1)(S-s)}} \\ &= e^{-(S-s)} \frac{e^{R_2(\sigma-s)} - e^{R_1(\sigma-s)}}{e^{-R_1(S-s)} - e^{-R_2(S-s)}} = e^{\sigma-S} \frac{e^{-R_1(\sigma-s)} - e^{-R_2(\sigma-s)}}{e^{-R_1(S-s)} - e^{-R_2(S-s)}} = e^{\sigma-S} \Psi(\sigma, G)\end{aligned}$$

and

$$\begin{aligned}\psi(\sigma, B) &= \frac{e^{-(1-R_2)(S-\sigma)} - e^{-(1-R_1)(S-\sigma)}}{e^{-(1-R_2)(S-s)} - e^{-(1-R_1)(S-s)}} = \frac{e^{-S+\sigma+R_2(S-\sigma)} - e^{-S+\sigma+R_1(S-\sigma)}}{e^{-S+s+R_2(S-s)} - e^{-S+s+R_1(S-s)}} \\ &= \frac{e^{\sigma-S} (e^{R_2(S-\sigma)} - e^{R_1(S-\sigma)})}{e^{-(S-s)} (e^{R_2(S-s)} - e^{R_1(S-s)})} = e^{\sigma-s} \psi(\sigma, G).\end{aligned}$$

This establishes parts (1) and (2) of Lemma B0.

Taking the derivative of  $\Psi(\sigma, G)$  with respect to  $s$  and rearranging terms we obtain

$$\begin{aligned}\frac{\partial \Psi(\sigma, G)}{\partial s} &= (R_1 - R_2) \frac{e^{-R_1(S-s)-R_2(\sigma-s)} - e^{-R_2(S-s)-R_1(\sigma-s)}}{(e^{-R_1(S-s)} - e^{-R_2(S-s)})^2} = (R_1 - R_2) e^{s-\sigma} \frac{e^{-R_1(S-\sigma)} - e^{-R_2(S-\sigma)}}{(e^{-R_1(S-s)} - e^{-R_2(S-s)})^2} \\ &= \frac{(R_1 - R_2) e^{s-\sigma} \psi(\sigma, B)}{e^{-R_1(S-s)} - e^{-R_2(S-s)}} = \frac{(R_1 - R_2) \psi(\sigma, G)}{e^{-R_1(S-s)} - e^{-R_2(S-s)}} = a \psi(\sigma, G),\end{aligned}$$

where  $a < 0$ , since  $e^{-R_1(S-s)} - e^{-R_2(S-s)} > 0$  and  $R_1 - R_2 < 0$ , and  $a$  is independent of  $\sigma$ . Similarly, for  $\psi(\sigma, G)$  we have

$$\begin{aligned}\frac{\partial \psi(\sigma, G)}{\partial s} &= - \frac{\left(-R_2 e^{R_2(S-s)} + R_1 e^{R_1(S-s)}\right) \left(e^{R_2(S-\sigma)} - e^{R_1(S-\sigma)}\right)}{\left(e^{R_2(S-s)} - e^{R_1(S-s)}\right)^2} \\ &= \frac{R_2 e^{R_2(S-s)} - R_1 e^{R_1(S-s)}}{e^{R_2(S-s)} - e^{R_1(S-s)}} \psi(\sigma, G) = b \psi(\sigma, G).\end{aligned}$$

where  $b > 0$ , since both  $e^{R_2(S-s)} - e^{R_1(S-s)} > 0$  and  $R_2 e^{R_2(S-s)} - R_1 e^{R_1(S-s)} > 0$ , and  $b$  is independent of  $\sigma$ . This proves parts (3) and (4).

Finally, taking the derivative of  $\Psi(\sigma, G)$  with respect to  $S$  we obtain

$$\begin{aligned}\frac{\partial \Psi(\sigma, G)}{\partial S} &= - \frac{\left(e^{-R_1(\sigma-s)} - e^{-R_2(\sigma-s)}\right) \left(-R_1 e^{-R_1(S-s)} + R_2 e^{-R_2(S-s)}\right)}{\left(e^{-R_1(S-s)} - e^{-R_2(S-s)}\right)^2} \\ &= \frac{R_1 e^{-R_1(S-s)} - R_2 e^{-R_2(S-s)}}{e^{-R_1(S-s)} - e^{-R_2(S-s)}} \Psi(\sigma, G) = f \Psi(\sigma, G),\end{aligned}$$

where  $f < 0$ , since  $e^{-R_1(S-s)} - e^{-R_2(S-s)} > 0$  and  $R_1 e^{-R_1(S-s)} < 0 < R_2 e^{-R_2(S-s)}$ , and  $f$  is independent of  $\sigma$ . Similarly, we have

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{\partial \psi(\sigma, G)}{\partial S} &= (R_2 - R_1) \frac{e^{R_1(S-\sigma)+R_2(S-s)} - e^{R_2(S-\sigma)+R_1(S-s)}}{(e^{R_2(S-s)} - e^{R_1(S-s)})^2} = (R_2 - R_1) \frac{e^{S-\sigma}(e^{R_2(\sigma-s)} - e^{R_1(\sigma-s)})}{(e^{R_2(S-s)} - e^{R_1(S-s)})^2} \\ &= \frac{(R_2 - R_1) e^{S-\sigma} \Psi(\sigma, B)}{e^{R_2(S-s)} - e^{R_1(S-s)}} = \frac{(R_2 - R_1) \Psi(\sigma, G)}{e^{R_2(S-s)} - e^{R_1(S-s)}} = g \Psi(\sigma, G) > 0. \end{aligned}$$

where  $g > 0$ , since both  $R_2 - R_1 > 0$  and  $e^{R_2(S-s)} - e^{R_1(S-s)} > 0$ , and  $g$  does not depend on  $\sigma$ . This completes the proof of Lemma B0.

### Proof of Lemma B1

We provide the most general characterization for the upper best reply  $B_j(s)$  for a player  $j$  who gets a payoff  $v_j^G$  ( $v_j^B$ ) in the good (bad) state and pays a cost of research  $c_j$  per unit of time.

**(i) First-Order Condition for the Upper Best Reply.** By parts (1) and (2) of Lemma B0 player  $j$ 's expected payoff  $u_j(\sigma)$  can be written as

$$u_j(\sigma) = -\frac{c_j}{r} + \frac{e^{\sigma} \Psi(\sigma, G)}{1 + e^{\sigma}} \left[ v_j^G + e^{-S} v_j^B + \left(1 + e^{-S}\right) \frac{c_j}{r} \right] + \frac{e^{\sigma}}{1 + e^{\sigma}} \psi(\sigma, G) (1 + e^{-S}) \frac{c_j}{r}. \quad (12)$$

By parts (5) and (6) of Lemma B0, taking the derivative with respect to  $S$  then yields

$$\frac{\partial u_j(\sigma)}{\partial S} = \frac{e^{\sigma} \Psi(\sigma, G)}{1 + e^{\sigma}} \left\{ f \cdot \left[ v_j^G + e^{-S} v_j^B + \left(1 + e^{-S}\right) \frac{c_j}{r} \right] - e^{-S} \left( v_j^B + \frac{c_j}{r} \right) + g \cdot \left(1 + e^{-S}\right) \frac{c_j}{r} \right\}, \quad (13)$$

which implies that, at an interior solution, the following first-order condition must be satisfied

$$f \cdot \left[ v_j^G + e^{-S} v_j^B + \left(1 + e^{-S}\right) \frac{c_j}{r} \right] = e^{-S} \left( v_j^B + \frac{c_j}{r} \right) - g \cdot \left(1 + e^{-S}\right) \frac{c_j}{r}. \quad (14)$$

Equation (14) establishes that  $B_j(s)$  is independent of  $\sigma$  in the log-odds space, or, equivalently, that  $B_j(s)$  is independent of  $q$  in the regular space. Furthermore, it implies that  $v_j^G + e^{-S} v_j^B + (1 + e^{-S}) \frac{c_j}{r} > 0$  must hold at  $S = B_j(s)$ . Two cases can, in fact, be distinguished: if  $e^{-S} \left( v_j^B + \frac{c_j}{r} \right) \geq 0$ , then  $v_j^G + e^{-S} \left( v_j^B + \frac{c_j}{r} \right) + \frac{c_j}{r} > 0$  simply follows from  $v_j^G > 0$  and  $\frac{c_j}{r} > 0$ . If  $e^{-S} \left( v_j^B + \frac{c_j}{r} \right) < 0$ , then  $f \left[ v_j^G + e^{-S} \left( v_j^B + \frac{c_j}{r} \right) + \frac{c_j}{r} \right] < 0$  must hold, since  $g \cdot (1 + e^{-S}) > 0$  and  $f < 0$ , so that  $v_j^G + e^{-S} \left( v_j^B + \frac{c_j}{r} \right) + \frac{c_j}{r} > 0$  is again satisfied.

In the case of the evaluator, where  $c_e = 0$ , (14) simplifies into  $v_e^G + e^{-S} v_e^B = \frac{e^{-S} v_e^B}{f}$ .

**Second-Order Condition for the Upper Best Reply.** Differentiating (13) with respect to  $S$  we have

$$\frac{\partial^2 u(\sigma)}{\partial S^2} = \frac{e^{\sigma}}{1 + e^{\sigma}} \left\{ \begin{aligned} &\frac{\partial \Psi(\sigma, G)}{\partial S} \left\{ f \cdot \left[ v_j^G + e^{-S} v_j^B + \left(1 + e^{-S}\right) \frac{c_j}{r} \right] - e^{-S} \left( v_j^B + \frac{c_j}{r} \right) + g \cdot \left(1 + e^{-S}\right) \frac{c_j}{r} \right\} \\ &+ \Psi(\sigma, G) \left\{ \frac{\partial f}{\partial S} \left[ v_j^G + e^{-S} v_j^B + \left(1 + e^{-S}\right) \frac{c_j}{r} \right] + e^{-S} \left( v_j^B + \frac{c_j}{r} \right) (1 - f) + \frac{\partial g}{\partial S} \left(1 + e^{-S}\right) \frac{c_j}{r} \right\} \end{aligned} \right\}.$$

Equation (14) then implies

$$\left. \frac{\partial^2 u(\sigma)}{\partial S^2} \right|_{S=B_j(s)} = \frac{e^{\sigma} \Psi(\sigma, G)}{1 + e^{\sigma}} \left\{ e^{-S} \left( v_j^B + \frac{c_j}{r} \right) \left[ \frac{\partial f}{\partial S} \frac{1}{f} + (1 - f) \right] + \left( \frac{\partial g}{\partial S} - \frac{\partial f}{\partial S} \frac{g}{f} \right) \left(1 + e^{-S}\right) \frac{c_j}{r} \right\}$$

$$= \frac{e^{\sigma}\Psi(\sigma, G)}{1 + e^{\sigma}} \left\{ e^{-S} \left( v_j^B + \frac{c_j}{r} \right) \left[ \frac{\partial f}{\partial S} \frac{1}{f} + (1 - f) \right] + g \cdot \left( \frac{\partial g}{\partial S} \frac{1}{g} - \frac{\partial f}{\partial S} \frac{1}{f} \right) (1 + e^{-S}) \frac{c_j}{r} \right\}$$

Some algebra yields

$$\begin{aligned} 1 - f &= \frac{e^{-R_1(S-s)} - e^{-R_2(S-s)} - R_1 e^{-R_1(S-s)} + R_2 e^{-R_2(S-s)}}{e^{-R_1(S-s)} - e^{-R_2(S-s)}} \\ &= \frac{R_2 e^{-R_1(S-s)} - R_1 e^{-R_2(S-s)}}{e^{-R_1(S-s)} - e^{-R_2(S-s)}} = \frac{R_2 e^{R_2(S-s)} - R_1 e^{R_1(S-s)}}{e^{R_2(S-s)} - e^{R_1(S-s)}} = -\frac{\partial g}{\partial S} \frac{1}{g}. \end{aligned}$$

Substituting for  $\frac{\partial g}{\partial S} \frac{1}{g}$  in the above expression and rearranging terms we have

$$\begin{aligned} &\left. \frac{\partial^2 u(\sigma)}{\partial S^2} \right|_{S=B_j(s)} \\ &= \frac{e^{\sigma}\Psi(\sigma, G)}{1 + e^{\sigma}} \left\{ e^{-S} \left( v_j^B + \frac{c_j}{r} \right) \left[ \frac{\partial f}{\partial S} \frac{1}{f} + (1 - f) \right] + g \left[ -(1 - f) - \frac{\partial f}{\partial S} \frac{1}{f} \right] (1 + e^{-S}) \frac{c_j}{r} \right\} \\ &= \frac{e^{\sigma}\Psi(\sigma, G)}{1 + e^{\sigma}} \left[ \frac{\partial f}{\partial S} \frac{1}{f} + (1 - f) \right] \left[ e^{-S} \left( v_j^B + \frac{c_j}{r} \right) - g \cdot (1 + e^{-S}) \frac{c_j}{r} \right] \end{aligned}$$

which, by equation (14), can be rewritten as

$$\left. \frac{\partial^2 u(\sigma)}{\partial S^2} \right|_{S=B_j(s)} = \frac{e^{\sigma}\Psi(\sigma, G)}{1 + e^{\sigma}} \left[ \frac{\partial f}{\partial S} + f \cdot (1 - f) \right] \left[ v_j^G + e^{-S} v_j^B + \left( 1 + e^{-S} \right) \frac{c_j}{r} \right].$$

Recalling from above that  $v_j^G + e^{-S} v_j^B + \left( 1 + e^{-S} \right) \frac{c_j}{r} > 0$  at  $S = B_j(s)$ , we conclude that

$$\left. \frac{\partial^2 u(\sigma)}{\partial S^2} \right|_{S=B_j(s)} < 0 \quad (15)$$

if and only if  $\frac{\partial f}{\partial S} < -f(1 - f)$ , i.e.,

$$\frac{(R_2 - R_1)^2 e^{-(S-s)}}{(e^{-R_1(S-s)} - e^{-R_2(S-s)})^2} < \frac{(R_2^2 + R_1^2) e^{-(S-s)} - R_1 R_2 (e^{-2R_1(S-s)} + e^{-2R_2(S-s)})}{(e^{-R_1(S-s)} - e^{-R_2(S-s)})^2},$$

which always holds being equivalent to  $2e^{-(S-s)} < e^{-2R_1(S-s)} + e^{-2R_2(S-s)} \Leftrightarrow 0 < (e^{-R_1(S-s)} - e^{-R_2(S-s)})^2$ .

(ii) We now examine the slope of the upper best reply. First, we show that  $B_j(s) > s$  if  $s < \hat{\sigma}_j$  and  $B_j(s) = s$  otherwise. We start with computing the limit of  $\frac{\partial u_j(\sigma)}{\partial S}$  as  $S \rightarrow s$ . Recall that

$$\frac{\partial u_j(\sigma)}{\partial S} = \frac{e^{\sigma}\Psi(\sigma, G)}{1 + e^{\sigma}} \left\{ f \cdot \left[ v_j^G + e^{-S} v_j^B + \left( 1 + e^{-S} \right) \frac{c_j}{r} \right] - e^{-S} \left( v_j^B + \frac{c_j}{r} \right) + g \cdot (1 + e^{-S}) \frac{c_j}{r} \right\}$$

and focus on the last term of the product. A simple calculation gives

$$\begin{aligned} &\lim_{S \rightarrow s} \left\{ f \cdot \left[ v_j^G + e^{-S} v_j^B + \left( 1 + e^{-S} \right) \frac{c_j}{r} \right] - e^{-S} \left( v_j^B + \frac{c_j}{r} \right) + g \cdot (1 + e^{-S}) \frac{c_j}{r} \right\} \\ &= \lim_{S \rightarrow s} f \cdot \left[ v_j^G + e^{-s} v_j^B \right] - e^{-s} \left( v_j^B + \frac{c_j}{r} \right) + \lim_{S \rightarrow s} (f + g) \cdot (1 + e^{-s}) \frac{c_j}{r}. \end{aligned}$$

Because  $\lim_{S \rightarrow s} f = -\infty$  and  $\lim_{S \rightarrow s} (f + g) = 0$ , one sees that the sign of the limit above depends on the sign of  $v_j^G + e^{-s}v_j^B$ . Specifically, we have

$$\lim_{S \rightarrow s} \left\{ f \cdot \left[ v_j^G + e^{-S}v_j^B + \left(1 + e^{-S}\right) \frac{c_j}{r} \right] - e^{-S} \left( v_j^B + \frac{c_j}{r} \right) + g \cdot \left(1 + e^{-S}\right) \frac{c_j}{r} \right\} = \infty$$

if  $s < \hat{\sigma}_j$ , in which case  $v_j^G + e^{-s}v_j^B < 0$ , and

$$\lim_{S \rightarrow s} \left\{ f \cdot \left[ v_j^G + e^{-S}v_j^B + \left(1 + e^{-S}\right) \frac{c_j}{r} \right] - e^{-S} \left( v_j^B + \frac{c_j}{r} \right) + g \cdot \left(1 + e^{-S}\right) \frac{c_j}{r} \right\} = -\infty$$

otherwise. Since  $\lim_{S \rightarrow s} \frac{e^\sigma}{1+e^\sigma} \Psi(\sigma, G) = \infty$ , overall we have  $\lim_{S \rightarrow s} \frac{\partial u_j(\sigma)}{\partial S} = \infty$  if  $s < \hat{\sigma}_j$  and  $\lim_{S \rightarrow s} \frac{\partial u_j(\sigma)}{\partial S} = -\infty$  if  $s \geq \hat{\sigma}_j$ .

Next, we compute the limit of  $\frac{\partial u_j(\sigma)}{\partial S}$  as  $S \rightarrow \infty$ . We have

$$\begin{aligned} & \lim_{S \rightarrow \infty} \frac{\partial u_j(\sigma)}{\partial S} \\ &= \lim_{S \rightarrow \infty} \frac{e^\sigma \Psi(\sigma, G)}{1 + e^\sigma} \left\{ f \cdot \left[ v_j^G + e^{-S}v_j^B + \left(1 + e^{-S}\right) \frac{c_j}{r} \right] - e^{-S} \left( v_j^B + \frac{c_j}{r} \right) + g \cdot \left(1 + e^{-S}\right) \frac{c_j}{r} \right\}. \end{aligned}$$

Focusing on the second term of the product, we obtain

$$\begin{aligned} & \lim_{S \rightarrow \infty} \left\{ f \cdot \left[ v_j^G + e^{-S}v_j^B + \left(1 + e^{-S}\right) \frac{c_j}{r} \right] - e^{-S} \left( v_j^B + \frac{c_j}{r} \right) + g \cdot \left(1 + e^{-S}\right) \frac{c_j}{r} \right\} \\ &= \lim_{S \rightarrow \infty} f \cdot \left[ v_j^G + \frac{c_j}{r} \right] + \lim_{S \rightarrow \infty} g \cdot \left(1 + e^{-S}\right) \frac{c_j}{r}. \end{aligned}$$

Since  $\lim_{S \rightarrow \infty} \frac{e^\sigma}{1+e^\sigma} \Psi(\sigma, G) = 0$ ,  $\lim_{S \rightarrow \infty} f = R_1 < 0$  and  $\lim_{S \rightarrow \infty} g = 0$ , we have that overall  $\lim_{S \rightarrow \infty} \frac{\partial u_j(\sigma)}{\partial S} = 0^-$ .

Having computed the limits at the two extremes of the domain of  $S$ , we now consider two different cases. First, assume  $s < \hat{\sigma}_e$ . Then, since  $\lim_{S \rightarrow s} \frac{\partial u_j(\sigma)}{\partial S} = \infty$  and  $\lim_{S \rightarrow \infty} \frac{\partial u_j(\sigma)}{\partial S} = 0^-$ , by continuity there must exist a solution to  $\frac{\partial u_j(\sigma)}{\partial S} = 0$ , implying that in this case  $B_j(s) > s$ . Next, suppose  $s \geq \hat{\sigma}_j$ . In this case we show that  $\frac{\partial u_j(\sigma)}{\partial S} < 0$ . To see this assume by contradiction that there exists  $\tilde{S}$  such that  $\frac{\partial u_j(\sigma)}{\partial S} \Big|_{S=\tilde{S}} \geq 0$ . Since  $\lim_{S \rightarrow s} \frac{\partial u_j(\sigma)}{\partial S} = -\infty$  and  $\lim_{S \rightarrow \infty} \frac{\partial u_j(\sigma)}{\partial S} = 0^-$ , by continuity there must exist an interior solution  $S^* \leq \tilde{S}$  to  $\frac{\partial u_j(\sigma)}{\partial S} = 0$  such that  $\frac{\partial^2 u_j(\sigma)}{\partial S^2} \Big|_{S^*=B_j(s)} \geq 0$ , a contradiction. This establishes that  $B_j(s) > s$  if  $s < \hat{\sigma}_j$  and  $B_j(s) = s$  otherwise.

### Proof of Lemma B2

We provide the most general characterization for the lower best reply  $b_j(S)$  for a player  $j$  who gets a payoff  $v_j^G$  ( $v_j^B$ ) in the good (bad) state and pays a cost of research  $c_j$  per unit of time.

**(i) First-Order Condition for the Lower Best Reply.** By parts (3) and (4) of Lemma B0, taking a derivative of (12) with respect to  $s$  yields

$$\frac{\partial u_j(\sigma)}{\partial s} = \frac{e^\sigma \Psi(\sigma, G)}{1 + e^\sigma} \left\{ a \left[ v_j^G + e^{-S}v_j^B + \left(1 + e^{-S}\right) \frac{c_j}{r} \right] + \frac{c_j}{r} [b(1 + e^{-S}) - e^{-S}] \right\}. \quad (16)$$

Hence, player  $j$ 's first order condition is

$$v_j^G + e^{-S} v_j^B + \left(1 + e^{-S}\right) \frac{c_j}{r} = -\frac{1}{a} \frac{c_j}{r} [b(1 + e^{-S}) - e^{-S}] \quad (17)$$

which establishes that  $b_j(S)$  is independent of  $\sigma$  in the log-odds space and, thus, that  $b_j(S)$  is independent of  $q$  in the regular space. In the case of the informer, assuming  $v_i^G = v_i^B = v_i$ , the first order condition (17) simplifies into

$$a \left(1 + e^{-S}\right) \left(v_i + \frac{c}{r}\right) + \frac{c}{r} [b(1 + e^{-S}) - e^{-S}] = 0. \quad (18)$$

**Second Order Condition for the Lower Best Reply.** Taking a derivative with respect to  $s$  of (16) gives

$$\begin{aligned} & \frac{\partial^2 u_j(\sigma)}{\partial s^2} \\ = & \frac{e^\sigma}{1 + e^\sigma} \frac{\partial \psi(\sigma, G)}{\partial s} \left\{ a \left[ v_j^G + e^{-S} v_j^B + \left(1 + e^{-S}\right) \frac{c_j}{r} \right] + \frac{c_j}{r} (b(1 + e^{-S}) - e^{-S}) \right\} \\ & + \frac{e^\sigma \psi(\sigma, G)}{1 + e^\sigma} \left\{ \frac{\partial a}{\partial s} \left[ v_j^G + e^{-S} v_j^B + \left(1 + e^{-S}\right) \frac{c_j}{r} \right] + \frac{c_j}{r} \frac{\partial b}{\partial s} (1 + e^{-S}) + \frac{c_j}{r} (1 - b) e^{-S} \right\}. \end{aligned}$$

For values of  $s$  that satisfy the first order condition (17), we have

$$\left. \frac{\partial^2 u_j(\sigma)}{\partial s^2} \right|_{s=b_j(S)} = \frac{e^\sigma \psi(\sigma, G)}{1 + e^\sigma} \frac{c_j}{r} \left\{ -\frac{\partial a}{\partial s} \frac{1}{a} [b(1 + e^{-S}) - e^{-S}] + \frac{\partial b}{\partial s} (1 + e^{-S}) + (1 - b) e^{-S} \right\}.$$

Using

$$\begin{aligned} 1 - b &= \frac{e^{R_2(S-s)} - e^{R_1(S-s)} - R_2 e^{R_2(S-s)} + R_1 e^{R_1(S-s)}}{e^{R_2(S-s)} - e^{R_1(S-s)}} \\ &= \frac{R_1 e^{R_2(S-s)} - R_2 e^{R_1(S-s)}}{e^{R_2(S-s)} - e^{R_1(S-s)}} = \frac{R_1 e^{-R_1(S-s)} - R_2 e^{-R_2(S-s)}}{e^{-R_1(S-s)} - e^{-R_2(S-s)}} = -\frac{\partial a}{\partial s} \frac{1}{a}, \end{aligned}$$

the above expression simplifies to

$$\left. \frac{\partial^2 u_j(\sigma)}{\partial s^2} \right|_{s=b_j(S)} = \frac{e^\sigma}{1 + e^\sigma} \psi(\sigma, G) (1 + e^{-S}) \frac{c_j}{r} \left[ b(1 - b) + \frac{\partial b}{\partial s} \right],$$

which is negative if and only if  $\frac{\partial b}{\partial s} < -b(1 - b)$ , i.e.,

$$\frac{(R_2 - R_1)^2 e^{(S-s)}}{(e^{R_2(S-s)} - e^{R_1(S-s)})^2} < \frac{(R_2^2 + R_1^2) e^{(S-s)} - R_1 R_2 (e^{2R_1(S-s)} + e^{2R_2(S-s)})}{(e^{R_2(S-s)} - e^{R_1(S-s)})^2}$$

which always holds being equivalent to  $2e^{(S-s)} < e^{2R_1(S-s)} + e^{2R_2(S-s)}$ . Thus,

$$\left. \frac{\partial^2 u_j(\sigma)}{\partial s^2} \right|_{s=b_j(S)} < 0. \quad (19)$$

(ii) Turn to the slope of the lower best reply. First, we show that  $b_j(S) < S$  if  $S > \hat{\sigma}_j$  and  $b_j(S) = S$  otherwise. We start with computing the limit of  $\frac{\partial u_j(\sigma)}{\partial s}$  as  $s \rightarrow S$ . Recall that

$$\frac{\partial u_j(\sigma)}{\partial s} = \frac{e^\sigma \psi(\sigma, G)}{1 + e^\sigma} \left\{ a \left[ v_j^G + e^{-S} v_j^B + \left( 1 + e^{-S} \right) \frac{c_j}{r} \right] + \frac{c_j}{r} [b(1 + e^{-s}) - e^{-s}] \right\}$$

and focus on the last term of the product. A simple calculation gives

$$\begin{aligned} & \lim_{s \rightarrow S} \left\{ a \left[ v_j^G + e^{-S} v_j^B + \left( 1 + e^{-S} \right) \frac{c_j}{r} \right] + \frac{c_j}{r} [b(1 + e^{-s}) - e^{-s}] \right\} \\ &= \lim_{s \rightarrow S} a \cdot \left[ v_j^G + e^{-S} v_j^B \right] - e^{-S} \frac{c_j}{r} + \lim_{s \rightarrow S} (a + b) \cdot (1 + e^{-S}) \frac{c_j}{r}. \end{aligned}$$

Because  $\lim_{s \rightarrow S} a = -\infty$  and  $\lim_{s \rightarrow S} (a + b) = 0$ , one sees that the sign of the limit above depends on the sign of  $v_j^G + e^{-S} v_j^B$ . Specifically, we have

$$\lim_{s \rightarrow S} \left\{ a \left[ v_j^G + e^{-S} v_j^B + \left( 1 + e^{-S} \right) \frac{c_j}{r} \right] + \frac{c_j}{r} [b(1 + e^{-s}) - e^{-s}] \right\} = -\infty$$

if  $S > \hat{\sigma}_j$ , in which case  $v_j^G + e^{-S} v_j^B > 0$ , and

$$\lim_{s \rightarrow S} \left\{ a \left[ v_j^G + e^{-S} v_j^B + \left( 1 + e^{-S} \right) \frac{c_j}{r} \right] + \frac{c_j}{r} [b(1 + e^{-s}) - e^{-s}] \right\} = +\infty$$

otherwise. Since  $\lim_{s \rightarrow S} \frac{e^\sigma}{1 + e^\sigma} \psi(\sigma, G) = \infty$ , overall we have  $\lim_{s \rightarrow S} \frac{\partial u_j(\sigma)}{\partial s} = -\infty$  if  $S > \hat{\sigma}_j$  and  $\lim_{s \rightarrow S} \frac{\partial u_j(\sigma)}{\partial s} = \infty$  if  $S \leq \hat{\sigma}_j$ .

Next,

$$\lim_{s \rightarrow -\infty} \frac{\partial u_j(\sigma)}{\partial s} = \lim_{s \rightarrow -\infty} \frac{e^\sigma}{1 + e^\sigma} \psi(\sigma, G) \left\{ a \left[ v_j^G + e^{-S} v_j^B + \left( 1 + e^{-S} \right) \frac{c_j}{r} \right] + \frac{c_j}{r} [b(1 + e^{-s}) - e^{-s}] \right\}$$

Focusing on the second factor, we obtain

$$\begin{aligned} & \lim_{s \rightarrow -\infty} \left\{ a \left[ v_j^G + e^{-S} v_j^B + \left( 1 + e^{-S} \right) \frac{c_j}{r} \right] + \frac{c_j}{r} [b(1 + e^{-s}) - e^{-s}] \right\} \\ &= \lim_{s \rightarrow -\infty} a \cdot \left[ v_j^G + e^{-S} v_j^B + \left( 1 + e^{-S} \right) \frac{c_j}{r} \right] + \lim_{s \rightarrow -\infty} b \cdot \frac{c_j}{r} + \lim_{s \rightarrow -\infty} (b - 1) e^{-s} \frac{c_j}{r}. \end{aligned}$$

Since  $\lim_{s \rightarrow -\infty} \frac{e^\sigma}{1 + e^\sigma} \psi(\sigma, G) = 0$ ,  $\lim_{s \rightarrow -\infty} b = R_2 > 0$  and  $\lim_{s \rightarrow -\infty} a = 0$ , overall we have  $\lim_{s \rightarrow -\infty} \frac{\partial u_j(\sigma)}{\partial s} = 0^+$ .

Having computed the limits at the two extremes of the domain of  $s$ , we now consider two different cases. First, assume  $S > \hat{\sigma}_j$ . Then, since  $\lim_{s \rightarrow S} \frac{\partial u_j(\sigma)}{\partial s} = -\infty$  and  $\lim_{s \rightarrow -\infty} \frac{\partial u_j(\sigma)}{\partial s} = 0^+$ , by continuity there must exist a solution to  $\frac{\partial u_j(\sigma)}{\partial s} = 0$ , implying that in this case  $b_j(S) < S$ . Next, suppose  $S \leq \hat{\sigma}_j$ . In this case we show that  $\frac{\partial u_j(\sigma)}{\partial s} > 0$ . To see this, assume by contradiction that there exists  $\tilde{s}$  such that  $\frac{\partial u_j(\sigma)}{\partial s} \Big|_{s=\tilde{s}} \leq 0$ . Since  $\lim_{s \rightarrow S} \frac{\partial u_j(\sigma)}{\partial s} = \infty$  and  $\lim_{s \rightarrow -\infty} \frac{\partial u_j(\sigma)}{\partial s} = 0^+$ , by continuity there must exist an interior solution  $s^* \geq \tilde{s}$  to  $\frac{\partial u_j(\sigma)}{\partial s} = 0$  such that  $\frac{\partial^2 u_j(\sigma)}{\partial s^2} \Big|_{s^*=b(S)} \geq 0$ , a contradiction. This establishes that  $b_j(S) < S$  if  $S > \hat{\sigma}_j$  and  $B_j(S) = S$  otherwise.

### Proof of Proposition 0

The Wald solution is characterized by the interior intersection of  $B_w(s)$  and  $b_w(S)$ , which always exists by the properties established in Lemmas B1 and B2.

## C Supplementary Appendix C: Technical Results

**Lemma C1** *The evaluator's marginal value of anticipating rejection increases in the initial belief,*

$$\frac{\partial^2 u_e}{\partial s \partial \sigma} > 0. \quad (20)$$

### Proof of Lemma C1

Using equation (16) from Appendix B for  $c_j = 0$  we have

$$\frac{\partial u_e(\sigma)}{\partial s} = \frac{e^\sigma}{1+e^\sigma} \Psi(\sigma, G) a \left[ v_e^G + e^{-S} v_e^B \right],$$

so that, since  $a$  does not depend on  $\sigma$ ,

$$\frac{\partial^2 u_e}{\partial s \partial \sigma} = \frac{\partial \left( \frac{e^\sigma}{1+e^\sigma} \Psi(\sigma, G) \right)}{\partial \sigma} a \left[ v_e^G + e^{-S} v_e^B \right]. \quad (21)$$

Furthermore

$$\frac{\partial \left( \frac{e^\sigma}{1+e^\sigma} \Psi(\sigma, G) \right)}{\partial \sigma} = \frac{e^\sigma \Psi(\sigma, G) + (1+e^\sigma) e^\sigma \Psi_\sigma(\sigma, G)}{(1+e^\sigma)^2}$$

and

$$\Psi_\sigma(\sigma, G) = \frac{-R_2 e^{R_2(S-\sigma)} + R_1 e^{R_1(S-\sigma)}}{e^{R_2(S-s)} - e^{R_1(S-s)}} < 0.$$

From

$$-\Psi_\sigma(\sigma, G) = \frac{R_2 e^{R_2(S-\sigma)} - R_1 e^{R_1(S-\sigma)}}{e^{R_2(S-s)} - e^{R_1(S-s)}} > \frac{e^{R_2(S-\sigma)} - e^{R_1(S-\sigma)}}{e^{R_2(S-s)} - e^{R_1(S-s)}} = \Psi(\sigma, G)$$

we have

$$\frac{\partial \left( \frac{e^\sigma}{1+e^\sigma} \Psi(\sigma, G) \right)}{\partial \sigma} = \frac{e^\sigma \Psi(\sigma, G) + (1+e^\sigma) e^\sigma \Psi_\sigma(\sigma, G)}{(1+e^\sigma)^2} < 0.$$

Overall, replacing in equation (21), and using  $a < 0$ , we obtain (20).

**Lemma C2** *The evaluator's marginal value of delaying approval increases in the initial belief,*

$$\left. \frac{\partial^2 u_e}{\partial S \partial \sigma} \right|_{s=b_i(S)} > 0. \quad (22)$$

### Proof of Lemma C2

Using (8) from Appendix B we have

$$\frac{\partial^2 u_e}{\partial S \partial \sigma} = \frac{\partial}{\partial \sigma} \left( \frac{e^\sigma}{1+e^\sigma} \Psi(\sigma, G) \right) \left[ f \left( v_e^G + e^{-S} v_e^B \right) - e^{-S} v_e^B \right],$$

given that  $f$  is independent of  $\sigma$ . Thus,

$$\frac{\partial \left( \frac{e^\sigma}{1+e^\sigma} \Psi(\sigma, G) \right)}{\partial \sigma} = \frac{e^\sigma \Psi(\sigma, G) + (1+e^\sigma) e^\sigma \Psi_\sigma(\sigma, G)}{(1+e^\sigma)^2} > 0.$$

Furthermore, for  $S < S^n$  we have  $\frac{\partial u_e}{\partial S}(b_i(S), S) > 0$ , so that

$$f\left(v_e^G + e^{-S}v_e^B\right) - e^{-S}v_e^B > 0.$$

Overall we obtain (22).

**Lemma C3** *The evaluator's marginal value of delaying approval decreases in the approval standard,*

$$\frac{\partial^2 u_e}{\partial S^2} \Big|_{s=b_i(S)} < 0 \text{ for } S \leq S^n. \quad (23)$$

### Proof of Lemma C3

From

$$\frac{\partial u_e}{\partial S} \Big|_{s=b_i(S)} = \frac{\partial u_e}{\partial s} \frac{\partial b_i(S)}{\partial S} + \frac{\partial u_e}{\partial S}$$

we have

$$\frac{\partial^2 u_e}{\partial S^2} \Big|_{s=b_i(S)} = \frac{\partial^2 u_e}{\partial s^2} \left( \frac{\partial b_i(S)}{\partial S} \right)^2 + \frac{\partial u_e}{\partial s} \frac{\partial^2 b_i(S)}{\partial S^2} + 2 \frac{\partial^2 u_e}{\partial S \partial s} \frac{\partial b_i(S)}{\partial S} + \frac{\partial^2 u_e}{\partial S^2}. \quad (24)$$

Using the expression for the evaluator's expected payoff (12) for  $c_j = 0$  and  $j = e$ , we now show that the four terms in (24) are negative so that we have (23):

- Term 1:  $\frac{\partial^2 u_e}{\partial s^2} \left( \frac{\partial b_i(S)}{\partial S} \right)^2 < 0$ . From

$$\frac{\partial^2 u_e}{\partial s^2} = \frac{e^\sigma}{1 + e^\sigma} \Psi(\sigma, G) \left( \frac{\partial a}{\partial s} + ab \right) \left( v_e^G + e^{-S}v_e^B \right) < 0$$

Simple computations yield  $\frac{\partial a}{\partial s} + ab = a \frac{e^{-R_1(S-s)} - e^{-R_2(S-s)}}{e^{-R_1(S-s)} - e^{-R_2(S-s)}}$ , from which the claim follows.

- Term 2:  $\frac{\partial u_e}{\partial s} \frac{\partial^2 b_i(S)}{\partial S^2} < 0$ . The evaluator's expected payoff is decreasing in  $s$  since the evaluator does not pay for research. The claim then follows from  $\frac{\partial^2 b_i(S)}{\partial S^2} > 0$ .
- Term 3:  $2 \frac{\partial^2 u_e}{\partial S \partial s} \frac{\partial b_i(S)}{\partial S} < 0$ . Using the fact that  $f\left(v_e^G + e^{-S}v_e^B\right) - e^{-S}v_e^B > 0$  for  $S < S^n$ , we have

$$\frac{\partial^2 u_e}{\partial S \partial s} = \frac{e^\sigma}{1 + e^\sigma} \Psi(\sigma, G) \left( fa \left( v_e^G + e^{-S}v_e^B \right) - ae^{-S}v_e^B \right) < 0.$$

Given that  $b_i(S)$  is increasing in  $S$ , the claim follows.

- Term 4:  $\frac{\partial^2 u_e}{\partial S^2} < 0$ . From derivations above, we have

$$\frac{\partial u_e}{\partial S} = \frac{e^\sigma}{1 + e^\sigma} \Psi(\sigma, G) \left( f \left( v_e^G + e^{-S}v_e^B \right) - e^{-S}v_e^B \right),$$

so that

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{\partial^2 u_e}{\partial S^2} &= \frac{e^\sigma \Psi(\sigma, G)}{1 + e^\sigma} \left[ \left( f^2 + \frac{\partial f}{\partial S} \right) \left( v_e^G + e^{-S}v_e^B \right) + (-2f + 1) e^{-S}v_e^B \right] \\ &= \frac{e^\sigma \Psi(\sigma, G)}{1 + e^\sigma} \left\{ f \left[ f \left( v_e^G + e^{-S}v_e^B \right) - e^{-S}v_e^B \right] + \frac{\partial f}{\partial S} \left( v_e^G + e^{-S}v_e^B \right) + (1 - f) e^{-S}v_e^B \right\}. \end{aligned}$$



Using the fact that  $f(v_e^G + e^{-S}v_e^B) - e^{-S}v_e^B > 0$  for  $S < S^n$  and that  $f < 0$ , we conclude  $f(f(v_e^G + e^{-S}v_e^B) - e^{-S}v_e^B) < 0$ . Given that  $\frac{\partial f}{\partial S} < 0$  and  $1 - f > 0$  as shown above, (23) follows.