

Selection process of public research projects in agriculture: is the scientific merit the only driver?

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ABSTRACT of presentation held on **12 September 2013, room C82, 12.30 – 13.30 hrs., Leeuwenborch, Wageningen**

The aim of the paper is to empirically analyse which factors affect the selection and funding of agricultural research projects by regional public authorities, such as regional governments. We study in particular the selection process of agricultural research projects run by the Emilia Romagna regional government in Italy, which we use as a template for other European regions. Leveraging a unique dataset, a Heckman selection model demonstrates that although the scientific merit of proposed projects is the primary selection criterion, factors such as the experience of the reviewers of the proposal and the gender composition of the reviewing team can also influence whether a submitted proposal receives funding as well as the amount allocated to the proposal.

