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Winners

of

DRUID Young Scholar Paper Award 2011

Henry Sauermann and Michael Roach: “The Price of Silence: Scientists' Trade-offs between Publishing and Pay”



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Abstract

A growing body of research draws on the notion that scientists face trade-offs between publishing research results and larger financial returns associated with limited disclosure. Yet little is known how scientists resolve such trade-offs. Using survey data from 1,400 junior life scientists, we find considerable heterogeneity in the 'price' scientists assign to publishing when they consider research positions in industry that allow versus restrict publishing, including scientists who are willing to give up publishing 'for free'. Analyzing sources of heterogeneity, we find that the required wage premium increases with a scientist's preference for publishing but decreases with the preference for money. Scientists who value publishing primarily as a currency in the labor market require a smaller wage premium, ceteris paribus, than scientists who value publishing as a mechanism to advance scientific knowledge, presumably reflecting different degrees of substitutability between publishing and pay. Finally, ability and the quality of training have a positive relationship with the required wage premium. We discuss implications for research on the economics of science, for managers seeking to attract and retain academically trained scientists, and for firms considering their participation in "open science".