

Press release

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Women are more successful at crowdfunding than men, says ESMT Berlin study

Women have higher success rates at crowdfunding scientific projects than men, according to new research from ESMT Berlin. The study suggests that the 'crowd' may apply different decision-making criteria than traditional funding agencies, says Henry Sauermann, lead researcher and associate professor of strategy.

Alongside fellow researchers, Chiara Franzoni from MIP Politecnico di Milano and Kourish Shafi from the University of Florida, Sauermann analysed data from over 700 campaigns on the largest dedicated platform to crowdfunding scientific research, Experiment.com. They found that students and juniors are more likely to succeed than senior scientists, and women obtain more funding than men.

Sauermann says: "Although the majority of campaign creators on the site were male, women were overall more successful. The data shows that males enjoyed a 43% rate of reaching their funding target, compared with 57% for females. Women's significantly higher success rates in crowdfunding contrast with their sometimes lower odds when competing with men for grants from government agencies. Through crowdfunding, access to resources is broadened for groups that have been excluded or disadvantaged in traditional funding systems."

The research suggests that crowdfunding has a number of advantages, including success for less conventional projects and being much faster than the traditional grant-based system.

Sauermann says: "Crowdfunding has already become an important tool for financing entrepreneurial, artistic and social projects. This type of financing for scientific research is still in its early stages but the considerable number of funded projects suggests that it can provide important monetary benefits. In fact, a number of universities actively encourage their researchers to start crowdfunding campaigns for this very reason."

More information:

Sauermann H, Franzoni C, Shafi K (2019). Crowdfunding scientific research: Descriptive insights and correlates of funding success. PLoS ONE 14(1): e0208384. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0208384>

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About ESMT Berlin

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