Matching and Network Effects

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Abstract

This paper examines the existence and magnitude of network effects in the matching of academic researchers. We study the formation of coauthor relations among economists over a thirty year period. Our principal finding is that a collaboration emerges faster among two authors if they are closer in the social network of economists. This proximity effect on collaboration is strong and robust. We also provide some evidence that matching depends on experience, junior authors being more likely to collaborate with senior authors.