Two Decades of the International Industrial Organization Conference: A Descriptive Analysis

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Abstract

Using 6,289 presentations across 20 editions of the International Industrial Organization Conference (IIOC) between 2006 and 2026 matched against bibliometric data from OpenAlex, Crossref, and Semantic Scholar, I document several facts about the conference's composition and publication outcomes. The share of presentations from RePEc top-20 departments has risen from 16% to 25%, and the median presenter's publishing experience has doubled from 6 to 13 years. About 45% of papers from mature cohorts reach peer-reviewed journals, and the share placing in top-5 general-interest journals has nearly tripled. European representation has declined from 21% to 16% while Asia-Pacific has risen from 5% to 12%. Rising Star sessions feature a higher female share (28% versus 21%) while delivering similar publication outcomes as the main program. A formal test of whether discussant quality predicts publication success yields a precise null.

Keywords: International Industrial Organization Conference; academic conferences; industrial organization; publication outcomes; institutional concentration; gender in economics; discussant quality.

JEL codes: A11, A14, I23, J44.

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1 Introduction

Field conferences are a central institution of academic economics. They bring together specialists to present and discuss the current research frontier, assign junior authors to senior discussants, and often act as the first public outing of papers that will later appear in top journals. Yet we know little about how field conferences evolve. Who presents, from which institutions, and at what career stage? How many of the presented papers eventually reach a peer-reviewed journal, and how quickly? Does the quality of the discussant make a measurable difference to the paper's publication trajectory? Answering these questions requires long longitudinal data on a single conference, not cross-sectional snapshots, because the questions are fundamentally about how the composition and performance of a conference shift over time.

This paper builds that kind of dataset for the International Industrial Organization Conference (IIOC), the largest annual gathering of industrial organization economists in North America.[1] Organized by the Industrial Organization Society since 2003 and held each year since (except for a COVID cancellation in 2020 and a virtual 2021 edition), the IIOC brings 260 to 400 researchers each year to present and discuss new work in IO, antitrust, regulation, and related fields. I parse the public conference programs on Editorial Express from 2006 through 2026, clean the resulting 6,289 presentations and 2,970 presenters, match them against three bibliometric databases (OpenAlex, Crossref, and Semantic Scholar) to track publication outcomes, and build author-level citation profiles for presenters and discussants.

I document five facts. First, the conference has become smaller and denser: presentations fell from 400 in 2009 to 254 in 2026 (a 37% reduction), but the drop reflects fewer parallel sessions rather than a shorter schedule. Second, concentration has risen on both ends: the HHI of presenting institutions nearly doubled, and the share of presentations from RePEc top-20 departments rose from 16% to 25%. Third, the typical presenter has become substantially more senior, with median years of publishing experience doubling from 6 to 13 over the sample. Fourth, geography has shifted: European representation fell from 21% to 16%, while Asia-Pacific rose from 5% to 12%. Fifth, quality has risen in parallel: the share of IIOC papers placing in the top-5 general-interest journals has nearly tripled, even as the overall verified journal publication rate sits around 45%.

[1] Two sister conferences complete the regional map for the field: the European Association for Research in Industrial Economics (EARIE), founded in 1974, and the Asia-Pacific Industrial Organization Conference (APIOC), established in 2016. Shifts in participation across the three conferences speak to broader changes in the geography of economic research, and the IIOC patterns reported here should be read with that regional context in mind. The NBER Industrial Organization summer meeting is likely the most selective IO gathering in North America, but it operates under a different format: participation is invitation-only, and acceptance is highly selective as only few papers are presented and discussed in each meeting.

Taken together, these patterns suggest a conference that has moved upmarket: fewer presentations, from a more concentrated and senior set of institutions and researchers, yielding a rising share of top-journal placements. Whether this reflects deliberate selectivity by the program committee, declining submissions from marginal institutions, or substitution toward EARIE and APIOC, the data cannot fully distinguish. What the data do show is that a formal test of whether discussant quality predicts publication success yields a precise null, offering no support for the hypothesis that getting a "star" discussant improves a paper's prospects.

These facts build on a small but growing literature that studies conferences as objects of inquiry. Gorodnichenko et al. (2021) analyze papers presented at the AEA, EEA, and RES annual meetings and find that presenting at a major conference raises the probability of publishing in a top-tier journal by up to 4.8 percentage points. Spiegel and Toivanen (2022) study five editions of the EARIE conference and document that 40–50% of presented papers remain unpublished years later, with published papers taking on average more than three years to appear. Ellison (2002) documents a marked slowdown in the economics publishing process over the 1970s–1990s, pushing conference output further from final publication and making program-level data an increasingly useful window into current research; Hamermesh (2013) traces the long-run evolution of the top-journal author pool over six decades. The present paper extends this work along three dimensions: it covers two full decades rather than a handful of years, it focuses on a single field conference rather than a general-interest one, and it layers author-level citation profiles onto the standard program data to test whether discussant quality predicts publication. On the gender dimension, Chari and Goldsmith-Pinkham (2017) document that women made up about 21% of all authors at the NBER Summer Institute; Hospido and Sanz (2021) find evidence of gender-differentiated evaluation at economics conferences and Dupas et al. (2026) document gender-differentiated dynamics in economics seminars; and Lundberg and Stearns (2019) document that the share of women in the profession has been roughly flat for two decades. Institutional and geographic concentration of economics research have been analyzed by Kocher and Sutter (2001), Cardoso et al. (2010), and Angus et al. (2021), with US institutions dominating top journals but European and Asian output growing; Ductor and Visser (2023) document a related concentration pattern on the editorial side.

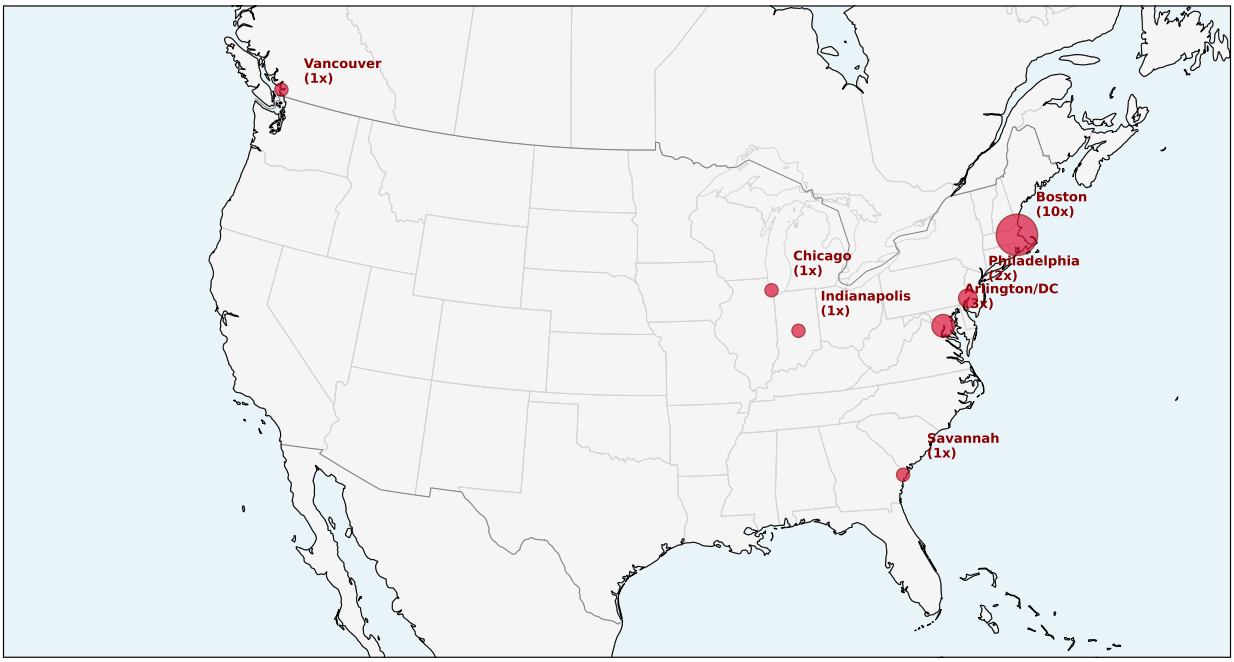
The rest of the paper proceeds as follows. Section 2 describes the IIOC and the construction of the panel. Section 3 tracks the conference over 21 editions, covering size, concentration, geography and gender, and seniority. Section 4 turns to publication outcomes and the distribution across journal tiers. Section 5 zooms in on Rising Star sessions, and Section 6 tests whether discussant quality predicts publication. Section 7 concludes.

2 Data

2.1 The IIOC and its Audience

The IIOC has been held annually since 2003, with the 2020 Philadelphia edition cancelled due to COVID-19 and a virtual edition held in 2021. The 2020 accepted program was published but never presented; I exclude it from all figures, tables, and trend analyses below because those "presentations" do not correspond to actual conference events. Boston has hosted 10 of the 19 in-person editions; Philadelphia, Arlington, Chicago, Indianapolis, Washington DC, Savannah, and Vancouver have hosted the remainder. Figure 1 plots the geography of host cities; Figure 2 plots the institutional origins of all 2,970 presenters in the analysis sample.

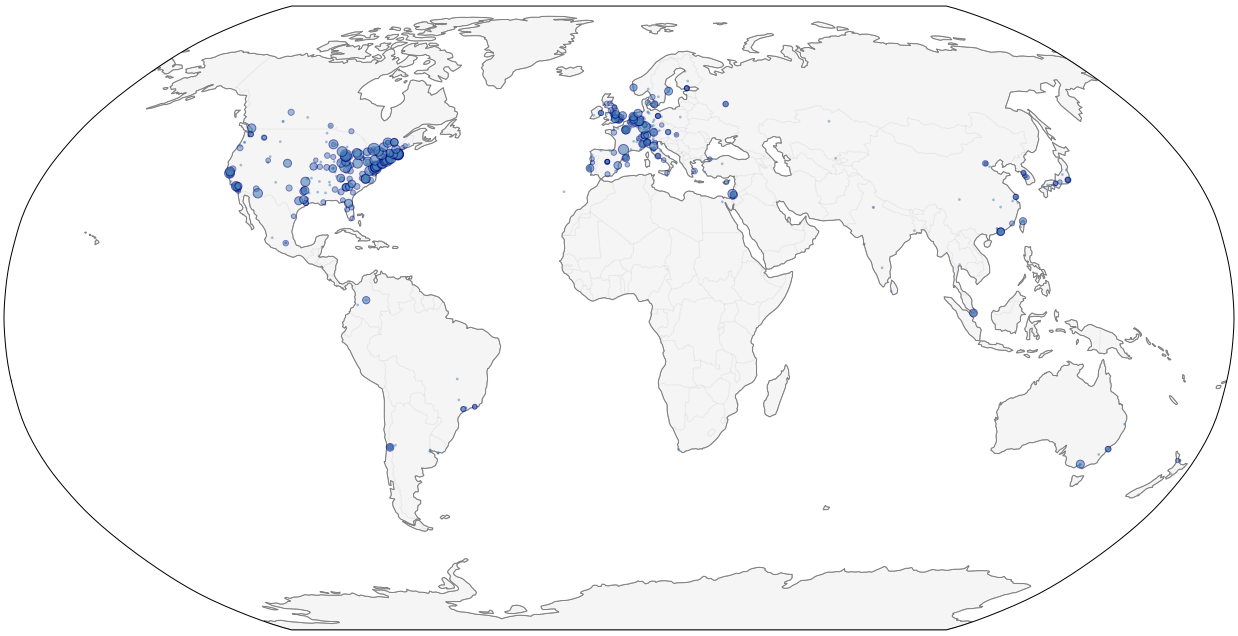
Figure 1: IIOC Host Cities, 2006–2026



Notes: Bubble size is proportional to the number of times each city has hosted the IIOC. Boston has been the dominant host (10 of 19 in-person editions); the conference has otherwise circulated among a small number of US cities and made one visit to Vancouver. The 2020 edition was cancelled due to COVID-19; the 2021 edition was virtual.

Together, these maps preview the central facts about IIOC participation: the conference is predominantly North American, with a long European tail and a growing Asia-Pacific presence. About 75–80% of presenters in any given year are based at a US or Canadian institution. Tel Aviv University, the University of Melbourne, and a handful of leading European universities anchor the international representation.

Figure 2: Geographic Origin of IIOC Presenters, 2006–2026



Notes: Each bubble is an institution that has sent at least one IIOC presenter; bubble size is proportional to the square root of total presentations across the sample. The US Northeast dominates, with secondary clusters in the Midwest and on the US West Coast. International clusters are visible in the UK, Continental Europe, and East Asia and Australia.

2.2 Data Construction

The IIOC has posted its conference programs on the Editorial Express platform since 2006, following a consistent URL pattern. Each program lists all sessions with their papers, presenting authors, institutional affiliations, session chairs, and discussants. I wrote a Python-based parser to extract structured data from these HTML pages across 21 years of varying formats. The HTML structure changed several times, moving from table-based layouts with explicit metadata fields (2006–2011) to inline headers with block-detail navigation (2012–2026). Format-specific parsing logic is required for each era, and a small number of rows in the 2008–2011 vintages have their paper titles replaced by JEL-codes lines in the original HTML; these are recovered by cross-referencing the adjacent title fields.

The final analysis dataset contains 6,289 paper presentations across 1,707 sessions, involving 2,970 unique presenting authors from 1,563 distinct institutions. (The full raw data, including the 2020 program, cover 6,613 presentations and 3,044 presenters.) I supplement the base data with four enrichments. First, I infer presenter gender from first names using the `gender-guesser` Python library, which classifies approximately 78% of names; the remaining 22% are coded as unknown, driven primarily by East Asian names and initials. Second, I classify institutions into three regions (North America, Europe, and Asia-Pacific) based

on keyword matching. Third, I match presentations against three bibliometric databases to track publication outcomes: OpenAlex (Priem et al., 2022), Crossref, and Semantic Scholar (Kinney et al., 2023). Fourth, I build citation profiles for presenters and discussants from a locally downloaded snapshot of 22 million OpenAlex economics-related works, which I use to measure both author seniority and the effect of discussant quality on publication.

For the publication matching, I use an author-verified three-stage procedure designed to minimize false positives from title-keyword overlap across unrelated research fields. Stage one joins each IIOC presenter's name against the local OpenAlex snapshot (restricted to the Economics, Business, Social Sciences, and Decision Sciences fields), keeping only works where the presenter (or a coauthor where the IIOC program lists one) actually appears as a listed author. Stage two supplements the local snapshot with a live Crossref query for any IIOC presenter whose papers would otherwise be unmatched; Crossref has better coverage of journal articles published in the past twelve months than the OpenAlex snapshot. Stage three adds a Semantic Scholar fallback for papers still unmatched after stages one and two, restricted to publications typed as journal articles and carrying the same author-verification and title-similarity gates. In all three stages, the candidate publication's title must meet a similarity threshold against the IIOC paper title (a blend of Jaro-Winkler and token-set ratio, set at 0.82 for OpenAlex/Crossref and 0.80 for Semantic Scholar), and the publication year must fall within one year before to twelve years after the presentation. Throughout the paper, I distinguish journal publications from working-paper repositories (SSRN, NBER, RePEc, arXiv, Harvard Dataverse, and other preprint venues); all publication rates and the top-outlet ranking in Table 5 refer to peer-reviewed journal publications only. Appendix A describes the full algorithm, including manual overrides for title-drifted papers and the automated audit that clears residual false positives.

Table 1 reports summary statistics by year, including the number of presentations, sessions, distinct institutions, the female share among classifiable presenters, the Herfindahl-Hirschman index of institutional concentration, and the journal publication rate for each cohort. These year-level statistics are the building blocks of all the time-series figures that follow. Rates for the most recent cohorts (2022 onward) reflect pipeline papers that are still moving through the review process and should therefore be read as lower bounds.

3 The IIOC Over Time

This section documents how the conference has evolved over the 21 years of the sample. I organize the discussion around four themes: size and format, institutional concentration, geography and gender, and the seniority of the typical presenter.

Table 1: Summary Statistics by Year

Year	Papers	Sessions	Presenters	Inst.	% Fem.	% Eur.	% Asia	HHI	% Publ.
2006	365	96	351	251	23.6	19.2	2.7	60	43.0
2007	310	95	286	208	17.5	18.7	2.3	71	46.8
2008	382	105	353	255	19.1	18.1	6.5	60	48.7
2009	400	106	366	258	24.8	22.5	5.8	59	41.5
2010	357	102	328	241	21.9	16.8	7.0	62	45.1
2011	395	106	365	269	21.2	19.0	4.6	54	47.8
2012	347	99	332	250	23.1	19.9	5.5	56	48.1
2013	395	104	366	277	23.9	21.5	5.3	52	47.6
2014	297	81	292	208	21.7	18.2	6.1	81	52.9
2015	259	71	255	177	24.0	16.2	3.9	76	48.3
2016	274	71	269	213	20.9	16.8	6.6	61	48.5
2017	311	84	306	226	18.4	18.6	7.7	67	45.0
2018	291	79	281	194	18.2	10.7	9.6	85	43.6
2019	285	76	269	187	19.1	15.8	7.4	84	48.4
2021	276	73	272	197	18.5	18.1	9.8	69	45.3
2022	260	70	252	166	20.9	20.0	4.2	99	40.4
2023	252	67	248	162	22.0	15.1	4.4	99	28.2
2024	310	82	309	208	20.8	19.0	9.4	75	21.3
2025	268	71	265	170	24.1	13.4	6.3	94	13.4
2026	255	69	252	160	25.9	12.9	12.2	103	12.5

Notes: Papers count all presentations on the program. Inst. is the number of distinct presenting-author institutions. % Fem. is the female share among presenters with classifiable first names. Regional shares are of all presentations. HHI is the Herfindahl-Hirschman index of institutional concentration, multiplied by 10 000. % Publ. counts only peer-reviewed journal publications matched against OpenAlex; working-paper series (NBER, SSRN, RePEc, arXiv, etc.) are excluded. The 2020 conference was cancelled due to COVID-19 but the accepted program was published; the 2022–2026 journal rates reflect pipeline papers still in review.

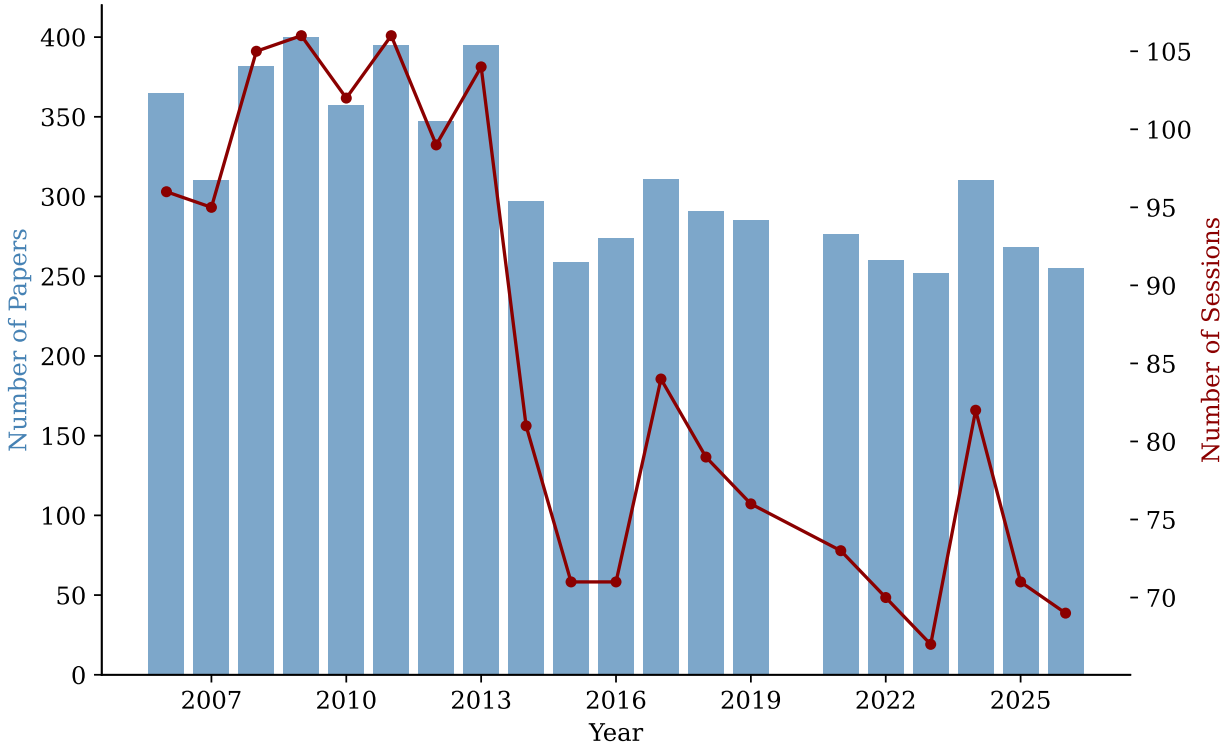
3.1 Size and Format

Annual presentations peaked at 400 in 2009 and have fallen to 254 by 2026, a 37% reduction (Figure 3). The number of sessions fell from 106 to 69 over the same period, and the number of distinct presenting institutions declined from 269 to 160. The drop is not explained by a shorter schedule: the conference still runs across roughly the same number of days, and papers per session have hovered around 3.7 throughout the sample. What has contracted is the number of parallel tracks, which has fallen from 14 at the peak to 10 in recent years.

This contraction is not driven by a shorter conference schedule. The number of time slots has remained roughly constant at six or seven per year, and the conference continues to span three days. Rather, the conference has become *narrower*: the average number of parallel sessions running simultaneously in each time slot fell from about 15 in the early years to about 12 in recent years (Figure 4). The IIOC runs the same schedule but in fewer rooms.

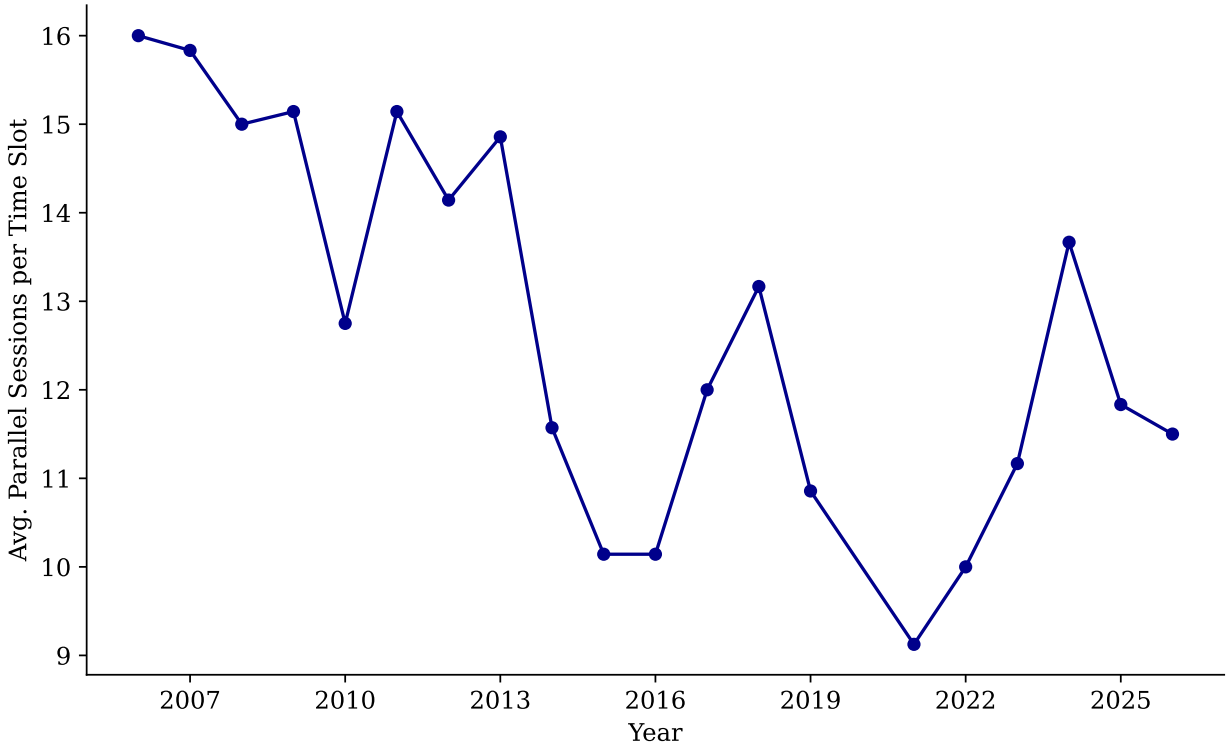
Whether this reflects a deliberate choice to be more selective, declining submissions, or

Figure 3: IIOC Conference Size, 2006–2026



Notes: Bars show the number of paper presentations per year (left axis); the line shows the number of sessions per year (right axis). The 2020 conference was cancelled due to COVID-19 and is omitted from this and all subsequent time series.

Figure 4: Average Number of Parallel Sessions per Time Slot



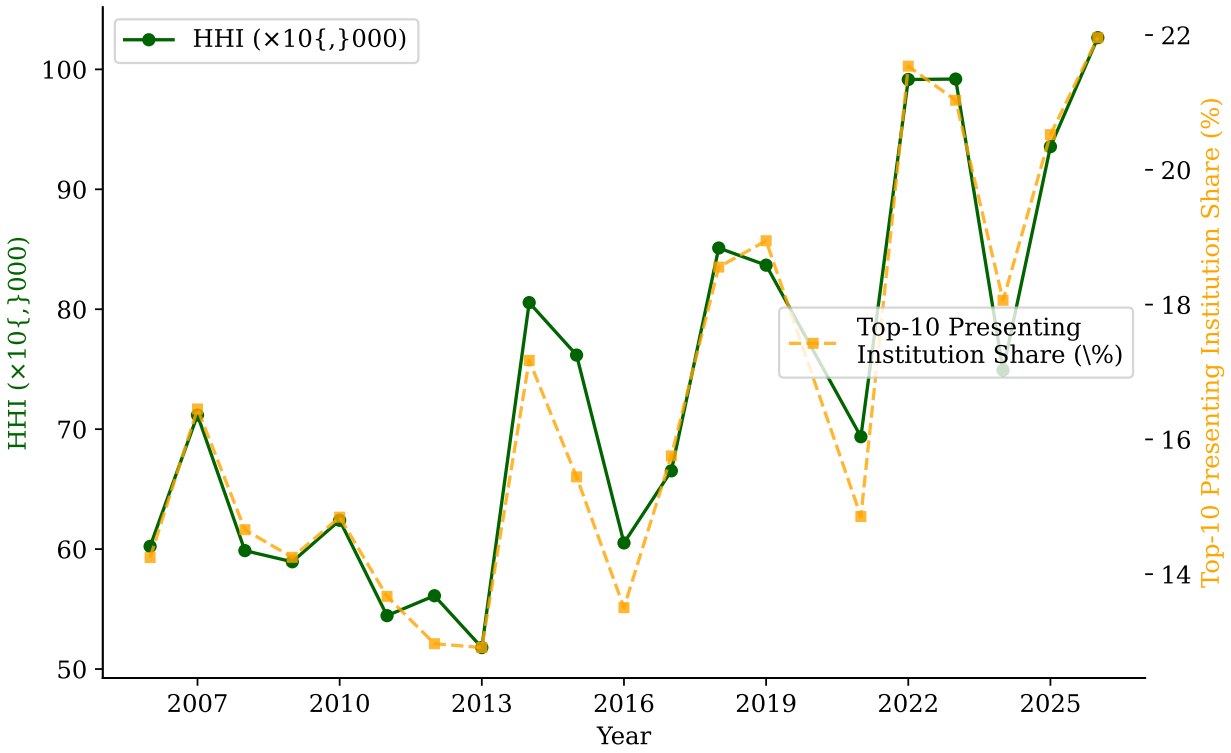
Notes: For each conference edition, I compute the average number of sessions running simultaneously in each time slot. The decline from approximately 15 to 12 parallel sessions, combined with a roughly stable number of time slots, accounts for most of the drop in total presentations.

competition from EARIE and APIOC, the data cannot fully distinguish. What they can show, and what the remainder of the section documents, is that the remaining presentations are drawn from a more concentrated, more senior, and higher-placing pool of researchers. That pattern is consistent with greater selectivity rather than declining attractiveness.

3.2 Institutional Concentration

The conference has become more institutionally concentrated over time. The Herfindahl-Hirschman Index (HHI) of presenting-institution concentration has nearly doubled, from about 60 (on a 10,000-point scale) in 2006 to 102 in 2026. Over the same period, the top-10 presenting institution share rose from about 14% to 22% (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Institutional Concentration at IIOC



Notes: The HHI is computed each year from the distribution of presentations across presenting-author institutions and multiplied by 10,000 for readability (left axis). The top-10 presenting institution share is the combined share of presentations from the ten most-represented institutions each year (right axis). Both series move upward, particularly after 2014.

These patterns echo the broader institutional concentration in top economics output documented by Kocher and Sutter (2001) and Cardoso et al. (2010). Table 2 lists the 30 most represented institutions over the full sample. Business schools and law schools are rolled up

into their parent university, so that, for example, Harvard Business School, Harvard Kennedy School, and Harvard Law School all count toward Harvard University. Presenters who list two institutions joined by "and" (e.g., "Stanford University and Microsoft") contribute to both in the ranking. Research-affiliate networks such as NBER and CEPR are not counted as standalone employers. Harvard leads with 143 presentations across 20 editions, followed by the University of Toronto (125), Indiana University (115), New York University (110), and Northwestern (107). Four US federal and regulatory institutions appear in the top 30, including the Federal Trade Commission (102), the U.S. Department of Justice, and research offices at the Federal Reserve, reflecting the conference's strong ties to antitrust policy.

To test whether the rise in concentration reflects a broader move toward elite departments rather than just a narrow tail of frequent attendees, I classify each presenter's affiliation as belonging to the RePEc top-20 economics departments worldwide or not.[2] Figure 6 plots the share of IIOC presentations from this group over time.

The share has risen from an average of 16.4% in 2006–2010 to 24.9% in 2022–2026, a rise of 8.5 percentage points, or roughly 0.5 percentage points per year. The trend is visible even before the size contraction of the mid-2010s: top-20 departments were already over-represented at the early IIOC, but their share has drifted steadily upward. Two interpretations are consistent with this pattern. Either the program committee has become more selective toward papers from prestigious departments, or researchers at top departments have substituted toward the IIOC as peer field conferences (EARIE, APIOC) have crowded out mid-tier institutions. The data cannot adjudicate between these, but both would be consistent with the parallel rise in top-journal placements documented in Section 4.

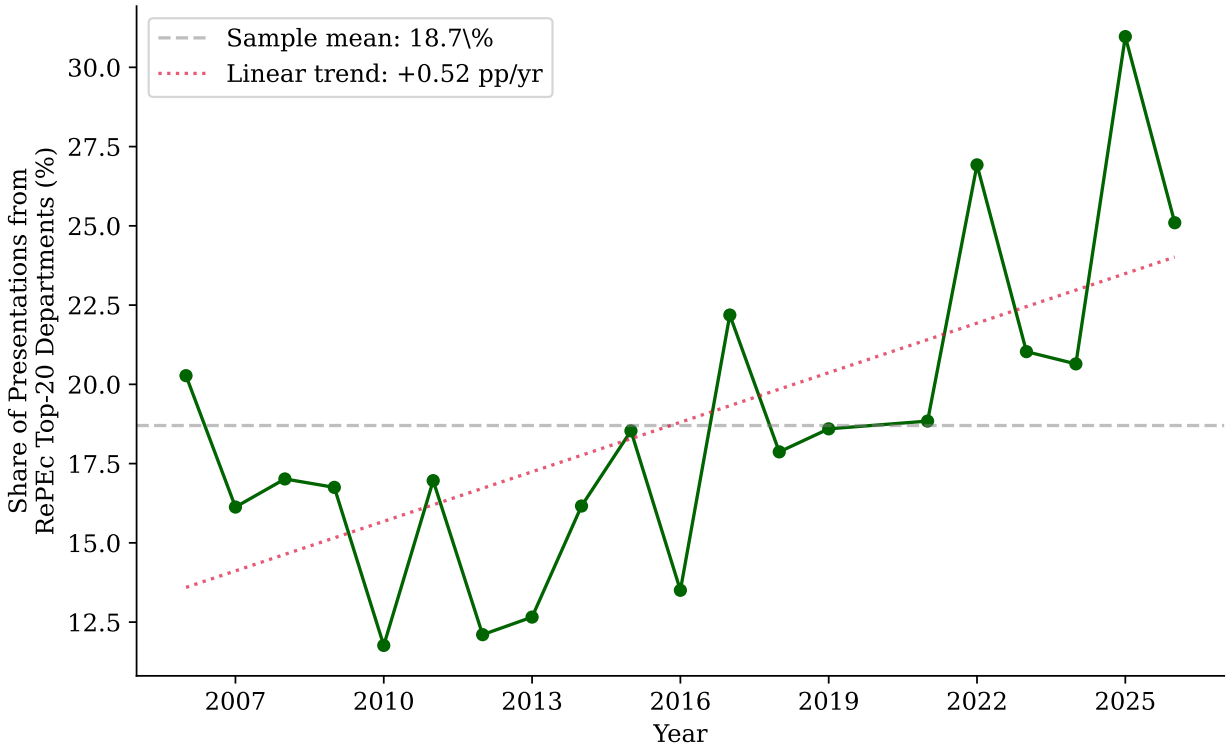
3.3 Geography and Gender

Geographically, the IIOC remains a North American conference, with about 75–80% of presenters based at US or Canadian institutions in any given year. Within the remaining share, two trends stand out (Figure 7). European representation has declined steadily, from about 21% in 2006–2010 to 16% in 2022–2026. Over the same period, Asia-Pacific representation has more than doubled, from 5% to 12%. At the current rate of convergence, Asia-Pacific presenters will outnumber Europeans at the IIOC within a few years, a striking reversal that tracks the shifting center of gravity of IO research more broadly.

The share of female presenters (among those with classifiable names) has hovered around

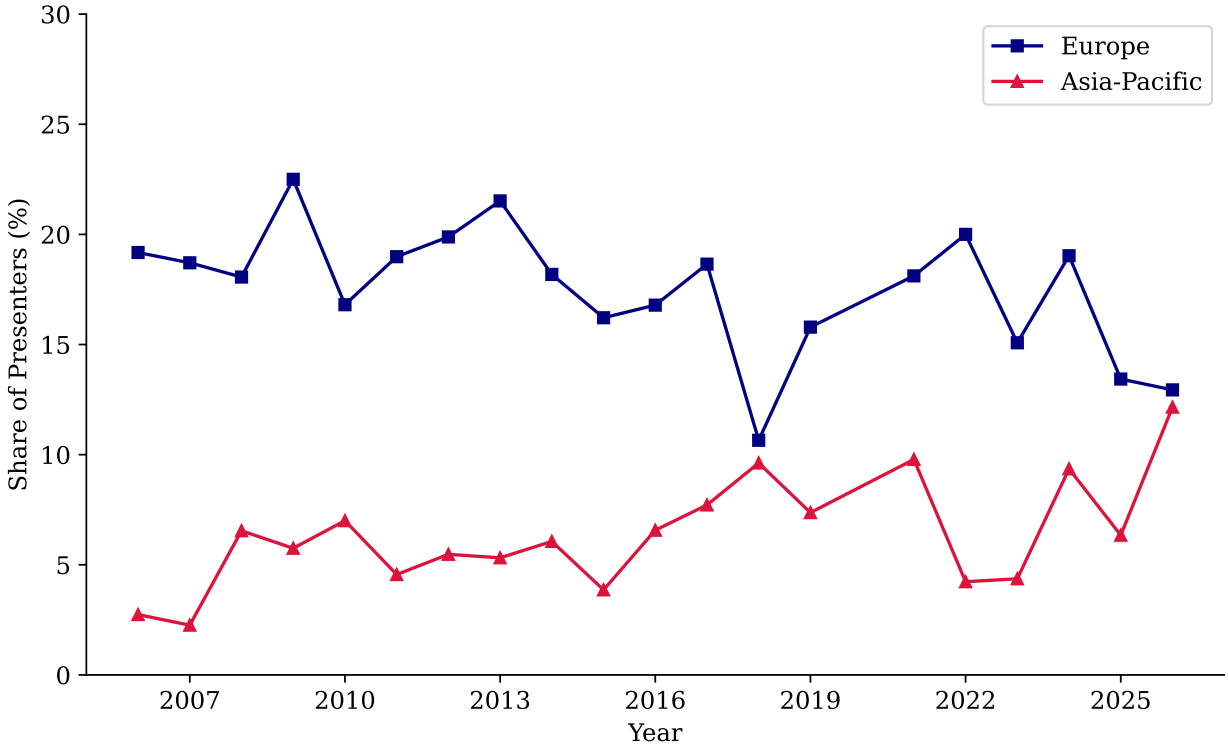
[2]The list is taken from the long-run RePEc department rankings and is intentionally broad: it includes Harvard, MIT, Chicago, Stanford, Yale, Princeton, Berkeley, Columbia, NYU, Northwestern, Michigan, Penn, Duke, Boston University, UCLA, LSE, Oxford, Cambridge, Paris School of Economics, Toulouse, Bocconi, Barcelona School of Economics, and the Pompeu Fabra. Keyword matching against the institution string identifies the affiliation as belonging to a top-20 department; the classifier is intentionally inclusive.

Figure 6: Share of IIOC Presentations from RePEc Top-20 Departments



Notes: An institution is classified as a RePEc top-20 department using keyword matching against the presenting-author institution string. The dashed line is the linear trend over the full sample; the slope of +0.5 percentage points per year is statistically different from zero.

Figure 7: Geographic Origin of IIOC Presenters Over Time



Notes: Regional shares are computed as a percentage of all presentations each year. North America (not shown) accounts for the residual, typically 75–80%. The Asia-Pacific category includes East Asian, Australasian, Israeli, and Turkish institutions; the regions are assigned via keyword matching against institution names.

Table 2: Top 30 Presenting Institutions at IIOC, 2006–2026

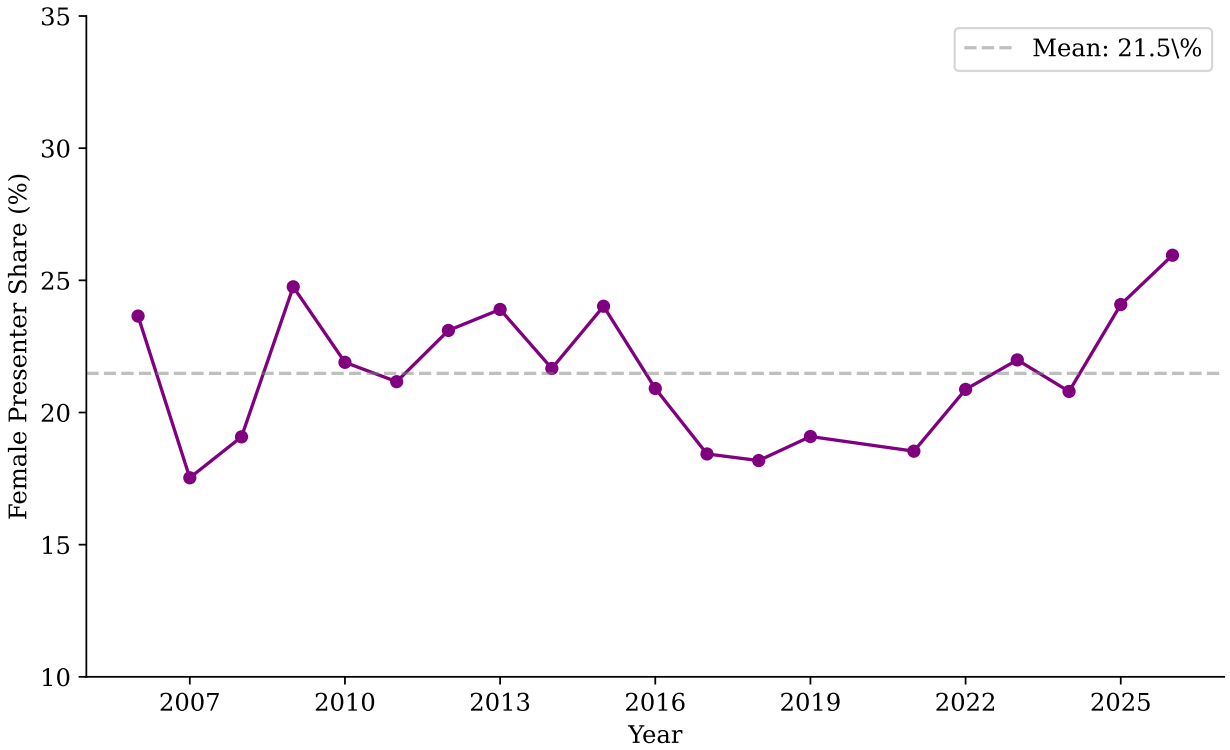
	Institution	Presentations	Distinct Presenters	Years
1	Harvard University	139	91	20
2	University of Toronto	120	51	20
3	Indiana University	110	42	20
4	New York University	108	62	20
5	Northwestern University	103	71	19
6	Boston University	100	55	20
7	Federal Trade Commission	99	43	20
8	Cornell University	92	41	18
9	University of Pennsylvania	82	61	19
10	MIT	80	50	20
11	University of Mannheim	78	46	19
12	University of Chicago	68	50	20
13	University of Maryland	67	29	19
14	University of Michigan	62	35	19
15	Stanford University	62	50	20
16	Yale University	60	34	16
17	Düsseldorf Institute for Competition Economics	59	41	16
18	KU Leuven	58	39	18
19	University of Wisconsin-Madison	53	39	16
20	Johns Hopkins University	53	25	19
21	University of Rochester	52	22	17
22	Toulouse School of Economics	51	41	18
23	Northeastern University	49	23	19
24	Federal Reserve System	47	22	17
25	Ohio State University	47	23	17
26	University of Arizona	45	24	16
27	Duke University	41	33	17
28	UCLA	41	23	17
29	Michigan State University	40	13	14
30	Columbia University	40	28	17

Notes: Ranking is by total presentations (the presenting author's affiliation at the time of the talk). *Distinct Presenters* is the number of unique individuals from that institution over the sample; *Years* is the number of distinct conference editions featuring at least one presenter from the institution.

21% for most of the sample period, with a modest increase to 26% by 2026 (Figure 8). This is in line with Lundberg and Stearns (2019)'s "stalled progress" narrative for women in economics, the conference-evaluation evidence of Hospido and Sanz (2021), and the seminar-interaction evidence of Dupas et al. (2026). Two features of the IIOC nonetheless stand out. First, Rising Star sessions consistently feature a higher female share (28% versus 21% in regular sessions), suggesting that either the selection process for these sessions is more

gender-balanced or that the pipeline of junior women in IO is stronger than the stock of senior researchers would suggest. Second, the data offer no evidence of deterioration: the trend, however modest, is upward.

Figure 8: Female Presenter Share Over Time



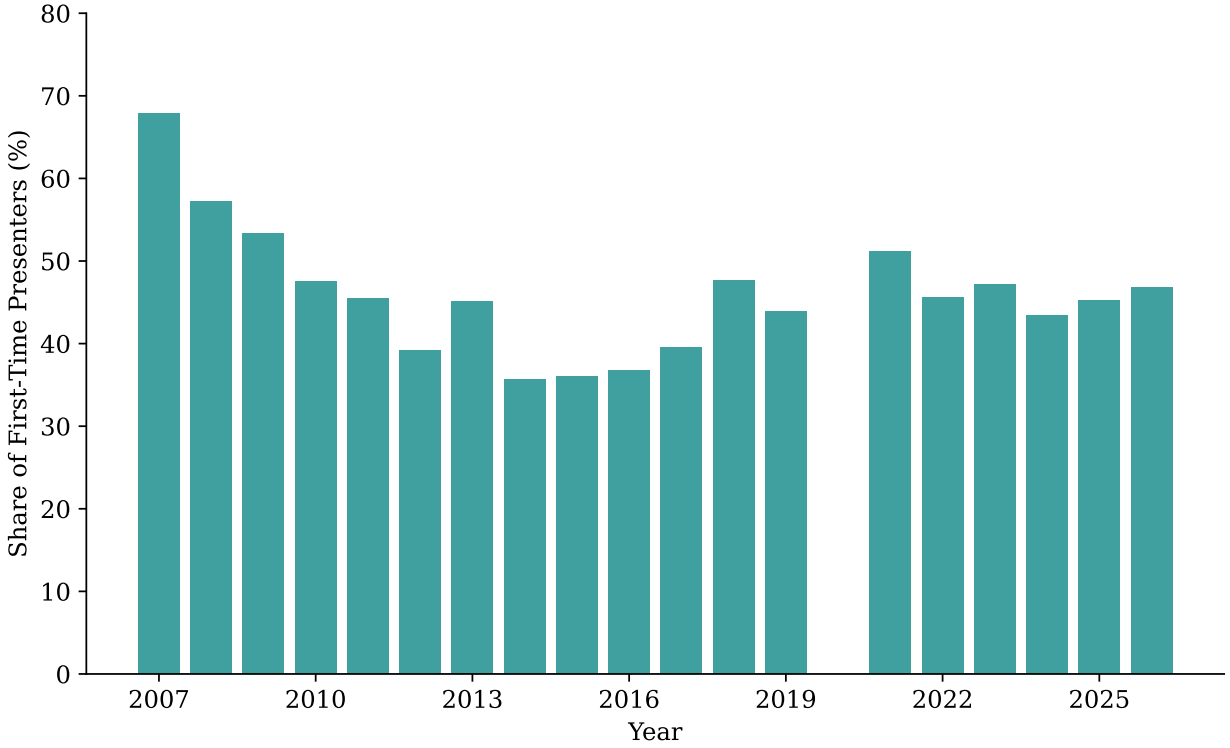
Notes: The female share is computed among presenters with classifiable first names (approximately 78% of the sample); presenters with unclassifiable or ambiguous first names (predominantly East Asian names and initials) are excluded from both the numerator and the denominator. The dashed line shows the sample mean.

3.4 Returning Presenters and Seniority

The conference has a stable core of regular attendees alongside substantial turnover. About 55% of all presenters appear exactly once: they present a paper and never return. Another 30% appear two or three times, and the remaining 15% present four or more times, forming the community's backbone. In any given year, about 40–45% of presenters are appearing at the IIOC for the first time (Figure 9), indicating healthy inflow of new researchers even as the conference shrinks.

Tables 3 and 4 list the 30 most frequent presenters and the top 20 overall regulars (counting presenter and discussant roles together). Christopher Snyder of Dartmouth College

Figure 9: Share of First-Time Presenters, by Conference Year



Notes: For each year after 2006, I compute the share of presenters whose name does not appear in any earlier IIOC program. The 2006 edition is excluded because all presenters are mechanically "first-time" in the sample. The share stabilizes in the 40–50% range after the first few years.

holds the record, with 22 presentations across 20 of the 21 years; when discussant roles are added, his total rises to 44 appearances, followed by Jordi Jaumandreu and Ginger Jin.

Table 3: Top 30 Presenters at IIOC, 2006–2026

	Presenter	Pres.	Yrs	Latest Institution
1	Christopher Snyder	21	19	Dartmouth College
2	Ginger Jin	18	13	University of Maryland at College P
3	Alexei Alexandrov	15	11	Unaffiliated for research purposes
4	Dongsoo Shin	15	14	Santa Clara University
5	Qihong Liu	15	12	University of Oklahoma
6	Jordi Jaumandreu	15	14	Boston University
7	Dakshina De Silva	14	13	Lancaster University
8	Lawrence White	14	11	Stern School of Business, New York
9	Konstantinos Serfes	13	13	Drexel University
10	Ting Liu	13	12	Stony Brook University
11	Teresa Harrison	13	12	Drexel University
12	Georgia Kosmopoulou	13	13	University of Oklahoma
13	Matthijs Wildenbeest	13	12	University of Arizona
14	Federico Ciliberto	12	9	U Virginia
15	Emek Basker	12	12	U.S. Census Bureau
16	Robert Feinberg	12	12	American University
17	Jeffrey Prince	12	11	Kelley School of Business, Indiana
18	Nathan Wilson	12	10	Compass Lexecon
19	Andras Niedermayer	12	10	University of Mannheim
20	Peter Newberry	12	12	University of Georgia
21	Ching-I Huang	12	11	National Taiwan University
22	Thomas Jeitschko	12	10	Michigan State University
23	Yossi Spiegel	12	10	Tel Aviv University
24	Timothy Brennan	11	7	University of Maryland Baltimore Co
25	Chun-Yu Ho	11	11	University at Albany, SUNY
26	Devesh Raval	11	10	Federal Trade Commission
27	Andrea Mantovani	11	10	TSE
28	Michael Ward	11	9	University of Texas at Arlington
29	Haizhen Lin	11	10	Indiana University
30	Andrew Toole	11	9	US Patent and Trademark Office

Notes: *Pres.* is the total number of IIOC presentations; *Yrs* is the number of distinct conference years in which the individual appeared as a presenter. The institution listed is the affiliation recorded at the individual's most recent IIOC appearance.

Beyond the distinction between one-timers and regulars, a more substantive question is whether the *seniority* of the typical presenter has changed over time. Using the author profiles built from the OpenAlex economics works database, I match 71% of presenter-year observations to a first-publication year and define seniority as the difference between the conference year and the presenter's earliest recorded journal article. Figure 10 plots the

Table 4: Top 30 IIOC Regulars (Presenter or Discussant Appearances)

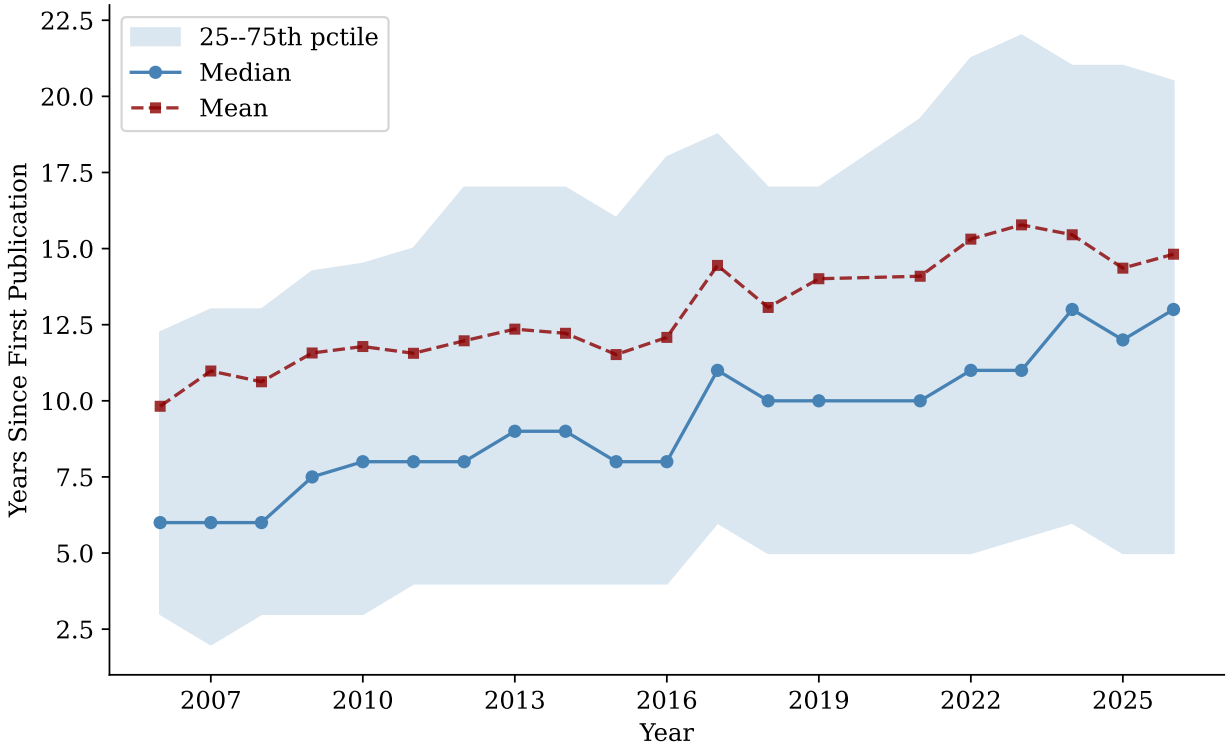
	Name	Total	Presenter	Discussant
1	Christopher Snyder	43	21	22
2	Jordi Jaumandreu	34	15	19
3	Ginger Jin	33	18	15
4	Qihong Liu	32	15	17
5	Dongsoo Shin	30	15	15
6	Alexei Alexandrov	29	15	14
7	Emek Basker	28	12	16
8	Jeffrey Prince	28	12	16
9	Matthijs Wildenbeest	28	13	15
10	Georgia Kosmopoulou	28	13	15
11	Teresa Harrison	27	13	14
12	Nathan Wilson	27	12	15
13	Peter Newberry	27	12	15
14	Konstantinos Serfes	26	13	13
15	Dakshina De Silva	26	14	12
16	Robert Feinberg	26	12	14
17	Devesh Raval	26	11	15
18	Federico Ciliberto	25	12	13
19	Matthew Lewis	25	10	15
20	Haizhen Lin	25	11	14
21	Christopher Conlon	25	10	15
22	Thomas Jeitschko	24	12	12
23	Michael Ward	24	11	13
24	Bettina Peters	24	11	13
25	Ting Liu	24	13	11
26	Marc Rysman	23	8	15
27	Yossi Spiegel	23	12	11
28	Lawrence White	23	14	9
29	Ching-I Huang	23	12	11
30	Jonathan Williams	23	9	14

Notes: Ranking is by total appearances across both roles. A discussant appears formally on the program even if the individual is not also presenting, and vice versa.

distribution year by year.

The change is large. The median presenter's years of publishing experience rose from 6 in 2006 to 13 in 2026, more than a doubling. The mean rose from 10 to 15 years. Both the 25th and 75th percentile shifted right by comparable amounts, so the pattern is not being driven by a small number of very senior researchers dragging the mean; the whole distribution has moved. Combined with the concentration and RePEc top-20 results above, the picture is of a conference whose typical presenter is drawn from a more senior and more prestigious pool than two decades ago.

Figure 10: Seniority of IIOC Presenters Over Time



Notes: Seniority is measured as the conference year minus the presenter's first-publication year in the OpenAlex economics works database. Observations with unmatched or implausible first-publication years are dropped, leaving 71% of presentations. The shaded band is the 25th-to-75th percentile range; the solid line is the median; the dashed line is the mean.

One natural confound is that the economics profession as a whole has become older (Hamermesh, 2013). But the magnitude observed here, a 7-year increase in median seniority over 20 years, exceeds what profession-wide aging alone can plausibly produce over the same period. The IIOC appears to have specifically moved upmarket: more senior presenters from more concentrated institutions, with fewer of the newer, fringe affiliations that populated the 2006–2010 programs.

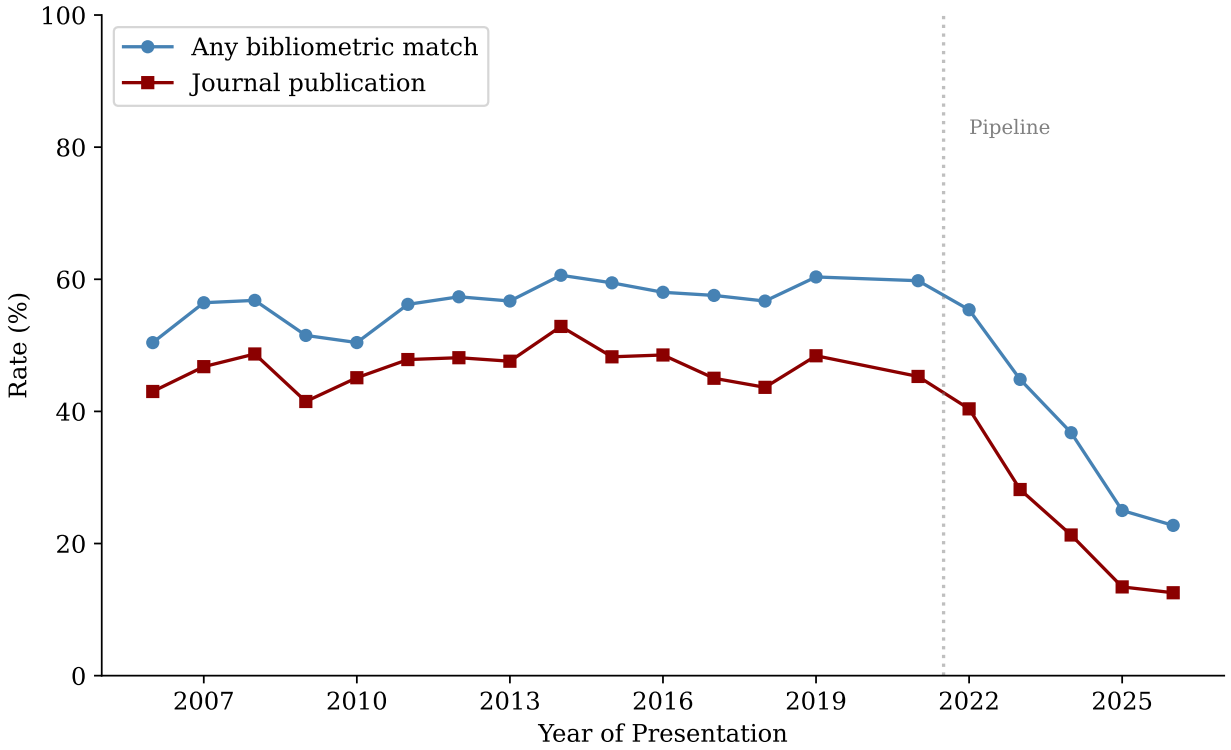
4 From Presentation to Publication

A central question about any academic conference is how effectively it serves as a pipeline to publication. Using the matched OpenAlex data, I can track publication outcomes for IIOC presentations with reasonable coverage. The matching is intentionally conservative: I would rather under-count true publications than inflate the journal rate with noisy matches between same-named authors or loose title overlap. The 2020 conference was cancelled due to COVID-19 and is omitted from all pipeline statistics.

For the mature cohorts (presentations from 2006 through 2021, which have had at least five years to move through the publication process), about 45% are verifiably matched to a peer-reviewed journal publication (Figure 11). The matching is deliberately conservative and uses four gates: (i) an IIOC presenter or coauthor must appear as an author on the candidate publication; (ii) the candidate outlet must be in an economics, business, social-science or decision-science field (medical, physics, engineering and conference-proceedings outlets are all rejected); (iii) the IIOC paper title and the journal paper title must either share a character-level Levenshtein similarity above 0.65 or share at least two substantive content words with a token-set similarity above 0.45; (iv) an automated audit flags and clears known false-positive patterns (shared-surname disambiguation failures, title drift that is too loose). I also supplement OpenAlex with a Crossref backfill for very recent issues and a Semantic Scholar fallback for still-unmatched titles, both held to the same author-verification and 0.80 title-similarity gates. The 45% figure is therefore a lower bound on the true publication rate: some genuine matches are missed when both the title and the coauthor list change substantially between conference and journal. The 2022–2026 cohorts show mechanically lower rates because many papers remain under review, consistent with the publication-process slowdown documented by Ellison (2002).

The 45% journal publication rate sits squarely inside the 40–50% benchmark estimated by Spiegel and Toivanen (2022) for the EARIE conference; differences in matching methodology make direct comparisons tentative, but the order of magnitude lines up. Taken together, the two estimates imply that a sizable minority of IIOC presentations remain unpublished

Figure 11: From IIOC Presentation to Publication



Notes: The upper series ("Any bibliometric match") counts any IIOC paper matched to a record in OpenAlex, Crossref, or Semantic Scholar, including working-paper repositories; the lower series ("Journal publication") counts only peer-reviewed journal articles. Vertical line marks the boundary between mature cohorts (2006–2021) and the publication pipeline (2022–2026), where the overall match rate is mechanically lower because many presented papers have not yet reached a journal, and some have not even been posted to SSRN, NBER, or similar working-paper venues at the time of measurement.

within the observation window. The gap between the any-match rate (around 56%) and the journal rate (around 45%) captures papers that are posted as NBER, SSRN, or similar working papers but do not receive a separate journal publication within the observation window.

Table 5 reports the 30 leading outlets after canonicalizing journal names (so that "The RAND Journal of Economics" and "RAND Journal of Economics" count together, and the HTML-entity variant of the JEMS title collapses with the plain-text version). The field's flagship, the *International Journal of Industrial Organization*, leads with 215 matched papers, followed by the *RAND Journal of Economics* (127), the *Journal of Industrial Economics* (111), *AEJ: Microeconomics* (81), and *Management Science* (80). Of the top-5 general-interest journals, the *American Economic Review* accounts for 60 papers, *Journal of Political Economy* for 57, and *Review of Economic Studies* for 45; together, the top-5 outlets account for roughly 3–4% of all IIOC papers, a small share in absolute terms but notable given the selectivity of these outlets. Figure 12 visualizes the distribution.

Figure 12: Top 15 Journal Outlets for IIOC Papers

Notes: Horizontal bars show the top 15 peer-reviewed journal outlets by number of IIOC-presented papers matched in OpenAlex. Working-paper series (NBER, SSRN, RePEc, arXiv) are excluded.

The citation distribution among published IIOC papers is heavily right-skewed (Figure 13). The median published paper has a modest citation count, while a small number of

Table 5: Top 30 Journal Outlets for IIOC Papers

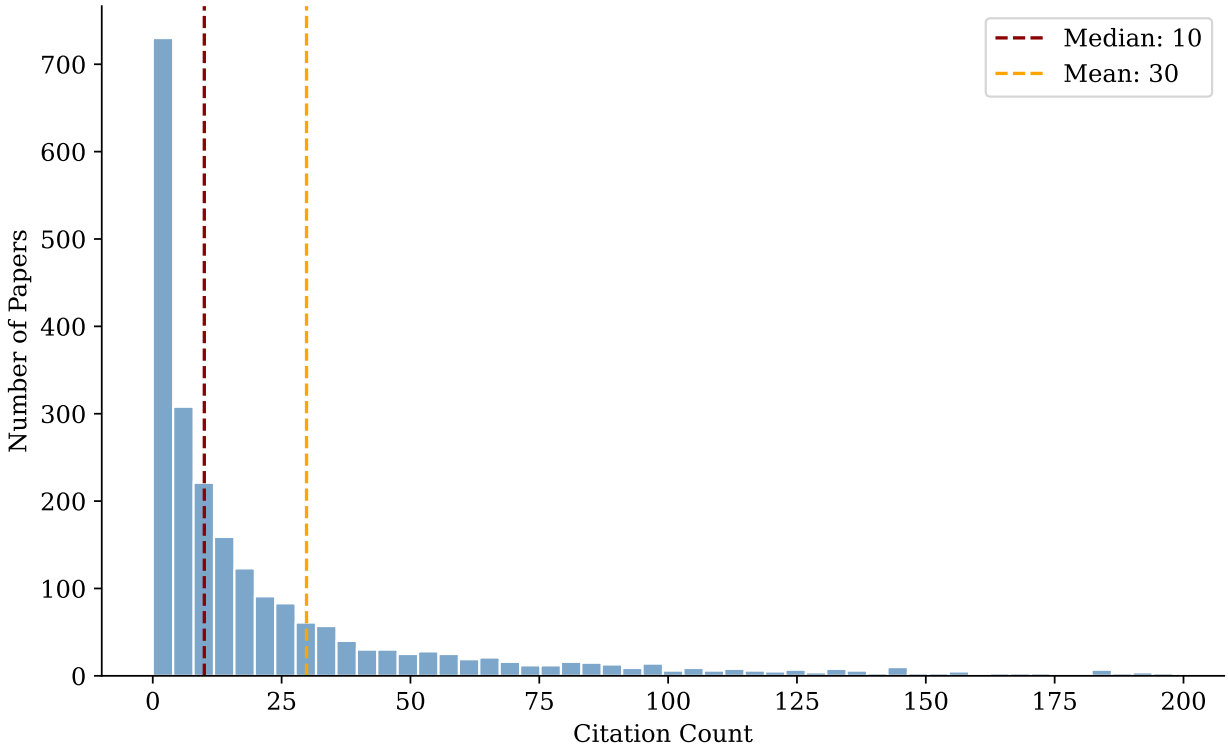
	Journal	Papers
1	International Journal of Industrial Organization	215
2	RAND Journal of Economics	127
3	Journal of Industrial Economics	111
4	American Economic Journal: Microeconomics	81
5	Management Science	80
6	Journal of Economics & Management Strategy	75
7	Review of Industrial Organization	68
8	American Economic Review	60
9	Journal of Political Economy	57
10	Review of Economic Studies	45
11	Marketing Science	39
12	Review of Economics and Statistics	39
13	International Economic Review	36
14	Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization	34
15	Economics Letters	33
16	Economic Inquiry	32
17	Journal of Law and Economics	31
18	European Economic Review	29
19	Quantitative Marketing and Economics	28
20	Economic Journal	28
21	American Economic Journal: Economic Policy	25
22	Econometrica	22
23	Information Economics and Policy	22
24	Journal of Regulatory Economics	21
25	Review of Network Economics	20
26	Journal of Economic Theory	20
27	Journal of Health Economics	19
28	Games and Economic Behavior	17
29	Research Policy	16
30	Applied Economics	16

Notes: Ranking by number of IIOC-presented papers matched to each journal in OpenAlex. Working-paper series (NBER, SSRN, RePEc, arXiv, preprint repositories) are excluded from the count.

highly cited papers pull the mean well above the median, the familiar pattern of academic impact in economics.

A more pointed version of the publication question is not *whether* IIOC papers get published but *where*. Figure 14 classifies every IIOC paper by the tier of its eventual publication outlet, from top-5 general-interest journals at the top to unmatched papers at the bottom. The tiers used here follow the RePEc journal ranking and group the *American Economic Review*, *Econometrica*, *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, *Journal of Political Economy*, and

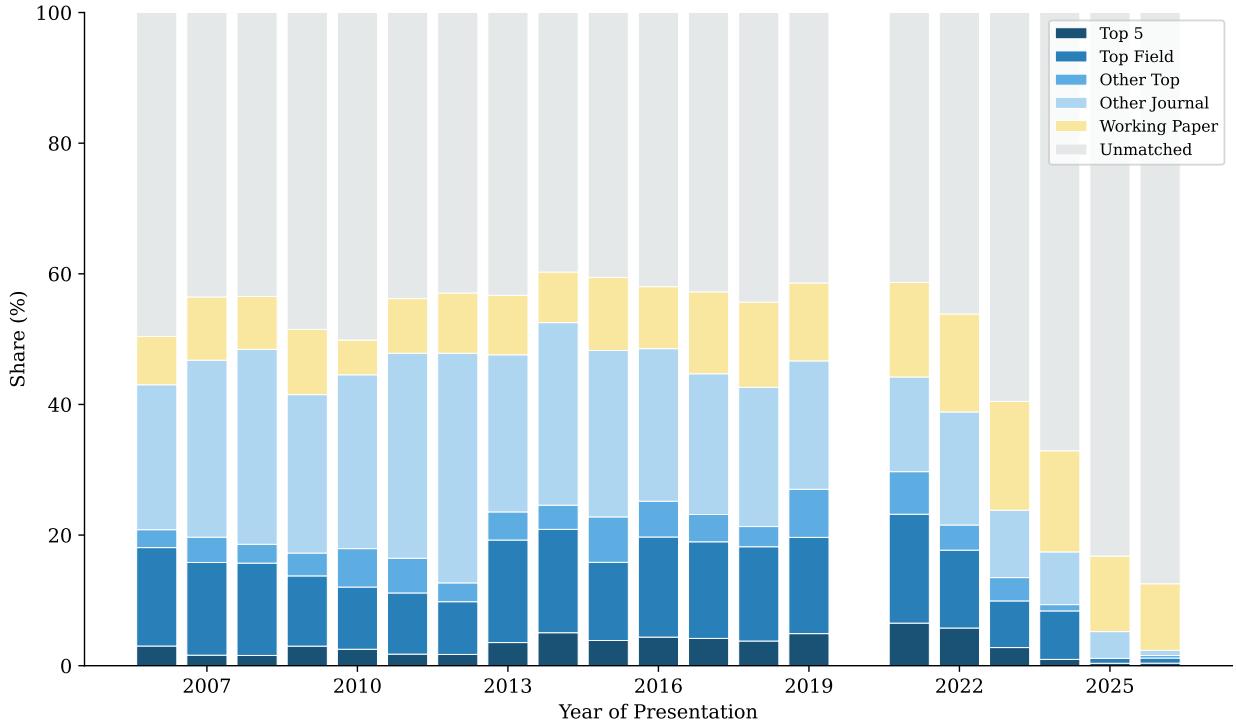
Figure 13: Citation Distribution of Published IIOC Papers



Notes: Histogram of OpenAlex citation counts for IIOC papers that were matched to a peer-reviewed journal publication. The x-axis is censored at 200 citations for readability; a long right tail extends beyond. Vertical lines mark the median and mean.

Review of Economic Studies as the top-5 tier; field journals are split into a "top-field" tier (*International Journal of Industrial Organization*, *RAND Journal of Economics*, *Journal of Industrial Economics*, *Management Science*, and the AEJ series) and a broader "field" tier for the remainder.

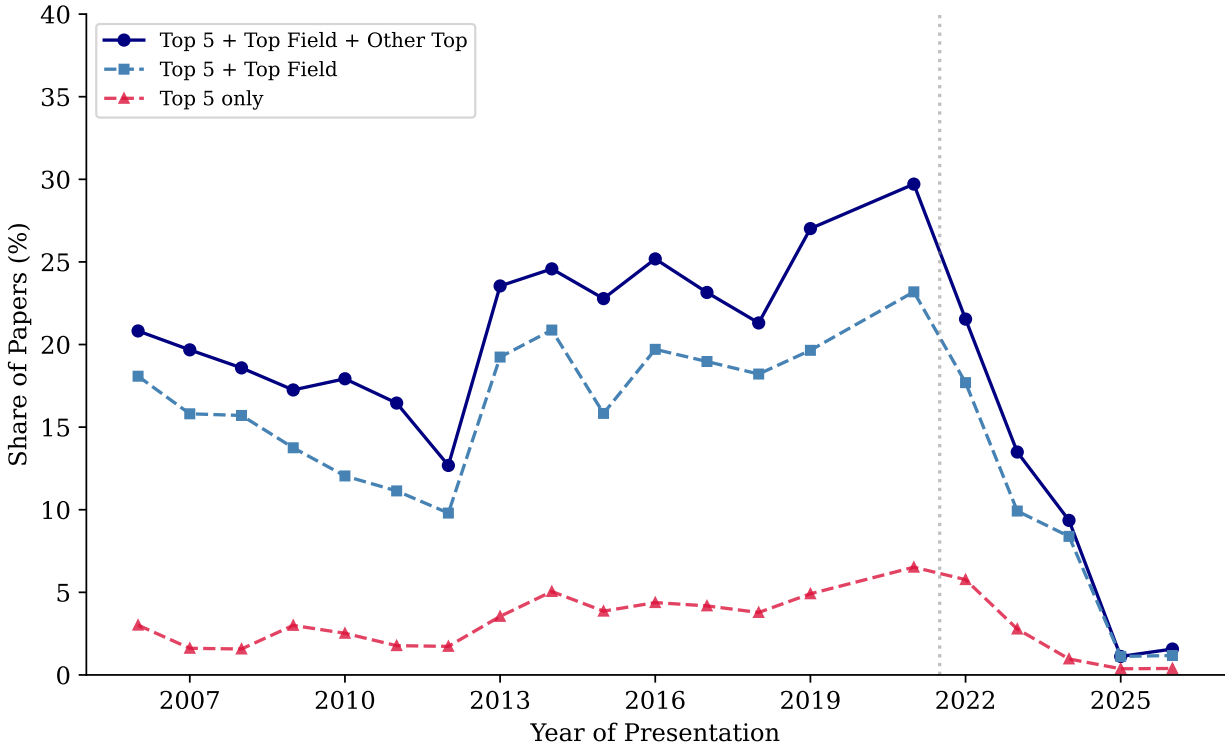
Figure 14: Publication Outcomes by Journal Tier, 2006–2026



Notes: Each bar shows the distribution of a cohort's papers across six mutually exclusive outcome tiers. Top 5: AER, Econometrica, JPE, QJE, REStud. Top Field: RAND, IJIO, JIE, AEJ Micro, JEMS, Management Science, Marketing Science, QME. Other Top: REStat, JHE, JLE, EER, IER, JEEA, EJ, JF, JFE, RFS, JDE, AEJ EP. The 2022–2026 cohorts have elevated "Unmatched" shares because many papers remain in review.

The picture is striking. The share of IIOC papers eventually published in top-5 journals has nearly tripled, from 1.2% in 2006–2010 to 3.1% in 2016–2021 (Figure 15). The combined share in top-5 plus top field journals rose from 9.6% to 13.4% over the same period. This pattern is consistent with the concentration, RePEc top-20, and seniority results above: as the conference shrank and the presenter pool moved upmarket, the average paper's publication ceiling rose as well. Card and DellaVigna (2013) document that top-5 acceptance rates have been declining and slots becoming scarcer, so the rising top-5 share at the IIOC cannot reflect profession-wide slackness; it appears to be specific to the IIOC's changing composition.

Figure 15: Share of IIOC Papers Published in Top Journals



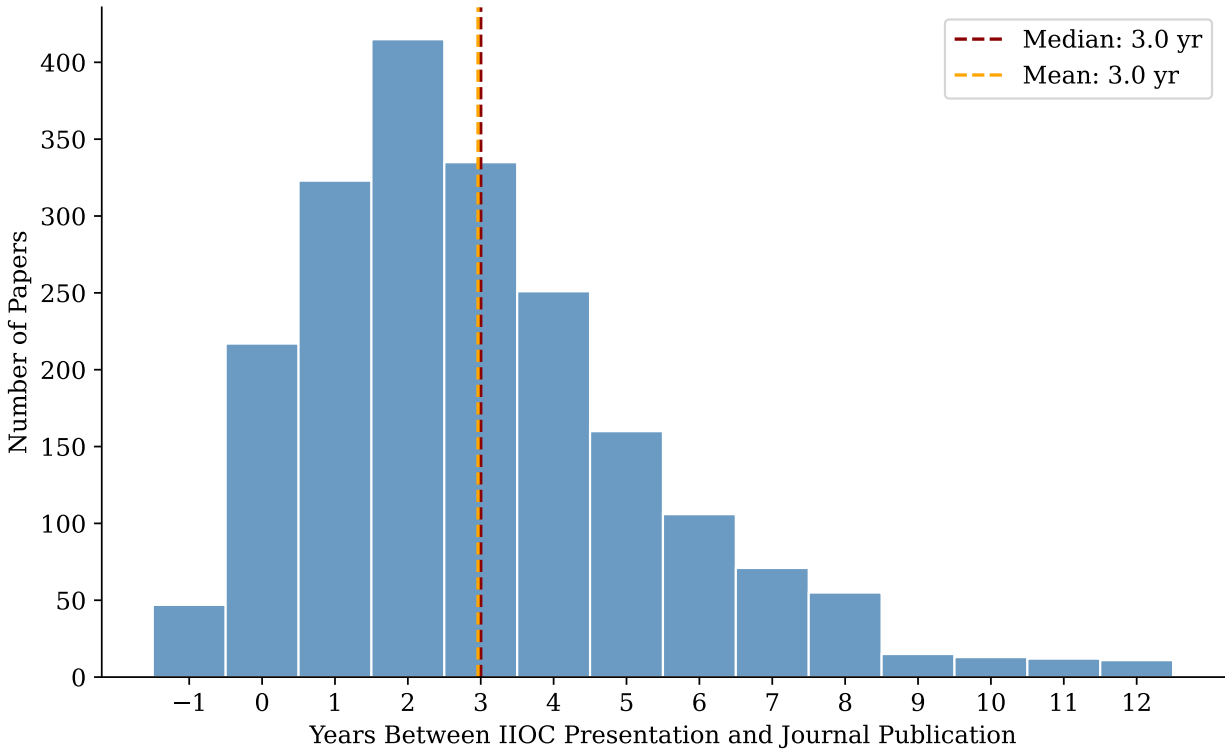
Notes: Three series, all computed on a cohort basis. The top-5 only series shows the share of each year's IIOC papers that appeared in AER, Econometrica, JPE, QJE, or REStud. The top-5 + top-field series adds the top IO and business-school outlets (see Figure 14 notes). The most inclusive series adds a set of other leading general-interest and field journals.

4.1 How Long Does It Take?

A complementary question is not *whether* an IIOC paper gets published but *when*. For every paper matched to a peer-reviewed journal publication, I compute the lag in years between the IIOC presentation date and the journal's publication year. Restricting to the mature cohort (presentations from 2006 through 2021) and to lags of 12 years or less leaves 2,782 papers with a clean lag measurement.

The median lag is 2 years and the mean is 2.6, with an interquartile range of roughly 0 to 4 years (Figure 16). The distribution has two notable features. First, the mode at zero and one year: a non-trivial share of IIOC papers appear in print within a year of being presented, which typically means the paper was already accepted or close to acceptance when it was presented. Second, a long right tail: 10% of matched papers take six or more years between presentation and publication, consistent with the slow publication timelines documented by Ellison (2002).

Figure 16: Distribution of Lag Between IIOC Presentation and Journal Publication

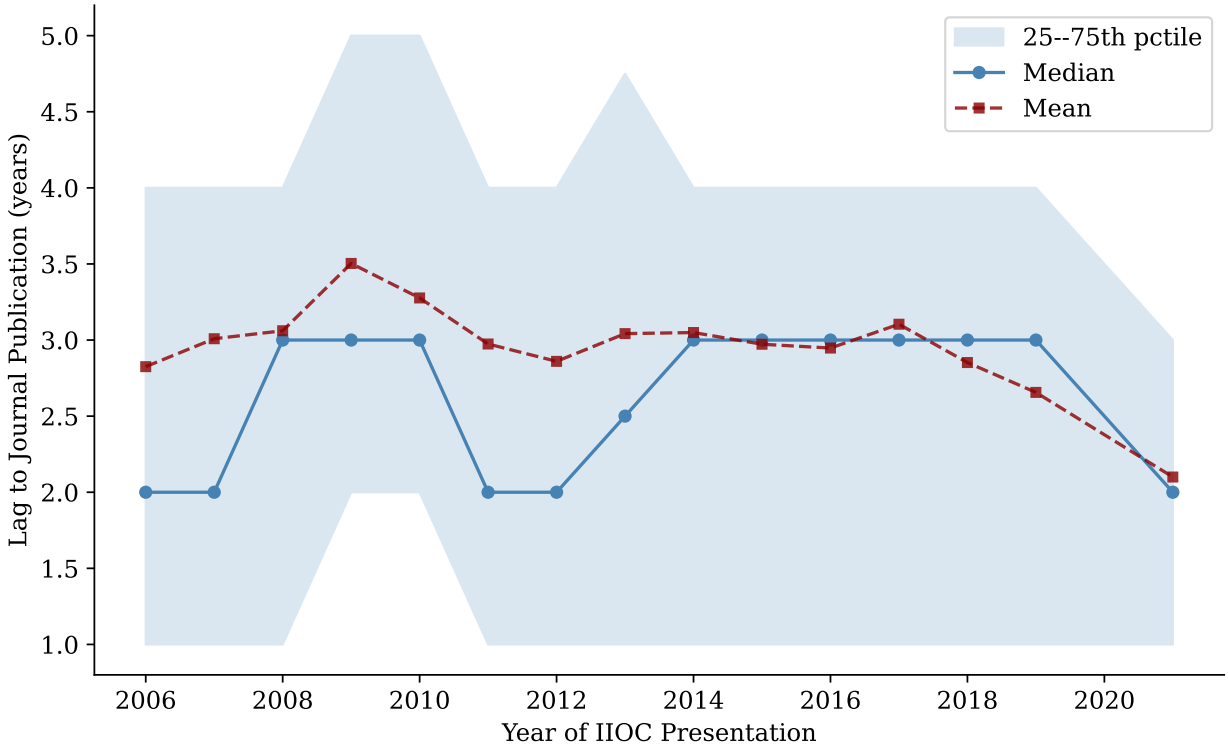


Notes: Histogram of the difference between the journal's publication year and the IIOC presentation year for matched mature-cohort papers (2006–2021). Lags below −1 or above 12 years are excluded as match noise; this leaves 2,782 papers. Vertical lines indicate the median and mean.

Has the lag changed over two decades? Figure 17 plots the median and mean lag by IIOC cohort year. Both series are remarkably flat: the median has held at 2 years in almost

every cohort, and the mean fluctuates narrowly around 2.5. This is a mild surprise. Ellison (2002) documented a marked slowdown in economics publishing through the early 2000s, and Spiegel and Toivanen (2022) estimate average lags above three years at EARIE. The stability of the IIOC lag over twenty years suggests that once a paper is in the conference pipeline, the time to publication has not meaningfully lengthened, even as the conference itself has contracted and shifted upmarket.

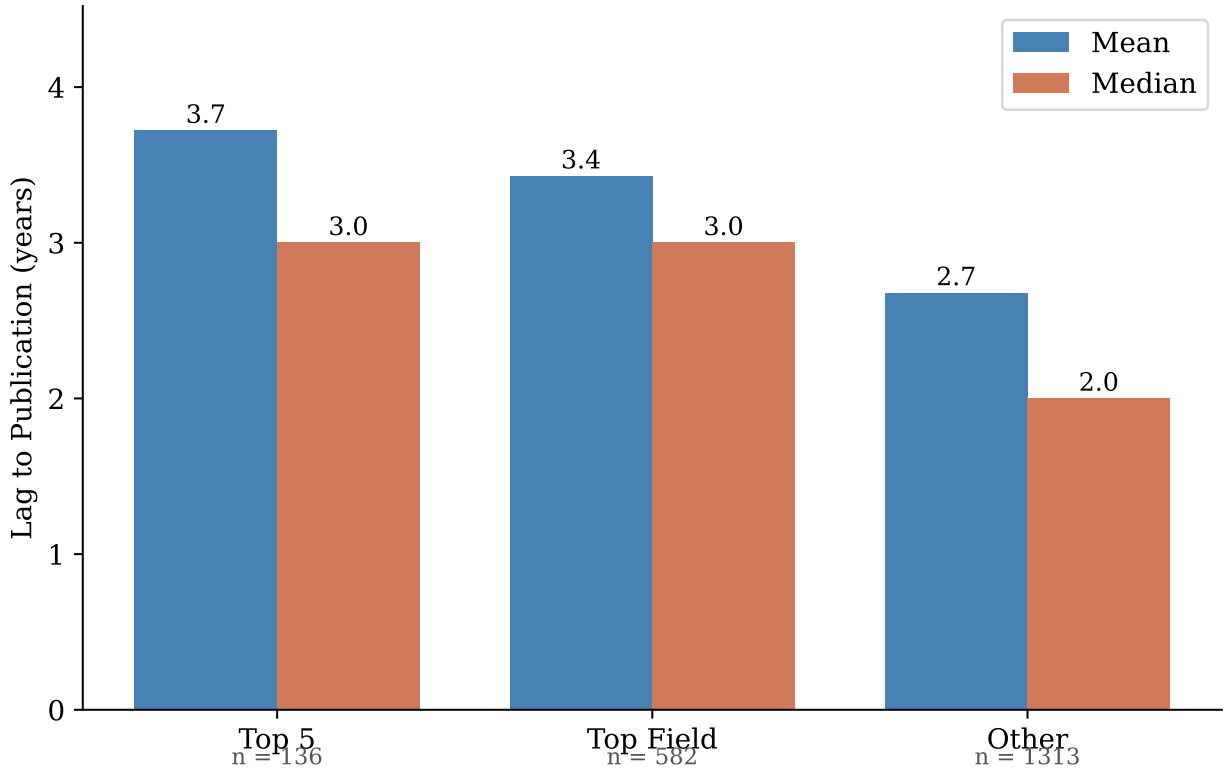
Figure 17: Publication Lag by IIOC Cohort Year



Notes: For each IIOC cohort 2006–2021 (excluding 2020), the plot shows the median lag to journal publication and the 25th–75th percentile band. Cohorts with fewer than 20 journal matches are dropped for stability. Cohorts after 2021 are omitted because many papers are still in review and the measured lag would be downward-biased.

A useful disaggregation is by journal tier, since top journals typically run longer review rounds and the "mode-at-zero" papers are disproportionately field-journal placements. Figure 18 summarises the mean and median lag for each tier on the mature cohort. Top-5 and top-field journals carry essentially the same lag (mean 2.9, median 3 years); other journals sit roughly half a year lower (mean 2.5, median 2). Placing in a top outlet adds about five to six months of review time relative to the median IIOC paper, but the premium journals do not separate from each other.

Figure 18: Publication Lag by Journal Tier (Mature Cohort, 2006–2021)



Notes: Mean and median lag in years between IIOC presentation and journal publication, computed on the mature cohort (2006–2021 presentations). Tier definitions follow Figure 14. Sample sizes are shown below each pair of bars.

5 Rising Stars

The Rising Star sessions, sponsored by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, were introduced in 2010 to showcase promising early-career researchers. These sessions have become a fixed feature of the conference, accounting for approximately 30 papers per year (about 10 sessions of 3 papers each, all scheduled in the first evening time slot).

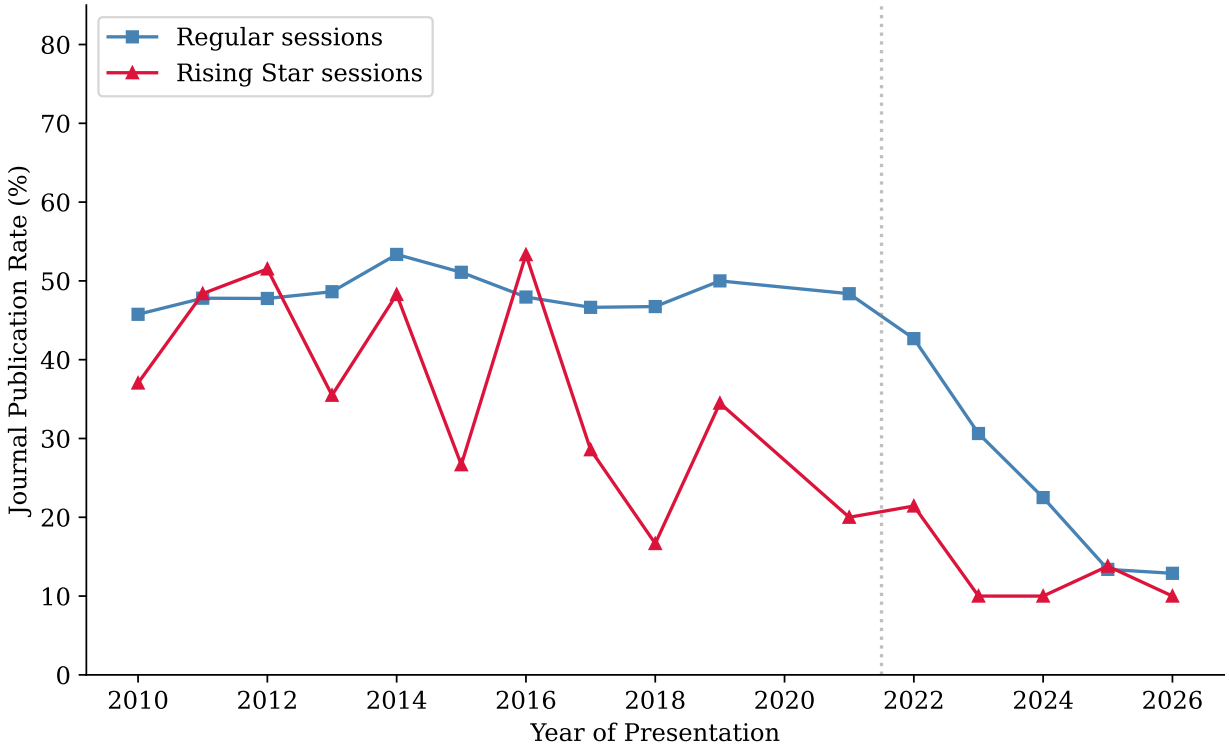
Rising Star presenters differ from regular presenters in measurable ways. They are more likely to be female (28% versus 21%, among classifiable names) and, by construction, are at an earlier career stage. Their journal publication rate for mature cohorts (2010–2021) is 58%, compared with 62% for regular session papers (Figure 19). The modest gap likely reflects the earlier developmental stage of Rising Star papers at the time of presentation rather than lower ultimate quality: these are working papers by junior researchers who have not yet had as many rounds of revision and resubmission as their more senior peers presenting in regular sessions. Many Rising Star papers are also job market papers or near-JMP submissions for which the author has a strong incentive to target a top outlet. Doing so lengthens the expected time to publication, since placing a paper at a top-5 or leading field journal typically involves longer review cycles and more rounds of revision than a first placement at a regional or specialized outlet would. The lower raw rate for Rising Star papers is therefore consistent with authors trading off publication speed for placement quality, rather than with a difference in ultimate placement success.

6 Does the Discussant Matter?

Each IIOC paper is assigned a discussant, a fellow researcher who reads the paper, provides formal comments during the session, and ideally offers constructive feedback that improves the final product. A natural question is whether the quality of the discussant predicts the paper's publication outcome. If higher-quality discussants provide more valuable feedback, we might expect their papers to fare better. Since 2006 the IIOC has additionally designated Rising Star sessions specifically to pair junior presenters with senior discussants, which should bias any discussant-quality effect upward in the raw data; the analysis below therefore conditions on year fixed effects throughout.

I construct citation profiles for all presenters and discussants by extracting author-level publication and citation statistics from the OpenAlex economics works database. This yields profiles for 86% of presenters and 79% of discussants in the IIOC data. The coverage gap arises from a combination of name ambiguity (common surnames that match several OpenAlex entities) and a handful of non-academic discussants from industry and regulatory

Figure 19: Journal Publication Rates: Rising Stars vs. Regular Sessions

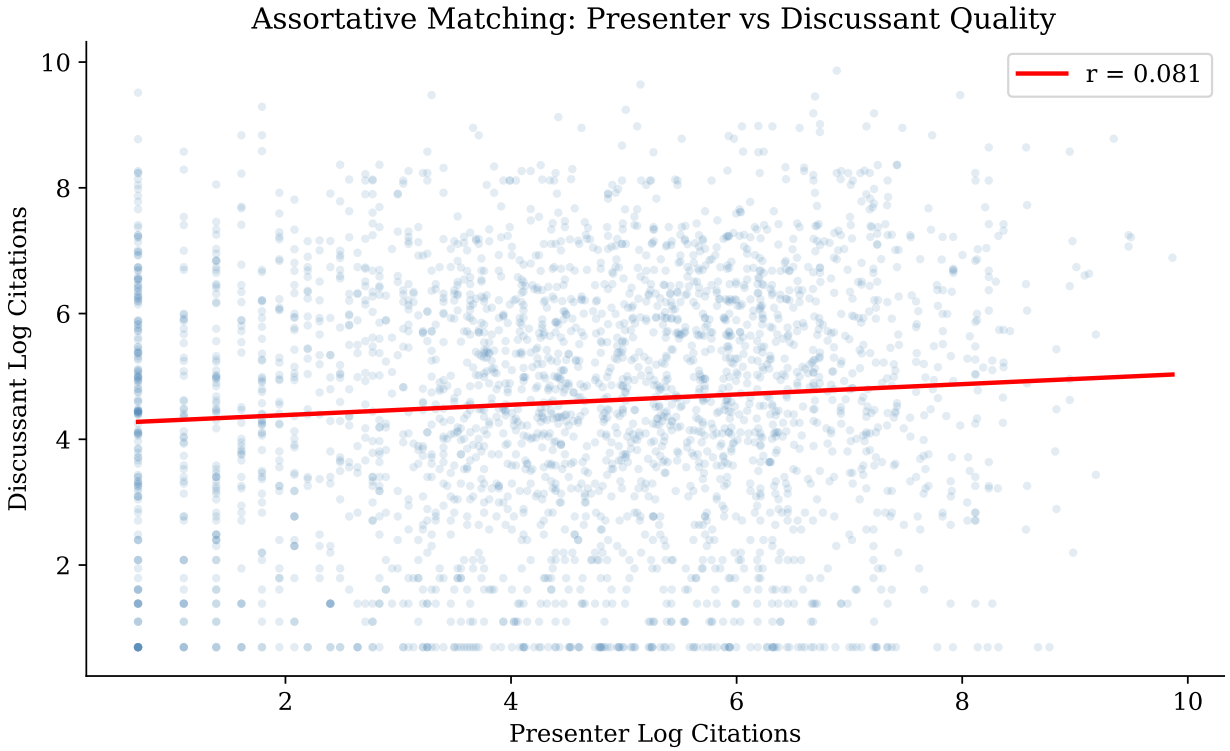


Notes: Annual journal publication rates are shown separately for papers in Rising Star sessions and in regular sessions, starting in 2010 (the first year of the Rising Star program). The vertical line marks the boundary between mature and pipeline cohorts.

agencies whose publication records are sparse. The remaining sample is large enough that within-year comparisons of citation rank are well identified.

The first question is whether presenter and discussant quality are correlated, that is, whether the conference engages in assortative matching. The evidence suggests it does, but only weakly. The Spearman rank correlation between presenter and discussant total citations is 0.081 ($p < 0.001$). Presenters in the top quintile of citations receive discussants with a median of 149 citations, compared with 88 for bottom-quintile presenters (Figure 20). The matching is thus mildly assortative rather than random, but far from deterministic.

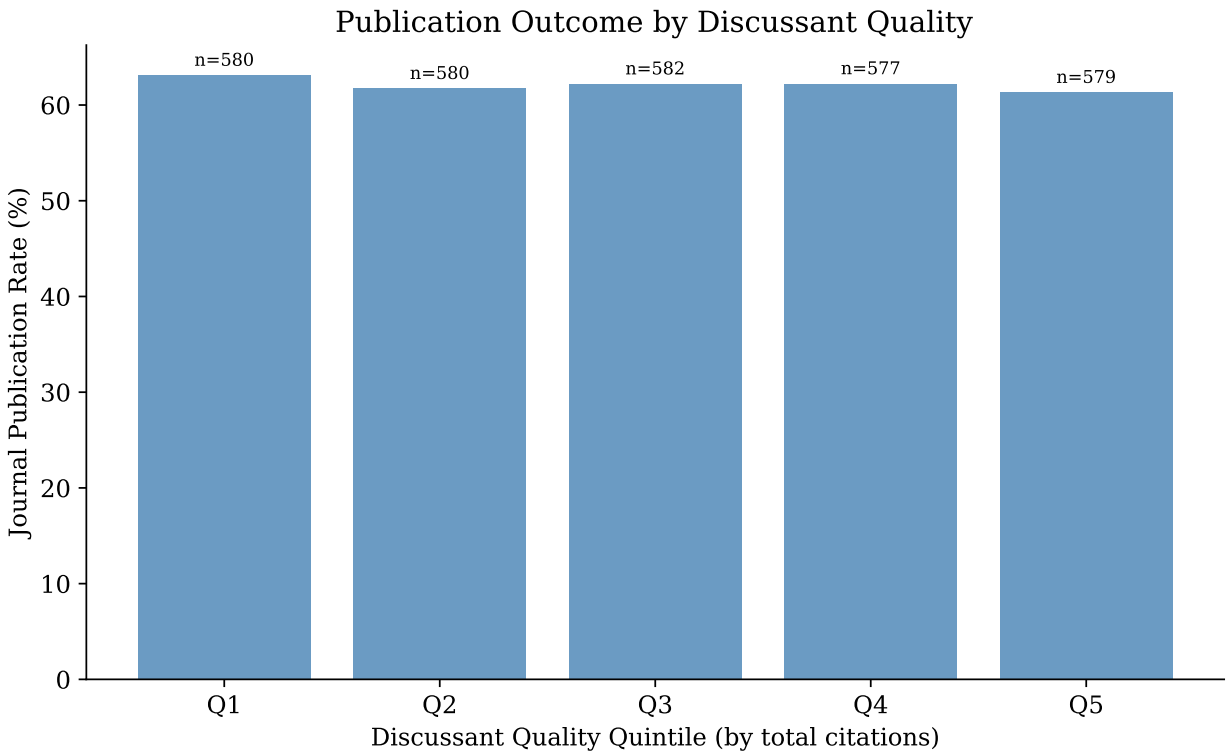
Figure 20: Assortative Matching: Presenter vs. Discussant Quality



Notes: Each point is one IIOC paper. Axes show the natural logarithm of each individual's total career citations in OpenAlex. The red line is the OLS fit; the slope corresponds to a Pearson correlation of 0.081 on log-citation units.

The more consequential question is whether discussant quality predicts publication outcomes. Here the answer is clearly no. Journal publication rates are essentially flat across discussant quality quintiles, ranging from 61.3% to 63.1% with no monotonic trend (Figure 21). A linear probability model regressing publication status on log presenter citations, log discussant citations, and year fixed effects confirms this null: the presenter's own citation record modestly predicts publication ($\beta = 0.007$, $t = 2.06$), but the discussant's citations have no predictive power ($\beta = -0.004$, $t = -0.79$).

Figure 21: Publication Outcome by Discussant Quality Quintile



Notes: Discussants are sorted into quintiles by their OpenAlex total-citation count. The bars show the share of papers in each quintile that were subsequently matched to a peer-reviewed journal publication. The variation across quintiles is economically small (about 2 percentage points) and not statistically different from zero in a linear probability model with year fixed effects.

This null has two natural interpretations. The optimistic reading is that the conference allocates discussants roughly equitably, and that all discussants, regardless of seniority, provide equally useful feedback. The pessimistic reading is that formal discussant comments at conferences have little impact on a paper's trajectory relative to other inputs (referee reports, seminar feedback, coauthor effort). Either way, the data offer no support for the hypothesis that getting a "star" discussant improves a paper's publication prospects.

7 Conclusion

This paper provides a comprehensive empirical portrait of the IIOC over its 21-year history from 2006 to 2026. Five facts stand out. First, the conference has become smaller, falling from 400 to 254 papers per year, through a reduction in parallel sessions rather than a shorter schedule. Second, institutional concentration has risen on both ends: the HHI of presenting institutions has nearly doubled, and the share of presentations from RePEc top-20 departments has risen from 16% to 25%. Third, the typical presenter has become substantially more senior, with median years of publishing experience doubling from 6 to 13. Fourth, Asia-Pacific representation has more than doubled while European representation has declined. Fifth, the share of IIOC papers placing in top-5 general-interest journals has nearly tripled. The combined picture is one of a conference that has moved upmarket: smaller, more senior, more concentrated at the top, and producing a higher share of top-journal output. A formal test of whether discussant quality matters for publication yields a precise null.

The dataset constructed here, covering 6,613 presentations matched to bibliometric outcomes together with presenter and discussant citation profiles, may prove useful for further research on the dynamics of academic knowledge production in industrial organization. Natural extensions include tracking the career trajectories of individual Rising Star presenters, comparing the IIOC's patterns with those of EARIE and APIOC as comparable regional pillars, and examining whether the upmarket drift documented here is specific to IO or reflects a broader move among economics field conferences.

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A Matching Algorithm

For each IIOC presentation in the analysis sample I attempt to determine whether the paper was later published in a peer-reviewed journal and, if so, in which outlet and in which year. The guiding principle behind the procedure is to accept a match only when we can be confident that the journal article is the same paper by the same author, and to prefer leaving a row unmatched over attaching a wrong publication to it. False positives inflate the journal-rate numbers and, more importantly, attribute work to authors who did not write it, which would be particularly damaging for senior figures in the Industrial Organization Society whose IIOC papers are the most visible public face of the conference.

The procedure runs in three automatic stages followed by a researcher-curated layer and a clean-up audit. Each stage only considers presentations that remain unmatched after the previous stage.

Stage 1 — local bibliometric join. I download a copy of the OpenAlex bibliometric database (Priem et al., 2022) restricted to works in the Economics, Business, Social Sciences, and Decision Sciences fields. This yields about 22 million candidate records. For each IIOC presentation I search this local copy for papers whose authors include the IIOC presenter. To minimise false positives from same-name researchers, I accept a match only when the presenter's full name appears in the authors list or, as a fallback, a first-initial-plus-last-name variant does. I then require that the candidate journal paper appear within one year before and twelve years after the presentation, and that the title of the candidate paper and the title on the IIOC program be sufficiently similar. Similarity is measured as the larger of a Jaro-Winkler score and a token-set ratio over cleaned titles, and must be at least 0.82 for a match to go through.

Stage 2 — Crossref backfill for recent issues. OpenAlex indexes journal issues with a delay of several months. To catch papers that appeared in the most recent twelve months

of the sample window but had not yet propagated into the OpenAlex snapshot, I also query the Crossref API for each still-unmatched IIOC presentation. Crossref results are held to the same author-verification and title-similarity standards as Stage 1.

Stage 3 — Semantic Scholar fallback. Semantic Scholar (Kinney et al., 2023) has better coverage than OpenAlex for a residual set of minor journal venues and for junior authors whose OpenAlex profiles are incomplete. For papers still unmatched after Stages 1 and 2, I query Semantic Scholar's paper-search endpoint by title (using an authenticated API key that allows one query per second), restrict results to records that Semantic Scholar classifies as journal articles with a named venue, and apply the same author-verification requirement. The title-similarity threshold at this stage is slightly relaxed to 0.80 to accommodate minor title drift that the earlier stages' stricter filter misses.

Researcher-curated overrides. The automatic procedure cannot catch three types of cases. First, title drift: papers whose conference title differs substantially from the eventual journal title, such as "Launching a Thousand Ships" in 2009 appearing in print as "Incentives for Parallel Innovation". Second, renamed-paper trajectories across years: for instance, "Bargaining in Hospital Merger Models" presented in 2013 became "Simulating Hospital Merger Simulations" in the 2023 *Journal of Industrial Economics*. Third, same-name disambiguation failures where two economists share a first name, last name, and research area, and the automatic gates cannot tell them apart. For these cases I manually consulted the publication pages of 40 IOS leaders (officers, board, past presidents) and a further 20 to 30 authors whose earlier rows looked suspicious on inspection, and recorded 89 explicit overrides that the automatic matcher cannot produce. These overrides identify the correct journal and year for each affected row and are preserved through subsequent re-runs of the pipeline.

Automated audit. After the three matching stages and the manual overrides, an audit sweeps the remaining positive matches and removes any that look suspicious. It clears matches whose journal is not an economics or business outlet (for instance a physics, medical, or theatre journal picked up by title-keyword overlap with an unrelated paper), matches attached to IOS leaders that fail a stricter name-equality test, and matches whose title-similarity score falls below the minimum threshold for the stage that produced them. The audit leaves researcher-curated entries untouched so that the work embedded in the manual overrides is never overwritten.

Summary of sources. In the final dataset, 3,463 of the 6,289 analysis rows (55%) carry a positive match, of which 2,612 are classified as peer-reviewed journal publications. The local OpenAlex join produces most of the matches (1,386), followed by Crossref (1,264). A looser title-drift pass within OpenAlex catches an additional 486 cases, Semantic Scholar adds 224, and the manual overrides account for 77 hand-curated entries (a further 2 manually cleared incorrect matches). A small number of matches come from intra-author title propagation across multiple IIOC presentations of the same paper (10) and from live OpenAlex queries for 2022 and later (6). The remaining rows fall into one of two groups: either the audit cleared a low-quality match, or no candidate publication could be found at all. Code to reproduce every stage, the complete override list, and the audit rules is available on request.