

Durham, April 7th, 2014

Professor Paola Pierucci
Presidente di Commissione
Abilitazione Scientifica Nazionale – settore 13/C1
pieruccip@yahoo.it

cc: dottor Simona Corvaja
Responsabile del procedimento
Abilitazione Scientifica Nazionale – settore 13/C1
scorvaja@unime.it

cc: dottor Gianluca Cerracchio
MIUR – Direzione Generale Ufficio I
MIUR-DGUS@miur.it

cc: Ministero per l'Istruzione, l'Università e la Ricerca – MIUR
Direzione Generale per l'Università
direzione.universita@miur.it

Re: National Scientific Qualification (ASN – Abilitazione Scientifica Nazionale) – Economic History/History of Economic Thought/Economic Methodology

Dear professor Pierucci,

Dear dottor Corvaja and dottor Cerracchio,

We have been informed by our Italian colleagues that the ASN Commission is developing criteria that will govern academic promotion in Italy. As we understand it, the ASN rules (DM 76/2012, art.4, sec. 2, letter B) state that the Commission must check for “the individual contribution in the case of co-authored works.” We, the undersigned editors of the principal international journals in the history of economic thought and economic methodology, believe that we can contribute important information to the ASN committee for the history of economic thought and economic methodology regarding the nature of the international practices for our specific discipline. In conjunction with our editorial boards and the community of scholars who aid in reviewing scientific articles, we largely determine which papers are published in the peer-reviewed journals in our field.

Co-authorship of articles in the wider economics discipline is increasingly more common, so that, in many subfields of economics, it is the rule, not the exception. Co-authored articles do not yet dominate the history of economic thought and economic methodology, although they are very frequently encountered. The nature of scholarly collaboration in our field does not typically admit of any neat division of the total credit for a scholarly article into the individual contributions of its co-authors. As a result, we do not encourage – much less require – authors to report their individual contributions in the published versions of their articles. Our presumption is that the co-authors are each equally responsible for the final product, except in those rare cases in which the co-authors volunteer to apportion the credit in

some other way. We also adhere to the common practice in several fields – though we know some other fields may follow a different one – in which co-authors are listed alphabetically, with no implication that the order of listing conveys any information about the importance of an individual co-author's contribution. Exceptions to this rule are rare and, again, at the discretion of the co-authors themselves.

The increasing prevalence of scholarly collaboration and co-authorship represents a vital element in scientific progress in many fields. We hope that the ASN committee for the history of economics/history of economic thought/economic methodology will not adopt rules that in any way discourage such collaboration by penalizing co-authors who fail to apportion their individual scholarly contributions within published articles. It would be particularly invidious to discount those articles completely in assessing the fitness of scholars for promotion. Much of the best work is co-authored; apportionment of scholarly effort into distinct shares is often impossible; and none of the major journals in our field require, nor even encourage nor welcome, such apportionment.

Yours sincerely,

John B. Davis (Marquette University and University of Amsterdam; Co-editor *Journal of Economic Methodology*)

Riccardo Faucci (University of Pisa; Co-editor, *HEI – History of Economic Ideas*)

Luca Fiorito (University of Palermo; Co-editor, *Research in the History of Economic Thought and Methodology*)

Nicola Giocoli (University of Pisa; Co-editor, *HEI – History of Economic Ideas*)

D. Wade Hands (University of Puget Sound; Co-editor *Journal of Economic Methodology*)

Kevin D. Hoover (Duke University; Editor, *History of Political Economy*)

Roberto Marchionatti (University of Turin; Co-editor, *HEI – History of Economic Ideas*)

Stephen Meardon (Bowdoin College; Editor, *Journal of the History of Economic Thought*)

Richard Sturn (Institute of Public Economics and Schumpeter Centre, Graz University; Managing Editor, *European Journal of the History of Economic Thought*)