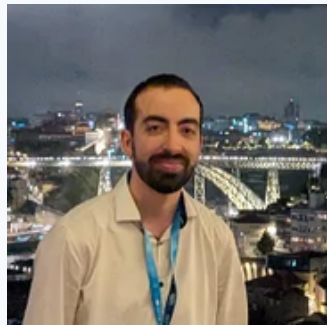


# SÉMINAIRE

→ **de recherche** ←

**JEUDI  
21  
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**12H15  
SALLE 103  
TEAMS**



**LOÏC VOISIN**

**(USMB, IREGE)**

BEYOND SELECTION:  
EVALUATION SYSTEMS  
AS BOUNDARY-SETTING  
MECHANISMS IN  
CORPORATE INNOVATION

CO AUTHORS: BARTHÉLÉMY  
CHOLLET (GEM, IREGE),  
THOMAS GILLIER (GEM)

Evaluation systems are central to innovation management, yet they are most often viewed as tools for selecting and prioritizing projects. This study challenges this view by examining how evaluation systems shape the definition and governance of innovation within corporate R&D. Drawing on a qualitative study conducted in the R&D division of a large automotive firm, the analysis is primarily based on extensive access to internal documents spanning both operational and strategic levels, complemented by observations and informal interviews. Focusing on evaluation systems as the unit of analysis, the study compares formal stage-gate processes with a recurring internal innovation showcase, as well as alternative evaluation spaces such as innovation labs and internal contests. The findings show that evaluation systems extend beyond selection by acting as boundary-setting mechanisms. First, they define what counts as innovation by shaping which ideas become visible and evaluable, leaving others outside the boundaries of recognized innovation. Second, once ideas enter an evaluation system, they are progressively shaped by its rules and criteria, as project teams align their work with what is expected and valued. Third, the coexistence of multiple evaluation systems enables distinct innovation logics to operate simultaneously, supporting both established and exploratory innovation trajectories. By reconceptualizing evaluation as a core component of innovation governance, this study shows how the design and combination of evaluation systems shape the boundaries and direction of innovation itself.