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[Managing Optimism Biases in the Delivery of Large-Infrastructure Projects: A Corporate Performance Benchmarking Study](#)

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Abstract

Optimism bias has been a considerable challenge in the planning and delivery of public services, particularly infrastructure mega projects. This paper explores the mechanisms of collecting and publicly disseminating information about the performance of government contractors on past projects to improve the success rate of future initiatives. Drawing on international examples from North America, Europe and Asia, it is argued that the production and dissemination of greater information through benchmarking does not on its own lead to reductions in the prevalence of optimism biases. However, there is evidence that when combined with incentives built formally into government procurement processes that reward high performance, benchmarking can support improvements in the quality of project outputs.