

*In Memory of Ornella W. Maietta*

Ornella W. Maietta passed away on 18th April 2019, after a long battle against cancer fought with the dignity that marked her whole life.

Ornella got her bachelor degree in Agriculture in 1987 at the University of Naples Federico II and the Specialization degree in Agricultural Economics in 1991 at the Centro di Specializzazione in Economico Agrarie per il Mezzogiorno, Portici (NA). Then she enrolled the M.Phil. in Land Economy at the University of Cambridge, UK where she graduated in 1993. Finally, she got her PhD degree in Agricultural Economics and policy at the University of Siena in 1997.

Soon after she got a position as researcher at the then Department of Agricultural Economics and Policy of the University of Naples Federico II. Then she moved to the Department of Economics and Statics of the same University where she was serving as Associate Professor of Economic Political.

Ornella's contributions to the profession focuses mostly on two broad areas of research, namely:

- a) the economics of innovation where she provided key contributions on the methodology for estimating the farm/firm efficiency and productivity – she was the recipient of the 2002 best young economist paper by the European Review of Agricultural Economics/European Association of Agricultural Economists and soon after she published an important book on the analysis of efficiency that has been the reference textbook for the last generation of production economists – as well as on the role of human capital in generating innovation and growth with a focus on university-firms R&D collaboration as a driver of innovation especially for low-tech industry;
- b) the economic analysis of non-profit sector, with a wide set of contributions ranging from the analysis of cooperatives to socially responsible consumption, from fair trade consumption to school meals and care sector, to some contributions that tried to bridge between the two broad areas of research analyzing the role of social capital and innovation.

Ornella was very active also in the profession being a member of the Italian Association of Agricultural and Applied Economists – AIEAA since its establishment in 2011 and having served as Associate Editor of *Bio-based and Applied Economics* – BAE from 2012 to 2018.

Ornella was an excellent economist, an effective mentor of generations of young economists, and a true friend of many of us. We will always remember her brilliant economic mind as well as the high quality of her academic commitment and her pursuit of excellent in study and research. But we will mostly miss the human touch she put in whatever she did, the mutually respectful relationships she was able to develop and the supportive and loyal collaboration she provided to whoever worked with her, primarily the young economists.