



## Call for Papers

“Exploring Entrepreneurial Ventures, Family Firms, and Hidden Champions”  
6th International Research Forum on Mittelstand, biennial conference 2020

### Track 07 - General Track: Family Firms & Entrepreneurship

Mannheim, Germany, May 24<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup>, 2020.  
Submissions accepted until January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

#### Track Chairs:

Andrea Calabrò (IPAG Nice, France)  
Christian Hauser (HTW Chur, Switzerland)  
Baris Istipliler (University of Mannheim, Germany)  
Herbert Neubauer (WU Vienna, Austria)  
Torsten Pieper (University of Charlotte UNC, USA)  
Sven Wolff (University of Siegen, Germany)  
Maren Rottler (University of Mannheim, Germany)

#### Description of the track

This is a general track dedicated to entrepreneurial ventures and family firms that are globally the most frequent firm types (La Porta, Lopez-De-Silanes, & Shleifer, 1999; Faccio & Lang, 2002). Their contributions to growth, innovation, economic resilience and longevity are substantial to the success of the global economy, making them a pillar for sustainable prosperity and development.

**Family firms** operate in a polar tension between continuity, stability, reliability, sustainability and management for the long-run as one pole; while successful family firms are often steered in a fashion that cherishes dynamic adaption to changing environments, innovation, strategic

renewal and succession as the other pole (Miller & LeBreton-Miller; 2005). Likewise, **entrepreneurial ventures**, especially those not solely profit-oriented ventures, manage trade-offs between the social and financial goals, given the social, creative, or sustainable orientation of their founders (Doherty et al, 2014), while aspiring to fulfill the expectations of important stakeholders and investors. In the last thirty years, these fields of research made significant progress in terms of theoretical underpinnings, but arguably still lack a systematic adoption of thorough and theoretically-based frameworks (Chrisman, Chua, & Sharma, 2003; Zahra & Sharma, 2004).

For **family firm research**, the key topics mirror issues of family business managers, with the main ones being succession, economic performance, and firm governance (Chrisman, Chua, & Sharma, 1996; Debicki, Matherne, Kellermanns, & Chrisman, 2009), while significant areas in the field clearly deserve more scholarly scrutiny, especially the domains of effective family firm management, strategy, and governance. Moreover, sociological and psychological aspects remain under-researched, although it is well known that family firms garner and capitalize in particular on social capital. Their focus on sustainability, both financially and non-financially, often leads to the emergence of a fragile social structure around them – consisting of a web of strong and weak relational ties – that often goes along with the development of shared values and vibrant firm cultures (Long, 2011), which needs to be understood better in several dimensions. Emergent social structures (Ekeh, 1974) may influence and alter managerial behavior at helm of the family firm and thereby affect family firm performance: the social individual, the individual in his group setting (Asch, 1952), remains largely unexplored (Ahrens, Calabrò, Huybrechts, & Woywode, 2019). Similarly, the field has found that part of the economic and non-economic relations often creates a strong regional and spatial anchoring, and therefore the consequences of the activities of family firms for the regions, cities, provinces as well as the trajectories they create need to be better understood (Stough, Welter, Block, Wennberg, & Basco, 2015).

For **entrepreneurship research**, key topics mirror the diversity and myriads of entrepreneurial forms, such as solo-entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurship, digital entrepreneurship, creative entrepreneurship, refuge entrepreneurship, high growth entrepreneurship, and even academic entrepreneurship. Similarly, entrepreneurship research is driven by societal mega trends, such as aging, climate change, and the digital age. In the same vein, the fields that deserve further scholarly scrutiny within the realms, for instance the role of institutional frameworks and local ecosystems for social and sustainable entrepreneurship and stakeholder responses to tensions regularly encountered by those ventures, also require a truly interdisciplinary approach. Further, the spatial and geographic dimension of entrepreneurship gains traction as cities of the 21<sup>st</sup> century need to become smart, green, energy efficient and mobile. Questions of how entrepreneurship can facilitate and foster this urban change and how cities attract entrepreneurial agents, talents, and innovators that may inter alia lift the quality of district life deserves being researched (Albino, Berardi, & Dangelico, 2015).

We invite all empirical (quantitative and qualitative), conceptual, and methodological work that advances our understanding in the fields of entrepreneurship and family firm research. We hope that this track attracts scholars that have advanced this field over the last four decades as well as young scholars that aim to study and teach in this exciting field. We believe that methodological exchange from fields, such as **business studies, economics, history, geography, politics, information systems, sociology, and psychology** will help to foster scientific progress, the robustness, and credibility of results in this relatively young field of research. By sharing novel approaches, we see this track as an opportunity to jointly develop further knowledge about the potential, benefits, and constraints of different methods to enable researchers to improve the design and execution of their research and to spread and share their practices within the community and beyond.

From a theoretical point of view, we welcome papers with interesting and new hypotheses that may include, but are not limited to:

- agency theory,
- leadership theory,
- social exchange theory,
- resource-based theory,
- theory of the firm,
- identity theory,
- upper echelon theory,
- organizational theories,
- theories of familiness, et cetera.

We encourage authors to test hypotheses that may advance or help to reinterpret existing theory and knowledge in the field of family business research.

Ultimately, we aim for contributions which provide **RELEVANCE** through addressing the key elements for **entrepreneurial ventures, entrepreneurial families, and family firms** which might be about CEOs and family CEOs, growth, social capital, sustainability, creativity, succession, digitalization, strategy, and ownership.

Moreover, we especially invite **YOUNG SCHOLARS** to submit their work to this track. In case of questions if your topic might fit the track, please do not hesitate to contact us directly.

To submit your paper to the 2020 conference:

<http://www.forum-mittelstandsforschung.de>

### **Literature:**

- (1) Ahrens, J.-P., Calabrò, A., Huybrechts, J., Woywode, M. (2019). The enigma of the family successor–firm performance relationship: A methodological

- reflection and reconciliation attempt. **Entrepreneurship, Theory & Practice**, 43(3), 437-474.
- (2) Anderson, R. C., & Reeb, D. M. (2003). Founding-family ownership and firm performance: evidence from the S&P 500. **The Journal of Finance**, 58(3), 1301-1328.
  - (3) Albino, V., Berardi, U., Dangelico, R. M. (2015). Smart cities: Definitions, dimensions, performance, and initiatives. **Journal of Urban Technology**, 22(1), 3-21.
  - (4) Austin, J., Stevenson, H., Wei-Skillern, J. (2006). Social and commercial entrepreneurship: same, different or both? **Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice**, 30, pp. 1–22.
  - (5) Chua, J. H., Chrisman, J. J., & Sharma, P. (1999). Defining the family business by behavior. **Entrepreneurship Theory & Practice**, 23(4), 19-39.
  - (6) Daspit, J. J., Holt, D. T., Chrisman, J. J., & Long, R. G. (2016). Examining family firm succession from a social exchange perspective: A multiphase, multistakeholder review. **Family Business Review**, 29(1), 44-64.
  - (7) Feldman, E. R., Amit, R., & Villalonga, B. (2019) Family firms and the stock market performance of acquisitions and divestitures. **Strategic Management Journal**, forthcoming.
  - (8) Miller, D., & Le Breton-Miller, I. (2011). Governance, social identity, and entrepreneurial orientation in closely held public companies. **Entrepreneurship Theory & Practice**, 35(5), 1051-1076.
  - (9) Schmid, T., Achleitner, A. K., Ampenberger, M., & Kaserer, C. (2014). Family firms and R&D behavior—New evidence from a large-scale survey. **Research Policy**, 43(1), 233-244.
  - (10) Villalonga, B., & Amit, R. (2006). How do family ownership, control and management affect firm value?. **Journal of Financial Economics**, 80(2), 385-417.

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**The deadline for submissions is 25<sup>th</sup> January 2020.**  
**Submit your paper [here](#)**

