

Call for Papers

BEYOND HYBRIDITY: ADDRESSING COMPLEX SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS THROUGH MULTI-LEVEL PROCESSES

Submission Deadline: 31 March 2022

Guest Editors (alphabetical order)

Sophie Bacq, Indiana University, bacqs@iu.edu

Giacomo Ciambotti, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, giacomo.ciambotti@unicatt.it

Bob Doherty, University of York, bob.doherty@york.ac.uk

Silvia Dorado, University of Massachusetts Boston, silvia.dorado@umb.edu

Helen Haugh, Cambridge Judge Business School, h.haugh@jbs.cam.ac.uk

Matteo Pedrini, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, matteo.pedrini@unicatt.it

Jeffrey York, University of Colorado Boulder, jeffrey.york@colorado.edu

JMS Editor: Gideon Markman, Colorado State University,
gideon.markman@colostate.edu

BACKGROUND

This SI seeks to expand our understanding of the multi-level conceptualizations, creativity and contexts that define the processes involved in addressing complex social and environmental problems including, but not limited to, COVID-19, food insecurity, poverty, gender inequality, climate change, biodiversity loss, sustainable energy production, and waste management. Recent years have seen a growing body of literature on social entrepreneurship, defined as “the innovative use and combination of resources to pursue opportunities to catalyse social change and/or address social needs” (Mair and Martí, 2006, p. 37). The aims of social entrepreneurship are broad, ranging from tackling grand challenges (George et al., 2016) and complex social and environmental problems (Mair and Rathert, 2020; Schad and Bansal, 2018), to enabling and assisting the “excluded, marginalized, or suffering” (Saebi et al., 2019, p. 73) who are themselves “not capable of changing this situation” (ibid. p. 71).

Social enterprises create societal and environmental value while also running a commercial activity (Doherty et al., 2014; Dorado, 2006; Wry and York, 2019). For this reason, they are generally recognized as an ideal-type of *hybrid organization* – a combination of organizational forms (with different missions, goals, and processes), logics and identities (Battilana et al., 2017) that challenge conventional conceptions of economic organizing (Battilana and Lee, 2014; Wilson and Post, 2013). The focus of extant research has typically addressed topics associated with social enterprise viability and sustainability, e.g., business

models (Davies and Doherty, 2019), founder identity (Wry and York, 2017), organizational identity (Cornelissen et al., 2020; Nason et al., 2019), organizational design (Santos et al., 2015), resource management (Ciambotti and Pedrini, 2021; Shepherd et al., 2020), and governance (Bacq and Aguilera, 2021; Ebrahim et al., 2014; Grimes et al., 2019). In addition, scholars have investigated organizational-level tensions and drifts associated with divergent missions, goals, and processes (Grimes et al., 2019; Smith and Besharov, 2019), and responses to institutional demands (Battilana and Dorado, 2010; Gümüşay et al., 2020b). Nevertheless, the ambition to tackle complex social and environmental problems has mostly remained in the background.

Despite this growing body of literature, there is much to learn about processes to address complex social and environmental problems (Dorado and Ventresca, 2013). This requires engagement with questions that examine multi-level processes beyond hybridity. We thus encourage scholars towards research on other promising paths. These paths include efforts to broaden the unit of analysis from social enterprises to include commercial, non-profit, and governmental organizational forms (Mair and Rathert, 2020; White et al., 2020). They also include research that extends the level of analysis to embrace individual (e.g., Bacq and Alt, 2018; Mair and Noboa, 2006), inter-organizational, community, field, and system-level processes (Lumpkin and Bacq, 2019; Shepherd et al., 2020; Zahra and Wright, 2016).

AIMS and SCOPE of the SPECIAL ISSUE

The studies identified above demonstrate the importance of social entrepreneurship and hybridity research (Battilana et al., 2017; Grimes et al., 2020; McMullen and Warnick, 2016; Wry and York, 2019). At the same time, this prior research illuminates opportunities for deepening and extending theory development. First, an important area of inquiry is to clarify our understanding of the connections and interdependencies between social entrepreneurship, social enterprise and inter-organizational arrangements that aim to catalyse impact and systemic change (Mair and Rathert, 2020; Wry and York, 2019). Second, we call for research that investigates how the current hybridity framing foments or hinders innovative and creative ways of tackling complex social and environmental problems at different levels of analysis (e.g., individual, organizational, system). Third, conceptualizing social entrepreneurship as a multi-level process connected offers new opportunities to frame and understand how to tackle complex social and environmental problems in diverse regulatory, social, and cultural institutional contexts.

TOPICS of INTEREST

We invite theoretical and empirical contributions to this SI. Following is a non-exhaustive list of potential question areas:

Conceptualizations of social entrepreneurship, hybridity, and other forms of organizing in tackling complex social and environmental problems.

- How integral and/or consequential is hybridity to social entrepreneurship?
- What are the antecedents and outcomes of social entrepreneurship and how does hybridity influence their innovativeness, viability, and impact?
- How might social entrepreneurship effectively contribute to systemic social and environmental change?

- How does the efficacy of social entrepreneurship compare to other social impact initiatives and forms of organizing for addressing complex social and environmental problems?

Creative approaches in addressing complex social and environmental problems.

- Are there differences on how entrepreneurs in the commercial, social, and public sectors create, discover and exploit opportunities with impact on complex social and environmental problems?
- How does hybridity influence the acquisition and exploitation of resources required to address complex social and environmental problems?
- Which business models and strategies are designed to address complex social and environmental problems?
- How do different structures, governance arrangements, processes, and practices support or hinder innovation to address complex social and environmental problems?

Contextual influences on the role of social entrepreneurship and hybridity in addressing complex social and environmental problems.

- What new theories and models of social entrepreneurship would further our understanding of how to address the complex social and environmental problems associated with extreme conditions (e.g., poverty, inequality)?
- What new theories and models to further our knowledge of the temporal factors (e.g., short- vs long-term; influence of past, present and future) associated with engagements to address complex social and environmental problems?
- What are the unique features of the business models and strategies required to address complex social and environmental problems in developing economy contexts?

SUBMISSION PROCESS and DEADLINES

Submissions should be prepared using the JMS Manuscript Preparation Guidelines (<http://www.socadms.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/JMS-ManuscriptPreparation-Guidelines.pdf>)

Manuscripts should be submitted using the JMS ScholarOne system (<https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/jmstudies>)

Papers will be reviewed according to the JMS double-blind review process.

We welcome informal enquiries relating to the Special Issue, proposed topics and potential fit with the Special Issue objectives. Enquiries should be directed to the Guest Editors:

Sophie Bacq, bacqs@iu.edu

Giacomo Ciambotti, giacomo.ciambotti@unicatt.it

Bob Doherty, bob.doherty@york.ac.uk

Silvia Dorado, silvia.dorado@umb.edu

Helen Haugh, h.haugh@jbs.cam.ac.uk

Matteo Pedrini, matteo.pedrini@unicatt.it

Jeffrey York, jeffrey.york@colorado.edu

Deadlines:

- Submission portal opens: 1 March 2022.
- Submission portal closes: 31 March 2022.
- Expected publication: July-August 2024.

SPECIAL CONFERENCES and PAPER DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS

The SI is fully integrated to the forthcoming **13th International Social Innovation Research Conference** (conference track: Hybrid models and organizing implications for social entrepreneurship research and beyond), hosted by Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore in Milan, September 8-10th, 2021.

This SI is also integrated to the **18th Annual Social Entrepreneurship Conference**, co-sponsored by University of Southern California Marshall School of Business, Greif Center for Entrepreneurial Studies, Brittingham Social Enterprise Lab, and Indiana University Kelley School of Business, Johnson Center for Entrepreneurship & Innovation. Guest Editors will organize a pre-submission workshop adjacent to that event in which interested authors will present a synopsis of their idea for the SI and receive feedback from senior scholars in the field.

In September 2022, Guest Editors will host at least one **Paper Development Workshop** for R&R authors to develop their manuscripts. Participation in the workshop does not guarantee acceptance of the paper in the SI, and is not a prerequisite for publication.

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