

**Call for Papers for a Special Issue – Thunderbird International Business Review**

**Topic: Understanding Sustainable Innovation in Emerging Markets**

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**Submission Deadline: November 30, 2024**

**Special issue information**

Multinational enterprises (MNEs) are pressured to grow and survive in an increasingly volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) globalized world. To achieve sustainable development goals (SDGs) at the same time (Boons et al., 2013; Cillo et al., 2019; Ketata et al., 2015), there is constant pressure on multinational firms to simultaneously consider achieving financial performance targets whilst tackling sustainability issues and raising awareness and interest in sustainable innovation. Sustainable innovation integrates environmental protection with the ability to create new products or processes that satisfy customer needs in the long term (Larson, 2000; Delmas & Pekovic, 2018; Adams et al., 2023). Sustainable innovation is an emerging and novel solution to transform technology, products and markets, change business and society and effectively address sustainability issues whilst solving wicked problems (Nill & Kemp, 2009; Schaltegger & Wagner, 2011; Smith et al., 2014;

Ullah et al., 2021; Attah-Boakye et al., 2023). Practicing sustainable innovation tends to be a core challenge for emerging market multinational enterprises (EMNEs).

Although its importance has been stressed, our current understanding of sustainable innovation by EMNEs in the international business (IB) field is limited. First, there is a lack of a clear and comprehensive understanding of sustainable innovation concepts from emerging market contexts (Jaiswal & Zane, 2022). Although Schumpeter (1934) introduced the concepts of sustainable innovation, what sustainable innovation activities are carried out by MNEs from underdeveloped markets, and the costs, risks and challenges associated with sustainable innovation in an international business context. Moreover, the lack of understanding of the appropriate measures needed to develop sustainable innovation in underdeveloped markets requires further exploration. Second, we have little knowledge about the antecedents of sustainable innovation decisions and performance in underdeveloped markets. Specifically, how the contextual factors (i.e., institutional, geographical, and cultural contexts) influence the adoption, commitment and performance of sustainable innovation is underexplored. Third, it is important to further explore how sustainable innovation is practiced by MNEs from emerging markets to further advance existing IB theories (Gërguri-Rashiti & Ramadani, 2017). Due to the diverse and sometimes conflicted goals, the pursuit of sustainable innovation is challenging, tense and paradoxical.

Therefore, how emerging market multinationals (EMNEs) balance their goals, how they manage and synthesize these tensions and how contexts play a role in the sustainable innovation process are largely unknown (Adams et al., 2023). Finally, there is a knowledge gap in the financial and non-financial outcomes of sustainable innovation as well as the role of top management teams in supporting sustainable innovation.

This special issue aims to bring the discussion of sustainable innovation into IB research and to address the practical and theoretical implications of sustainable innovation at the firm level. It calls for contributions by advancing our understanding of sustainable innovation concepts and practices, driving factors of sustainable innovation, processes of sustainable innovation and consequences of sustainable innovation from the perspective of firms from emerging markets. This Special Issue seeks novel theoretical and empirical advances in research ideas, theoretical developments, research methodology and research design. No specific theoretical or methodological approaches are preferred. High-quality conceptual, qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods submissions are welcome.

Topics of interest include, but are not limited to:

**1. To understand the concept and complexity of sustainable innovation**

- a. What are the practices of sustainable innovation carried out by international firms from emerging markets? How can sustainable innovation be measured appropriately?
- b. What are the challenges of sustainable innovation of international firms from emerging markets?
- c. How do these challenges interact over time?
- d. How do the sustainable innovation practices carried out by international firms from emerging markets and encountered complexities differ from their counterparts from developed countries?

**2. Understanding the antecedents of sustainable innovation**

- a. What are the individual-level or managerial-level drivers of sustainable innovation decisions and performance?
- b. What are the firm-level antecedents of sustainable innovation decisions and performance?
- c. How does corporate governance structure influence sustainable innovation decisions and performance?
- d. What are the contextual drivers of sustainable innovation decisions and performance?

**3. Understanding processes of sustainable innovation**

- a. How is sustainable innovation practiced by international firms from emerging markets?
- b. What are the different strategies of managing paradoxes of sustainable innovation used by international firms from emerging markets?
- c. How do firms from developed countries and emerging markets differ in terms of managing sustainable innovation?
- d. What explains differences in their approaches to and processes of sustainable innovation?

#### 4. Understanding outcomes of sustainable innovation

- a. What are the financial implications of adoption, commitment, and performance of sustainable innovation?
- b. What are the non-financial implications of adoption, commitment, and performance of sustainable innovation?

In conclusion, we encourage the submission of manuscripts that provide unique perspectives through interdisciplinary research, collaboration among co-author teams, and diverse methodological approaches. This Special Issue offers an opportunity to advance our understanding of sustainable innovation of multinationals from emerging markets.

#### Submission process details:

The submission deadline is November 31st, 2024.

The manuscript should follow the *Thunderbird International Business Review* guidelines (<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/page/journal/15206874/homepage/forauthors.html>). Authors need to clearly indicate in their cover letter that their manuscript is for the Special Issue on sustainable innovation in emerging markets.

#### Submission Deadline and Tentative Publication Schedule:

Milestone	Date
Call for papers announcement	August 2023
Paper proposal submission and decision	March 31, 2024
Full paper submission deadline	November 30, 2024
First round decision	March 31, 2025
Second round decision	July 31, 2025
Final editorial decisions	September 2025
Anticipated publication	Winter 2025

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#### Short Biographical Notes of the Guest Editors:

**Dr Kweku Adams** is an Associate Professor in International Business & Management at the Bradford School of Management. He is a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy and holds an MBA (Finance)- Master of Laws (LLM), PhD (International Business Management), among others. He has also held academic positions in North America as a Lecturer in Strategy and Global Management at the Haskayne School of Business, University of Calgary and as a Visiting Lecturer of Management at the University of Lethbridge School of Management in

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**Dr. Gonzalo Molina Sieiro** is a scholar in the field of Strategic Management, currently serving as an Assistant Professor at the Lee Business School, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. He

earned his Ph.D. in Strategic Management from Florida State University. He also holds a M.A. in International Economics and Finance, cum laude, from Brandeis University. His research focuses on the intersection of strategic leadership, international entrepreneurship and strategic actions, like acquisitions. Specializing in international entrepreneurship, Dr. Molina-Sieiro has published influential work in prominent academic journals, including the *Journal of Management*, *Small Business Economics*, and *Leadership Quarterly*. His research encompasses varied subjects, ranging from strategic leadership in Corporate Social Responsibility to the role of ownership types and institutions in the internationalization of emerging economy ventures."

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