CALL FOR PAPERS

California Management Review (CMR)
Special Section on
Managing Innovation and Entrepreneurship in Family Firms:
In Search of New Practices, Strategies and Organizational Solutions

Guest-Editors:
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During the last decades, innovation and entrepreneurship have been widely acknowledged as key determinants of sustainable value creation and competitive performance, and have captured increasing interest from scholars and practitioners around the world.

Although management of innovation and entrepreneurship has been largely investigated by scholars from different disciplines, most of the traditional management literature has been developed considering cases and examples of firms where ownership and management are separated, without taking explicitly into account what happens in those organizations in which the two are unified.

Unification of ownership and control is typical of family firms. The involvement of family owners in management endows firms with distinctive incentives, authority structures, and norms of accountability and results in unique resources and capabilities. Therefore, there are strong reasons to believe that management of innovation and entrepreneurship is different in family and non-family firms and leads to different decisions, processes and performance patterns. This special section aims to focus on a direction of management research that has largely been overlooked so far – how innovation and entrepreneurship are distinctively managed in family firms.

Besides the ubiquity of family firms, which are the most common forms of organization and play a crucial role across all economies worldwide, this new direction of research is important because family firms increasingly make use of innovation and entrepreneurship to nurture their competitive advantage and to overcome economic downturn. The companies FIAT, Knauf and Wal-Mart are three examples of well-known family firms that have strongly anchored their competitive advantage in innovation and entrepreneurship. This points to a strong need of family CEOs, owners, managers, scholars and business educators for research on how innovation and entrepreneurship are distinctively managed in family firms.

The purpose of this special section is therefore to generate a collection of papers on how the practices, strategies and organizational solutions adopted to manage innovation and entrepreneurship change in the context of family firms, and how family involvement in a business organization affects
innovation and entrepreneurship. This special section offers an ideal opportunity to provide insights that can inform family firm decision makers about how the idiosyncratic characteristics of the family governance have an impact on the management of innovation and entrepreneurship and how innovation and entrepreneurial practices should be revised to suit its distinctive characteristics.

We envision a special section composed of analyses of real cases that illuminate the relevance, successes, and failures of particular practices, strategies and organizational solutions in family firms, as well as conceptual and qualitative empirical studies that contribute to innovation and entrepreneurship theories by examining the differences in the way family and non-family firms manage innovation. The special section will also include an interview to or point of view contribution from the leader of family firms that are universally benchmarked for excellence in innovation and entrepreneurial management. This special section should thus foster additional conversation on this important subject among academics and practitioners alike. Moreover, it should provide material for in-class discussion, as well as catalyze further cross-disciplinary study in this new avenue at the intersection of innovation, entrepreneurship and family business.

The guest editors will rely on the endorsement of a prestigious Advisory Board made of top scholars in the field of family business and innovation/entrepreneurship, who also share the view that more case analyses on this topic are needed, and that will contribute with the dissemination of the call and the build up of the issue.

If you are interested, we request that you submit an extended abstract no later than January 15th, 2014 to the attention of Alberto Di Minin (adiminin@berkeley.edu), Alfredo De Massis (a.demassis@lancaster.ac.uk) and Federico Frattini (federico.fratini@polimi.it) according to the following guidelines.

The extended abstract must run between two and five pages, double-spaced, font-size 12. It should clearly state (i) the purpose of your study; (ii) the particular innovation and/or entrepreneurial management issue addressed in your study; (iii) the context in which you examine this particular innovation and/or entrepreneurial management issue (i.e. real names of companies need to be cited unless the contribution is intended to be conceptual); (iv) the relevance of your study for practitioners, academic scholars, and CMR readership.

You can decide to send a first draft of your paper along with your extended abstract, however this is not a requirement. You are also welcome to contact either one of the Guest Editors for further information.

Based on the extended abstracts, the Guest Editors will review these proposals and select those that are most likely to result in first-rate, high-impact submissions. Authors of potentially interesting studies will be asked to submit a full draft of their paper online through the CMR system by September 30th 2014 to be peer reviewed.

Authors whose papers receive a revise and re-submit will be invited to a special developmental conference organized by the Guest Editors. At this conference, authors will receive developmental feedbacks from the co-editors and invited discussants. Subsequent to the conference, authors would be invited to revise and resubmit their papers taking on board the reviewers’ comments and comments from workshop participants. The papers will be reviewed again externally, with final decisions made in this third and final stage.