

Call for Papers for Special Issue of Triple Helix Journal

Innovation Cooperation between Large and Small Firms: Operational Models

Guest Editors-In-Chief:

Dr. Annika Steiber, A.S. Management Insights AB, USA, annika.steiber@gmail.com
Assoc. Prof. Sverker Alänge, Chalmers University of Technology, Sweden,
sverker.alange@chalmers.se

Associate Editors: Managing Guest Editors (MGE)

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Globalization, climate change, technological development, and more create demand for continuous innovation and new operational business models. Large incumbents face tremendous challenges in continuing pursuing and exploiting their existing business at the same time as they need to explore new areas for the future. This has proven to be very hard and history is full of examples where large successful corporations turn into a downward spiral towards extinction. Small start-ups, on the other hand, excel in pursuing new ideas leading towards new innovation but face limitation when it comes to scaling its business on a global market. There are examples of collaborations initiated by large firms that lead to innovation success, however, many large firms still are looking for ways to develop the ambidextrous dynamic capability that would allow them to become innovative through the cooperation with small creative firms (Alänge and Steiber, 2017).

This has made the other actors in the Triple Helix (Etzkowitz and Leydesdorff 1995, 1997), government, university, and industry players, trying to figure out what their role could be to contribute to the creation of a dynamic between large and small firms. Third party actors, both governmental, university, and privately or publicly funded intermediaries, have created space for interaction between large and small firms, such as Science Parks, research institutes, governmentally or privately funded accelerators, TTOs, laboratories and test sites, and specific initiatives such as local/central government funding of collaboration initiatives based on competitive applications by the participating parties, typically also including university participants.

This call is centered on these operational models initiated both by the industry

participants themselves, and by the other Triple Helix actors. This has been an area where relatively little empirically based research has previously been presented (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2013) but where vital knowledge and experience now is being accumulated. Thus, there is a need of presenting and critically evaluating these operational models for ambidexterity. Below follows some questions that papers within this call could aim at answering:

This special issue focuses on the following questions:

- Implemented operational models for ambidexterity, preferably described through case studies and from which lessons learned could be drawn. How could these implemented operational models be conceptualized and characterized? Lessons learned over time by the firm applying the specific operational model for ambidexterity? Suggestion on sub questions:
 - What are the triggers for adoption of the selected operational model and what are the goals and ambition levels for selected empirical cases?
 - What is the planned duration of activities within the operational model and is the model in itself viewed as a permanent or a temporary instrument?
 - Is any type of intermediary involved in the operational model? What is the intermediary's role(s)?
 - Could underlying dynamic capabilities be identified as a prerequisite or result of developing and implementing the new operational model for ambidexterity? (that is could the Dynamic Capabilities concept and the Ambidexterity concept be viewed as complementing concepts?)
- What are the metrics for success used by the firm? Suggestion on general metrics that could be used to analyze the effectiveness of a specific operational model?
- What roles do third party actors (intermediaries) take in facilitating or participating in initiating and accomplishing innovation cooperation between small and large firms?
 - Can Third Party "Space" serve a vital role in creating innovation cooperation between large and small firms, e.g. science parks, accelerator program, filtering function, and more (Lopez & Vanhaverbeke, 2009), and if so, how is this done and under what circumstances?
 - Are intermediaries becoming more or less important over time in supporting this kind of new collaboration between large and small firms? (for example some large firms create their own "private" open innovation solutions focused on startups)

- To what extent are university actors vital contributors to innovation processes including both on-going knowledge cooperation and entrepreneurial spin-offs from universities?
 - Which university actors can be identified – such as students, researchers, IP and liaison offices.

- In selected case study of an operational model for ambidexterity, what is the role of intellectual property – such as patents and licensing? Can IP issues be a hurdle? How have the actors behind the models found workable ways to solve the IP issues?

We would like to invite you to address these questions or pose your own. An ideal article combines theoretical, empirical and policy elements, although the balance may differ. Following pre-reviewing by the editors, submission of papers will be done through journal online submission system at:

<http://www.editorialmanager.com/trhe/default.aspx>.

Authors should follow the *Instructions for Authors* found on the Journal homepage.

References

Alänge, S, & Steiber, A. (2017) Innovation Collaboration between Small and Large Firms: Three operational models for ambidexterity in large corporations

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