



CALL FOR PROPOSALS

STRATEGIZING NEW GROWTH AVENUES IN AN EVOLVING GLOBAL CONTEXT

CONFERENCE CONVENORS

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Over the past few decades, strategy scholars have made great strides in explaining firm growth. Some scholars have underlined the role of innovations as vital drivers of firm growth. Others have highlighted, instead, the influences stemming from the resources that firms possess and the processes through which they accumulate and redeploy resources. Another area of emphasis refers to corporate strategies as vehicles for growth and the use of alliances and acquisitions as specific firm growth modes. Research on global strategies has advanced our understanding of the challenges and opportunities that firms face when expanding across national borders.

Yet, despite the rich body of knowledge about firm growth resulting from these various perspectives, several contemporary developments suggest the need to revisit current thinking and point to fruitful opportunities to expand the research frontier on this important issue. For instance, although innovations have helped firms such as Apple, Facebook, and Google achieve explosive growth rates and attain record-breaking market valuations, preserving an organizational culture conducive to innovation and sustained growth remains a crucial strategic challenge. Some companies such as Uber and Airbnb benefited from the digital transformation that took place in the past two decades and attained impressive growth rates through the introduction of disruptive business models. Recent developments in areas such as advanced robotics, nanotechnology, additive manufacturing, synthetic biology, big data analytics, virtual reality, artificial intelligence, and internet of things hold the promise of opening new growth avenues for companies in a variety of industries. Harnessing this technological potential, however, may require companies, especially those competing in complex innovation ecosystems, to rethink their competitive and cooperative strategies. Firm growth in such cases presupposes an orchestration involving several parties and the striking of a balance between competing interests and collaboration incentives.

Further, economic indicators suggest that several developed economies show signs that their growth engines are losing steam, thus spurring debate about how public policies can accelerate economic growth. A related development is a shift in several developed economies away from global trade toward sharper focus on fostering economic growth within their respective national borders. This, in turn, presents several challenges for companies whose activities span several countries as they need to redesign their strategies taking into account this evolving global context. Also, the debate about the extent to which economic growth can be leveraged to decrease social inequalities within and across countries has gained traction in several corners of the globe. This debate raises interesting questions about the role of private firms, public-private partnerships, and social entrepreneurship in promoting inclusive growth.

The considerations outlined above set the stage for the conference, which is an opportunity for strategy scholars to take stock of current thinking about firm growth and to engage in renewed research conversations about the topic. The venue of the conference, Sao Paulo, Brazil, is the largest economic and industrial hub in the Southern Hemisphere, the largest business center in Latin America, and second only to New York in terms of offices of multinational companies. As such, this location offers scholars attending the conference a great opportunity to interact with Latin American scholars, business leaders and consultants, and learn more about the unique opportunities and challenges facing local companies and international companies with activities in the region. In addition, Sao Paulo stands out for its dynamic culture and cosmopolitan flair.

The conference will feature sessions with distinguished scholars, business leaders and public policymakers to advance conversations about the need to rethink firm growth and strategize new growth avenues in the face of the evolving global context. The conference co-chairs welcome submissions that address the main theme of the conference. Also, along with track chairs, the program co-chairs invite submissions that provide theoretical, empirical, or managerial insights about the topics organized around the five tracks outlined below, which inform the overall theme of the conference.

Track A: **Redefining Global Growth Strategies in a New Era of Protectionism**
Track Co-Chairs: Maria Tereza Fleury, *FGV-EAESP*
William Newburry, *Florida International University*

This track focuses on challenges and opportunities that firms face as they redefine their strategies for achieving growth through international expansion taking into account recent and/or expected changes in global trade. How does increasing protectionism change the role of global supply chains as sources of competitive advantage? How do shifting customers' preferences toward "buying local" affect the balance between global integration and local responsiveness? What role does regional integration play in offsetting the effects of increasing barriers to global trade? How can firms leverage alliances with, and acquisitions of, companies in host markets to overcome an international context that is less favorable to global trade? How can firms leverage digital technologies to develop business models that accelerate growth through international expansion? How can firms integrate talent across globally dispersed R&D units in a context wherein labor mobility across national borders becomes restricted?

Track B: **Leveraging Growth through Collaboration Networks and Innovation Ecosystems**
Track Co-Chairs: Rahul Kapoor, *University of Pennsylvania*
Fernando Suarez, *Northeastern University*

This track addresses the issue of how firms should redesign their collaboration networks, as well as their relationships in complex innovation ecosystems, to harness the potential of new technologies to fuel growth. How can firms leverage recent developments in areas such as advanced robotics, nanotechnology, big data analytics, synthetic biology, virtual reality, and artificial intelligence to accelerate growth? To which extent do these technological opportunities require firms to redesign their collaboration networks? Do different network configurations lead to different levels of (a)symmetries in the growth rates of collaborating firms? What are the specific challenges that firms face in collaborations involving entrepreneurial ventures and established companies? How can resource transfer be facilitated in such collaborations as a way of accelerating growth? How are these challenges compounded in complex innovation ecosystems that entail relationships with suppliers and complementors as well? Do these ecosystems benefit participating firms asymmetrically in terms of facilitating firm growth? How can firms manage complex interorganizational relationships in collaboration networks and innovation ecosystems to adjust their strategies to the cycling between periods of rapid growth and periods of economic downturns, typical of several economies and most notably, emerging economies?

Track C: **(Inclusive) Growth at the Intersection of Business Strategy and Public Policy**
Track Co-Chairs: Sergio Lazzarini, *Inspere*
Caterina Moschieri, *IE Business School*

This track aims at exploring the intersection between business strategy and public policy and its role in promoting firm growth and socially inclusive economic growth. How can strategy research in general, and a better understanding about firm growth in particular, inform the design of public policies geared toward economic growth? What are the lessons from research on technology and innovation management that can help governments promote an innovation driven environment? How can research on cooperative strategies inform the design and the management of public-private partnerships? How can public policies, in turn, facilitate firm growth? Under which circumstances can the state function as an effective driver of innovation and entrepreneurship? Which lessons from Brazil's experience with wealth redistribution, through the Bolsa Familia program, can be applied to the design of policies that foster inclusive growth? What is the role of social entrepreneurship in that regard? What are the opportunities for firms to pursue growth through bottom-of-the-pyramid approaches?

Track D: **Growing Beyond Commodities**
Track Co-Chairs: Maria Alejandra Gonzalez-Perez, *EAFIT University*
Luiz Mesquita, *Arizona State University*

This track targets papers that deal with the unique opportunities and challenges facing firms whose growth strategies have traditionally relied on commodities. In many countries around the globe, and most notably in Latin America, natural resources and commodities remained important drivers of economic growth. To which extent will the current decline in demand for natural resources and commodities suppress economic growth in the affected regions? As governments explore growth avenues beyond commodities, what are the opportunities available for firms? To which extent can technology, innovations, and new business models help these firms expand internationally? How can firms in regions whose economies rely on commodities redesign their global strategies in the face of the expected increase in barriers to global trade? Can they rely on regional integration to offset this effect? Does collaboration with multinational companies offer a viable alternative?

Track E: **Teaching and Research Methods**
Track Co-Chairs: Jorge Carneiro, *FGV-EAESP*
Paulo Prochno, *University of Maryland*

This track aims at attracting symposia and PDW proposals on new developments on both teaching and research methods. This includes a broad range of teaching topics such as online education (both degree and executive education programs), hybrid courses, new techniques on participant centered learning as well as sessions on survey research and scale development, qualitative and multi-level research and experiments.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES AND REQUIREMENTS

Proposals (5-7 pages, for paper and panel sessions)

relating to the conference theme are invited.

Only original, unpublished work is sought.

Deadline for Submission of Proposals: November 6, 2017

To learn more about the
SMS Special Conference Sao Paulo please go to:
saopaulo.strategicmanagement.net

Timeline:

November 6, 2017	Submission Deadline for Proposals
November 9, 2017	Co-Author Confirmation Deadline
Late December 2017	Notifications of Program Review Committee Decisions
Mid-February 2018	Conference Program Available Online
March 15-17, 2018	SMS Special Conference Sao Paulo

a professional society for the advancement of strategic management

The Strategic Management Society (SMS) is unique in bringing together the worlds of reflective practice and thoughtful scholarship. The Society consists of over 3,000 members representing over 80 different countries. Membership, composed of academics, business practitioners, and consultants, focuses its attention on the development and dissemination of insights on the strategic management process, as well as fostering contacts and interchange around the world.

The Society is probably best known through the Strategic Management Journal (SMJ) published by John Wiley & Sons. This Class A journal has become the leading scholarly publication in the field of Strategic Management and is consistently rated one of the top publications in the management area. In 2007 the Society launched the Strategic Entrepreneurship Journal (SEJ) and in 2010 the Global Strategy Journal (GSJ). The intent is for these new quarterly publications to soon also become Class A journals and to promote the development and dissemination of advances in the field by maintaining the highest standards of intellectual thought combined with practical relevance, just as their sister publication SMJ has done for many years.



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