



Management and Organization Review
Second Research Frontiers Conference

*The SME Ecology of Transforming Economies: Knowledge Creation,
Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Economic Growth*

**Co-sponsored by the Guanghua School of Management, Peking University and the
International Association for Chinese Management Research**

Beijing, October 5–7, 2016

We are excited to announce the *Management Organization Review* (MOR) Second Research Frontiers Conference. This interdisciplinary Research Frontiers Conference serves as MOR exploration dialectic for advancing and opening new research directions of phenomena in the social sciences underlying management and organizations, globalization, and economic growth through boundary-crossing dialog and discourse with a focus on all transforming economies.

The conference is intended to provide the basis for framing future special issues of MOR.

It draws together social science scholars and thought leaders from around the world, as well as executives, entrepreneurs, policy-makers, and non-business scholars in a stimulating community-building setting.

The core theme of the conference explores the role of knowledge creation and innovation capacity of small- and medium-sized enterprises (including family businesses) on the economic development of transforming economies. Almost all transforming economies acknowledge the significance of SMEs for employment, lessening economic inequality and raising economic wellbeing. In reality, however, SMEs have been overlooked as important sources of knowledge creation and innovation for sustained economic development. SMEs are considered to be disadvantaged by liability of limited scale; asymmetric institutional barriers; lack of access to capital and managerial and technical talent; and restricted social and technological networks which have been identified as inhibiting their potential for innovation. Although almost every transforming economy aspires to invigorate and develop the innovation capacity of their SMEs, history, culture, institutional configuration, stage of economic development, etc. imply that each transforming economy faces different permutations of challenges, contradictions, and complexities that affect the development of country specific SME innovation capacity. This theme will first be explored in two back-to-back conferences that will direct attention on China and India. Future conferences will direct attention on Russia, Eastern Europe (Ex-Soviet Republics), Africa, and Latin America.

Potential sub-themes could include the antecedents and future of emerging economy innovations; exploiting institutional voids embedded in state and local policies and national innovation systems

affecting SME innovation, (e.g. incentives for invention and R&D, innovation and entrepreneurship, industrial clusters and innovation); MNE and SME innovation; history and culture; social and management innovations; role of university training; SME and family business management and organization that achieve extraordinary with ordinary resources, relationship between small and large firms; barriers to transforming size distribution of SMEs to accelerate rise of large companies; role of national culture and creativity (e.g., Taoism – Confucianism) and management of technological startups; regional differences between SME ecologies; evolution and role of global ICT on SME innovation; business management practices and promotion of creativity and innovation; innovation competition between emerging economies (e.g., China and India); SME family business contribution to economic growth; professionalization and the role of outsiders in the innovation process of SME family firms; effect of degree and type of family influence on innovation and creativity; critical success factors for product innovation in family firms and family SMEs as compared to other governance and ownership archetypes; models of inter- and intra-organizational diffusion of innovation in SMEs with different governance (e.g., family firms vs. venture-backed firms).

Designing and Organization of the Program

The design of the program itself involves a novel approach. The program will consist of 7 plenary panel sessions in addition to the opening and closing gala plenary sessions. The Program will be created bottom up. The Program Committee is soliciting 3–4 page proposals for plenary panels on any aspect of the theme of the conference. Proposals must:

- Describe the specific sub-theme focus of the panel and why it represents an underexplored but promising line of inquiry.
- Identify 4–5 panelists, the nature of their expertise, and a panel sub-theme that they will inform and motivate.
- Collectively each panel is expected to outline and delineate the contours of new lines of inquiry and opportunities for new leading edge research directions.
- Panelists are not expected to present lengthy papers. The challenge for each panelist is to plan on a high level, 15-minute compelling presentation.
- Lastly each plenary panel proposal must also include explicit statements from each panelist committing to personally participate for the entire conference if the plenary panel proposal is accepted for presentation and discussion at the conference.

Each plenary panel session is allocated two hours (120 minutes). The format of each plenary panel involves a maximum of 90 minutes for the presentations by the panelists and the leadoff commentator. The formal presentation is followed by commentaries and discourse among the participants. It does not follow traditional Q&A with panel. The essential idea is to stimulate conversation and plant the seeds for follow-up networking and new collaborations. At the conclusion of each plenary panel the panelists will be given a few minutes to reprise and respond to discussion that followed the plenary panel presentation. Each day will also include downtime periods for networking, reassessment of discussions, emergence of new collaborations, and decompression.

Attendance

Participation in the MOR Research Frontiers Conference is by invitation only on the basis of the quality, originality, and fit of the panel proposal with the conference theme. The program committee will make every effort to ensure that the assembled participants represent a cross section of senior and junior scholars, including advanced PhD students, and that participants come from diverse geographies. Fifty percent of the participants must have not participated in a prior MOR Research Frontiers Conference. This rule ensures that this prestigious and influential conference continues to stay vigorously stimulating, welcoming of new ideas and new perspectives, and counteracts formation of in-groups and creeping parochialism.

The program committees for Beijing and Bangalore expect that much of the plenary program will be created from proposals submitted in response to the Call for Proposals. Some authors will be able to join the conference by participating in a pre-conference Paper Development Workshop. (Details to be announced separately at a later date).

Program Committee (as of October 31, 2015):

Arie Y. Lewin, Editor in Chief MOR, Duke University

Suresh Bhagavatula, IIM Bangalore

Jiangyong Lu, Senior Editor MOR, Peking University

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