

**Call for Papers***Management and Organization Review***Research Frontiers Conference on ‘SMEs and  
Family Business in China’****Zhejiang University School of Management  
November 6–8, 2019****Conference Organizers:****Professor Xiaowei Rose Luo** (*INSEAD, France*) [xiaowei.luo@insead.edu](mailto:xiaowei.luo@insead.edu)**Professor Arie Y. Lewin** (*Duke University, USA*) [ayl3@duke.edu](mailto:ayl3@duke.edu)**Professor Xiaobo Wu** (*Zhejiang University, China*) [xbwu@zju.edu.cn](mailto:xbwu@zju.edu.cn)**Professor Peter Ping Li** (*Nottingham University, China*) [peter.li@nottingham.edu.cn](mailto:peter.li@nottingham.edu.cn)

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SME), many of which are family businesses, play a significant role in China. Based on recent statistics, about 67% of firms were non-state owned and non state-owned firms contributed to 47% of the R&D in 2017 (Report of the Top 500 Firms in China, 2017). The majority of these firms are SMEs or family businesses. In the past two decades, the government has increasingly recognized these firms as a major engine of economic growth and innovation, and as a vital force for providing employment and environmental sustainability. These firms have also experienced a multitude of challenges, ranging from intense competition, digital transformation, and underprivileged access to resources (Li et al., 2015). However, they are not yet in the spotlight of research. We lack both theoretical and empirical understanding of how these firms cope with the opportunities and challenges in China’s fast-changing transitional market, especially under the emerging VUCA (volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity) contexts with the advances of digital technologies and market customization.

The Research Frontiers Conference in Hangzhou, 2019 calls for more indigenous research on SMEs and family businesses in China. We intend to attract research that delves into the ongoing opportunities and challenges facing SMEs and family firms in China, which seeks to understand how they survive, grow, and innovate in such contexts. We encourage the use of a broad range of theoretical perspectives and empirical methodologies. Topics can be related to but are not limited to the following:

- How do SMEs and family firms cope with intense competition?*
- How do they overcome disadvantages in access to resources?*
- How do they cope with the obstacles in transitional markets in order to scale up?*
- What is unique about the entrepreneurship in family business?*
- How innovative are these companies and what factors can explain their success or failure in innovation, especially during the technological paradigm shifts?*
- How do they prevent themselves from being copied and achieve sustainability?*
- How do they achieve growth through collaboration networks and innovation ecosystems?*
- How do they cope with digital transformation?*
- How do they cope with market customization?*
- How can they manage their business platforms and ecosystems?*
- How is the interacted relationship between state/regional and these firms over time? What are their corporate political strategies?*
- How do they leverage local governments' incentives to grow?*
- How do these firms manage diverse stakeholders in their environment such as customers, supply chain partners, the state, and community?*
- What is the proper governance structure for their sustainable development?*
- How do they attract and retain talents?*
- What is unique about professional managers in family firms? What are the different succession models for family firms?*
- What is the role of family relationship (e.g., mother, daughter, and son-in-law) in the process of succession?*
- Do they pursue internationalization and how is it different from such strategies of nonfamily or large firms or their counterparts in mature markets?*
- How do Chinese SMEs and family firms compare with their counterparts in the advanced economies as well as other emerging economies?*
- What are the strategic implications of Belt-and Road Initiative (BRI) for SMEs and family businesses covered by BRI?*

Studies can either focus on China or conduct comparative research (i.e., comparing family firms or SMEs in China and other countries). Contribution to both theory and practice is expected, as well as significant managerial or policy implications.

Submission can be one of the two types:

- (1) Individual research studies as full-length papers. The total length should not exceed 40 pages, double-spaced, with regular font (12) and margin.
- (2) A proposal for a panel around a subtheme (less than 5 pages). A proposal can include 3 to 5 papers. These papers can be written as a proposal (less than 7 pages each). It is the responsibility of the panel proposal writer to invite the papers into her/his panel.

Submission deadline: August 17, 2019.

However, papers or proposals submitted before the deadline will be considered on a running basis and invitations will be issued as papers or proposals are accepted but not later than September 7, 2019.

Participants are responsible for their travel and accommodations. The conference will cover other related costs such as tea/coffee breaks, light breakfasts, lunches, and dinner.

Following the conference the guest editors will invite submissions for the MOR special issue. Revised papers will be discussed at a special PDW to be announced. Following the PDW, the guest editors will determine papers to be included in the MOR Special Issue. Some papers could be published in later regular issues.

## REFERENCES

- Li, J. B., & Piezunka, H. 2019. The uniplex third: Enbaling single-domain role transitions in multiplex relationships. *Administrative Science Quarterly* (forthcoming).
- Li, X. C., Chen, L. Chua, J. H., Kirkman, B. K., Rynes-Weller, S., & Gomez-Mejia, L. 2015. Research on Chinese family businesses: Perspectives. *Management and Organization Review*, 11(4): 579–597.

Report of the Top 500 Firms in Chin. 2017. 中国500强企业发展报告2017.

## SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Please make sure to acquaint yourself with MOR editorial statement and instructions to authors <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/management-and-organization-review/information/instructions-contributors>.

Read ‘The Critique of Empirical Social Science: New Policies at *Management and Organization Review*’ (Lewin et al., 2016). Available here: <https://doi.org/10.1017/mor.2016.43>

Please submit papers via the MOR online submission website:  
<https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/mor>