

Call for Book chapters for the



Handbook on SME Entrepreneurship

Submission Deadlines:

Chapter proposals (ca. 1 page): May 31st, 2021

Full paper: October 31st, 2021

Background and motivation

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are considered the engines of worldwide economies and the main sources of job creation (Wiklund et al., 2019). Already 40 years ago Welsh and White (1981) noted that “*a small business is not a little big business*”. In other words, the management of SMEs and their sub-group of young SMEs (i.e. start-ups) cannot be viewed simply as a downsized version of large business management, but rather it is a flexible and easily adaptable set of tools supporting entrepreneurs in taking optimal decisions. In the light of the high importance of SMEs in emerging, developing and developed economies worldwide, it has become inexorable to investigate the underlying mechanisms and practices of management in SMEs and start-ups. Whereas the pure *management* side of these enterprises has already been discussed in much detail in the last two decades, this handbook concentrates more on the *entrepreneurship* side, i.e. on the growth- and innovation-orientation of SMEs.

In ambiguous business conditions, there are no standard procedures and rules, and the previous patterns of entrepreneurial behavior cannot be universally applied. As a result, it has become indispensable to conceptualize original business models (Bouwman et al., 2019; Cosenz and Bivona, 2020; Hock-Doepgen et al., 2020) and fresh decision-making techniques and methods for SMEs that are in line with the new business requirements of the modern world. The success and survival of SMEs strongly depends on the effectiveness of individual decision-making processes, which stresses the firm’s need to establish proper entrepreneurial decision-making processes in order to maintain their competitive advantage in a continuously changing environment.

This handbook will therefore include chapters on topics as well as theories and practices related to the diverse facets of SME entrepreneurship. For instance, we would welcome research that explores the employee intellectual agility as the initiator of innovations in SMEs (Dabić et al., 2021). We also believe that the role of SMEs in entrepreneurial ecosystems should be researched not only from macro-perspective, but also from the micro-level (Cunningham et al., 2019). Since innovating business models represents one of SMEs’ key capabilities, digital entrepreneurship as a topic will also be incorporated

(Garzella et al., 2021). Cutting-edge technologies and globalization have encouraged SMEs to expand their businesses on the global market (Dabić et al., 2019). In line with that, the internationalization process of SMEs can be further explored (Morais and Ferreira, 2020; Schulz et al., 2009). In this new digital era, exploring the influence of human resource management (Heneman et al., 2000) in SMEs has also become more important than ever. The organizational culture facilitates the SMEs to create the identity, and consequently can encourage digitalization and sustainability (Isensee et al., 2020). Knowledge sharing can upgrade customer relationships, trust, and organizational learning in SMEs that can ultimately improve performance (Anand et al., 2021). SMEs are confronting new barriers in terms of the cost of digitalization and dealing with new trends regarding the Industry 4.0 technologies. SMEs should use the technology to their advantage and explore, for example, how big data analytics can help them improve customer service (Wang and Wang, 2020). For SMEs to survive, it is crucial that they collaborate, and exchange knowledge and technology with the different stakeholders (Silva et al., 2019; Spithoven et al., 2013; Van de Vrande et al., 2009). The features, such as their smallness and newness, allow SMEs to implement open innovation practices much easier and quicker than the larger firms, which eventually enable them to boost the innovation performance (Lee, et al., 2010; Kraus et al., 2020).

Objectives and topics

For this Handbook, we envision the articles that would be possibly related to (but not at all limited to) any of the following questions:

- What are the underlying and emerging theories of SME Entrepreneurship?
- What are the practices, actions and measures that foster the digital transformation of SMEs?
- Context: Do different types of SMEs – in terms of e.g. nationality, ownership, and governance – approach and respond to internationalisation in the same manner?
- How can we measure more accurately growth, innovativeness, creativity, or possible collapses of SMEs?
- How could universities and science provide tools to encourage the growth of SMEs?
- What role does governance play in the subsequent success of SMEs? How do organizations manage marketing in different fields of SMEs? In what way does project organization communication foster the failure of open innovation projects of SMEs?
- What are the new development opportunities for SMEs?
- What is role of business angels and financial support for growth of SMEs?
- What is the influence of environmental, political, and technological changes on SMEs' strategy?
- What are the drivers of SMEs global value chains and relationships?
- What are best practice examples of supporting SMEs in their transition to sustainability?

We invite the prospective authors to add their contributions on the current state of conceptual and empirical research in the area of SME entrepreneurship. We are aiming to bundle together the key research activities on this important topic and generate a contemporary body of knowledge providing a focused view on a range of topics that will serve as fertile ground for future research. We invite submissions that are either conceptual or empirical without preference to specific theoretical or methodological approaches. High quality conceptual, qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods submissions are welcome.

The six main topics of the handbook with individual chapter topics are:

1. Novel Theories of Entrepreneurship in SMEs:

- Firm related theories
- Core competence and resource-based theories
- Innovation theory
- Theory of Social Change
- Interdisciplinary use of theories
- Theories of internationalization
- Critical evaluation

2. SMEs from the point of view of different levels of analyses (macro, meso, micro):

- Policies for enhancing SMEs growth
- SME and regional development
- Entrepreneurial ecosystems
- Governance of innovation in SMEs
- Marketing and branding in SMEs
- Value co-creation in SMEs
- Business incubators

3. The role of education for SMEs

- Experience, learning and SMEs
- Responsible forms of entrepreneurial education
- Developing skills, knowledge and competences for SMEs
- Ethical research questions in SMEs

4. Processes within SMEs:

- Strategic planning and management of SMEs
- Internationalization of SMEs
- Systematic innovation management
- New technology-based ventures
- SME performance
- Decision processes in SMEs
- Digital transformation of SMEs
- Social media strategies for SME

5. Entrepreneurial capital and SMEs:

- Human resource management in SMEs
- Team formation in SMEs
- Talent managers for SMEs
- Gender equality
- Role of immigrants, expatriates and inpatriates for SMEs
- Intellectual capital, knowledge creation, knowledge sharing and role of clusters and networks among SMEs
- Social capital growth of SMEs and sources of finance of SMEs

6. SMEs and their stakeholders:

- The role of customers, investors, employees, suppliers, communities, governments, trade associations etc. for SMEs
- Corporate social responsibility in SMEs.

Submission requirements:

Chapter proposal (1-2 pages by May 31st 2021) indicating:

- the section to which the contribution is made
- the primary aim and research question
- the theoretical and practical focus and methodology use
- expected results/contribution

Only original unpublished manuscripts may be submitted. The manuscripts will be required to follow the official Guide for Authors (which will be provided). We recommend that each chapter be around 6,000-8,000 words. A maximum limit is 10,000 words.

Schedule:

- May 31st: Submission of chapter proposals
- June 10th: Acceptance of proposals
- October 31st: Deadline for full chapter submission, including the permissions for figures and images
- December 31st: Reviews and feedback
- February 28th, 2022: Submission of revised chapters
- End of 2022: Digital version release

Editors:

- *Professor Dr. Marina Dabić**, University of Zagreb, Faculty of Economics and Business, Croatia & Nottingham Trent University, United Kingdom
- *Professor Dr. Dr. Sascha Kraus*, Free University of Bozen-Bolzano, Faculty of Economics & Management, Italy

**Handling editor (all submissions to: mdabic@net.efzg.hr / marina.dabic@ntu.ac.uk)*

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