



Call for papers

VI International Forum on Management

Theme: Family and technology: Resilience factors in SMEs in a pandemic

Program Chair: Remedios Hernández Linares, University of Extremadura (Spain)

The pandemic generated by COVID-19 has forced firms to face dramatic environmental changes: the breakdown of global supply chains; restrictions on opening hours to the public; limitations on the number of people who can be served in an establishment; borders closures; perimeter closures in towns, cities, and regions; the need to adapt physical workspaces to turn them into safe environments; the need to invest in technologies to promote remote work or the increase of home-based businesses, among others (Choudhury et al., 2020; Gonsalves, 2020; Kniffin et al., 2021; Reuschke & Mason, 2020).

Small- and medium- enterprises (SMEs), due to their smaller size and higher flexibility may explore new opportunities and develop emergent strategies for sustainable business operations (Davidsson, 2015; Papadopoulus et al., 2020; Shepherd & Williams, 2018). However, they are more vulnerable to environmental changes (Wade & Hulland, 2004) because they have fewer options in terms of resources, capabilities, and market power (Drnevich & Kriauciunas, 2011; Sawers et al., 2008). This higher vulnerability and their significant share of the business landscape (Ayyagari et al., 2007; Filipe et al., 2016; OECD, 2017) seem to call for a critical reflection on how to promote SMEs' resilience, so that they can survive and successfully face both the COVID-19 pandemic and other pandemic and crisis situations that may occur in the future. This reflection is also justified by a report published by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) last year, according to which:

The current crisis has affected SMEs disproportionately, and has revealed their vulnerability to the supply and demand shock (in particular with regard to their liquidity) with a serious risk that over 50% of SMEs will not survive the next few months. A widespread collapse of SMEs (60-70% of OECD employment) could

have a strong impact on national economies and global growth prospects, on perceptions and expectations, and even on the financial sector, which may already be under strain by non-performing portfolios. (OECD, 2020, p. 3).

Moreover, "the pandemic and its social and economic reverberations are triggering particularly salient challenges for family businesses" (De Massis & Rondi, 2020, p. 1727). For example, while succession has been considered traditionally as an intra-family process that must be methodically planned and executed to ensure a smooth and beneficial transition to the next generation (e.g., Cabrera-Suárez et al., 2001), as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic a vast cohort of family firms (mostly family SMEs) have to face succession in an unexpected, rapid, and unplanned way (De Massis & Rondi, 2020). Despite these additional challenges, during times of crisis family business are better able to mobilize their specific bundle of resources to keep their business operating, lending superior resilience to family firms (Amann & Jaussaud, 2012; Calabrò et al., 2021; Kraus et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2016). In fact, research has shown that family business' ability to (for example) leverage their family's social capital and patient financial capital can make a difference in times of crisis, making the family the backbone of family business resilience in such times (Calabrò et al., 2021).

Along this line, technology seems to be a second SME resilience factor in the pandemic. Thus, to deal with the repercussions of COVID-19 SMEs use, among other resources, mobile apps and digital technologies, such as mobile and collaborative technologies and the internet of things with next-generation telecommunication networks (e.g., 5G), big-data analytics, artificial intelligence that uses deep learning, and blockchain technology (Papadopoulus et al., 2020; Rakshit et al., 2021). The implementation of such technologies by SMEs to secure their continuity requires strategic rethinking of their business processes, as well as understanding the implications of technologies deployment on work, organizing, and performance (Papadopoulus et al., 2020).

To explore these important and broad issues, the **VI IFM** theme, **"Family and technology: Resilience factors in SMEs in a pandemic"**, encourages particularly rigorous and relevant submissions that advance our understanding of these issues. Possible research questions that align with the conference theme include, but are not limited to, the following examples:

-
- How do SMEs respond to global shock, such as the COVID-19 pandemic? How do SMEs cope with the challenges and opportunities of an increasingly connected, yet physically distanced world?
 - Do enterprising families build organizational resilience to face global crises? If so, how do they do this?
 - How can a family business survive in the case of a sudden succession? How may unplanned successions unfold in family-owned SMEs or be viable or beneficial?
 - Does a direct link between digital technologies deployment by SMEs and their performance during COVID-19 exist?
 - What categories of SMEs benefit most from the use of technologies (e.g., mobile apps and digital technologies)?
 - How do family values and prior crises in the history of the family and/or the business affect family business resilience? (De Massis & Rondi, 2020).

In addition to the conference theme, the **VI IFM** more broadly welcomes submissions on all topics that are relevant to management theory and practice, such as: accounting and management control, cultural aspects in global management, entrepreneurship and innovation, ethics and social responsibility, environmental management, finance and economy, human resource management, management and enhancement of heritage, marketing, strategic management, teaching methodologies, technologies and information systems, territorial planning and ordering, third sector and public administration, or touristic management.

Submission types

VI IMF 2022 welcomes a varied and wide range of submissions to create a vibrant conference environment that promotes the exchange of ideas and collaboration among attendees. Submission types include:

- Poster
- Extended abstract
- Full paper
- Symposium

Key dates and deadlines

- All paper submissions due: **November 15, 2021**
- Notification of acceptance for all submissions: December 20, 2021

References

- Amann, B., & Jaussaud, J. (2012). Family and non-family business resilience in an economic downturn. *Asia Pacific Business Review*, 18(2), 203–223.
- Ayyagari, M., Beck, T., & Demircug-Kunt, A. (2007). Small and medium enterprises across the globe. *Small Business Economics*, 29(4), 415–434.
- Cabrera-Suárez, K., De Saá-Pérez, P., & García-Almeida, D. (2001). The succession process from a resource-and knowledge-based view of the family firm. *Family Business Review*, 14(1), 37–48.
- Calabrò, A., Hermann, F., Minichilli, A., & Suess-Reyes, J. (2021). Business families in times of crisis: The backbone of family firm resilience and continuity. *Journal of Family Business Strategy*, 12(2), 100442
- Choudhury, P., Foroughi, C., & Larson, B. Z. (2020). Work-from-anywhere: The productivity effects of geographic flexibility. *Academy of Management Proceedings*, 2020(1), 21199.
- Davidsson, P. (2015). Entrepreneurial opportunities and the entrepreneurship nexus: A re-conceptualization. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 30(5), 674–695.
- De Massis, A., & Rondi, E. (2020). COVID-19 and the future of family business research. *Journal of Management Studies*, 57(8), 1727-1731.
- Drnevich, P. L., & Kriauciunas, A. P. (2011). Clarifying the conditions and limits of the contributions of ordinary and dynamic capabilities to relative firm performance. *Strategic Management Journal*, 32(3), 254–279.
- Filipe, S. F., Grammatikos, T., & Michala, D. (2016). Forecasting distress in European SME portfolios. *Journal of Banking & Finance*, 64, 112-135.
- Gonsalves, L. (2020). From face time to flex time: The role of physical space in worker temporal flexibility. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 65(4), 1058-1091.
- Kniffin, K. M., Narayanan, J., Anseel, F., Antonakis, J., Ashford, S. J., Bakker, A. B., Bamberger, P. et al. (2020). *COVID-19 and the workplace: Implications, issues, and insights for future research and action*. Washington, DC: APA.
- Kraus, S., Clauss, T., Breier, M., Gast, J., Zardini, A., & Tiberius, V. (2020). The economics of COVID-19: Initial empirical evidence on how family firms in five European countries cope with the corona crisis. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research*, 26(5), 1067–1092.
- Lee, S. H., Phan, P. H., & Ding, H. B. (2016). A theory of family employee involvement during resource paucity. *Journal of Family Business Strategy*, 7(3), 160–166.
- OECD (2017). *Enhancing the contributions of SMEs in a global and digitalised economy*, 7-8. Retrieved from: <https://www.oecd.org/mcm/documents/C-MIN-2017-8-EN.pdf> (last accessed: August 28, 2021).



-
- OECD (2020). *Tackling coronavirus (COVID-19): Contributing to a global effort. SME policy responses*. Retrieved from: <https://www.enterprisegreece.gov.gr/assets/content/files/c38/a4201/f495/document.pdf> (last accessed: August 28, 2021).
- Papadopoulos, T., Baltas, K. N., & Balta, M. E. (2020). The use of digital technologies by small and medium enterprises during COVID-19: Implications for theory and practice. *International Journal of Information Management*, 55, 102192.
- Rakshit, S., Islam, N., Mondal, S., & Paul, T. (2021). Mobile apps for SME business sustainability during COVID-19 and onwards. *Journal of Business Research*, 135, 28-39.
- Reuschke, D., & Mason, C. (2020). The engagement of home-based businesses in the digital economy. *Futures*, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.futures.2020.102542>
- Sawers, J. L., Pretorius, M. W., & Oerlemans, L. A. (2008). Safeguarding SMEs dynamic capabilities in technology innovative SME- large company partnerships in South Africa. *Technovation*, 28(4), 171–182.
- Shepherd, D. A., & Williams, T. A. (2019). *Spontaneous venturing: An entrepreneurial approach to alleviating suffering in the aftermath of a disaster*. MIT Press.
- Wade, M., & Hulland, J. (2004). Review: The resource-based view and information systems research: Review, extension, and suggestions for future research. *MIS Quarterly*, 28(1), 107–142.