

## INNOVATION & MANAGEMENT REVIEW

SPECIAL ISSUE / CALL FOR PAPERS

# INNOVATION AND BUSINESS STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABILITY



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**Submission deadline**

**31 July 2021**

| SUBMISSION UNTIL JULY 31 2021 |



*Innovation & Management Review - INMR is pleased to invite papers for a special issue on "Innovation and Business Strategy for Sustainability". This special issue focuses on the firms' strategy, innovation and sustainability and their goals for achieving sustainable development of businesses and society.*

We welcome contributions towards the following overarching points:

- Innovation, Strategy and Sustainability
- University-Industry partnerships and Triple Helix
- Disruptive technology, innovation and sustainability
- Social entrepreneurship, social innovation and SDGs
- Multi-Stakeholder collaboration and engagement for SDGs
- Innovation for ESG (environmental, social, governance) and sustainability
- Digital innovation, industry 4.0, and smart manufacturing technologies for sustainable development
- Sustainability and innovation in emerging economies
- Innovation and sustainable human resource management
- Integrating SDGs and innovation for business and society
- Sustainable innovation in turbulent scenarios.

#### Informations & Submission

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[Innovation & Management Review](#) is pleased to invite papers for a special issue on “**Innovation and Business Strategy for Sustainability**”.

### Overview of the Theme

This special issue focuses on the firms’ strategy, innovation and sustainability and their goals for achieving sustainable development of businesses and society. It draws on recent trends followed by researchers who increasingly link sustainability with the firm strategy and innovation. The central idea is that by incorporating sustainability in their mission and vision, firms can drive strategy focused on innovation and the triple bottom line (i.e., society, economy and environment) (Bansal & Song, 2017). This issue broadly seeks to build on contributions from a variety of areas in the management discipline, which have sought to identify the underlying mechanisms leading to the sustainable development of firms and society. There has been increasing research interest on how SMEs as well as MNCs incorporate sustainability in their strategy as well as respond to the pressures and barriers towards adopting sustainability practices (Buckley et al., 2017; Lartey et al., 2020). As well as, studies that integrate the interactions between university-industry-government, for example the Triple Helix model, enhancing the role of different stakeholders in generating knowledge and innovation for business and society (Cai and Etzkowitz, 2020). The research draws on both the developed and emerging economies (Kolk and Lenfant, 2010; Sajjad et al., 2018; Raziq, 2019; Claro and Esteves, 2021). It, however, is also noted that firms could do more on sustainability than they are doing at present (BCG, 2018; Rosenberg, 2016).

Innovation is an integral part of the firm strategy, and increasingly recognized as a key driver of sustained business growth and competitive advantage. According to Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2010), innovation relates to both the development of new products, processes, and technologies, as well as their diffusion and application that in turn translates into improved firm performance. Today, firms are under increasing stakeholder pressure to demonstrate greater social responsibility, embrace sustainable business practices and engage them in business decisions (Sajjad et al., 2015; Stocker et al., 2020). The ability to innovate is fundamental to respond to this increasing pressure and it can be related to small, incremental changes in products, services, and business models to radical innovations, both aiming at integrating sustainability into business practices, goals and, at a high level, strategies (Evans et al., 2017; Jolink & Niesten, 2015). In particular, the active participation and contribution of the business sector is imperative for achieving the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – a set of 17

Global Goals to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity for all by 2030 (Scheyvens et al., 2016). The United Nations (2021) estimated that implementing the SDGs creates US\$12 trillion in business opportunities and without interest and persistent support of the business sector, it will be impossible to successfully achieve the SDGs by 2030. Thus, by aligning their strategies and practices to the SDGs, firms can make significant contributions to achieving the SDGs (Eweje et al. 2020).

Global sustainable development challenges – ranging from climate change, water and food crisis, to poverty, conflict, and inequity – require innovative solutions. Accordingly, firms have a pivotal role in creating innovative solutions for long-standing problems related to SDGs, which require more concerted approaches (Cordova and Celone, 2019) to accelerate technology development and diffusion and bring innovative products to the market (OECD, p. 14). To this end, sustainability-oriented innovations have become imperative for firms to simultaneously address pressing sustainable development issues and achieve competitive advantage (Kennedy, Whiteman and Ende, 2017; Pacheco, Alves & Liboni, 2018). Proactive firms are increasingly focusing on developing sustainable products and services as well as making their business operations more environmentally and socially friendly to cater the growing needs of a wide range of stakeholders. Increasingly, firms are adopting Industry 4.0 and smart manufacturing technologies as well as cutting-edge information and communication technologies – cloud computing and cognitive computing, radio-frequency identification (RFID), cyber-physical systems (CSP), digital sensors, artificial intelligence (AI), blockchain technology, 3D printing, machine learning, internet of things (IoT), robotics, and big data and analytics – to achieve sustainable outcomes (Allam and Dhunny, 2019; Dantas et al., 2020; Saunila et al., 2019; Sarkis et al., 2020; Tjoa and Tjoa, 2016; Wu et al., 2018; Alves, Galina and Dobelin, 2018).

The SDGs provide a series of prompts to our scholarly community with respect to topic areas that have particular salience in the pursuit of the Goals (Bebbington & Unerman, 2018; Salvia et al. 2019), and given the interdisciplinary nature of the SDGs, it will be important to interact and analyze the perceptions of academics working in other disciplines, so that new practices and policies can emerge in a more effective and inclusive manner, in other words, in a holistic perspective.

## Topics of Interest

We welcome conceptual, review and empirical papers from a variety of perspectives but encourage scholarly contributions that focus on advancing knowledge on Strategy, Innovation and Sustainability. Sample topics might include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Innovation, Strategy and Sustainability
2. University-Industry partnerships and Triple Helix
3. Disruptive technology, innovation and sustainability
4. Social entrepreneurship, social innovation and SDGs
5. Multi-Stakeholder collaboration and engagement for SDGs
6. Innovation for ESG (environmental, social, governance) and sustainability
7. Digital innovation, industry 4.0, and smart manufacturing technologies for sustainable development
8. Sustainability and innovation in emerging economies
9. Innovation and sustainable human resource management
10. Integrating SDGs and innovation for business and society
11. Sustainable innovation in turbulent scenarios.

## Publication Schedule

Completed papers of 8000 words (including all text, references and appendices) in length should be submitted via the Innovation & Management Review online submission site no later than **July 31, 2021**. Submissions should follow INMR author guidelines at

<https://www.emeraldgrouppublishing.com/journal/inmr#author-guidelines>

□ **Deadline for paper submission: July 31, 2021**

□ Reviewers' first report: October 30, 2021

□ Revised paper submissions: December 15, 2021

□ Expected publication online: February, 2022

## Guest Editors

Dr Aymen Sajjad (Massey University, New Zealand)

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