

Special Issue on "Field-Configuring Events as Arenas for Innovation and Learning"

Guest Editors

Elke Schüßler (Freie Universität Berlin)
Gernot Grabher (HafenCity University Hamburg)
Kathrin Möslein (Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg)
Gordon Müller-Seitz (Freie Universität Berlin)

Call for Papers

Submission deadline: October 1, 2013

Final manuscripts: October 1, 2014

Publication: Industry and Innovation, Volume 22, Issue 1 (2015)

The aim of this Special Issue is to analyze field-configuring events (FCEs) explicitly as arenas for innovation and learning from an interdisciplinary perspective. Since the coining of the term field-configuring events (Meyer et al. 2005; Lampel & Meyer 2008), the body of research on organized events such as trade fairs, conferences, or festivals has grown in different disciplinary contexts, particularly management research (e.g. Hardy & Maguire 2010), economic geography (e.g. Maskell et al. 2006; Power & Jansson 2008), and organizational sociology (e.g. Moeran & Strandgaard Pedersen 2011). The general gist of these studies is that interactions at temporally and spatially bounded sites allow for both planned and unexpected processes to occur that produce symbolic and material effects for the fields in which the events are embedded, be they local urban and regional environments or global industry and policy fields.

This Special Issue aims to analyze the specific parameters that allow different kinds of FCEs to bring about novelty in different contexts and to specify the innovation and learning processes that take place at these dynamic arenas.

We first call for papers that shed light on (one of) the following three dimensions that underlie existing theorizing on FCEs, but that lack a deeper theoretical reflection particularly from the background of innovation and learning research:

- **Time:** FCEs are described as temporary social organizations that are brought about and impact upon a more permanent field context. Some FCEs are singular occurrences, whereas others take place periodically. Open questions include: In which ways is temporal limitation conditioned by more permanent structures such as organizations or organizational fields? What role does the timing of FCEs play in producing field-configuring effects, for instance regarding the date, the duration, and the singularity of events? What are typical short-term and long-term effects of FCEs and under which conditions can the former be transferred into the latter?
- **Space:** FCEs are spatially bounded sites in global networks of host locations and exhibit certain spatial parameters in the way they are organized. They are also embedded in a particular urban and regional environment. Open questions include:

What determines the global geographies of FCE-hosting locations? What is the role of the location and spatial set-up of FCEs in shaping interactions? Similarly, what is the role of architecture and design in enabling as well as constraining creative processes and knowledge exchange? Do different degrees of spatial ‘boundedness’ and permeability produce different kinds of effects?

- **Relations:** FCEs support the formation and stabilization of network ties with both on-site and off-site effects. Open questions include: How are ties formed and developed over a series of events? What is the role of event organizers in brokering network relationships? How can relational effects of FCEs such as enhanced creativity be measured empirically?

Second, we call for papers that illuminate the kinds of innovations that can be brought about by different kinds of FCEs and the ways different actors can benefit from organizing or participating in FCEs. We are interested in empirical studies that shed light on the following issues:

- **Forms of organized events:** Existing research focuses primarily on large-scale venues such as international sports events, trade fairs or industry conferences. Open questions include: What is the role of smaller and more informal event forms that nonetheless have a field-wide effect? Can new event formats such as innovation camps, ‘unconferences’, or ‘barcamps’ be productively analyzed from an FCE perspective? What can such an analysis contribute to research on design thinking, user innovation, or communities?
- **Innovation types:** Previous studies suggest that FCEs allow for spontaneous and unusual interactions across participants so that novelty can emerge. Open questions include: What types of innovations emerge out of FCEs? Are some types of innovation more or less likely to result from particular planned and unplanned processes during such events? Can we even develop a contingency model of what types of events – and what processes – promote what types of innovation?
- **Appropriation of the benefits of innovation:** Existing research assumes that it is beneficial to participate in field-configuring events, but does not indicate in much detail how different actors derive benefits from organizing or participating in these venues. Open questions include: Who benefits and in which way from the innovations emerging during field-configuring events? What are the means of appropriation of the benefits of such innovations? Are they different than for innovation not created during FCEs or during events that are not field-configuring? Do we see firms designing strategies for benefiting from such events? What types of strategies can we see emerge? Can we even make a typology of innovation strategies for FCEs?

We mainly encourage submissions of high quality empirical papers that, rather than offering merely descriptive accounts, contribute to a theoretical agenda of developing perspectives on FCEs as arenas for innovation and learning at the intersection of management research, economic geography and organizational sociology. We explicitly encourage the use of

different methodologies for studying FCEs and their effects such as network analyses, ethnographic research, discourse analyses, or case studies and will aim for a diversity of methodological approaches being represented in our Special Issue.

Submission Process

To be considered for publication, manuscripts of a maximum of 8.000 words must be sent electronically to Guest Editor Elke Schüßler (elke.schuessler@fu-berlin.de) by October 1, 2013. Please submit manuscripts as e-mail attachments. Following an eligibility check and quick quality check, papers selected for review will receive a double-blind review following Industry and Innovation's normal review process. For more information see www.industryandinnovation.org

All questions should be directed to Elke Schüßler (elke.schuessler@fu-berlin.de).

Anyone who is considering a submission for this Special Issue should consider submitting their work to the track “*More than Meets and Greets: Exploring the Temporary and Spatial Dimension of Organized Events as Sites of Knowledge Exchange, Learning, and Innovation*” at the 2013 EURAM conference in Istanbul. Authors can receive valuable feedback for their work at this conference, but participation is neither a requirement for, nor will it guarantee inclusion in the Special Issue.

References

- Hardy, C., & Maguire, S. 2010. Discourse, field-configuring events, and change in organizations and institutional fields: narratives of DDT and the Stockholm convention. *Academy of Management Journal*, 53(6): 1365-1392.
- Lampel, J., & Meyer, A. D. 2008. Field-Configuring Events as Structuring Mechanisms: How Conferences, Ceremonies, and Trade Shows Constitute New Technologies, Industries, and Markets. *Journal of Management Studies*, 45(6): 1025-1035.
- Maskell, P., Bathelt, H., & Malmberg, A. 2006. Building global knowledge pipelines: The role of temporary clusters. *European Planning Studies*, 14(8): 997-1013.
- Meyer, A. D., Gaba, V., & Colwell, K. A. 2005. Organizing Far from Equilibrium: Nonlinear Change in Organizational Fields. *Organization Science*, 16(5): 456-473.
- Moeran, B., & Strandgaard Pedersen, J. (Eds.) 2011. *Negotiating Values in the Creative Industries: Fairs, Festivals and Competitive Events*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Power, D., & Jansson, J. 2008. Cyclical clusters in global circuits: Overlapping spaces in furniture trade fairs. *Economic Geography*, 84(4): 423-448.