

**Call for Papers****ZfB-Special Issue on “The Future of Strategy Research”****Journal of Business Economics**  
(Zeitschrift für Betriebswirtschaft)**Publication date: January 2014****Guest Editors:****Rudi K. F. Bresser and Joachim Schwalbach**

Although the field of strategic management is multidisciplinary and admits a wide array of theories and methodologies, research has established that its members, nevertheless, share an implicit consensus about the meaning of the field. Yet, the field faces major, interrelated challenges that threaten its viability. It is the purpose of this Special Issue to discuss ways to address these challenges. We highlight three problem areas.

First, while the field embraces a multidisciplinary approach to advancing knowledge, it has done little to circumvent an uncontrolled eclecticism. A vast array of different theoretical frameworks is applied to an equally vast and increasing number of phenomena so that a leading representative of the field has described this state as ‘debilitating fragmentation’. Arguably, researchers need to find ways to consolidate knowledge without stifling advancement or sacrificing the field’s multidisciplinary pluralism.

Secondly, a related problem is that strategy research is almost exclusively concerned with novelty and theory at the expense of relevance. This lack of relevance does not only concern the practice of strategic management, it also concerns the very nature of the academic field because the preoccupation with novel theoretical contributions prevents consolidation and necessary replication. Instead, the field’s boundaries are continuously expanded by pressures to produce and what appears to be opportune to authors in a culture that values volume and novelty. The obsession with publishing in A-journals and editorial policies demanding new and significant contributions are two factors that contribute to this seemingly uncontrolled proliferation of theoretical frameworks and strategic phenomena. It has been proposed that researchers and leaders of academic institutions should revamp tenure and promotion practices to encourage research that is relevant both to the academic field and to practice but significant progress in this regard is elusive.

A third problem area is that the publicly espoused values of ethical behavior in conducting research are not accepted by the research community. According to survey results recently published in the *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, ‘cheating’ is considered legitimate by many and commonplace. Acts of

evidence fabrication, falsification, and plagiarism are endemic. While this behavior is not germane to the strategic management field but appears to characterize all management subdisciplines, strategic management scholars need to openly discuss this problem and invent options and incentives to diminish such misconduct. Interestingly, the problem of misconduct seems to feed on the above problem areas. With a barely controlled eclecticism and an obsession for novelty, the incentives to engage in unethical behavior are high.

This special issue invites contributions that address ways to further consolidation and relevance of strategic management research on the basis of widely accepted ethical standards. We invite English language manuscripts from a wide variety of theoretical and methodological approaches. While the challenges described above are salient, we encourage prospective authors to think of and address other related issues as well.

The review and evaluation process for the special issue will be integrated into the **“5<sup>th</sup> International CSR Conference” to be held 4-6 October 2012 in Berlin Germany**. A selection of papers that make it through the beginning stage(s) of the review process will be invited to participate in a special track of the conference, where the author(s) will have the opportunity to interact with other researchers and the special issue editors.\* Following the conference, the special issue guest editors will make decisions as to the final disposition of the manuscripts.

**Submission Process for this Issue:**

Authors should submit their full article by **August 1, 2012**.

Articles must be 10,000 words or less in length.

September 1, 2012: Invitations to Special Issue Track  
of the 5<sup>th</sup> International CSR Conference.

December 15, 2012, Final Manuscript Decisions expected.

Authors interested in the special issue can contact the Guest Editors with any queries at [rudi.bresser@fu-berlin.de](mailto:rudi.bresser@fu-berlin.de) or [joachim.schwalbach@hu-berlin.de](mailto:joachim.schwalbach@hu-berlin.de). Please submit all manuscripts electronically in a Word-compatible format to [rudi.bresser@fu-berlin.de](mailto:rudi.bresser@fu-berlin.de).

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\* Although it is not a requirement of a submission that the author(s) attend the conference, it is strongly recommended that at least one author makes an effort to attend. Authors attending the conference will have the conference fees waived.