

R&D Management

Call for Papers: Special Issue on Innovation Management Research Methods

In collaboration between *R&D Management* and
the ISPIM Special Interest Group on Innovation Research Skills (IRS)



Submission DL: January 31, 2019

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Main goal of the call:

This is a call for insightful scholarly contributions to the application of existing and emerging methodologies in the field of innovation management research. In particular, we are looking for submissions that develop methods for improved and more rigorous examination of R&D and innovation activities.

Setting the scene:

Innovation refers to the discovery, development, implementation and adoption of new products, services or business models, new ways of organising the value chain, new production processes and new forms of organisational structure (e.g. Tidd & Bessant, 2013). Innovations are essential for the competitiveness of individual firms and ecosystems, as well as for addressing grand challenges in society and economy. Therefore, understanding how to manage innovation is a topic of both academic and practical relevance.

Innovation Management is maturing as a research field, creating increasing demands for rigour in research design, execution and publication. Effective research topics in a management field are those that address a grand challenge, provide novel insight that potentially change the conversation, catch and hold the attention of academic experts, and have relevant scope and insights for practice (Colquitt & George, 2011). The topics studied in the sub-discipline of innovation management often fulfil these criteria. However, the level of rigour applied in research design and execution varies greatly. The fundamental principles of good research – such as to match the research design with the research question, or to choose samples that are appropriate for answering the research question (Bono & McNamara, 2011) – indeed apply to the field of innovation management research. However, the field also provides a number of specific challenges that call for the adaption of existing methods, or the development of distinctive research methods.

The most fundamental of these challenges is probably the complexity of the definitions, operationalisations, and measurements of central innovation management concepts such as “innovation performance”, “creativity” and “novelty” (see e.g. Crossan & Apaydin, 2010; Klijn & Tomic, 2010). In addition, innovation management researchers frequently face challenges when attempting to generalize their findings. Furthermore, innovation theories have become more complex and open over time, and they now articulate relationships between multiple actors and stakeholders (Sørensen, Mattsson, & Sundbo, 2010). The rapid and pervasive spread of digital technologies provides additional sources of data and methods of analysis, which can challenge the fundamental assumptions of extant innovation theories, the scope of how innovation is defined, and the central agency of the nature of innovation (Benner & Tushman, 2015; Nambisan, Lyytinen, Majchrzak, & Song, 2017). Furthermore, in examining relevant issues and phenomena for innovation management, researchers face challenges with new organizing forms and levels of analysis such as innovation ecosystems (e.g. Rohrbeck et al., 2009; Ritala et al., 2013) and platform-based markets (Gawer & Henderson, 2007; Parker & Van Alstyne, 2017).

The objective of this Special Issue is to put forward a collection of relevant methodological developments within the context of innovation management. It will aim to contribute to a more thorough understanding of existing and

emerging methods and their application in innovation management research. Furthermore, we want to encourage researchers to address promising research opportunities in innovation management by providing methodological guidance and inspiration that cater for the specific characteristics of this field.

We invite papers that focus specifically on research methods for innovation management. The call is open to contributions that emphasize any method, whether it is qualitative, quantitative or conceptual in nature. In particular, we are looking for papers that provide specific methodological implications for future research on innovation management. The papers should deepen our understanding of how the reliability, validity, generalizability and overall quality in innovation management research can be improved. Whereas illustrative applications in innovation management contexts would be highly appreciated, the emphasis of each paper should be on the research method itself. We encourage contributions that address, but are not limited to, the following topics (if you have an idea that is not listed here, please contact us):

- *Innovation management as a unique discipline.* How do specific innovation management characteristics impact the way research methods need to be applied in innovation management research? What characterizes innovation management as a self-standing discipline? *Borrowing from neighbouring disciplines.* How can we as innovation management researchers learn from and borrow methods used in other disciplines such as psychology or the behavioural sciences? How can we conduct good, systematic inter-disciplinary work that can enhance innovation management research?
- *(Innovative) research designs.* How can existing research designs be adapted to suit the particular requirements of innovation management research? Which new research design formats might emerge?
 - *New units and levels of analysis in innovation management.* What kind of challenges and opportunities are there when studying broad and often loosely-coupled forms of organizing such as innovation ecosystems and platform-based markets? How can we study innovation management issues in structures that involve a large number of actors and fewer possibilities for “management” or “coordination” than in more traditional, well-defined structures?
 - *Measurement issues in innovation management research.* How can we measure the seemingly immeasurable concepts used in innovation management research? How can we adapt existing methods of measurement from other disciplines to the innovation management context?
 - *Model specification in innovation management.* How can we identify appropriate and complete model specifications in the context of innovation management research? How can we select meaningful mediators and moderators to refine / extend / challenge current innovation management theories?
 - *Theorizing in innovation management research.* How can we develop theory from empirical data in innovation management that suits the field’s distinct features?
 - *Data sources.* How can we create appropriate samples to answer research questions in innovation management? How can new and emerging sources of data (such as those provided by social media) be leveraged in innovation management research? How can we deal with methodological challenges and the opportunities that big data generates?
- *Methods and practical impact.* How can we utilize methods that allow better communication of the results so that they are understood outside of academia? How can we combine rigorous research methods with practical relevance without compromising any of them? How can we foster academic and practitioner collaboration in innovation management research?

Review Process & Timelines:

Please follow the author guidelines for submissions in the R&D Management journal website ([http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/\(ISSN\)1467-9310/homepage/ForAuthors.html](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/(ISSN)1467-9310/homepage/ForAuthors.html)). Full papers must be submitted no later than **January 31st, 2019** and at the earliest on November 1st, 2018. All papers will be externally reviewed in accordance with the policies of R&D Management Journal. Expected time of publication of the special issue is Spring of 2020.

As part of the submission process, authors have the opportunity to develop their papers in collaboration with the ISPIM Special Interest Group in Innovation Research Skills and the Special Issue Editors. In particular, authors with an invitation to submit a revision following the first round in Spring 2019 will be invited to attend a Special Issue session at the ISPIM Innovation Conference, June 2019, in Florence, Italy. Participation to this session is not mandatory for the authors, yet it is highly recommended.



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