

Special Issue Call for Papers

Digitalisation and Resource Mobilisation

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Firms are open systems that depend on their environment to obtain a variety of resources, including human capital (e.g., top management team members, employees, and advisors), social capital (e.g., interorganisational ties), and financial capital (e.g., debt and external equity), necessary for survival (Clough *et al.*, 2019; Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978). Digitalisation — “the way many domains of social life are restructured around digital communication and media infrastructures” (Brennen and Kreiss, 2016: 1) — has dramatically transformed how firms mobilise resources from their environments and interact with (prospective) resource-providers (Cumming *et al.*, 2021). If anything, the current COVID-19 pandemic has further fostered digitalisation across the globe (Sheng *et al.*, 2021), making digitalisation even more impactful for the resource mobilisation process. For example, firms increasingly use modern technologies for the recruitment and selection of new employees and to manage employees working remotely (Potočnik *et al.*, 2021; Tambe *et al.*, 2019). Furthermore, new firms without a track record can nowadays mobilise financial resources via digital platforms from prospective investors located across the globe. Even traditional financial firms, such as venture capital investors, have recently been forced to make resource provision decisions without site visits or face-to-face contact with management teams.

Our aim with this Special Issue is to stimulate more research on how digitalisation impacts the process of resource mobilisation. There is significant and recent research on digitalisation and how it, for example, impacts human resource management (Tambe *et al.*, 2019), entrepreneurship and innovation (Nambisan *et al.*, 2019), firm strategy (Hanelt *et al.*, 2021; Menz *et al.*, 2021), the use of data for strategic decision making (Hartmann and Henkel, 2020; Lee *et al.*, 2020), and the creation of new financing sources (Bertoni *et al.*, 2021). However, to date, we lack a deep theoretical and empirical understanding of *how digitalisation affects the process of resource mobilisation*. Within the management literature as a whole, much of the work on resource mobilisation has taken “a variable-centric approach, examining correlations between ... actors or situations and the final outcome of resource mobilization episodes, leaving the intervening processes as something of a black box” (Clough *et al.*, 2019: 241).

Ultimately, the resource mobilisation process comprises several intermediate steps (Clough *et al.*, 2019), which can all be uniquely influenced by digitalisation. Firstly, digitalisation can significantly affect how firms *search* for or identify prospective resource providers. Secondly, digitalisation can change the way firms gain *access* to resources. Thirdly, digitalisation can influence how firms and resource providers agree on the *governance* of resources. Finally, digitalisation might reshape how firms and (prospective) resource providers *interact*, including protecting resources and retaining valuable resources. Potentially interesting themes related to these intermediate steps include, but are not restricted to, the following:

- Does digitalisation reduce bias (e.g., gender, location,...) in firms’ search for prospective resource-providers and/or in the resource-provision decision of resource holders?
- How can digitalisation help firms to stand out from the crowd in a context where valuable resource-providers have increasing access to firms searching for their knowledge, skills, and/or money?
- How can digital technologies foster or constrain firms’ interactions with resource-providers? For example, how can digitalisation affect well-being in a world where employees work increasingly remotely and are more distant from the firm and colleagues? Or, how can digitalisation help to establish trust between management teams and (prospective) investors?

- Are digitalised firms better prepared for ‘black swan’ events, where due to the pandemic, for example, they found it easier to retain skilled employees or attract new resources?
- How does digitalisation influence the governance function in firms and the representation of resource-providers such as investors or employees in governance?
- Digitalisation can make specific functions, which utilize skills of employees who have been with the firms for a long time, redundant. At the same time, digitalisation can require the recruiting of new employees with novel skill sets. How can firms manage such tensions and potential resistance from existing employees?

To expand our understanding of the links between digitalisation and resource mobilisation at any or multiple levels of analysis (micro, meso, macro), we welcome studies approaching these themes from multi-disciplinary perspectives and theoretical lenses, using qualitative and/or quantitative methods.

SUBMISSION PROCESS AND DEADLINES

The *British Journal of Management* provides a valuable outlet for research and scholarship on management-orientated themes and topics. It publishes articles of a multi-disciplinary and interdisciplinary nature as well as empirical research from within traditional disciplines and managerial functions. With contributions from around the globe, the journal includes articles across the full range of business and management disciplines.

For questions about this special issue, please contact the co-editors: Ilke Inceoglu (I.Inceoglu@exeter.ac.uk), Tom Vanacker (TomR.Vanacker@UGent.be), or Silvio Vismara (silvio.vismara@unibg.it).

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Authors of papers that get a “revise and resubmit” decision after the first review round will be invited to a **workshop** [Location to be determined]. The goal of the workshop is to further improve the quality and visibility of all the papers and to make a stronger overall connection.

Authors should ensure they adhere to the journal author guidelines which are available at: [http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/\(ISSN\)1467-8551/homepage/ForAuthors.html](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/(ISSN)1467-8551/homepage/ForAuthors.html).

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