

MSM Academic conference – Theme clarification

It is with great pleasure that we invite you to participate in Maastricht School of Management's (MSM) Academic Conference marking MSM's 70th anniversary and the start of the institutional cooperation with Maastricht University.

We invite you to prepare and send an abstract for presentation during one of the knowledge tracks that will take place during the academic conference themed "Private sector development in emerging economies, contributing to a climate smart and inclusive society". We have prepared a number of specific research themes, for which we welcome you to contribute to.

Research themes

During the conference there will be five different research themes. Each theme needs to address the role of educational institutions. In this document you will find a clarification of each theme:

- [Triple helix constructs for local development](#)
- [Value chain development for countries in transition](#)
- [Climate smart agriculture & water efficiency and ecosystem development](#)
- [Inclusive development \(focus on gender and youth\)](#)
- [Enabling impact and sustainable finance](#)

Submission of abstract

Please indicate your interest for contributing to the conference by sending an abstract related to the research themes to dijkm@msm.nl by 15 June 2021. You will receive a confirmation of acceptance by mid-July which will give you the go-ahead to produce your paper which has to be handed in by 30 September 2021. By 15 October 2021 you will be informed if your paper will be included in the conference program.

Triple helix constructs for local development

Economic development is driven by innovations and their commercialization into goods and services. This requires, research and development systems to create innovations, a vibrant industry to commercialize innovation and a well-functioning government to facilitate. The deliberate and purposeful bringing the three spheres together so that they can act in the concept known as the Triple Helix Partnership (THP) approach. Central to the Triple Helix Model (THM) is the blurring of boundaries between government-industry-research/knowledge institutions with each actor assuming some roles of “the other”. The key is to clearly understand how the element in the triple helix link formally and informally to support the innovation system and then seek to design policies that will strengthen the links that are valuable to the relationship (Smith and Bagci-Sen 2010). Though the Triple Helix (TH) model can be applied at the national level, perhaps this model is most apt at local development level. Innovation occurs in an institutional, political and social context. Innovation occurs more easily when geographical concentration and proximity are present, and therefore a regional cluster takes a crucial dimension in such processes. The ultimate objective of a regional economic development policy is really to create a “Commons”. The “Commons” include the shared resources that companies and communities rely on in order to be productive. Every successful company and every region begins with certain foundations—an educated populace, pools of skilled labor, vibrant networks of suppliers, strong infrastructure, basic research that can be commercialized (Fulkner et. al. 2017). The “Commons” is crucial for shared prosperity that is at the heart of a successful economic development strategy. The commons forms the basis for emergence of clusters, the engines of local economic development through upskilling and creation of industries. Clusters enhance firms’ competitiveness through agglomeration economies. This is due to presence of high skills, specialized suppliers and service provides, improved market access and circulation of information.

This theme will explore approaches to establishing strong triple helix partnership drawing from best practices and also field experiences.

We are welcoming papers in the area of triple helix constructs for cluster development.

Value chain development for countries in transition

Value chains are networks of companies that are crucial for economic development. In close cooperation with governmental and non-governmental public organizations, value chains serve as the economic vehicles that develop goods and services, and that bring them to domestic markets, to foreign markets in the region, or to distant foreign markets. The massive attention for value chain development that we have witnessed in the past decade on the side of international development organizations is to be explained by the many opportunities value chains offer, such as business development, knowledge transfer, foreign direct investment, job creation, and export. However, the extent to which value chains positively contribute to domestic development goals depends on the conditions under which domestic industry and farm sectors participate in value chains. Among the many factors that play a role here, three stand out:

1. It is a priority for any emerging economy to enhance local value addition, particular in global value chains. Traditionally, mineral and agricultural commodities are exported in unprocessed or semi-processed form to foreign markets. In specialized global value chains, emerging economies typically take care of the manufacturing or assembling stages. In both chain types, the value addition is limited. What could governments do to help the local industry expand their value addition by moving into either the design or the marketing stages of the chain?
2. A major issue in agri-food value chains in emerging economies is the fragmentation of the chain. Due to the multiple middlemen, the low level of organization among primary producers, and the supply-drivenness of the chain, the level of coordination within the value chain is low. This situation hinders the development of efficient and more competitive domestic food supply. The emergence of a local lead firm that can 'govern' the value chain is often seen as a remedy and also as a condition for upgrading at various levels in the value chain. What is the nature of these local lead firms? When do they help food supply and retail become more competitive? When not? What is the role of the newly emerging e-commerce grocery platforms in this context?
3. To meet the 12th Sustainable Development Goal of responsible consumption and production, economic growth needs to be sustainable, and based on a low carbon and climate resilient development. This requires value chains to contribute to a circular economy, which promotes the elimination of waste and the continual safe use of natural resources. What opportunities does the circularity of value chains hold for businesses in emerging economies?

We are welcoming papers that address one or more of the issues described above.

Climate smart agriculture & water efficiency and ecosystem development

During a successful internal seminar at MSM in March 2021, we identified the roles of a business school in the field of Climate Smart Agriculture & Water Efficiency (CSA&W). Proceedings of this workshop are available on MSM's website. We concluded that for MSM, one important role to play is to help build local ecosystems that support farmers in adopting and managing CSA innovations. These ecosystems can consist of a series of different (existing) partnerships and should preferably driven by the Triple Helix platform approach. Based on our expertise and track record, we are now particularly interested in how management of CSA-focused ecosystems can contribute to private sector development in rural areas. We wish to further extent our knowledge in the area of the governance structures and business models that can realize this. We feel that a business school is in the best position to support ecosystem development, through:

- Evaluating and strengthening agribusiness partnerships
- Stimulating Triple Helix constructions
- Facilitating CSA ecosystem development & management
- Evaluating agricultural innovations
- Calculating cost-benefit ratios of agricultural innovations
- Developing agribusiness entrepreneurship
- Supporting TVET colleges and universities in playing a role in ecosystem coordination.

We are welcoming papers that address the topics as described above.

Inclusive Development

Working towards 'the inclusive organization' requires proactiveness because inclusiveness is about making sure that no groups or individuals are excluded. This applies to participation and representation in (public) services, businesses, trainings, social activities and society in general. People that are or may feel excluded are often from historically disadvantaged groups and/or minorities, for example youth, women, certain ethnic groups, or people with mental health problems. Sometimes, concrete barriers prevent such groups from being part of any form of organization (including labor processes or even family life). An example is that survivors (men, women, boys and girls) of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) do not get adequate help in dealing with their trauma to improve their psychosocial wellbeing. Help may not be available, too expensive, or rejected, and survivors of SGBV are often stigmatized - even by health care providers. Challenging attitudes and perceptions of people through gender transformative training benefits inclusive organization. Another important topic relates to Youth Unemployment. A growing number of youths is seeking for employment. Economic development plans to provide answers to this growing number of unemployed youths which has its impact on organizations. An important question relates to how organizations can absorb as many youth as possible on the one hand and on the other also further industrialize?

We are welcoming papers in the areas of gender and youth of inclusive development.

Enabling impact and sustainable finance

An important enabling factor for private sector development in emerging economies is the availability of and access to capital. Increasingly, and with the support of development finance institutions across the world, the focus is no longer on just any form of foreign direct investments. Stimulating the development of business in the global South more and more requires capital that contributes to a more sustainable, just and inclusive society. Economic development that widens the gap between the have and have nots or that usurps nature for the benefit of (just a small segment of) the current generation, will not make a meaningful contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals that were adopted unanimously by all nations of the world in 2015. The UN Declaration contains a promise to all citizens of the world to leave no one behind when it comes to her or his development.

The track on impact and sustainable finance invites academics and practitioners to submit proposals addressing the importance, the practice and the effects of impact and sustainable finance on private sector development in emerging economies.

We are welcoming papers that address among others:

- The availability gap: the need for sustainable and impact finance compared to its availability
- The new IRR: Impact, Risk and Return
- Positive conditions enhancing the flow of impact and sustainable finance to emerging economies
- Measuring positive and negative social and environmental impact of impact and sustainable finance
- What are the downsides of impact and sustainable finance?
- What can universities do to enhance (the availability of) impact and sustainable finance?