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Two Special Issue Announcements

Journal of International Management

Industry and Innovation



3rd iBEGIN Conference

International Business, Economic Geography and Innovation

Fox School of Business, Temple University, Philadelphia PA, USA
November 13-14, 2015

Keynote Speakers:

Professor Harald Bathelt, University of Toronto,
Editor, *Journal of Economic Geography*

Professor John Cantwell, Rutgers University,
Editor-in-Chief, *Journal of International Business Studies*

Professor Mark Lorenzen, Copenhagen Business School
Director, DRUID

The distribution of economic value creating activities across space has intrigued scholars since at least the nineteenth century. The modern study of this phenomenon has its roots in the classic work of Marshall (1920). Over the course of the last century, it has been studied from different perspectives, leading to the formation of several research communities and each with an associated body of literature. Economic geographers and regional scientists mainly study the characteristics of *places* while international business scholars focus on the *organization* of economic activities. In other words, economic geographers' and regional scientists' main focus of interest is the location, while for international business scholars, it is the (multinational) firm. Over the last few decades, innovation has received increasing amounts of attention from both research communities who recognize it as one of the key drivers of the modern knowledge economy.

In the main, these three location-based literatures have moved along in parallel with one another, but their actual analytical connections remained very limited, and their treatment of location, geography and the spatial organization of the firm remains very partial and fragmented. The main goal of the International Business, Economic Geography and Innovation (iBEGIN) research program is to work at the nexus of these three research communities and literatures and build knowledge conduits among them. This research aims to encourage cross- and inter-disciplinary dialog with the view of building a holistic view of the spatial organization of economic activity.

There are three megatrends underlie much of the change that we have witnessed over the last few decades and that will continue to shape the world economy. The first megatrend is the shift from trade-in-goods to trade-in-activities. Beginning several decades ago, but accelerating rapidly over the last decade, products and services are increasingly emerging from global value chains (GVCs) that are geographically dispersed around the globe. These GVCs are orchestrated, in the main, by multinational enterprises (MNEs) and increasingly disaggregated and fine-sliced into narrow, highly specific activities that are undertaken in economic clusters. These narrow activities produce intermediates (and not complete goods or services) and these compose the vast majority of all international trade today.

The second megatrend is the rise of knowledge-intensive intangibles. Value is rapidly migrating out of tangible goods and services that are becoming commoditized and into the soft intangibles that encase them. These intangibles arise from specialized, upstream knowledge (R&D, patents, inimitable organizational routines, software, training) and downstream knowledge (brands, trademarks, customer service) activities. This migration of value has dramatically magnified the importance of innovation, concomitantly shortening technology lifecycles.

The third megatrend is the rise of emerging markets. The number of locations where the highly specific GVC activities can be performed has ballooned over the last two decades. A long list of clusters locations in Asia and South America and even some parts of Africa have become integral parts of GVCs. These locations are tightly woven into global economy and give rise to perceptions of "flatness" perceived by many lay observers.

The disaggregation of global value chains, global innovation systems and emerging market catch-up processes are salient examples of topics at the heart of the iBEGIN research agenda. All papers that address the iBEGIN nexus, both theoretical and empirical, are welcome.

Submission deadline: September 1, 2015.

Submission format: extended abstract – maximum 2000 words

Please submit by email attachment to:

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- The conference organizers have made arrangements for the best papers from the conference in TWO SPECIAL issues – one in the *Journal of International Management* and one in *Industry and Innovation*. The conference organizers will handle the subsequent review process.