

Call for Papers
Frontiers in International Business Conference
Hosted by the Sonoco International Business Department & SC CIBER
Darla Moore School of Business
University of South Carolina

2019 Theme:
The Digital Economy in a Multi-Polar World

While it remains an open question as to whether the digital economy represents a new industrial divide, there is little doubt that it is disrupting conventional notions of the boundaries and organization of firms, industries, and nation-states. Recent research on digital technologies already demonstrates substantial shifts in the ways multinational corporations are organized around highly fluid, disaggregated and geographically dispersed value chains, innovations are developed and disseminated through decentralized networks of globally dispersed actors, collaborators connect across political barriers, and entrepreneurs launch global ventures with little regard to financial constraints and cross-national differences. Such technological disruption raises added uncertainties to the ongoing institutional disruption we are witnessing within both nations and transnational regimes. In turn, one cannot help but call into question the applicability of standard theories about the ways in which firms and their societies can compete in the world as well, as regulate these transforming, transnational markets.

This conference aims to stimulate a vibrant, inter-disciplinary debate about the future of international business in light of the seemingly conflicting trends of potentially greater connectivity and technological change and potentially greater market fragmentation. We invite scholars from management, marketing, international business, sociology, economics, politics, history and related fields to share views on the possible realignment of firms, industries, and markets as well as the changing roles of market and non-market actors.

We will also include a group of key practitioners engaged in the digital revolution. A central aim is to generate creative synergies as we rethink fundamental theories from different levels of analysis and different paradigmatic approaches.

We encourage paper and panel proposals that embody a variety of theoretical perspectives, methods, and even speculation. Illustrative themes include but are not limited to:

- The changing nature, organizational forms and governance structures of international businesses in view of de-verticalization, disintermediation, and modularity of digital products and processes.
- The evolution of industrial structures through shifts in sectoral boundaries, reallocation and recombination of innovative efforts across organizational and institutional actors through digital technologies, and geographical dispersion of innovative activities through increased participation of users and complementors.

- The emergence, growth trajectories and competitive strategies of dispersed network organizations such as i-businesses and digital platforms, as well as the emergence of new forms of risk finance to support these ventures.
- The international fragmentation of digital value chains as a function of institutional characteristics along with the shifting role of emerging markets in digitally enabled global value chains.
- The role of political, social, legal, and economic factors in the variation of digital businesses and adoption of modern digital technologies as well as the variation of institutional configurations supporting and regulating new competitive advantages.
- The interaction between national institutions of R&D and labor and transnational networks and regimes as they impact the diffusion of digital technologies and formation of global innovation ecosystems.

Date, location, and preliminary schedule:

WHEN: October 3-5, 2019

WHERE: Darla Moore School of Business, Columbia SC

- Thursday, October 3 (6:30pm): Opening reception
- Friday, October 4: Keynote: *Patrick Kilbride, Global Innovation Policy Center, US Chamber of Commerce*
 - Panels and Papers
 - Lunch time Keynote and discussion with leading entrepreneurs in digital technologies and i-business, including *Robert Viglione, a pioneer in blockchain ecosystems, Co-founder & CEO of Horizon Labs, and President of the Zen Blockchain Foundation.*
- Saturday, October 5: Paper presentations and panel discussions in the morning; conference ends with noon lunch.

Submission details and logistics (NEW DEADLINE!!):

Paper proposals of no more than 1,000 words or panel proposal of no more than 1,500 words (including names of participants) due **June 24, 2019**. Submit proposals and queries by email to: frontiers2019@moore.sc.edu.

Accepted participants will be provided meals and accommodations at the Columbia Hilton: <http://www.hiltoncolumbia.com/>.

Organizing Committee:

Elisa Alvarez-Garrido
Sali Li
Gerald McDermott
Michael Murphree