

International Food & Agribusiness Management Association (IFAMA) 2020 Meetings
Rotterdam, The Netherlands, June 15th-18th, 2020

Title of the Special Track:

**Entrepreneurship, Learning and Institutions in Agri-Food Systems:
New Ways of Organizing to address Grand Sustainability Challenges**

Co-organizers:

Dr. Rob Lubberink, Postdoctoral Researcher, Wageningen University & Research
Dr. Valentina Materia, Assistant Professor, Wageningen University & Research
Dr. Domenico Dentoni, Associate Professor, Wageningen University & Research

Description:

Most actors along agricultural and food value chains, as well as their surrounding stakeholders (e.g., non-governmental organizations or NGOs, policy-makers, civil society, communities) are currently exposed to processes of rapid change, unprecedented opportunities and turbulent environments. The grand sustainability challenges that they need to address involve climatic changes, socio-political instability, crime and corruption, food insecurity, obesity and malnutrition, and chronic poverty, among others (George et al. 2016).

To address or at least adapt to these societal changes and challenges, actors in agri-food systems are called to experiment new ways of organizing (Ferraro et al. 2015) and redeploy their resources and competencies (Dorado and Ventresca 2013). Furthermore, actors have to find a fragile equilibrium between commercial and social interests and need to respond to changing and conflicting stakeholder demands (Seelos and Mair 2007; Halme et al. 2012).

In relation to these societal changes and challenges, this track calls for papers that focus on *entrepreneurship* meant as processes of organizing to address grand sustainability challenges (Peterson 2009; Rindova 2009; Munoz and Cohen 2018). With this overarching view, we are specifically interested, first, on processes of *entrepreneurial learning* – that is, why and how individuals, teams and organizations interplay experiences, reflections and interactions (Corbett 2007; Dentoni et al. 2018). And, second, we seek papers that zoom into the *role of institutions* in entrepreneurship: that is, how societal pressures, values and identities – often made ostensible to entrepreneuring individuals, teams and organizations through formal or informal structures (Welter and Smallbone 2011; Shantz et al. 2018; Mozumdar et al. 2019) – shape these processes.

We encourage authors to submit (either near completion or fully completed) research papers seeking to advance theory in the domains of entrepreneurship, organization and innovation studies and, more broadly, that bring rich empirical examples of novel organizational forms taking place in (agri-food) value chains and networks. Among others, papers in this track may address the following questions:

- How do entrepreneurs and their stakeholders build or use networks, make strategic decisions and implement them in turbulent and uncertain environments?
- How do multiple levels (e.g. family, communities, formal organizations, markets, institutions, society at large) influence entrepreneurial decisions and practices? How can entrepreneurial decisions and practices actually influence these multiple levels?

- How do innovative business models, stemming from the emergence and application of new technological or social innovations (e.g., access to information, energy, finance) trigger or constrain entrepreneurial practice?
- How do existing organizations and institutions enhance or impede the entrepreneurial environment in their respective industries? How can agents remain entrepreneurial despite challenging organizational and institutional environments?
- How do entrepreneurs learn, i.e. develop their market orientation, innovativeness, entrepreneurial competencies and capabilities across individual, team, and organizational levels?
- How entrepreneurs leverage informal institutions? Can entrepreneurs thrive in formal institutional voids and, if so, how?

We will welcome submission from authors with a wide range of disciplinary and empirical backgrounds, and we will provide developmental comments to bring authors' study to impactful publications.

Engaging with this IFAMA track is easy: please prepare and submit your 2-page abstract through the following link: <https://ifama2020.org/academic-paper-abstracts/>. Please contact the co-organizers (Domenico: Domenico.dentoni@wur.nl; and Valentina: Valentina.Materia@wur.nl) for questions or suggestions.

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