



## **IFERA 2017 Annual Conference Call for Papers**

### **“Locality and Internationalization of Family Businesses”**

#### **Program Co-Chairs:**

**Jörn Block, University of Trier (Germany)**

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Family businesses are often torn between their local roots and their desire and need for internationalization. They grapple with the paradox of being deeply rooted to their origins, tradition and local communities, while, at the same time, exploiting international opportunities in the global marketplace to stay competitive.

IFERA invites papers that speak directly to the selected conference theme “Locality and Internationalization of Family Businesses”. In addition, we invite papers on all aspects of family business research, including but not limited to succession, leadership and governance, entrepreneurship, strategy, organization, family relationships, emotions, family psychology and sociology, history, economics, finance, and accounting, as well as issues that lie at the intersection of these and other interrelated disciplines. All theoretical and methodological approaches are welcome.

Family business research is indeed a truly multi-disciplinary, creative, rigorous, reflexive, and critical community. Let’s discover once again the pleasure of discussing between good friends the topics we love in a relaxed environment. Moreover, Zadar is amazing in June!

#### **Family firms’ local roots and how they impact the local economy**

The conference seeks for a better understanding of the relationship between family firms and their local economy. It is often assumed that family firms have a strong connection to their home regions. But, so far, little empirical research exists on this topic.

Exemplary research questions are the following:

- How do family firms and their leaders and decision makers care about the local economy? How does this connection to the home region develop over the generations?

- What is the role of family firms in regional economic environments and how do they contribute to regional economic growth and development?
- Which role does the family and the family tradition play to create a link between the family firm and the region in which the family firm is located?
- How can policy makers create an environment such that family firms become a cornerstone of regional development?
- How do family firms face economic crises and how does this impact the local labor market?

These and other related questions from the perspective of regional economics research are of high importance for (regional) policy-makers and other stakeholders of family firms.

### **Family firms' local roots and how they influence strategy**

Being local can be an advantage and disadvantage at the same time. The conference seeks to contribute to a better understanding how the local roots of family firms influence strategy at both the business and the family level, and how family can turn their local roots and regional embeddedness into a competitive advantage resulting in above-average performance.

Exemplary research questions are the following:

- How do local roots and embeddedness of family firms influence business strategy and firm performance?
- How do local roots shape family strategies? And how do families leverage regional cultures, networks and embeddedness in their strategies?
- How can local roots and regional contexts favor or hinder success factors of the family firms?
- How do customers, suppliers and other external stakeholders value the local roots of family firms?
- How do roots and traditions shape the international identity of family companies?

These and other related questions from the perspective of strategy and performance research are of high importance for family firms and their leaders in order to understand their unique competitive (dis)advantages resulting from their local roots.

### **Family firms and their development from local to global companies**

As family firms develop and grow they internationalize and turn from local to global companies. The conference seeks to understand how this growth and internationalization changes both the family and the firm. It further seeks to understand how family firms can keep and preserve their local character while being successful in the global marketplace.

Exemplary research questions are the following:

- How do the local roots of family companies affect their internationalization process?
- How do family firms and the families behind them change when they develop from a local to global company?
- When do local roots become a liability for internationalization and what can be done about it?
- How can family firms internationalize and still stick to their local roots and traditions?
- How do family firms differ from other firms in their internationalization and market entry strategies? What is the role of the family and its involvement in management and ownership in this regard?

These and other related questions from the perspective of international management and evolutionary economics research are of high importance for family firms and their leaders to determine their internationalization and growth strategy.

In summary, the IFERA 2017 theme “Locality and Internationalization of Family Businesses” encourages submissions that embrace diverse disciplinary traditions, theoretical perspectives and methodological approaches to (1) advance our understanding of the distinctive opportunities and challenges prompted by the duality between being deeply rooted in local communities, cultures, and networks while exploring new opportunities for expansion and entrepreneurship in the global marketplace; and to (2) help family owners and managers, as well as policy makers and professionals engaged with family firms to effectively manage the nexus between locality and internationalization to build competitive advantages and sustain firm growth and performance across generations.

## **Journal Special Issues**

We are currently working with several peer-reviewed academic journal in exploring special issues from this conference. Further information will be announced in due course. Please be sure to check the conference website <http://ifera2017.ifera.org/> regularly for latest updates.

## **Dates and Deadlines**

All submissions (Full papers, Work in progress and Research Dissemination) due:

**February 3, 2017**

Notification of acceptance for conference submissions: March 13, 2017

Application for consortia: March 20, 2017

Notification of acceptance for consortia: March 25, 2017

Journal special issue deadlines: August 31, 2017 (changes possible)

For submission instructions, please visit <http://ifera2017.ifera.org/>.