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Sub-theme 11: New Approaches to Organizing Collaborative Knowledge Creation

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Call for Papers

Over the past few decades, scientific and technological developments have radically reshaped the way in which people organize collaborative knowledge creation. Examples of new approaches to knowledge creation include innovation contests, scientific consortia, self-managed teams, and technology enabled forms of organizing such as online communities for open source software development, and knowledge platforms such as Wikipedia (e.g., Fjeldstad et al., 2012; Osterloh & Frey, 2000; Puranam et al., 2014). These new approaches to knowledge creation are particularly compelling for their open and collaborative organizational forms (Faraj et al., 2016), which allow ideas for new products and services to be sourced from anywhere and anyone (e.g., Franke et al., 2014; Harhoff & Lakhani, 2016; King & Lakhani, 2013) and collaboratively implemented.

Another common feature of new organizational forms is their agent-centric design, based on principles of self-organization (Anderson, 1999) and local decision-making. This allows interdependencies among individuals and knowledge creation tasks to surface in unexpected ways (Ben-Menahem et al., 2016) and enables the creation of complex knowledge products using the skills and efforts of a fluid pool of individuals (e.g., Boudreau, 2010; Boudreau et al., 2011; Fjeldstad et al., 2012; Lee & Cole, 2003; Gassmann et al., 2010). Moreover, in contrast to traditional organizational knowledge creation processes, in new organizational forms, agents' roles and responsibilities are typically not strictly confined by formal hierarchy or employment contracts, but rather shaped by emerging opportunities for exercising agency based on individual expertise and self-efficacy beliefs (Bandura, 1989; Faraj et al., 2011; von Krogh et al., 2003; Puranam et al., 2014).

While research on new organizational forms is burgeoning, much remains to be understood about the

mechanisms whereby knowledge creation unfolds in settings characterized by a flat hierarchy, voluntary membership, and open organizational boundaries (e.g., Fjeldstad et al., 2012; Gulati et al., 2012; O'Mahony & Lakhani, 2011; von Krogh & von Hippel, 2006).

This sub-theme seeks to bring together research advancing organizational knowledge creation theory (e.g., Grant, 1996; Kogut & Zander, 1992; Nonaka, 1994; Nonaka & von Krogh, 2009) and organization theory on innovation, design, and coordination by exploring how individuals organize collaborative knowledge creation in new forms of organizing (e.g., Faraj et al., 2011; Faraj et al., 2016). We welcome papers that focus on micro-level mechanisms, organizational and network-based analysis, and their intersection. We invite contributions that advance, challenge, or change our understanding of collaborative knowledge creation by challenging fundamental assumptions and core questions in organizational theory.

Papers may address issues related (but not limited) to the following issues:

- What are unconventional forms of organizing and prevalent forms of coordination?
- Which novel and known coordination problems arise in new approaches to collaborative knowledge creation and how do individuals resolve these challenges?
- What is the nature and function of human agency in new approaches to collaborative knowledge creation?
- How are collaborative knowledge creation efforts shaped by, and how do they shape new technologies?
- How do new forms of organizing afford surprising discoveries and knowledge creation in unconventional domains?
- How are fundamental issues related to the distribution and combination of knowledge sources implicated by new approaches to organizing knowledge creation?
- How do new forms of organizing advance our general understanding of emergent properties self-organizing systems?
- What are the boundaries and limitations of specific new approaches to organizing knowledge creation?
- How do identities and cultures evolve in new forms of organizing?

The sub-theme intends to stimulate a constructive dialogue around conceptual and empirical research across these and related issues. High-quality, novel contributions in both early and later stages of development are warmly invited.

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