



NBM @ SOFIA 2018

3rd International Conference on New Business Models

Call for contributions

“New business models with impact: focused, scalable and international”.

The University of National and World Economy

27-28 June, 2018

Sofia, Bulgaria

www.nbmconference.eu

After another successful edition of NBM @ Graz 2017, we are thrilled to announce **NBM @ Sofia 2018** conference under the topic of **"New Business Models with impact: focused, scalable and international"**. The conference will take place at **The University of National and World Economy in Sofia, Bulgaria on June 27th and 28th 2018**. Authors are invited to **submit their extended abstracts of 700-1200 words by 28 February 2018 to NBMSofia@vub.be**. **Please stay updated through the conference website: www.nbmconference.eu**

1. Background

Society faces a broad range of sustainability challenges (environmental, social, health, energy, and so on), even to which the United Nations set up the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's), calling upon governments, business and civil society to transform the world into a more sustainable place (United Nations, 2017). For businesses, it is no longer a question "whether" they should endeavor for more than just financial values, but "how" they can integrate multiple value creation with respect to, for example, ecological or social values (Jonker, 2016). This shift in meaning and focus of value creation brings forth not only possible alterations in current existing business models, but also the conception of "new business models", which can also be referred to as sustainable business models.

Rauter (2017) explains the meaning of NBM, sustainable business models or business models for sustainability, referring to Schaltegger et al. (2016): "A business model for sustainability helps describing, analyzing, managing, and communicating (i) a company's sustainable value proposition to its customers, and all other stakeholders, (ii) how it creates and delivers this value, (iii) and how it captures economic value while maintaining or regenerating natural, social, and economic capital beyond its organizational boundaries." And whilst NBMs follow the principles of collaborative, shared and multiple value creation (Jonker, 2016), it is very much clear that NBMs are set on creating an impact on society.

Even though research on business models benefits from a broad range of research streams, the aspects of impact and scalability of NBMs still holds a lot of questions. Indeed, the realization, increase, measuring and reporting (amongst other things) towards the classical business model of financial value creation have been extensively documented over the years; however, for NBMs, which aim for creating collaborative, shared and multiple value, to a lesser extent. Even though NBMs challenge our current understanding of business models, they hold promise to deal with socio-economic challenges currently left undealt with (Dentchev et al., 2017). Next to this, whilst scalable solutions towards sustainability challenges seem intrinsically very much welcome (who would not appreciate more or better solutions towards a

problem?), it seems to be very difficult to choose, create and maintain these solutions.

2. Types of contributions solicited

We want to keep the tradition for this international conference on NBM regarding the submissions. We are looking forward to receive:

- Theoretical, conceptual, empirical papers.
- Literature reviews, qualitative and quantitative research.
- from a broad variety of scholarly disciplines (e.g., management, entrepreneurship, innovation, environmental studies, organization theory, transition theory, change management).
- and from a broad variety of domains that have been studied in the context of business models (e.g., energy, health, agriculture, food, finance, retail).

With this call for papers, we invite scholars and practitioners to elaborate and contribute, but not limit themselves, to the following research questions:

- How do NBMs realize impact?
- How to increase the impact of NBMs?
- How to measure the impact of NBMs?
- How to report the impact of NBMs?
- How to create international impact with NBMs?
- Under what circumstances do NBMs decrease their impact?
- What are the determinants of scalability of new business models?
- What are the barriers for scalability?
- Small is beautiful – how to focus on resolving local sustainability issues?

Participants are kindly invited to submit their contribution to one of the following sessions:

Session 1

"Theorizing and conceptualizing Business Models for the Circular Economy"

Chairs: Jan Jonker and Niels Faber

Unmistakably politics, businesses and society at large (re)discover the notion of a circular economy (CE) fueled by an increasing urgency to address wicked ecological, economic and societal problems. The CE is taking shape at the three levels, namely (1) individual organizations (the micro level), (2) value-chains and value cycles created by a changing array of constituents (the meso level), and (3) the economic system (the macro level). In this session, we would like to focus on a number of fundamental questions around how to design, shape and foster the CE at each of these three levels. Core of the CE is how to close material loops. From an economic perspective, this implies the formation of a new generation of business models. To make this happen requires action by a multitude of constituents who engage in a whole range of inter-organizational collective activities. What are collective business models that give substance to the circular economy? What forms of organizing are best suitable for these models? How does accounting takes shape in such collectives? This session not only addresses the material aspects of organizing closed-loops but also aspects around revenue sharing (e.g. cascading), transition and collaboration and governance. We welcome above all theoretical and conceptual papers.

Session 2

"New Business Models, Sustainable Development and Corporate Strategic Management"

Chair: Romana Rauter

New and sustainable business models are intensively discussed as a possibility to foster a transition to more sustainable societies. In this context, two aspects amongst others are relevant to determine whether new business models will effectively be able to support this transition: First, they have to contribute to Sustainable Development and second, a certain potential for scalability and longevity needs to be inherent. Both aspects are related to corporate strategy, which can be defined as a vision of success prescribing ways to reach this success. Therefore, descriptive as well as explanatory contributions that specifically, but not exclusively, deal with the following topics are invited:

- Which insights have been gathered from the established concepts of strategic management and how can these be used for the development, implementation and improvement of new sustainable business models?

- How do corporate sustainability strategies influence the design and management of new sustainable business models?
- How does decision making for new sustainable business models look like and who are responsible key actors?

Theoretical and conceptual contributions as well as empirical insights from various contexts are welcome. The focus, however, lies more on rather established corporations than on entrepreneurs and start-ups.

Session 3

"Managing Business Ecosystems for NBM"

Chairs: Wolfgang Vorraber and Matthias Mueller

Business models and their contributing actors get more and more connected. They often operate on a shared market for services and products forming an ecosystem. Initially emerged in the area of software ecosystems (e.g. Play Store, Social Media platforms) more and more ecosystems appear in other domains (e.g. automotive industry) and are increasingly relevant for New Business Models. Challenges on managing such ecosystems or even creating own ecosystems increase. A lack of knowledge exists on how ecosystems can be used to realize and leverage impact of NBMs and how this process can be managed. This management has the emerging need of tools and methods for visualization, representation and analysis of these ecosystems and the therewith connected business models. Furthermore, insights on how ecosystems influence scalability of new business models are of special interest.

This session calls for papers on theories and methods which support managing ecosystems as well as for practical case studies on business ecosystem management of New Business Models.

Session 4

"Sustainability-Oriented Business Model Assessment (SUST-BMA): How to Assess and Manage the Sustainability Effects of Business Models?"

Chairs: Florian Lüdeke-Freund, Romana Rauter and Martina Zimek

This session will feature case studies, new management frameworks and instruments that offer new insights into how entrepreneurs and managers can assess and better manage their business models for sustainability (BMfS). The aim of this session is to develop a group of scholars and a joint research agenda dedicated to issues of SUST-BMA. This group will continue its work and extend its collaboration beyond NBM@Sofia 2018.

Whether and how BMfS effectively support sustainable development is not just a matter of design, but also of the measurability and manageability of business model effects. While the interrelations between organizations' sustainability performance and their business models is discussed in an increasing number of academic and practice publications, for example, on sustainability accounting, appropriate management approaches for the deliberate assessment and management of business models and their expected contributions to a sustainable development of the natural environment and human society are currently not available. A first attempt to structure and better understand this challenge by combining the business model concept and the sustainability balanced scorecard is discussed in "Sustainability-Oriented Business Model Assessment – A Conceptual Foundation" (Lüdeke-Freund et al., 2017).

The aim is to cover the following topics and questions (non-exclusive list):

1. **Operating and controlling BMfS:** Once implemented, how are sustainability-oriented business models maintained? How are mission-drift, paradoxes, goal conflicts and other tensions managed or even avoided? Who is responsible for controlling business model performance? How are operating models kept on track – which frameworks and tools allow for operating and controlling BMfS?
2. **Assessing BMfS:** Controlling whether business models support firms' sustainability performance requires assessment tools and frameworks. What kind of assessment, in a broader sense accounting frameworks and tools, can be applied to manage business models' sustainability performance? What are the impacts of BMfS from a business as well as a society perspective? Which frameworks, tools, key performance indicators etc. can be used to assess these impacts of BMfS?
3. **Changing and innovating BMfS:** What are the implications of controlling and assessing BMfS? Which decisions in terms of changing and innovating BMfS could (or should) be taken once potential impacts are assessed and known? Which frameworks, tools, key performance indicators (see topic 2) could be used to continuously monitor and guide such innovations?

Session 5

"Business & Society Paper Development Workshop: 'Collaborative Cross-Sector Business Models for Sustainability'"

Chairs: Florian Lüdeke-Freund, Esben Pedersen, Irene Henriques and M. May Seitanidi

This session will serve as an interactive paper development workshop together with (some of) the guest editors of a planned Business & Society special issue on "Collaborative Cross-Sector Business Models for Sustainability". The deadline for final paper submission to the journal is 1st December 2018.

In the last few decades, there has been a wave of interest in business models, which has also impacted the debates about corporate sustainability and corporate social responsibility. But what is often missing or lost in the business model discussions is the fact that the development of businesses is often dependent on the *collaboration* of multiple actors such as suppliers, customers, universities, and government – namely *cross-sector collaboration*.

Therefore, the purpose of this session, and later the Business & Society special issue, is to explore the role of cross-sector collaboration and partnerships for new and potentially sustainable business models and sharing platforms. To date, collaboration with stakeholders has often been lumped together and drawn as a 'key partners' box in the business model canvas, which in turn leads to an underrepresentation of partners and networks, or stakeholders in general, in dominating business model frameworks and theories. Addressing collaborative models will blur the boundaries of conventional business model thinking, which remains dominated by well-defined boxes and clear-cut boundaries.

This session aims at motivating authors *to explore the theoretical, conceptual and practical areas where narrow perspectives on customers and suppliers are extended or replaced by considering the whole range of possible stakeholders related to business models and sharing platforms. The aim is to develop insights about how collaborative business models and sharing platforms can be stimulated, managed and led to outcomes that are beneficial for both business and society.*

Possible topics include (but are not limited to):

- When do collaborative business models supplement or replace conventional business models?
- What types of sharing and collaboration are needed for social innovations to thrive?
- How do hybridization approaches inform collective action models?
- How is economic, social and environmental value(s) balanced among the different actors in collaborative business models?

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- How is value created, delivered and captured from cross-sector collaboration shared among actors from business and society?
- What tensions, dilemmas and paradoxes emerge when managing and operating collaborative business models for sustainability?

A more extensive list can be found in the full call for papers through this [link](#).

IMPORTANT NOTE: Participating in this session requires a short paper, i.e. submitting an extended abstract only will not qualify for this session. A minimum of 10 double-spaced pages, excluding references and exhibits, is required. Note that submission of a short paper to the session is not a precondition for submission of a full paper to the Special Issue. In case of questions, please contact fluedeke-freund@escpeurope.eu

Session 6

"New Perspectives on the Bottom of the Pyramid Strategies"

Chairs: Nikolay A. Dentchev, Alain Verbeke, Jeremy Hall, Laura Micheline and Jenny Hillemann

This is a paper development workshop in the frame of a special issue on "New perspectives on the Bottom of the Pyramid Strategies", approved by the editors of Business & Society (submission deadline 1 April 2019). Workshop participants are invited to submit extended abstracts of about 1.000 words. Prior to the conference in Sofia, workshop participants are encouraged to revise their abstracts and to develop further their ideas toward a first draft of a paper (no obligation). These abstracts will be reviewed by the workshop organizers. In addition, all workshop participants will be encouraged to share their papers with all other participants, in order to generate feedback. In addition, we will share during the workshop relevant references, theories, case studies, data sources, etc. that might be supportive for the further development of the papers. Overall, we aim at creating a constructive environment for developing sound ideas in preparation for a scholarly contribution.

Workshop participants will be offered an opportunity to submit their contributions to this Special Issue in BAS. A full call for papers can be found on the [journal website: http://journals.sagepub.com/pb-assets/cmscontent/BAS/BOP-Special-issue-BAS-final.pdf](http://journals.sagepub.com/pb-assets/cmscontent/BAS/BOP-Special-issue-BAS-final.pdf)

Session 7

"Continued insights on Business Models from Young Academics"

Chairs: Ivan Bozhikin and Martina Zimek

This session focuses on scientific contributions from young academics. After a successful young academics session at NBM@Graz 2017, again Bachelor's and Master's students will get the opportunity to present their studies and research results and to voice their point of view based on their research. The research must be related to the relevant questions raised in the Call for Contributions and can also be presented as works-in-progress. This session will contribute and give insights on the overall conference topic "New Business Models with impact: focused, scalable and international".

Session 8 – Practical Workshop

"University-based platforms in support of social entrepreneurship: new dynamics for challenging business models"

Chairs: Abel Diaz Gonzalez, Philippe Eiselein and Nikolay Dentchev

Social entrepreneurs are nowadays key players in our society. None of the efforts made by social entrepreneurs should be underestimated, since they try to provide entrepreneurial solution to challenging problems in our societies. Business models of social entrepreneurs are mostly based on challenging propositions and idealistic approaches; they are constantly challenged to find complementary partners, scale their social impact and be profitable. Universities, due to their interconnectedness with public, private and social organizations, are well positioned to provide support to social entrepreneurs. Such support can contribute to reduce the challenges that these ventures are facing and increase the social impact that they are envisioning. This workshop will present the current case of the VUB Social Entrepreneurship platform (c.f. platform.vubsocialentrepreneurship.com), a crowdfunding and crowdsourcing tool that makes it for social entrepreneurs easier to communicate, network, find missing competencies and attract people willing to help. Through an analysis of different projects on the platform, *this workshop focuses on discussing the potential role of universities in supporting the establishment and development of promising business models, especially for social entrepreneurs.*

The workshop will be guided through the following questions:

1. What concepts / theories should we use to understand these new dynamics?
2. How can universities cooperate with relevant stakeholders to create an ecosystem in support social entrepreneurs?
3. What type of needs from Social Entrepreneurs can be addressed through crowdfunding and crowdsourcing virtual platforms?
4. What are the challenges of developing such platforms lead by universities
5. What kind of strategies should be developed to successfully articulate this platform between the academia, industry and social enterprises?

We also believe in a network of partner universities that can implement this model jointly to make usage of different resources and articulate their strategy. Such a network can contribute to the international spillover effects in terms of ecosystem, collaboration and impact. Some projects of social entrepreneurs will be able to develop international activity. Others will be able to copy in partner countries (with the consent of the initiative takers). Furthermore, collaborations among a network like this will strengthen each partner capacity on the topic and will allow local staff to nurture their knowledge on the topic and advance their skills on coaching social entrepreneurial projects to help them achieve their goals

This workshop is open to all attendees at the conference, and there is no need to submit an abstract for participation. We believe in complementarity, therefore, the participation of academics, young researchers, practitioners and individuals with experience / relation to social entrepreneurship is highly appreciated. The will certainly open new research opportunities for all the participants.

Submission Procedures

Authors are invited to submit their **extended abstracts of 700-1200 words by 28 February 2018** to NBMSofia@vub.be while clearly mentioning to which session they want to apply.

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Deadlines

Submission of Abstracts	February 28, 2018
Notification to Authors	April 10, 2018
Submission of Revised Abstracts or Short Papers	May 20, 2018
Registration Deadline	May 20, 2018
Conference Get Together	June 26, 2018 (optional)
Conference Sessions	June 27 & 28 2018
Social Activity	June 29, 2018 (optional)
Short Papers for Proceedings	August 15, 2018

Publication Possibilities

Accepted abstracts will be distributed to the conference participants. After the conference, participants are invited to revise their ideas and submit papers for the conference proceedings.

Conference participants will have the opportunity to submit to two special issues in Business & Society (IF 3.298) on:

- "Collaborative Cross-Sector Business Models for Sustainability" with guest editors [Esben Rahbek Gjerdrum Pedersen](#) (Copenhagen Business School), [Florian Lüdeke-Freund](#) (ESCP Europe Business School), [Irene Henriques](#) (Schulich School of Business), [M. May Seitanidi](#) (Kent Business School) – deadline for full paper submission to the special issue is 1 December 2018.
- "New Perspectives on the Bottom of the Pyramid Strategies" with guest editors Nikolay A. Dentchev (Vrije Universiteit Brussel), Alain Verbeke (U Calgary), Jeremy Hall (Nottingham U), Laura Michelini (LUMSA U), Jenny Hillemann (Vrije Universiteit Brussel) - deadline for full paper submission to the special issue is 1 April 2019

Conference Fee and registration

The conference fee for this international conference in Bulgaria:

Student 135 EUR

Regular 185 EUR

Scholars with Bulgarian Affiliation only 20 EUR

Information about the registration procedure will follow. Registrations will be managed through the conference website.

Conference Venue

University of National and World Economy

Address: 1700 Sofia, Student Town, UNWE, Bulgaria

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Conference Organization Team

Prof.dr. Nikolay Dentchev	(Vrije Universiteit Brussel) – conference chair
Prof.dr. Rumen Gechev	(University of National and World Economy)
Prof.dr. Pencho Penchev	(University of National and World Economy)
Drs. Philippe Eiselein	(Vrije Universiteit Brussel)
Drs. Abel Diaz Gonzalez	(Vrije Universiteit Brussel)
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Prof.dr. Romana Rauter (Graz University)
Prof.dr. Nikolay Dentchev (Vrije Universiteit Brussel)

A list of all the Members of the Scientific Committee is accessible online.

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