

Call for Papers – Workshop
Tradition as Resource or Constraint for Strategic Action in the Digital Age
In-Person

Matera, Italy
December 15-16, 2023

Workshop chairs and organisers:

Gino Cattani, Donato Cutolo, Simone Ferriani, Gianvito Lanzolla, Innan Sasaki

Sponsoring institutions: *Bayes Business School's Digital Leadership Research Centre, University of Bologna, New York University, IE Madrid.*

In cooperation with the Guest Editors of the **Special Issue of Advances in Strategic Management**, "[Tradition as Resource or Constraint for Strategic Action](#)"

We invite authors to submit papers to our workshop, an exciting forum for the exchange and cross-fertilization of ideas from scholars interested in the role of tradition in strategy-making and organizing. We are especially interested in work that explores how organizations use tradition as a resource, particularly how managers and entrepreneurs leverage cherished traditions to achieve growth and innovation without undermining valued legacies and their own administrative heritage. As an example, consider Walt Disney's ongoing challenge to move iconic characters of animated cartoons into new eras while maintaining their timeless characteristics. How should a character like Mickey Mouse, who was created one century ago, act and behave in the present? How much of that beloved legacy should be revisited to address the preferences of an ever-changing market? Walt Disney's CEO and Chairman Bob Iger's view on the matter is illustrative of the managerial tension that such questions pose: "You can't allow tradition to get in the way of innovation. I firmly believe in respecting the tradition but making sure it continues to evolve. There's a need to respect the past, but it's a mistake to revere your past."

In addition to our broad focus on the interplay between tradition and innovation, we especially encourage submissions from authors examining contemporary challenges related to the role of tradition within a rapidly changing competitive landscape shaped by the adoption of digital technologies in all types of organizations. We are open to multiple perspectives on these topics and how strategy mediates the tensions that often emerge at the intersection of cherished traditions and imperatives to transform.

We expect to host an intimate conference of 30+ leading scholars from around the world, and we are not restricted to any theoretical orientation or methodological approach. The conference steering committee invites the submission of rigorous research papers that shed light on the following questions:

- How can firms manage the tension between tradition and innovation?
- To what extent can tradition go hand in hand with innovation?
- How to accommodate the renewal of a cherished tradition without stifling it?

- What is the role of storytelling in both preserving and catalysing change in the delicate balance between tradition and innovation?
- How does the tension between tradition and innovation change over time?
- How do organizations perpetuate and leverage traditions in the face of heterogeneous (and sometimes opposing) audience preferences (e.g., peers, customers, critics, etc.)?
- How to navigate the demands of rapidly changing digital environments without threatening timeless values, norms, and beliefs?
- How do digital technologies enable or constrain the rethinking of traditional products?
- Does a strong focus on tradition really inhibit innovation? If so, why and under what conditions?
- How do organizations use narratives to enable dialogue and negotiation between tradition and innovation?

Keynote speakers:

Tina Dacin, Queen's University
 Gernot Grabher, HafenCity University Hamburg
 Gianni Lorenzoni, University of Bologna and Bayes Business School
 Costas Markides, London Business School

If you are interested and available to contribute to the workshop, please upload your proposal (working paper or extended abstract) to this [link](#) by 1 October 2023. Notification of inclusion in the workshop will be sent to the authors by 15 October 2023.

Submission to the workshop and inclusion in the workshop programme does not imply in any way consideration for the Special Issue of Advances in Strategic Management, “*Tradition as Resource or Constraint for Strategic Action.*” Authors interested in submitting to the Special Issue will have to submit their work also to the Special Issue following the instructions at this [link](#). General information on the AiSM series can be found [here](#)

Workshop deadlines and other details

Proposal (working paper or extended abstract) submission deadline: 1 October 2023 (please submit your proposal [here](#)).

Notification of inclusion: 15 October 2023.

No registration fees (lunch, dinner, and refreshments will be provided for the two days by the organizers)

Workshop: 15 and 16 December 2023, in person-only, in Matera, Italy

About Matera. Located in Southern Italy, Matera is a UNESCO world heritage site and the 2019 European Cultural Capital. The closest airport is Bari's International Airport, distant around 50 minutes from Matera. The town of Matera has a rich array of hotels for all budgets. The venue's address and other logistical information will be sent to the invited authors.