

Cooperative Strategies and Trust in Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

Key words: Cooperation, Strategy, Trust, SMEs, Performance

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Track Description

Cooperative strategies are at the same time a great opportunity and a serious threat to the firm. This is especially true for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Manoeuvring with a relatively small war chest in the rough waters of competition, cooperative strategies are of vital importance for small business units. By pooling critical resources such as know-how or production capacities partners may come up with unique combinations that generate competitive advantages or allow them to overcome the liability of smallness which otherwise restricts competing with larger enterprises in the market. Thus, participating in a cooperation arrangement may positively affect a firm's performance. However, the commitment to a specific cooperation arrangement brings about specific investments and therefore bears a degree of risk. The key to success in cooperation relationships is an efficient and effective coordination of the actors' behaviour within the scope of the cooperation arrangement.

This raises a number of critical questions: How can SMEs identify the right cooperative strategy? How can SMEs set up successful cooperative relationships? How can they choose the right partners? How can actors make sure that their partners behave in the agreed and therefore expected way? What is the role of trust in this context? How are the costs and the benefits of cooperation to be distributed between the partners? How can cooperative relationships be evaluated?

Possible topics suitable for this track include, but are not limited to:

- Definition of Cooperative Strategies for SMEs
- Designing Cooperative Relationships for SMEs
- Evolution and Termination of Cooperative Relationships of SMEs
- Market, Trust and Hierarchy in Cooperative Relationships of SMEs
- The Role of Trust in Cooperation Arrangements between SMEs and Large Enterprises
- Coordination Mechanisms in Cooperative Relationships and SME Performance
- Matching Partners for SME Cooperation Relationships
- Cooperative Internationalization of SMEs
- Cooperative R&D of SMEs
- Evaluation Tools for Cooperative Relationships of SMEs
- Social Embeddedness and Cooperative Relationships of SMEs
- SME Clusters and Economic Development

We encourage researchers to present their ideas and concepts in the form of purely theoretical or theory-driven empirical work. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches are welcome, as is innovative conceptual work that challenges the dominant ideas in the mainstream literature.

Additional Feature:

<p>The best papers submitted to this track will be selected for publication in a special issue of the International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Innovation (IJEI).</p>
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