

TRACK INFORMATION

Title: "Fair and inclusive transition for SMEs in the digital era: towards responsible management, entrepreneurship and innovation"

Outline (max. 300 words):

In the OECD area, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) represent around the 99% of all firms, approximately two thirds of all employment, and contribute to over half of the value added. Given the weight of small businesses in the economy, it is important to remind that their aggregate achievements have a major effect across the globe.

In the last year several unexpected challenges happened at the macro level (e.g., Covid 19 pandemic) forcing European's SMEs to rethink their business model towards a more sustainable one. To do so, due to their characteristics, SMEs have to open their organizational boundaries and find new collaborative strategies to face grand challenges (e.g., climate change, social inequality, and gender gaps). For instance, SME may leverage several factors to trigger the evolution of their business model and the creation of resilient organizational architectures (e.g., technology, innovation, policy, individual behaviors, collective action, etc.)

Nevertheless, this would not be possible without the change of SME's strategies, managerial approaches, organizational practices as well as the implementation and integration of sustainable and ethical principles in their business models.

Therefore, SMEs should rely on internal figures able to govern such transitions (e.g., established or new organizational roles) and/or on other external stakeholders able to support those figures (e.g., consultants, Universities, etc.).

Eventually, understanding how SMEs act and react to the needs for a more sustainable future is crucial for economic, environmental, and social well-being. Consequently, this track calls for papers that will investigate topics such as (but not limited to):

- Factors triggering SMEs' transition toward sustainable business models (e.g., technology, innovation, policy, individual behaviors, collective action, etc.).
- Formal and informal practices for boosting collaborative sustainability-oriented transitions or innovation processes in SMEs (e.g., the creation of resilient architectures).

- Challenges and benefits connected with the design of SMEs' sustainable strategies and/or business models.
- Collaborative organizational roles dealing with the sustainable transition: internal figures (employees, managers, etc.) and external actors (e.g., consultants, Universities, etc.)
- SMEs' managerial approaches or entrepreneurs' heuristics for responsible and responsive sustainable innovation.
- Decision-making for sustainability in SMEs.

More generally, this track welcomes contributions that will investigate, in the context of entrepreneurship and innovation, issues related to the sustainable behaviors of SMEs dealing with fair and inclusive transitions by creating new business models.

Keywords:

Small and Medium-sized Enterprises; Sustainability; Innovation; Transition; Business models

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