5th INTERNATIONAL FAMILY BUSINESS RESEARCH FORUM
September 9-11, 2020 @ Hasselt, Belgium

ORGANIZERS
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Submission deadline: April 15, 2020
https://ifbrf2020.sciencesconf.org/
Background
At its fifth edition the International Family Business Research Forum has in the last years provided a unique platform for developing family business research in a structured, stimulating, challenging and friendly environment (and of course within an inspiring context). After four editions (in Witten at University of Witten/Herdecke Germany (2015), in Naples/Capri, at the University of Naples Federico II Italy (2016), in Vienna, at WU – Vienna University of Economics and Business Austria (2017), in the Principality of Monaco, at the International University of Monaco (2019)) we are moving to the inspiring context of Hasselt (Belgium) hosted by our colleagues from Hasselt University.

The interest in family business as an autonomous academic research field has grown tremendously in recent years, mostly motivated by the family business prevalence worldwide and the increasing number of people and institutions acknowledging the importance and need to get a further understanding on family businesses actors and arenas. Despite of that, while family business studies have advanced significantly during the past decade, research still largely focuses on a limited number of topics and theory development requires ongoing attention. Although the discipline is progressing in terms of theory building, it still lacks a systematic adoption of theoretically-based frameworks. Thus, on the one hand, family firm research is still dominated by a focus on the family firm, incorporating contradicting and contrasting views between idealizing and critical family business features. The critical views of family firms investigate besides traditional concerns about leadership succession: nepotism and non-professionalism; family conflicts; misplaced altruism towards family members among others. At the opposite, positive interpretations of family firms’ behaviors and results include, among others: long-term orientation; family social capital; strategic resource accumulation; superior brand identity; better financial performance. On the other hand, family firm research still lacks a systematic analysis of the business family. In order to advance the current understanding of the positive and negative characteristics of family businesses, it is indispensable to research the developmental dynamics of the structures and processes of business families. Therefore, family firm research should also put its focus on the reciprocal institution of the family business. This might be the next step to understand the generation of positive and negative features of family firms in order to enhance the theory development for both sides – the family firm and the business family.

Aim of the forum
The aim of this Forum is to try to reconcile the interplay of negative and positive views within and between the family and the business system. In this way, future research should aim to better explain when the positives and negatives above are likely to occur, and under what conditions. In this way, the Forum will aim to address questions such as:
- What are the underlying unexpressed research questions that may help to move the field one step further?
- What kind of theories should we use to explain the behavior and identity of business families and family firms?
- How can we capture the heterogeneity of business families and family firms?
- Which new methods should we explore?
- Which are the contributions we should disseminate among family owners, managers and business families?

Therefore, we invite submissions from the international family firm research community, to discuss together the state of the art of the research on family firms and have the opportunity to collect feedback and insights on how to develop the ideas presented in the Forum for leading international journals.

Types of submissions solicited and deadlines
We encourage international scholars – with particular attention to PhD Students and young researchers – to submit their ideas and works in progress at different stages. Given the developmental nature of the Forum, we encourage submissions of: a) research ideas/proposals/extended abstracts¹ and b) draft of papers/full papers.

Important deadlines are indicated here below:
- April 15, 2020 – All papers should be submitted electronically at https://ifbrf2020.sciencesconf.org/
- April 30, 2020 – Authors will be notified on acceptance in order to arrange their travels
- May, 15 2020 – Accepted participants get a written feedback (based on a blind-review process)

¹ Accepted research ideas, proposals and extended abstracts must be subsequently developed into working papers.
• **July, 15, 2020** – Scholars are invited to address/implement the suggestions and send a revised version

**Format**
The format of the Forum will be highly interactive. All sessions will be organized in plenary, and each paper/proposal will have a formal discussant (who will present the discussion with the use of PPT). The organizing team (based on external Reviewers) will provide feedback (a one page written review) on the papers/proposals accepted for presentation in the Forum.

**Detailed program (tentative)**
- **September 9, 2020** Wednesday
  *BDO Practitioner Event*
  *Welcome reception, 7pm-10pm (location, to be defined), Hasselt*
- **September 10, 2020**, **Thursday**
  *Plenary sessions, 9am-6pm (Hasselt University), Hasselt*
  *Social dinner, 8pm-11pm (location, to be defined), Hasselt*
- **September 11, 2020**, **Friday**
  *Plenary sessions, 9am-6pm (Hasselt University), Hasselt*
  *Social dinner, 8pm-11pm (location, to be defined), Hasselt*
- **September 12, 2020**, **Saturday**
  *Social program (depending on the number of interested people)*

**Workshop fee for authors and delegates**
200 EUR

**Keynote speaker**
Prof. Pursey Heugens, Professor of Organization Theory, Development, and Change, Rotterdam School of Management (RSM), Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands

**Publishing opportunities**
There are several publishing opportunities for participants (linking the papers to existing special issues and fast review tracks in journals).

**Best paper awards**

1. Best paper award sponsored by RCEF (250 EUR)
2. 1 Best contribution to practice award sponsored by BDO (500 EUR)
3. 1 Best paper award sponsored by the STEP Project (250 EUR)

**Venue**
Hasselt University
Hasselt, Belgium

Looking forward to meeting you in Hasselt, city of Jenever, Fashion, Food and Nature!