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## Editorial

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**Biographical notes:** Urs Daellenbach is a Reader in Management at Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand. His research interests focus on the resource-based view of the firm with a specific focus on contexts associated with R&D and innovation. His publications have appeared in *Strategic Management Journal*, *Long Range Planning*, *Industrial and Corporate Change*, *Journal of Management Studies*, *British Journal of Management* and *R&D Management*.

Eelko Huizingh is an Associate Professor of Innovation Management at the Faculty of Economics and Business, University of Groningen, The Netherlands. He is the Director of Scientific Affairs of The International Society for Professional Innovation Management (ISPI). His research focuses on the intersection of innovation, marketing, and information technology. He has (co)authored over 300 articles, which have appeared in *Technovation*, *Marketing Science*, *Marketing Letters*, *European Journal of Innovation Management*, *International Journal of Innovation Management*, *International Journal of Technology Management*, *International Journal Entrepreneurship and Innovation Management*, *Decision Support Systems*, *Information and Management*, *Organisational Behaviour* and *Human Decision Processes*. Recently, Sage published his book *Applied Statistics with SPSS*.

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While the ideas and possibilities that are highlighted in open innovation perspectives (Chesbrough, 2003) tend to dominate much of the recent research on innovation, arguments for the benefits of cooperative efforts between organisations have a long tradition across many research areas. For example, there is an extensive literature on interorganisational alliances (e.g., Gulati and Gargiulo, 1999; Osborn and Hagedoorn, 1997; Powell et al., 1996; Stuart, 2000). Similarly, Dodgson (1993) noted that organisational collaboration in technological activities is becoming increasingly prevalent, and pointed to the need for inter-personal and organisational trust in generating

successful outcomes from this approach. Thus, where open innovation is leading to the consideration of the range of potential partners and processes beyond formal ties, many of the issues promoting or inhibiting such connections have previously been the focus of research without invoking the open innovation perspective.

The articles in this special issue<sup>1</sup> address such questions predominantly from these more traditional notions and dilemmas, while also connecting them to some open innovation themes. The first article, by Lisa Callagher, examines the foundation on which interorganisational innovations start, focussing on search practices for accessing external knowledge. By studying an emerging biotechnology cluster, the influence of geographic proximity, cluster life-stage and relational proximity on search practices is assessed, with the latter two suggesting crucial differences. Implications for practice revolve around how best to access non-local knowledge and how the cluster may facilitate such activities.

The second article in the special issue (Braun, Mueller, Adelhelm and Vladova) moves to a consideration of knowledge flows in the early stages of R&D collaborations. Drawing on the concepts of absorptive and desorptive capacities (Lichtenthaler and Lichtenthaler, 2009), the authors present how interactions between potential cooperation partners are affected in the initiation and constitution phases. They also find that during the negotiation process, the importance of these capacities shifts from the firm to the personal level connections.

The third article, authored by Hannele Lampela, similarly assesses developments that occur during the initiation of collaborations but extends this to subsequent stages of learning and end product development from such innovation processes. The data from a sample of Finnish companies across three separate innovation networks allowed consideration of how the characteristics of the collaboration relationships, the learning between partners, and the development of end products in the innovation process were interrelated and had evolved. By taking a dynamic view, the possibilities for extending relationships beyond 'ad hoc' or one-off needs-based interactions become more apparent.

Next, in a large-scale study of external collaboration, von der Heidt and Scott found that stakeholder involvement in the innovation process did not mediate the effects of product innovation orientation and stakeholder orientation on interorganisational innovation outcomes as expected for their sample of Australian manufacturing firms. Instead innovation strategies and stakeholder orientation had direct connections to innovation performance and relationship quality. These results combine to highlight the value of integrative models of interorganisational relationships, highlighting that managers may well have scope to extend their interaction competencies and may also need to boost their R&D spending and further emphasise product innovation strategies in order to profit from such relationships.

In the final article, Smirnova, Podmetina, Väätänen and Torkkeli also examine new product development and collaborative practices, extending the consideration to the unique context for 223 Russian firms. Their analysis focuses on these firms' openness to interaction with external partners. Patterns of product innovations and collaborations with a broad range of stakeholders were assessed and these then related to the type of product innovation categories and the strategic orientation of the firm. While new product introductions were not extensively prioritised in the sample, most firms had introduced new products, which appeared to contribute to growth, with the most radical product introductions related to more extensive and successful external collaborations. Key

findings connect a firm's new product development orientation to successful international partnerships and multi-stakeholder relationships.

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## Notes

- 1 The International Society for Professional Innovation Management (ISPIM) is a worldwide network of innovation management professionals from research, industry and intermediary organisations. ISPIM's goals are to create a worldwide network of excellence in the field of innovation management, to enhance collaboration between its members and to be at the forefront of research on innovation. ISPIM achieves this via its international conferences and regional events, journal publications, collaborative research projects and other member services.