

## ***Human Relations* special issue call for papers**

### **Organization-Creation: Theorizing the Processes and Practices of Entrepreneuring at Work**

**Deadline: 30<sup>th</sup> April 2023**

Guest Editors:

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#### **Introduction**

*Human Relations* has long hosted a dialogue between entrepreneurship, work, and organization scholars. Research on topics such as entrepreneurial narratives (Kibler, Mandl, Farny, & Salmivaara, 2021), leadership as entrepreneurial agency (Edwards & Meliou, 2015), entrepreneurial careers (Valette & Culié, 2015) or entrepreneurial identity work (Essers & Benschop, 2009; Essers, Doorewaard, & Benschop, 2013) demonstrates the synergistic potential of these domains by highlighting distinct aspects of human practices in a dynamic world. However, the vast majority of studies of entrepreneurship, work and organization have kept a polite distance by emphasizing domain differences and treating them as externalities (e.g., Storey, Salaman and Platman, 2005; McCabe, 2009). With this Special Issue, we aim to reinvigorate the intersections between entrepreneurship, work, and organization by advancing research on the organizational processes and practices of entrepreneurship at work. To do so, we focus on the notion of “entrepreneuring” (Steyaert, 2007) that puts emphasis on the processes of organization-creation as collective work taking place in new ventures, in existing organizations or between them (Hjorth, 2015). This enables to link two key dimensions of contemporary work: the organizational in entrepreneurship and the entrepreneurial in organizing.

With the growing emphasis on identifying entrepreneurial employees and bolstering “enterprising selves” at work (Miller and Rose, 1990; Kallinikos, 2004; Ainsworth and Hardy, 2008; Gleadle et al., 2008), the question of how such ‘entrepreneurialisation’ affects the organizational conditions for work, including hierarchies of power and authority, gains urgency. This trend has been deftly critiqued (Ahl and Marlow, 2021; Jones and Spicer, 2009) based on how enterprise discourse and associated apparatus of entrepreneurial management affects control, agency, and subjectivity (Miller and Rose, 1990; McCabe, 2009). Nevertheless, as organizational processes and practices of entrepreneurship become normalised in our conceptions of contemporary work (Kallinikos, 2004), they have largely escaped scholarly attention (for an exception, see Goss, 2005; Hjorth, 2005).

Focus is placed on the concept of ‘*entrepreneuring*’ as *ongoing sensitivity to and disclosure of emerging possibilities through the process and practice of organization-creation*,

*that is, the creation of relatively stabilized collectives sharing work, responsibilities, visions, rules or knowledge.* Organization-creation operates in the in-between of order and disorder, stability and novelty. It acknowledges the “creative and social/collective organizing process...” (Johannisson, 2011, p. 137), amidst an unfinalized, open-ended trajectory (Hjorth and Holt, 2016; Dimov, 2020). Creating new organization affirms novelty rather than existing order and therefore makes necessary organization-creation for a new order to operate (Hjorth, 2014). Importantly, this conceptualization represents an inflection point of both work and entrepreneurship studies, in that organized but novel work is required to adapt to or bring about new organizations, social value and alternative futures (cf. Munoz et al., 2020, Shepherd 2020, Etzioni 2011). Yet, entrepreneuring occurs amongst existing organizational conditions of work. In this sense, while order needs entrepreneuring to keep up with a changing world, entrepreneuring needs order to organize people and resources to create value. We argue that, rather than being refined in isolation, work, organization, and entrepreneurship research can be bridged by establishing new ways of understanding organization-creation as a process in tension with the existing organization of work. This represents a challenge: creating the organizational conditions for a new order to become actualised also means a new organization of work is demanded. What do the organizational processes and practices for organization-creation look like, and how do such conditions co-exist with the organization of present work?

To further understand this dynamic tension between organizational inertia, work and entrepreneuring, we posit that there is much to be gained by adopting onto-epistemological assumptions of relational and processual constitution of organizing, entrepreneuring, and work (Chia, 1996; Goss, 2005; Tsoukas and Chia, 2002; Hjorth et al., 2015). With the promise that an entrepreneuring worldview offers, there are many pressing issues that demand further theoretical development. *First* and foremost, questions remain about how to organize for organization-creation—i.e., how to induce collective entrepreneuring as a form of work has become the key issue for new *and* existing organizations (Amabile, 1998; Alexy et al., 2021; Hargadon and Bechky, 2006; Burton et al., 2019). Rather than merely ‘managing a changing machine-worker relationship’ or implementing a strategic instrument by top-management (Burgelman, 1983; Zahra and Covin, 1995), entrepreneuring is an organic organization-creation process (surely with strategic implications) occurring at the intersection of an already organized but changing world. *Second*, entrepreneurship, work and organization scholars have not yet absorbed the full potential of the entrepreneuring perspective (Champenois et al., 2020; 2021) such that key questions remain on how affective, relational, and material practices are stabilized into ‘organizations’ while change remains ongoing and possible (Gherardi, 2019). That is, the question of how parallel dynamics of both stabilization and movement in organization-creation processes take place deserves further attention. *Third*, existing research has yet to fully attend to emergence (Katz and Gartner, 1988) and metamorphoses (Weiskopf and Steyaert, 2009) of practices that play out at work. *Finally*, existing scholarship tends to have a retrospective gaze in that we learn about the work practitioners are doing to organize, but this comes at the expense of first-person orientation towards novelty and uncertainty (Cole, 1959; Dimov et al., 2020; Gartner, 2007; Goss, 2005; Sarasvathy, 2003). We see much promise in how process- as well as practice-based studies in organization- as well as entrepreneurship

studies may start to join forces in imagining and researching the becoming (and perishing) of organization of work, as a process of entrepreneuring.

### **Objective of this special issue**

The objective of this Special Issue is to connect the organizational in entrepreneuring with the entrepreneurial in organizing at and of work. To do so, we intend to stimulate theory-building on the practices and processes of entrepreneuring occurring in-between established orders and the challenging/breaking thereof. In particular, we welcome submissions that further our understanding of how to organize *for* organization-creation (Thompson, 2018; Amabile, 1998; Hargadon and Bechky, 2006). Consistent with the Scope and Aim of Human Relations, we invite contributions from all geographical areas, with particular interest in entrepreneuring as a collective process, and research that affirm diversity and consider the influences of gendered, social, political, institutional, ethical, cultural, and economic contexts for entrepreneurship and work (Yousafzi, et al. 2018). Moreover, we call for studies that deepen our knowledge of how the affective, relational, and material aspects of entrepreneuring intersect in organization-creation at work. Articles included in this Special Issue will make new theoretical gains by addressing the dynamics of both stabilization and movement in organization-creation processes, including the emergence and metamorphoses of practices that play out within and because of broader social and ecological systems. Finally, we aim to develop scholarship that integrates the first-person orientation towards novelty and uncertainty (Dimov et al., 2020), rather than a retrospective gaze, and that joins practitioners in ‘imagining-with’ alternative political, social, technological and ecological futures that have yet to come into being. Taken together, this Special Issue will set a new basis for entrepreneuring research that is sensitive to contemporary trends of new forms of work.

### **Indicative research questions:**

- What changes in self- and collective identities are presently characterising changing organization of work in the wake of the recent turn towards entrepreneuring?
- What has work and social relations in/around work become in the wake of emphasizing the entrepreneurial worker as an ideal subjectivity?
- How are employment relations and careers modified by entrepreneuring at work as an ideal or as a concrete practice?
- What are the resistances to entrepreneuring at/of work?
- How do conceptions of entrepreneurial action align with organizational processes and work practices?
- What conflicts and tensions do emerge from organizing for entrepreneurship at work and from the expectations placed on enterprising workers?
- How does management of work handle entrepreneurship processes at work?
- What is organizational entrepreneurship today, and how is it expressed on individual, group- and organizational levels?
- What characterizes entrepreneuring as an organization-creation process at work, in Western and in post-colonial contexts?

- How are the conditions for work ontologically different in the existing and the emerging organization?
- What can process perspectives on organization do for studying, describing, and analyzing entrepreneuring in a world calling for responsible and sustainable businesses?
- What are the methodological challenges involved with studying organization-creation at work as a future-building process in a post-anthropocentric perspective?

### **Potential contributors should note**

This Special Issue is in line with, and strongly supportive of, the mission and focus of *Human Relations*. Potential contributors are strongly advised to familiarize themselves with the Journal's scope and expectations. In line with Human Relations policy and the objectives of the Special Issue, please note:

- 1) We are committed to pluralism in terms of perspectives and theoretical grounding. We are particularly interested in receiving submissions from and about marginalized voices and contexts.
- 2) We are seeking papers which address the social relations in and around work and workplaces – across the levels of immediate personal relationships, organizations and their processes, and wider political and economic systems.
- 3) We are keen to receive submissions from a critical social science perspective which challenge orthodoxy, engage critically across disciplines where relevant, and engage critically with practical and policy implications.
- 4) We invite papers which address the interstices and linkages between work and the 'micro' (immediate relationships between people), the 'meso' (organizations and workplaces and their rules, processes and structures) and the 'macro' (the wider economy and society).
- 5) Conceptual or empirical papers are equally welcome.
  - a. Rigorously executed research following any social science method is welcome in empirical papers, not least multi-level or longitudinal studies. Papers using all kinds of qualitative methods are encouraged.
  - b. Conceptual or theoretical papers which make a novel contribution are encouraged but should be in line with the Call for Papers' focus on contextual understanding.
- 6) The guest editors will select a number of papers to be included in the Special Issue, but other papers submitted in this process may be considered for publication in a regular issue of Human Relations if the rejection is owing to fit with the Special Issue.

### **Deadlines and paper development workshop**

Special Issue workshop: We will hold a paper development workshop to allow interested contributors to receive feedback on an early version of their manuscript. The workshop will be held on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> of December 2022. Participation in the workshop is no guarantee of

acceptance of the paper for the special issue, neither is it a requirement for consideration of a paper. Application to the workshop: please send an extended abstract of 2000 to 3000 words (including references and appendices) by Thursday 1st September 2022 to Neil Aaron Thompson (n.a.thompson@vu.nl). To be considered for this special issue, submissions must fit with the aim and scope of Human Relations. Papers should be prepared in accordance with the journal's submission guidelines. Full-length papers should be submitted through the journal's online submission system: <https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/hr> between April 1st and 30<sup>th</sup> 2023. Please make sure to tick the box "Special Issue" when submitted, and also to indicate in your cover letter that the submission is intended for this Special Issue. Please direct questions about the submission process, or any administrative matter, to the Editorial Office: [humanrelationsjournal@tavinstitute.org](mailto:humanrelationsjournal@tavinstitute.org). Questions about expectations, requirements, and the appropriateness of a topic should be directed to the guest editors of the special issue. The Guest Editors are also open to discussing initial ideas for papers, and can be contacted by email:

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