

Non-Market Strategy

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Project description:

Non-market strategy refers to an organisation's 'concerted pattern of actions to improve its performance by managing its institutional or societal context', for example its social, political and legal context (Mellahi et al. 2016: 144). This contrasts with the more frequently studied market strategy, which deals with the economic context.

There is considerable academic literature on non-market strategy, but recent literature reviews by the supervisors (Mellahi *et al.* 2016; Frynas *et al.* 2017; John and Lawton 2018) have suggested that there remain some significant ontological and epistemological gaps that reveal opportunities for theorizing nonmarket strategy phenomena and developing new research streams within the area. Ontologically, these gaps include:

- Alignment of market and non-market strategies and the performance in firms
- Interactions between political aspects and social aspects of non-market strategy
- Novel theoretical insights on non-market strategy from outside business such as political science, legal studies, sociology and history.
- Nonmarket risk management e.g. in foreign direct investments, especially among companies from emerging and transitional markets

We welcome applications for projects which will contribute novel insights related to any area of non-market strategy mentioned above and related thematic areas.

Epistemologically, the nonmarket strategy research has been contextualized only partially suggesting the lack of understanding of the diverse contextual influences on nonmarket strategies. Given the theoretical and practical value of contextualization (Johns 2017; Rousseau and Fried 2001), we invite proposals addressing this gap. The proposals may consider various forms of contextualization including situational (e.g. events and external shocks) (John and Vicente 2020; Ballesteros *et al.* 2017; Williams and Shepherd 2016), temporal (e.g. timing and speed) (Mac Cawley *et al.* 2019; John and Lawton 2017; Zachary *et al.* 2015; Rousseau and Fried 2001), spacial (e.g. location) (Rousseau and Fried 2001), functional (e.g. industry and sector) (Lin *et al.* 2019) and hierarchical (e.g. level) (Maon *et al.* 2019; Xu and Meyer, 2013) ones. For example, the proposals may explore the contextual influences arising from external shocks (e.g. pandemics, natural disasters, and crises). A potentially interesting angle in exploring the role of external shocks in nonmarket strategies is socio-political liminality—the situation where the existing systems have become futile whereas the new systems are not yet in place (John and Lawton 2020).

Also, the proposals may focus on any geographic region, industries, and economies (e.g. advanced and emerging economies) and any level of analysis (e.g. country-level, firm-level and individual-level) but they

should offer genuinely novel ideas and perspectives needed to understand the role of these contexts. Specifically, it is essential that the proposals explain how extending the nonmarket strategy research to a new context could add value to, or, perhaps, challenge, the existing knowledge in the area.

Methodologically, applicants may use qualitative approaches, quantitative approaches or mixed approaches to data analysis and synthesis but should explain the selected methodologies and sources of data and justify their usefulness and feasibility for addressing the research objectives.

About the Supervisors:

George's research focuses on both Corporate Social Responsibility and Corporate Political Activity, and interactions between these two types of activities. He has a passion for understanding non-market strategy in emerging and developing countries.

For more information: <http://www.open.ac.uk/research/people/jgf67>

Anna's research looks into strategies for managing nonmarket risk to internationalization of profit and non-profit organizations from advanced and emerging economies. Her recent work focuses on the quantitative and qualitative syntheses of the research into business-government-society relations and how these relations affect market performance of firms.

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