

Exploring online collaborative working

Supervisors: Dr [Isidora Kourti](#) and Professor [Elizabeth Daniel](#), Department of Strategy and Marketing

Project Description:

The increased complexity and levels of turbulence facing organisations today requires them to develop effective collaborations, both within their own organisation and with outside partners. Traditional ways of collaborating based on physical, face-to-face, contact have been proved valuable, yet challenging. Issues such as, cultural diversity (Vangen and Winchester, 2014), multiple identities (Kourti et al., 2018) and leadership differences (Ospina and Saz-Carranza, 2010) may threaten collaborative success. Over the past 20 years or so, technological changes and the emergence of a socio-technically organised world have changed the way organisations can develop and support collaboration. Computer mediated relationships allow new possibilities for collaboration and collective action (Daniel et al, 2017; Nunes, 2014; Zuboff, 2015). However, in an era that celebrates looseness and non-commitment (Lovink and Rossiter, 2018), supporting organisational members to work together through technological infrastructures becomes increasingly challenging.

We are interested in proposals that explore online or technology-enabled collaborative working. The proposal may compare new forms of technological enhanced collaborations with traditional collaborative forms, or may focus on newer, online or technology-enabled collaborations. For example, we would be interested in proposals that examine how organisational actors experience the pressure, the advantages and the tensions emerging from the need to collaborate through technological processes and infrastructures. We are also open to proposals that explore the wider role of technology in collaborative work.

The successful candidate will demonstrate a good understanding of the relevance of the context(s) of their proposed research such as, but not limited to, industry sectors (e.g. healthcare, hospitality and tourism, housing, education), geographic focus (e.g. developed or developing country) and international perspectives (e.g. international agencies collaborating with national/local organisations). We encourage either or both intra and inter-organisational collaborative work contexts,

The final theoretical framework and methodology will reflect the detailed research topic, research questions and strengths of the candidate. It is most likely that a qualitative research approach will be used based on case studies, focus groups, in-depth interviews and participant observation. However, we are open to proposals that incorporate mixed method approaches.

About the supervisors:

Isidora's current research focuses on organisational and inter-organisational settings and follows a practice-based perspective to explore issues, such as identity development, traditional and emergent working designs, working spaces and knowledge creation; and examines their theoretical and practical implications for the management of organisations and collaborative work.

Elizabeth research focuses on the effective use of information systems (IS) by organisations, and includes the identification and realisation of business benefits from IS. She has also undertaken work on inter-organisational systems, the use of boundary objects and more latterly the use of online working by micro, home-based entrepreneurs.

Reference / readings:

- Daniel, E.M.; Hartnett, E. and Meadows, M. (2017), Don't throw rocks from the side-lines: A sociomaterial exploration of organizational blogs as boundary objects. *Information Technology & People*, 30(3): 542-561.
- Kourti, I., Garcia-Lorenzo, L. and Yu, A. (In press). Managing the interactions between multiple identities in inter-organisational collaborations: An identity work perspective. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*. 27(4): 506-519.
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- Ospina, S. M., & Saz-Carranza, A. (2010). Paradox and Collaboration in Network Management. *Administration & Society*, 42, 404-40.
- Vangen, S. & Winchester, N. (2014). Managing cultural diversity. *Public Management Review*, 16 (5), 686-707.
- Zuboff, S. (2015). Big other: Surveillance capitalism and the prospects of an information civilization. *Journal of Information Technology*, 30(1), 75-89.