The 1st International Conference on Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Family Business

CALL FOR PAPERS

Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Family Business in Africa and MENA Region Countries: Opportunities and Challenges

Hosted by the Carthage Business School, University of Tunis Carthage
Tunis, Tunisia, April 16-18, 2020

Conference chairs

Wadid Lamine, Telfer School of Management, University of Ottawa, Canada
Hela Chebbi, ESG, University of Quebec at Montreal, Canada
You are invited to submit your papers to the International Conference on Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Family Business (ICEIFB). This international event will take place on April 16-18, 2020 at the Carthage Business School of the University Tunis Carthage, Tunisia. The conference aims to provide academics, policymakers and practitioners with a valuable forum for discussion and critical analysis of the major issues and challenges related to all areas of Entrepreneurship, Innovation, and Family Business. The ICEIFB is organized by the University Tunis Carthage in collaboration with the University of Quebec at Montreal, the University of Ottawa, the University of Turin, and Paris School of Business.

The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region and African countries become increasingly attractive actors in the global economy. Since the 2008 economic crisis and the Arab Spring, various countries have been trying to transform their economic, cultural and social standards to become more competitive and innovative. These recent transformations have generated a unique, but under explored, context that is full of insights on how to foster innovation and entrepreneurial capacities in these countries (Mellahi et al, 2011; Balakrishnan, 2013).

Nowadays, entrepreneurship represents a key driver for modern economies. Especially, entrepreneurship acts as a crucial enabler for the economic development of the African continent and the Middle East countries. However, the importance of entrepreneurship and its contributions vary according to the socio-economic contexts. Although these countries operate in different environments (social, economic, institutional and technological) and have significant national particularities in some aspects of the entrepreneurial pipeline, yet many similarities exist. Countries in these regions are both facing very similar challenges and have equivalent opportunities. Both regions have the highest youth population shares in the world, as well as the highest rates of youth unemployment. Also, across African and MENA regions, entrepreneurial intentions, too-early entrepreneurship rates and necessity-driven entrepreneurial activities are the highest in the world. Unfortunately, these high levels of enthusiasm are countered by a high number of failed businesses and limited growth potential for those businesses that survive. The obstacles preventing entrepreneurship from prospering range from lack of government support, weak entrepreneurial skills, difficulty in accessing funding, bureaucratic requirements, restrictive and biased regulatory conditions, lack of research and development, corruption, and social constraints.

Therefore, there is an urgent need to build a healthy and strong ecosystem in MENA region and African countries that nurtures, encourages and supports individuals to move on entrepreneurial intentions and actions. In particular, it becomes necessary to deploy in these regions, substantial human, natural, technological and financial assets more efficiently through adopting economic, educational and social policies that create sustained inclusive economic growth and prosperous societies that deliver opportunities to all. A critical aspect of this is for policymakers and experts to focus on establishing a conducive environment in which entrepreneurs and innovators can emerge, compete and growth. Also, there is a need to establish more efficient entrepreneurship education systems, technology transfer programs and business incubation and acceleration mechanisms to increase knowledge of business concepts, gain an entrepreneurial mindset, support nascent entrepreneurs and improve innovative management practices to enable firms to growth. The focus on fostering an entrepreneurship climate should pursue to build and strengthen connections between different players within the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Still, it is important to note that African and MENA region countries are also paying more attention to innovation. According to the Global Competitiveness Indicators, some countries from this region are in the Bloomberg 2019 Innovation Index top innovative 60 countries, such as Tunisia, United Arab of Emirates, Iran, South Africa and Kuwait. However, much effort is still needed to develop innovation and corporate entrepreneurship (Zahra, 2016) in these countries. From the international
perspective, multinational corporations operating in these two regions are developing some strategic agility capabilities (Cunha et al, 2019) to deal with changing local context and be more innovative.

Therefore, this context is on the cusp of a potential entrepreneurship gold rush. It offers opportunities for intra- and inter-regions cooperation. Entrepreneurs and managers in these regions need capital, technology, suppliers and, markets. China, EU and some Arab countries among others, could be strategic partners in providing these essential components to foster entrepreneurial activities. This conference aims to explore various approaches to address entrepreneurship, innovation, and family business practices in Africa and MENA Region countries. Papers may address (but are not limited to) the following issues:

- Entrepreneurship and regional development
- Entrepreneurship and the involvement of the MENA ecosystem
- Entrepreneurship and knowledge management in Africa and MENA countries
- Entrepreneurship and “the rise of modern-day influencer marketing”
- Entrepreneurial universities and entrepreneurship education
- Entrepreneurship and family business management in Africa and MENA countries
- Role of family on new ventures strategies
- Institutional factors on the development of family business in Africa and MENA countries
- Family business performance
- Women entrepreneurs in Africa and MENA countries
- Social Business in Africa and MENA countries
- Entrepreneurship in emerging markets and new economy
- Management best practices in Africa and MENA Region countries
- Digital/technological entrepreneurship and innovation in Africa and MENA Region countries
- Strategic improvisation and agility in the changing contexts of Africa and MENA countries
- Merger and acquisition in Africa and MENA countries
- Multinational corporations’ strategies in Africa and MENA countries
- International entrepreneurship
- Advanced innovative methods and business models in Africa and MENA countries

The conference scope is not limited to these themes. New ideas, theories, outlooks in all areas of Entrepreneurship, Innovation, and Family Business are welcomed!

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Pr. Alain Fayolle
EMLYON Business School, France

Pr. Alistair Anderson
Lancaster University Management School, UK
Submission Guidelines

Please submit your extended abstract or full papers (in PDF files), no later than **February 16, 2020** via the conference website: [https://icmei2020.sciencesconf.org/](https://icmei2020.sciencesconf.org/). All manuscripts will be double blind reviewed.

The first page of your submission must contain the title, author(s) and contact information of the corresponding author. The organizers expect an Extended Abstracts of no more than 3-pages, 1,5-space, maximum 1500-words. An abstract should inform explicitly about the following five issues: Research objective/question; Conceptual development; Methodology; Results (if not a conceptual paper); and Contribution. Please exclude tables, figures and references.

All submissions must be written in English or French.

**Submission Deadlines:**
- February 16, 2020: Submission deadline *(extended abstract and full papers)*
- March 07, 2020: Notification of acceptance/rejection
- March 20, 2020: Registration deadline
- April 16-18, 2020: Event

**Contact us:**
If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us at [EIFB2020@utctunisie.com](mailto:EIFB2020@utctunisie.com)

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• Olivier Toutain, Burgundy School of Business, France
• Merrill Warkentin, Mississippi State University, USA
• Shaker Zahra, University of Minnesota, USA

**Publication Opportunities**

A selection of high-quality papers related to entrepreneurship in Africa and MENA region countries will be considered for publication in a special issue in *Revue Entreprendre & Innover*. Some high-quality selected papers will be published also in *the EuroMed Journal of Business*.

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**CONFERENCES FEES**

The fee includes conference materials, coffee breaks, lunch buffets, and the gala dinner.

- 200 € for academics and professionals (except those located in MENA and African countries)
- 150 € for participants affiliated with institutions located in MENA and African countries
- 50 € for PhD students

**CONFERENCE VENUE**

The conference will be held at the campus of *The University of Tunis Carthage*, located in the Avenue Fattouma Bourguiba, Tunis 2036, Tunisia.