UNIVERSITY OF PARDUBICE
FACULTY OF ECONOMICS AND ADMINISTRATION

CALL FOR CHAPTERS

Book Title: Circular Economy oriented Business Model Innovations: A European Perspective

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Synopsis

In recent years, interest in **Business Model Innovation** (BMI) has increased dramatically (Velter et al., 2020). This expanding interest has led to wide, fragmented, and confused research across various fields, including the innovation management, strategic management, and entrepreneurship literature (Yang et al., 2020). The general definition of a company's business model (BM) defines it as system of interconnected and interdependent activities that determines the way the company 'does businesses with its customers, partners, and vendors (Amis & Zott, 2012). Recently, BMI has received increasing attention in specific areas (e.g. the circular economy, sustainability, servitization, digitization, and social innovation). Due to the importance of these concepts in their individual investigation fields, different 'sub-streams' have emerged (Pieroni et al., 2019).

The **sustainability-oriented BMI** sub-stream has evolved significantly over the past decade and incorporates sustainability principles as guidelines for BM design, adding complexity to the conventional BMI process. On top of generating superior customer value to achieve competitive advantage and capture economic value, it also seeks to contribute positively to society and the environment. On the other hand, currently, the newest concept for the pursuit of global sustainability is a **circular economy** (CE) strategy, while the most important benefit of a more CE-based approach is the possibility of retaining the added value in products for as long as possible, extracting their maximum value and eliminating waste (Smol et al., 2017). Research on **CE-oriented BMI** is even more recent than that on sustainability-oriented BMI but has grown rapidly in the last five years (e.g. Diaz Lopez et al., 2019; Pieroni et al., 2019; Konietzko et al., 2020). In general, in a circular economy, the linear flow of 'resources – products – waste', typical of the traditional business models of companies, is replaced by the pattern 'resources – products – waste – renewable resources' (Urbinati et al., 2017). Moreover, as a response to the increasing pressure on natural resources, CE aims to create multiple types of value, with the ultimate goal of achieving a more resource-effective and efficient economic system. CE-oriented BMI incorporates principles or practices from CE as guidelines for BM design. It aims to boost resource efficiency and effectiveness (by narrowing or slowing energy and resource loops) and ultimately close energy and resource flows by changing approaches to economic value and the interpretation of products.

Cross-agent cooperation and partnerships have gained an important role in the innovation process at the firm and country level, while universities, industries, governments, and civil society are becoming

the engines and core players (agents) of these processes. Cooperation at the University–Industry level allows knowledge flows through multiple channels. It comprises, for example, the exchange of codified academic research results in the form of publications, licensing and patents, or improvements in the quality of research and teaching through learning in the context of application (Franco & Haase, 2015). On the other hand, governments tend to promote research environments (ecosystems) conducive to cooperation between academic researchers and private companies and attempt to push academic researchers toward research and related interactions with industry and society (Boardman, 2009; Oskam et al., 2020). Meanwhile, sustainability has become critical in recent years due to global concern about the impact of business on resources, the environment, and society; the **quadruple-helix** theory further introduces the roles of civil society, media, and the culture-based public (Yun & Liu, 2019).

Innovation ecosystems (IE) gained importance, especially in the last ten years, because they differ from other earlier concepts and approaches (e.g., national and regional innovation systems, innovation clusters, and innovation milieus). IE are more explicitly systemic, show a greater appreciation of the connections among the many innovation actors (cross-agent cooperation), recognize the role of information and communication technologies, emphasise the differentiated roles (or niches) occupied by organizations and industries, and analyse the importance of market forces relative to government (Oh et al., 2016). The IE concept deals with a new role for public authorities, brings new understanding of firms´ performance, and requires a change in how the strategy and the innovation literatures have traditionally linked industry dynamics to firm performance.

However, nowadays, we can see **crucial differences between countries** (Pinho, 2017) and in their innovative ecosystems (e.g. degree of preparedness, networking, availability of infrastructure, functioning public administration, available funding opportunities, trust among stakeholders, and other components of civil society) that create **challenges for future research**. Similarly, we can see a crucial difference between firms and their BMI. The dynamic process of BMI can have different intensities, related to the degree of novelty introduced (i.e. 'new to the firm' or 'new to the industry') and the scope of changes (i.e. individual components or systemic/architectural structure). Moreover, different triggers (internal or external), such as changes in the competitive environment or legislation, can stimulate BM changes (Pieroni et al., 2019). Therefore, there is a need to identify the different practices in innovation environments (ecosystems) of National Innovation Systems with distinctive graduation levels, e.g. advanced (innovation leaders) vs. in development (modest innovators). Most of these differences directly affect the degree of cross-agent interaction within innovation ecosystems and between them and outsiders (e.g. foreign firms, universities, etc.), the diversity of actors, and the relationship rules, which are key elements of these systems (Mathieu & Delai, 2019). Consequently, there is a need to identify existing and effective CE-oriented business models and, based on them, to design a suitable BMI for firms from Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries as well as Inclusiveness Target countries (ITC) that are lagging behind Western European countries, specifically in cases of innovation performance and competitiveness (see below). It is also necessary to identify the roles of governments and universities in these processes and to allow the emergence of equal opportunities for men, women, and young research generations.

From a methodological side of view, the book is open for CE-oriented conceptual papers, case studies or econometric analyses.

As we can see, there are growing challenges in dealing with Business Models Innovations and Innovation Ecosystems, within EU countries, and especially in the growing era of the circular economy that has gained greater attention from governments, industry, and academia (the triple-helix

entities). These issues are becoming fundamental to sustaining societies', firms', and countries' innovation and sustainable competitive advantage.

Important Dates

January 31, 2021: Book Chapter Proposal

February 28, 2021: Accept/Reject Notification

November 30, 2021: Full Chapter Submission

January 31, 2022: Accept/Reject Notification

March 31, 2022: Submission of the final paper

October 31, 2022: Final Print Version Available

Submission Procedure

Chapter proposal submissions are invited from researchers and practitioners on or before January 31, 2021. Proposals should be limited to between 1000-2000 words, explaining the mission and concerns of the chapter and how it fits into the general theme of the book. Only electronic submissions in MS Word format will be considered. Please send your proposal via email to corresponding editor (jan.stejskal@upce.cz). Your submission must be made on or before the due date specified. Submissions will be reviewed in a single-blind manner. Notifications regarding the status of the chapter proposal will be made available to authors by February 28, 2021.