Special Track EBEN AC 2014
Responsible Innovation & Innovation Ethics

Responsible Innovation is an emerging concept to balance economic, socio-cultural and environmental aspects in innovation processes (European Commission 2011). Because technological innovations can contribute significantly to the solution of societal challenges like climate change or the aging of people, but can also have negative societal consequences, it is assumed that social and ethical aspects should be considered during the innovation process. By involving multiple stakeholders in innovation processes at an early stage, "societal actors and innovators become mutually responsive to each other with a view to the (ethical) acceptability, sustainability and societal desirability of the innovation process and its marketable products" (von Schomberg 2013: 63). The consideration of ethical and social aspects during innovation processes will lead not only to technological innovations which are socially acceptable but also socially desirable (cf. Matter 2011). The concept of responsible innovation expresses the ambition to address societal needs, next to the more traditional objectives of innovation like economic growth, profit maximization, competitive advantage etc. Because the concept of responsible innovation is relatively new and still evolving in different directions (cf. Owen et al. 2013; van den Hoven et al. 2013), the ethical implications for the innovation processes of large corporations and SMEs are still under-researched (Blok & Lemmens, 2014).

Waldman and Galvin (2008) for instance claim that responsible leaders combine economic orientations with an extended stakeholder orientation. The business objective shifts to optimizing the economic, social and environmental values in order to bring sustainable value for business and society. Waldman and Siegel (2008) stress, however, that responsibility exists only if there is "a clear and directly foreseeable return on investment". The central problem remains that for the short term, strict cost-benefits analyses are more accurate, but projections tend to become more difficult with respect to responsibility in the long term (Pless, et al. 2012; Blok & Lemmens, 2014). Consequently, the question is raised how companies make decisions and organize their innovation process to the extent it is considered more responsible?

While many innovation processes in the past have been blind to ethical impacts and concerns, the concept of responsible Innovation challenges us to deeply reflect on both personal values and societal norms when engaging with technological innovations (Nathan, 2014). Furthermore, we have to understand how companies deal with moral concerns and how they involve stakeholders in innovation processes in order to generate sustainable value for business and society. In this respect, it is not only necessary to analyse (ethical) decision-making processes of technological innovations at an organizational level, but also the linkages between innovations and their impact at a macro level.

Given the importance of the emerging field of responsible innovation and innovation ethics, we invite papers that discuss and provide insights in the business ethical aspects of responsible innovations and deepen management scholars' and practitioners' understanding of how ethical concerns can effectively be involved in responsible innovation processes. Therefore, we encourage the submission of papers that address the above issues.

Both empirical and conceptual papers are welcome and we strongly encourage multi-disciplinary submissions in areas such as:

- Management
- Innovation Management

- Business Ethics
- Public Administration
- Policy and Organizational Behaviour

References

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Pless N, Maak T, Waldman D. (2012) Different Approaches Toward Doing the Right Thing: Mapping the Responsibility Orientations of Leaders. Academy of Management Perspectives. Vol 26, No 4, p. 51-65.

Van den Hoven, J., Koops, B.J., Romijn, H., Swierstra, T., Doorn, N. (ed.)(2013 *forthcoming) responsible innovation, volume 1: innovative solutions for global issues.* Dordrecht: Springer

Von Schomberg, R. (2013)A vision of responsible research and innovation. In: W. Owen, J. Bessant, M. Heintz (ed.), *Responsible Innovation. Managing the Responsible Emergence of Science and Innovation in Society* Chichester: Wiley, pp. 51-74

Waldman D, Galvin B. (2008) Alternative Perspectives of Responsible Leadership. Organizational Dynamics, Vol 37, p. 327-341.

Waldman D, Siegel D. (2008) Theoretical and Practitioner Letters: Defining the Socially Responsible Leader. Leadership Quarterly, Vol 19, p. 117-131.

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Submissions should be made directly to the organizers, not later than February 28th.