Innovation as a collaborative phenomenon (Powell et al., 1996) has lead to the development of the concept of innovation networks (INs) (Dhanaraj and Parkhe, 2006; Von Hippel, 2007), where actors interact to develop innovations of different nature (Ahuja, 2000; Westerlund and Rajala, 2009): "An innovation network is [about]... the linkages between organizations... in order to create, capture and integrate the many different skills and knowledge needed to develop complex technologies and bring them into the market" (Calia et al., 2007: 427).

The critical sources of innovation, thus, often reside somewhere in a company’s surrounding business network (Björk and Magnuson, 2009). Through co-operation in innovating, firms can access complementary knowledge and share the costs and risks of innovative activities. Innovation networks can therefore be considered as an alternative form of organization in knowledge production.

In these inter-organizational networks, several business actors have valuable impact on the knowledge and innovation creation process (Ramperasad, Quester and Troshani, 2010). Accordingly, innovation tends to result from various interactions among different organizations (Häkansson et al., 2009), often very heterogeneous (Cantù, Corsaro and Shenota, 2011; Mason, 2011) in terms of different industries, goals, organizational structures, views of the surrounding network, roles, and other characteristics. Actors —like companies, intermediaries, research centers, governmental institutions, trade unions, universities, laboratories, technology centers, development organizations, local and international associations— join together to achieve mutually defined goals (Child and Faulkner, 1998). However, their goals can be very diverse and, furthermore, the same actor may try to achieve different goals (Corsaro and Snehota, 2011) in the context of different interaction and innovation processes.

Our Call for Papers is aimed at exploring how the features of business actors impact the innovations generated in interactions in networks. The topic of how such different actors confront their goals and how this impacts on the process of generation, adoption, and diffusion of an innovation is of particular interest.

Some specific, but not exclusive, research questions are the following:

- How do different business actors’ goals impact innovations generated in networks?
- How do these goals combine and co-exist in the development, adoption and diffusion of innovation? How do they address innovation-related processes?
- Does the interaction among actors with heterogeneous goals lead to certain resource interfaces to develop more than others?
- How do different goals co-exist in a business actor and how do they affect the different innovation processes it is involved into?
- Are there any patterns in how actors’ goals and the innovation networks change over time?
Submissions of papers

Papers submitted must not have been published, accepted for publication, or presently be under consideration for publication with any other journal. Submissions should be approximately 6,000-8,000 words in length. Submissions to the Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing must be made using the ScholarOne ManuscriptCentral system. For more details, please visit: www.emeraldinsight.com/jbim.htm and consult the author guidelines. Suitable articles will be subjected to a double-blind review. Hence authors should not identify themselves in the body of the paper. Submission deadline: 30 November, 2012. The best papers from the 28th IMP Conference – Special Track Combining the Social and Technological Aspects of Innovation: Relationships and Networks – will also be selected and invited for submission to this Special Issue.

Special Issue Editors

Daniela Corsaro, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, daniela.corsaro@unicatt.it
Chiara Cantù, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, chiara.cantu@unicatt.it
Annalisa Tunisini, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, annalisa.tunisini@unicatt.it

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