

Call for papers for the first Emerging Discourse Incubator: Research where the focal actor in the network is not a for-profit firm

The topic for JSCM's first [emerging discourse incubator \(EDI\)](#) will be research where the focal actor in the network is **not** a for-profit firm. The goal is to incubate a discourse where organizations such as NGOs, regulators, and the like are viewed as managers of their own supply networks, rather than as “non-traditional” members of the networks of others.

Our understanding of supply chains has broadened a great deal since 1999 when JSCM evolved from being a purchasing journal to a supply chain journal. Part of our increased understanding is that while a supply chain is a useful metaphor, value is provided via a network (Borgatti and Li, 2009; Choi and Dooley, 2009). These networks are complex systems that also contain members whose main motivation is not profit maximization (Carter, Rogers and Choi, 2015; Pagell and Wu, 2009).

However, with the exception of humanitarian logistics, research in supply chain management is almost always conducted with a for-profit firm as the focal actor in the network: typically with the explicit aim of increasing this focal actor's profits. This is a major oversight since “non-traditional” actors such as NGOs also manage supply chains and many academic disciplines study supply chains from perspectives other than maximizing profits for one actor in the network (Pagell and Shevchenko, 2014; Rodríguez et al., 2016).

Our contention is that supply chain management practice and theory have value for all members of the network. As a discipline we need to expand our discourse to recognize that these other network members also manage supply chains. For example, Rodríguez et al., (2016) show that NGOs can use traditional supply chain management practices to alleviate poverty.

Rodríguez et al., (2016) also note that NGOs and the like with their different motivations and resources would be expected to develop unique practices relative to for-profit firms. Research needs to explore this possibility both to improve the management of these actors' networks and because these practices could potentially enable for-profit firms to achieve sustainability goals.

Extant research almost exclusively addresses the supply network from a limited perspective. The goal of this EDI is to expand our knowledge so that the SCM field is of value to all organizations trying to manage a supply network. Finally, while we are explicit in calling for research where the focal actors are non-profits, we note that these networks can and often will contain for-profits.

We will consider all research that addresses supply chains from these alternative perspectives, that also advances JSCM's mission to be the journal of choice among supply chain scholars across disciplines, by attracting high-quality, high-impact behavioral research focusing on theory building and empirical methodologies. The potential focal actors include, but are not limited to:

- NGOs
- Social ventures, B-corporations and other organizations for whom profitability matters, but it is not the primary goal

- Regulators and other governmental actors
- Co-ops and other collectives
- The communities and natural systems where for-profit ventures operate

Submissions might answer questions such as:

- When and how can traditional SCM practices be adopted when the focal actor in the network is not motivated primarily by profit?
- What unique / presently unknown practices do these actors use to achieve their goals? Could these practices enable firms primarily motivated by profits to achieve sustainability goals?
- Are the networks these actors construct different from the networks constructed by for-profits? Does this have implications for effectiveness?
- How does a focal actor with limited financial resources govern its network; especially a network that contains either powerful for profit entities and or organizations with different motivations?

All papers published in JSCM are expected to make contributions to theory and we envisage that exploring these alternative focal actors will offer rich opportunities to elaborate on existing theories or build new theories. At a minimum, by expanding research to consider new actors all papers should be able to explicate boundary conditions, and hopefully most submissions will be able to go much further.

Timeline:

June 2017: Initial call for submissions

June 2017 - December 2018: Submissions to EDI as well as regular submissions are welcomed.

January 2018 - Invited papers expected to appear on-line to start the discourse.

January 2018-December 2018: As papers related to the EDI are accepted they will be published on line.

Please direct queries to any of JSCMs co-editors Mark Pagell (mark.pagell@ucd.ie), Brian Fugate (bfugate@walton.uark.edu), or Barbara Flynn (bbflynn@iu.edu).

Borgatti, S.P. and Li, X., 2009. On social network analysis in a supply chain context. *Journal of Supply Chain Management*, 45(2), 5-22.

Carter, C.R., Rogers, D.S. and Choi, T.Y., 2015. Toward the theory of the supply chain. *Journal of Supply Chain Management*, 51(2), 89-97.

Choi, T. Y., & Dooley, K. J. (2009). Supply networks: Theories and models. *Journal of Supply Chain Management*, 45(3), 25–26.

Pagell, M. and Wu, Z., 2009. Building a more complete theory of sustainable supply chain management using case studies of 10 exemplars. *Journal of supply chain*

management, 45(2), 37-56.

Pagell, M. and Shevchenko, A., 2014. Why research in sustainable supply chain management should have no future. *Journal of supply chain management*, 50(1), 44-55.

Rodríguez, J.A., Giménez Thomsen, C., Arenas, D. and Pagell, M., 2016. NGOs' Initiatives to Enhance Social Sustainability in the Supply Chain: Poverty Alleviation through Supplier Development Programs. *Journal of Supply Chain Management*, 52(3), 83-108.