

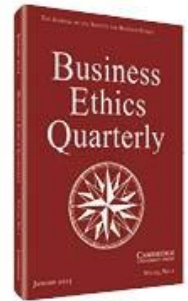
CALL FOR WORKSHOP INTEREST

A paper development workshop for the *Business Ethics Quarterly* special issue on

The Challenges and Prospects of Deliberative Democracy for Corporate Sustainability and Responsibility

Guest Editors:

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To help authors prepare manuscripts for submission to the special issue (details below), a paper development workshop will be held during the Society for Business Ethics (SBE) annual meeting in Boston in August 2019. Authors are invited to present and discuss their working papers during the workshop.

To be considered for the workshop, please send your working paper (full papers as well as short papers up to 3,000 words including references are acceptable) to Maximilian Schormair (maximilian.schormair@uni-hamburg.de) by **June 15, 2019**.

Presentation at the workshop does not guarantee acceptance of the paper for publication in *Business Ethics Quarterly*, and submission of a paper to or participation in the workshop is not a precondition for submission to the special issue.

SPECIAL ISSUE CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

The Challenges and Prospects of Deliberative Democracy for Corporate Sustainability and Responsibility

This is an abbreviated version of the call.

The full call for submissions is here: <https://doi.org/10.1017/beq.2019.2>

OVERVIEW:

Based on the seminal insight that legitimate political decisions need to be connected to a communicative exchange of reasons between the affected parties, the concept of deliberative democracy (Curato, Dryzek, Ercan, Hendriks, & Niemeyer, 2017) has received growing attention over the past years in business ethics as well as in management and organization studies. While the so-called “systemic turn” in deliberative thinking captured the attention of many political scientists (Dryzek, 2016; Owen & Smith, 2015; Parkinson & Mansbridge, 2012; Warren, 2012), business ethicists as well as management scholars discuss the merits of a democratization of corporate governance (Goodman & Arenas, 2015; Scherer, 2015; Schneider & Scherer, 2015; Stansbury, 2009). Reinvigorating past research on organizational and workplace democracy

(Harrison & Freeman, 2004; Landemore & Ferreras, 2015), Battilana et al. (2018) argue that deliberative forms of corporate governance are particularly relevant for so-called “multi-objective organizations” (Mitchell, Weaver, Agle, Bailey, & Carlson, 2016). These organizations reject monistic notions of stakeholder value (Harrison & Wicks, 2013) and aim for multiple objectives, such as financial, social, and environmental objectives simultaneously. Starting from the assumption that deliberative decision-making processes can foster the integration of these sometimes contradicting values, deliberative democracy appears to be particularly suitable for sustainability-oriented organizations. However, the implementation of deliberative democracy within such organizations is neither without obstacles (King & Land, 2018) nor without instrumental as well as normative shortcomings (Hielscher, Beckmann, & Pies, 2014; Johnson, 2006).

The contribution of deliberative democracy for conceptualizing the growing role of corporations as global governance actors, on the other hand, has been intensively discussed within political CSR research. Several political CSR scholars draw on Habermasian notions of deliberative democracy and advocate stakeholder deliberations (Marti & Scherer, 2016; Patzer, Voegtlin, & Scherer, 2018) – often organized in the form of “multi-stakeholder initiatives” (MSIs). MSIs have been theorized as particularly viable global governance instruments to accommodate different stakeholder perspectives through deliberative processes (Gilbert, Rasche, & Waddock, 2011; Mena & Palazzo, 2012). For deliberative political CSR scholars, MSIs should be structured in a way that fosters mutual understanding through deliberative communicative exchanges between affected stakeholders to “facilitat[e] positive and imped[e] negative business contributions to society” (Scherer, 2018: 394).

However, this approach has received ample criticism in the literature (Frynas & Stephens, 2015; Hussain & Moriarty, 2018; Mäkinen & Kourula, 2012; Whelan, 2012). Recent research raises serious doubts about the efficacy of MSIs as an approach to democratic global self-regulation of business, pointing to the co-optation of sustainability goals by corporate financial interests (Moog, Spicer, & Böhm, 2015). Levy et al. (2016) contend that private regulatory regimes such as MSIs evolve through dynamics of contestation and accommodation between its stakeholders that are driven by political power dynamics that reach well beyond the conceptual boundaries of consensus-oriented deliberations. Other scholars, in turn, criticize deliberative political CSR research from an agonistic perspective (Dawkins, 2015) arguing that the deliberative approach “will serve to effectively silence dissent, making it easier for dominant groups to claim others are being *unreasonable*” (Brown & Dillard, 2013: 181, emphasis in original). More recently, Sabadoz and Singer (2017: 196) contend that the concept of deliberative democracy is “ill-suited” for corporations since in their view “even if pursued genuinely, corporations themselves are poor venues for deliberation, due to how they are situated in, and structured by, the market system.” Mehrpouya and Willmott (2018: 731) in turn criticize the dominance of deliberative approaches within political CSR research for “accomodat[ing] ’apolitical’ research methodologies and perpetuat[ing] a neoliberal orientation”. In fact, the very idea of promoting the concept of deliberative democracy for business practice is exposed to the twofold risk of instrumentalization and commodification (Lee & Romano, 2013).

Against this background, this call for submissions invites for consideration papers that discuss the challenges and prospects of deliberative democracy for corporate sustainability and

responsibility. A list of specific possible research questions in several domains is found in the full call for submissions.

SUBMISSION EXPECTATIONS AND PROCESS:

To address these questions, we welcome a broad range of submissions, including normative, philosophical research as well as theoretical or empirical (quantitative or qualitative) social-scientific research. We encourage contributions that make use of, and contribute to, such disciplines as organization studies, philosophy, political science, sociology, economics, management, legal theory, and cultural studies. Papers are expected to make a clear theoretical contribution to the respective stream of research that is being addressed.

Manuscripts must be prepared in compliance with the journal's instructions for contributors: <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/business-ethics-quarterly/information/instructions-contributors>. Submissions that do not conform to these instructions, in terms of manuscript style and referencing, will not be reviewed.

Manuscripts should be submitted after December 1, 2019, and no later than January 31, 2020, using BEQ's online submission system: <https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/beq>. When submitting be sure to choose the option that indicates that the submission is for this special issue.

MORE INFORMATION:

For further information on the special issue, contact guest coeditor Maximilian Schormair at maximilian.schormair@uni-hamburg.de.

For information on the BEQ more generally, contact editor in chief Bruce Barry at EditorBEQ@Vanderbilt.edu or visit the journal's website at www.cambridge.org/beq.

References are found in the full call for submissions.