

Dear Colleague,

The **Journal of New Business Ideas & Trends** is a multidisciplinary journal with a broad base of content and style. It publishes original high quality papers written by both academics and practitioners, which capture leading edge developments, both in practice and theory. Authors may take a theoretical or an empirical approach, using either quantitative or qualitative methods. The Journal aims to be an international forum for disseminating vital information and knowledge regarding new business thinking and is published by the Australian Business Education Research Association.

Special Issue: Call for papers on a special issue on **MetaCapitalism, Innovation and Society** to be published in 2017. Papers should be sent to the Special Issue Editor Dr George Mickhail at george@uow.edu.au

CALL FOR PAPERS

MetaCapitalism, Innovation and Society

The rise of neoliberal regimes brought economic policies that were business-friendly, with the deregulation of mainly labour markets and relinquishing of the state regulatory powers to self-regulation, which facilitated outsourcing/offshoring, and the utilisation of the new information and telecommunication technologies.

The global free-market economy is driven by an efficiency imperative, and accounting, as the primary means of measuring¹ corporate efficiency, no doubt privileges the efficient market hypothesis. This very obsession with the ideal of 'efficiency' by corporations, through deploying 'internal' efficiency change strategies, such as MetaCapitalism (since its early adoption² in the year or so just before the beginning of the new millennium, given the early promises of Internet technologies), may render corporations unstable and increase their exposure to market risks.

MetaCapitalism is a term coined in 2000 by the largest accounting and consulting firm in the world, PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) Global, to describe their manifesto for 21st Century companies and markets. MetaCapitalism describes a 'generic recipe' (or should I say a 'universal recipe', given the wide influence and global reach

1 Corporations raise Capital to fund Assets (Balance Sheet), then they utilise those Assets in the course of their economic activity to generate Revenue while incurring Expenses (Income Statement), with the results of their economic activity for the year (Profit or Loss) borne by the Owners of Capital (in the Balance Sheet). In essence then, accounting measures how well or 'efficiently' a corporation had allocated its resources.

2 It is my firm view that cumulative efficiency transformations of corporations over a long period of time, which supposedly made them much leaner without any corporate slack, only made them extremely fragile, as they were unable to cushion any unexpected large-scale market volatility.

of the Big 4³ accounting and consulting fraternity) for corporate transformations to exploit the efficiency gains from the composite of political, economic and technological changes.

This special issue aims to examine this phenomenon, so as to bring the central conflict in resource allocation to the fore. The conflict is between two diametrically opposed systems. That of *closed* (internal) organisational systems mired in opaque and oppressive managerial machinations of biased control and manipulations to 'efficiently' allocate resources, and the more democratic exchanges of *open* (external) free market systems in resource allocation. This forcible *internal* resource allocation, according to some artificial measure of efficiency, like MetaCapitalism, inhibits internal systems, making them extremely fragile and susceptible to 'external' *Black Swans*⁴, while exhibiting no visible risks.

This is not only bad for companies and harmful for the economy, but also devastating for the workers, their families and the wider community. In doing so, are corporations renegeing on their social contract⁵– if ever they were party to it?

The suppressed voices of those devastated workers, and the immeasurable societal angst and misery experienced by their families and communities, is one of this special issue main motivations to unveil the fallacy lurking beneath highly questionable accounting practices. The role of these firms in pushing, at all cost, a particular neoliberal agenda of changes that promotes innovation, outsourcing and

3 PricewaterhouseCoopers, Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu, Ernst Young and KPMG (in order of their total revenues for 2015) comprise the 'remaining' Big 4 accounting firms, after the spectacular fall of Arthur Andersen (Accenture is the newly formed firm by its previous partners and employees) after being found guilty for its role in the Enron debacle in 2001. The Big 4 firms' operate in over 120 countries with total cumulative revenue in 2016 of US\$ 128 bn, placing them in the top 30% of the world or 60th place out of 200 countries, which was the equivalent to the total GDP of the bottom 55 countries. Their size and reach allows them more access to the corridors of power, especially with strategies ranging from donations to political parties and employing ex-politicians (such as, the ex-Queensland Premier, Wayne Goss as chairman of Deloitte and the ex-Victorian Premier, Steve Bracks, at KPMG) for influence, and ensuring their representation on professional standards boards & market regulatory bodies.

4 Nassim Nicholas Taleb (2007) defines Black Swans, as those statistically unpredictable large-scale external events, like the rise of the Internet, and the September 11th, 2001 attacks, and the global financial crisis of 2008.

5 The idea of a 'social contract' implies that the people surrender their sovereignty to an authority (usually a representative authority of the people, like government), in return for social order through the rule of law (determined by the representative authority of the people). However, the rise of multinational corporations that operated on a global scale brought (through political campaign finance in developed nations and corruptive practices, such as bribes, in underdeveloped nations) economic and social policies, such as globalisation, which favoured those corporations. Those corporations cultivated and brought politicians into power, who mastered neoliberal populism, like Thatcher in Britain, Regan in the USA and Howard in Australia. The neoliberal ideologues maximised the role of the private business sector in determining the political and economic priorities of the state, and hence subverting the social contract. This subversion of the social contract implied that the people surrender their sovereignty to the free market in return for their freedom to participate through the rule of market laws of demand and supply. The ideals of a social contract as envisioned by Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau were undermined by the rules of demand and supply, with corporate participation in society, has become increasingly unjust.

decapitalisation, constitutes the main tenets⁶ of MetaCapitalism. These changes are mostly beneficial to the owners of capital, but not necessarily the workers, seem to go against the very ideal of a free market economy that it purports to promote and a real threat to our democracy.

This call for papers attempts to respond to such important socio-economic and political changes with critique supported by rigorous applied analytics. Submissions are expected to either:

- (a) Examine the impact of MetaCapitalism on the fundamentals of public and not-for-profit institutions over a 5 – 10 year period, or
- (b) Examine the impact of MetaCapitalism on the fundamentals and market information of all (or a significant sample) of the corporations operating over a 5 - 10 year period in ONE of the industry sectors (ASX200, DOWJONES, FTSE, etc.), like: Financials, Materials, Real Estate, Health Care, Industrials, Consumer Staples, Consumer Discretionary, Energy, Telecommunication Services, Utilities, and Information Technology.

The aim of the analytics is to assist the researchers contextualise their critique of the MetaCapitalism doctrine within regards to Performance measurement, Governance, Sustainability, Creativity, Ethics, Democracy – to name a few.

Guidelines for authors

All submissions should be sent to the Special Issue Editor Dr George Mickhail at george@uow.edu.au

The submission deadline for receipt of papers is 30 August 2017. Papers will not be considered for the special issue if they are submitted after this date.

Submissions must adhere to the format and style guidelines of the Journal of New Business Ideas and Trends (see <http://www.inbit.org/Notes.html>).

Submissions will be subject to an initial screening by the Guest editor of the Special Issue and papers which fall outside the scope of the Special Issue or which are considered unlikely to be completed in time for the Special Issue will be desk rejected. The remaining papers will then be subject double blind refereeing.

There is NO submission fee.

It is intended that the special issue will be published in December 2017.

⁶ Innovation enabled corporations to transform their demand and supply trade exchanges with their customers and suppliers through the Internet and this enabled (better controlled) outsourcing of non-core and core activities, which naturally eliminated the need for capital resources (decapitalisation), like PP&E (plant, property and equipment) and their long-term financing liabilities (long-term debt), let alone all their associated expenses, within the corporation.

All accepted papers must have originality in their contributions and have attained the high research standard of the Journal of New Business Ideas and Trends.

The Joint-Editors of the New Business Ideas and Trends will exercise an oversight role prior to publication.

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Important dates

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