

Editorial: special issues in Business History

With three to four special issues per year on average, Business History has become the main publisher of special issues in the field. The editorial team that took up work in 2014 is keen to build on this recent development which offers guest editors the opportunity to highlight new research and emerging research areas involving any specialised topic of relevance to the field of business history. Moreover, it is important to all members of the scholarly community and the journal's readership that articles in special issues are often among the most heavily read and cited in the journal. The purpose of this editorial is to outline how we wish to encourage and develop special issues, focusing first of all on giving examples of the kinds of topics we are most interested in, and secondly, to indicating the process, general requirements and expectations involved in producing a special issue.

The subject of the special issue

The editorial team is interested in proposals for special issues in any area of business history, but we are especially keen to attract proposals from interdisciplinary research domains that study business and management employing a long-term perspective and which consider the influence of external as well as of internal factors in the evolution of entrepreneurship, management and business. Proposals along these lines from scholars from any discipline, including but not limited to management studies, economics, sociology, political science and science and technology studies, are most welcome.

As long as there is a clear focus to a proposed special issue and it tackles a subject, theory, method or scholarly debate of significance to business historians, we are open to any proposal. But, as an indication of the types of topics we are interested in, we provide some examples of some themes that have recently been or are in the process of being published and some emerging research areas that would be of particular interest to us and our readers. Both are indicative of the range of themes and topics that can be explored.

Examples of recently published, soon to be published, and recently commissioned special issues include the following: **New business history? (Business History 57:1 [2015]) Tripartism in comparative and historical perspective (forthcoming) Evolutionary economics and business history (forthcoming) The history of beer and the brewing industry (forthcoming) Business longevity (forthcoming) Business groups around the world (forthcoming) The evolution of embeddedness and adaptation of East Asian businesses in Europe (recently commissioned) Business and global environmental history (recently commissioned) Rhine capitalism (recently commissioned) Entrepreneurial freedom of action during the 'Third Reich': New perspectives on a current debate (recently commissioned)**

This is just a taste of the range of topics that are being covered in the journal. In addition, we encourage special issue proposals on emerging and evolving research themes that include such areas as:

Continuity and change in sources and methods in business history Varieties of capitalism and the history of capitalism in the world International business and emerging markets throughout history Green business Gender and business The business of education or health care Business and the labour market Ethics in business Consumers in business history The history of the Third Sector Crisis and renewal in business history Teaching methods in business history World business history

Process, general requirements and expectations

Process

Our policy is that a special issue must include: a substantial introduction outlining the state of the field in the topic being explored and potential fruitful areas for future research; and between four and seven research articles. We welcome either of two types of special issue proposal: (1) one involving a Call for Papers; or (2) a guest-edited issue involving invited articles. The Call for Papers route may be the most useful way to attract significant research from distant institutions and countries unknown to the responsible Guest Editors of a

Special Issue. Guest edited issues with invited articles may be the most useful way to disseminate outstanding research based on workshops or conference panels. In both cases the article proposals must be submitted through ScholarOne, the journal's electronic platform, and must be peer reviewed before final acceptance.

To be accepted as a special issue of Business History, a proposal must be submitted to the Executive Editor, currently Ray Stokes (BHEditorStokes@glasgow.ac.uk), following the guidelines indicated below. The Executive Editor and Associate Editors will then consider the proposal. Here it should be noted that topics of particular importance or timeliness might merit a double issue in exceptional circumstances, but that any proposed double issue must involve a Call for Papers. Furthermore, there is no guarantee of publication of any special issue if a minimum number of high quality articles is not forthcoming.

General requirements

At least two Guest Editors must be involved in any special issue, and they should be in principle from different institutions. The proposal guidelines are below. Special issues will in all but the most exceptional circumstances be a maximum of 60,000 words. The minimum number of articles for a special issue is four high-quality articles plus an introduction (up to 12,000 words for each, although the articles can also be as short as 6,000 words each on average), and a maximum of seven articles plus an introduction (on average up to 7,500 words each, although the average can be a minimum of 6,000). Within these limits, any given article may be up to 12,000 words including tables, graphs and references. The introductory article must be written by the guest editors and provide an informed analysis of the key questions, debates, and literature about the topic of the special issue as well as a discussion of avenues for future research. It should shed light on the importance of the topic and be aimed at attracting readers. In relation to this latter point: in order to attract a wide audience, the special issue will in all but the most exceptional circumstances be the result of cooperation across institutions or countries. Any exception to this rule will have to be carefully justified by the guest editors, and authorised by the Business History editorials team.

How to propose a special issue

We invite special issue proposals along the lines sketched out above that conform to this structure:

Presentation of the topic and questions to be addressed. Justification and relevance of the topic. One to two pages providing a short synthesis of existing debates and the state of literature in the field, research gaps in that field and how the special issue will contribute to fill these gaps. This part should include references. An indication of the mechanisms to be used to attract high quality articles. This might include a Call for Papers or an indication of invited contributions emerging from specialised workshops or sessions in conferences or congresses. Acknowledgment that all the articles proposed for the special issue, including the introductory essay, have not previously been published and are not under consideration elsewhere. Acknowledgement that all articles will be submitted through the ScholarOne electronic platform for the journal in order to be peer-reviewed before acceptance for publication. A proposed timetable with deadlines for completion of key milestones, which is to be monitored by the Guest Editors in close coordination with the member of the editorial team assigned to oversee progress on the special issue. The timetable should generally include: the date when a Call for Papers (if relevant) will be published or the dates of a workshop or session in the case of invited articles; the deadline for authors to submit the first version of their article to the ScholarOne website for peer-review evaluation (including the introductory article, which will be handled by the Associate Editor in charge of the special issue); the expected deadline for completion of the peer review process; and a suggested date for final publication. Please note that the final decision on this publication date will be in the hands of the editorial team, who need to take into account other articles accepted for publication in the journal and other special issues. Guest Editor details, including names, academic affiliation, address and email, accompanied by a short biography with indication of most important research conducted by guest

editors, and citations for the last two or three relevant publications related to the topic of the proposed special issue.

Guest Editors' Duties

Guest editors must:

- Send a special issue proposal to the Executive Editor (BHEditorStokes@glasgow.ac.uk), following the General Requirements outlined above, which will then be assessed by the editorial team.

If it is accepted:

- Follow the guidelines outlined above once the proposal has been accepted and communicate regularly with the Associate Editor assigned to oversee the production of the special issue.
- Prepare a Call for Papers to be published on the website of Business History if this special issue route is chosen and accepted.
- Instruct the authors to submit their manuscripts online by the due date to the ScholarOne electronic platform: <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/fbsh>. Authors should be aware that they must clearly indicate the name of the Special Issue for which it is submitting by using the drop-down menu for special issues in the system.
- Communicate closely with authors and with the Associate Editor assigned to oversee the special issue in order to stick to the proposed timetable for completion.
- Make decisions on submitted articles as soon as possible after reviewer reports are received which will then be forwarded to the Associate Editor assigned to oversee the special issue for final scrutiny.
- Clarify any author queries in relation to decisions on their article.
- Provide guidance to authors so as to convey the three elements that are of outstanding relevance for the editorial team of Business History to ensure high quality, i.e.: (1) that they must establish a dialogue with some of the debates outlined by the Guest Editors in their special issue proposal; (2) that they must have an introduction in which there is a clear question to be addressed, a clear theoretical framework which guides the hypothesis of the article, a clear presentation of sources and methodology and conclusions at the end that clearly link the empirical findings with the theoretical framework guiding the research indicated in the introduction; and (3) that they must have a historical approach in relation to sources, hypothesis, debates, findings and conclusions.
- Ensure that all authors understand that Business History will not accept articles that engage in plagiarism in any form, whether it involves extracts from previously published texts, graphs or tables, even if these materials are the author's. Contributions must be original and not be considered for publication in another journal or book.
- Ensure that authors who are not English native speakers are aware that they are responsible for having a native English copyeditor check and correct their texts before final acceptance. The journal does not perform English copyediting except for minor typos or mistakes, although it is possible for the publishers to arrange for copyediting. This is, however, a service that involves a fee, which must be met by the author.
- Provide all the authors with the journal's style guidelines, before they write their articles, and make sure they have used these guidelines before the article is submitted for peer evaluation.

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