



Call for Papers

Management and Organization Review

Research Frontiers Conference and Paper Development Workshop
'China's Outward Foreign Direct Investment to Africa'

September 9–12, 2021

Local Host: Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria

Conference Organizers and Program Committee

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Co-Sponsors

Asia Pacific Studies Institute, Duke University

Centre for International Business at the University of Leeds (CIBUL), University of Leeds

China Business Studies Initiative, University of San Francisco

China Europe International Business School (CEIBS), Africa (Ghana Campus)

Technology and Management Centre for Development (TMCD), Oxford University

Submission Deadline (full paper): May 5, 2021

Conference Format

The conference will follow a hybrid format.

- There will be 4-hour sessions online on each of the four days of the conference during the American morning, African/European afternoon, and Asian evening. That is when paper presentations and panels will take place.
- For delegates who attend in person, there will be three experiential 'learning journeys' in the South African morning. For example, the ties between South Africa and China go back to the discovery of gold. Chinese laborers worked on the gold mines – and a small group stayed. One learning journey will explore that history.
- Paper development sessions will be done in person or online as per the need.

Delegates will receive notification that papers are accepted by June 9. Deadline for confirming participation is June 30.

However, delegates have until July 20 to decide whether to attend in person or online. The conference registration fee is US\$ 100 whether delegates attend in person or online. Delegates will need to pay for travel, accommodation, and meals if they decide to attend in person.

CALL FOR PAPERS

Chinese investment is transforming the African landscape. Pot-holed roads are being replaced by double-lane highways. In urban areas, Chinese-built office complexes, hotels, and shopping malls are an increasingly common sight and in even remote rural areas, Chinese traders are selling Chinese-made essentials to locals. Africa is the last frontier to offer abundant investment opportunities to an economy with national capabilities in executing large-scale infrastructure projects.

FDI projects in Africa are an integral aspect of the Bridge and Belt globalization national initiative. It contributes to maintaining employment of Chinese workers in strategically important infrastructure industries, an important national consideration as China balances the transition to a service economy, increased domestic consumption, spiralling domestic debt and an ageing population. China, being the largest foreign investor in Africa, has attracted mixed views from inside and outside Africa for its investment on this continent and has been criticized by Western Countries for neo-colonialization behavior.

China OFDI into Africa helps create new opportunities given current environment in China and is taking place in an era during which global economic activity is transforming. A range of pressures suggest increasing de-globalization that will transform global trade, give rise to more regional trade compacts, and redefine global value chains. This highlights the huge opportunities for the development of technologically less advanced economies – markets.

European and American multinationals have been slow to take advantage of investment opportunities in Africa. Large-scale infrastructure development requires huge capital investment financing. The Western developed economies are either not willing or not able to match China OFDI policies for such projects. Even when financing can be arranged, there has been a lack of interest and the quite recent colonial history complicates the relationship between Africa and especially European countries.

This does not mean that reported concerns of neo-colonialism and power dependencies are absent from the China/Africa relationship. Facing the pressures of economic development and projected population growth, many African countries are attracted to the top-down state capitalism approach exemplified by the history of China since opening up in 1978 and by President Xi's aspirations for China to challenge the dominance of the US. Chinese FDI into Africa also reinforces an affinity between countries that question the efficacy of liberal democratic institutional configurations in how they govern. In an era of increasing populism, rising forces of de-globalization and the ratcheting economic competition between the US and China, such an affinity has far-reaching implications.

The MOR Research Frontiers Conference on China OFDI to Africa is therefore seeking papers that provide insight into why and how Chinese FDI into Africa is playing out. Especially welcome are scholars whose research can contribute to elucidate how Africans understand Chinese FDI on their continent, as well as exploration of the Chinese perspective. The conference seeks to feature rigorous scholarly contributions, including micro perspectives of how individuals experience Africa/China interactions, large-scale macro perspectives on the phenomenon, conceptual contributions, and qualitative case studies. But beyond that, we do not wish to impose specific themes or research questions.

SPECIAL ISSUE

Guest Editors

Helena Barnard,¹ Abdoukadre Ado,² Peter Ping Li,³ Stephan Manning,⁴ and Michael A. Witt⁵

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A special issue of MOR focused on exploring the history, experience, and implications of Chinese FDI into Africa is already in process. This *Management and Organization Review* research frontiers conference and paper development workshop will also feed into that special issue. Given the wide range of topics, disciplinary perspectives, empirical approaches, and the nature of the questions raised by Chinese FDI into Africa, the hope is to attract scholars from a range of disciplines such as international business, political science, corporate strategy, organization theory, cross cultural research, social movements, and others.

Exemplary contributions from the conference will be considered for the special issue.

Submission Information

Please submit full papers by May 5, 2021 via the MOR submission website by selecting the 'China Outward FDI in Africa' special issue designation: <https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/mor>

It is important that all papers conform to MOR's submission requirements.