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Call for Papers—Management Science Special Issue on Business and Its Interrelationship with Democratic Resilience, Geopolitics, and Society in a Time of Change

Caroline Flammer, Neil Malhotra, Christoph Loch

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Call for Papers—*Management Science* Special Issue on Business and Its Interrelationship with Democratic Resilience, Geopolitics, and Society in a Time of Change

Department Editors: Caroline Flammer,^a Neil Malhotra,^b Christoph Loch^c

^aColumbia University, New York, New York 10027; ^bStanford University, Stanford, California 94305; ^cIESE, 08034 Barcelona, Spain

Contact: caroline.flammer@sipa.columbia.edu (CF); neilm@stanford.edu (NM); cloch@iese.edu (CL)

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In the 2020s, the business environment is changing faster and more profoundly than at any time since the middle of the previous century. To name some prominent trends:

- Some historically democratic regimes are showing signs of moving toward autocracy. When this happens, it may test the robustness of the rule of law, of transparency of economic transactions, and of property rights; this is also influencing global economic activity.
- Increased geopolitical tensions among countries imperil peace and international collaboration with negative implications for firms' international operations and supply chains.
- Corporate lobbying, campaign contributions, and other forms of corporate political activity play an ever-increasing role in shaping public policy.
- Climate change and nature loss are being downgraded in priority by many countries with implications for the environment, society, and business.
- In some countries, the education system (school curricula and university research) is screened for conformance to "sanctioned" topics.
- The dependence of the global economy on a small number of powerful businesses seems to be rising, for example, in digital innovations, computing hardware, and a few critical natural resources.

Many of these trends increase the exposure to systemic risks for business, endangering their thriving, growing, and successful integration in their societies. What are the implications of these trends for the private sector? Do companies need to worry about these changes? More academic research is needed to better understand the impact of the outlined trends on business.

In addition, what is the impact of the private sector on these trends? What role do private sector organizations play, within their governance limits, to positively or negatively contribute to the business climate and address societal challenges? What are the trade-offs and potential backlash by the government that companies may face when doing so?

So far, academic literature across business, economics, and political science has largely left these questions, which sit at the intersection of these disciplines, unaddressed. This is what this special issue aims to do: invite scholars from multiple disciplines to show evidence on business and its interrelationship with democratic resilience, geopolitical tensions, and societal changes. We invite perspectives from business studies (as represented in *Management Science*) as well as political economy and political science. Cross-disciplinary collaboration is welcome and encouraged.

With a deadline of **Wednesday, October 1, 2025**, we invite five-page detailed paper proposals (that answer a set of questions specified below). The proposals will be given feedback by **mid December 2025**. Then, full papers will be invited with a deadline of **Wednesday, June 15, 2026**. By **July 15, 2026**, successful papers will be invited one revision (with a deadline of **Monday, September 1, 2026**) for a workshop on **Friday, September 18, 2026**, before we proceed to publication.

Papers should have the ambition to offer important insights to businesses about how they might be affected by the societal trends listed at the outset and to make tangible suggestions to businesses about how

they can make a positive contribution to mitigate or safeguard against these trends.

Proposal Structure

The following is an explanation of the questions that the five-page proposals need to answer so the editorial board can select a subset for feedback and further development:

1. What is the research question?
2. What is the research gap and contribution to the academic literature?
3. Why is it important for businesses and policy makers to close this research gap?
4. What data and research method will be used?
5. What are the anticipated results?
6. What are the implications for businesses, policy, and society?