European Academy of Management
EURAM

RCEF
RESEARCH CENTER FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND FAMILY FIRMS
UHASSELT

Call for papers

16th Workshop on Top Management Teams and Business Strategy Research

21–23 April 2027
Hasselt, Belgium

Diversity and Dynamics **at the Top**

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

David A. Harrison
McCombs School of Business
The University of Texas at Austin

Randall S. Peterson
London Business School

For its 16th edition, the TMT workshop focuses on how differences among senior leaders (executives, top management teams, boards, and broader strategic leadership systems) shape interaction, strategic decision-making, and organizational outcomes.

Going beyond questions of composition, we ask when diversity becomes a source of insight and strategic capacity, and when it generates faultlines, conflict, or fragmentation.

Abstract submission deadline | 22/01/2027

[workshop website]

Hosted by Hasselt University
Research Center for Entrepreneurship and Family Firms (RCEF)

Who resides at the helm of the organization, how do they interact, and what do they achieve?

Team composition	Team dynamics	Strategic decisions	Outcomes

We particularly encourage contributions that connect strategic leadership composition to interaction and strategic outcomes. Submissions may address, but are not limited to, the following themes and questions:

Conceptualizing and measuring diversity at the top

The distinction between separation, variety, and disparity calls for explicit alignment between diversity constructs and their measurement (Harrison & Klein, 2007). Upper echelons research cautions against treating observable characteristics as straightforward proxies for underlying cognition and behaviour (Carpenter et al., 2004; Neely et al., 2020), and a recent review questions the credibility of causal claims linking demographic diversity in strategic leadership teams to firm performance (Sieweke et al., 2025).

- How do demographic, functional, experiential, cognitive, and personality differences shape strategic leadership?
- When do different diversity constructs activate different mechanisms?
- How do visible characteristics relate to deeper differences in values, knowledge, and perspectives?
- How can we distinguish composition effects from selection and contextual influences?

We welcome longitudinal, qualitative, experimental, and mixed-method approaches, new measures, and replications of influential findings.

Interaction, power, and decision-making

Faultline theory examines how the alignment of members' characteristics can divide groups into potential subgroups (Lau & Murnighan, 1998). TMT research complements this perspective by examining diversity alongside debate, decision comprehensiveness, and information exchange (Simons et al., 1999; Boone & Hendriks, 2009). Finkelstein (1992) distinguishes structural, ownership, expert, and prestige dimensions of power in TMTs, and Peterson et al. (2003) link CEO personality to TMT dynamics and organizational performance.

- When do differences encourage knowledge integration and constructive disagreement, and when do they generate polarization or exclusion?
- How do trust, psychological safety, and behavioural integration shape these processes?
- How do CEO personality, formal authority, and informal status influence whose perspectives are heard?
- How do leaders prevent potential faultlines from becoming persistent divisions?

Board–TMT interaction and strategic leadership systems

Forbes and Milliken (1999) conceptualize boards as strategic decision-making groups and develop a model linking board characteristics, processes, and effectiveness. Research on the CEO–TMT interface also highlights the functional, relational, and structural connections between CEOs and other executives (Georgakakis et al., 2022).

- How do differences within boards and TMTs affect interaction across the two groups?
- When do shared backgrounds facilitate coordination, and when might they limit challenge or independent oversight?

We invite research on CEO–board and board–TMT interfaces, as well as other actors involved in strategic leadership.

Time, context, and strategic outcomes

Research on work-group cohesion shows that the relevance of surface- and deep-level diversity can change as members spend time together (Harrison et al., 1998). In TMTs, recent research examines organizational size and executive tenure as contingencies in the relationship between functional diversity and performance (Fabian et al., 2025).

- How do recruitment, succession, turnover, and shared experience alter diversity and team dynamics?
- How do ownership, institutional settings, or environmental uncertainty shape these relationships?

Outcomes of interest include strategic change, innovation, internationalization, resilience, sustainability, and organizational performance.

Beyond the central theme

We also welcome research on individual top executives, TMTs, boards, and strategic leadership more broadly. Conceptual and empirical contributions connecting strategic management with organizational behaviour, psychology, entrepreneurship, or related fields are encouraged, across family firms, entrepreneurial ventures, and established corporations.

- Executive cognition
- Executive compensation
- CEO succession
- Strategic decision-making
- Governance
- Family firms

KEY DATES

Abstract submission	Notification of acceptance	Registration	Full paper submission
22/01/2027	**12/02/2027**	**12/03/2027**	**02/04/2027**

Submission

Please submit an extended abstract of 2 pages in English through [submission platform or email address] by 22 January 2027. Abstracts should clearly state the research gap, theory, method, and expected contribution. Authors will be notified of acceptance by 12 February 2027. Accepted authors are asked to submit their full paper by 2 April 2027.

Venue

Hasselt University
Koning Boudewijnlaan, 3500 Hasselt
Registration and fee: €440 (VAT included)

21-23 April 2027

This workshop continues the series of Workshops on Top Management Teams and Business Strategy Research, previously co-organized by EIASM and from this edition onwards organized in collaboration with EURAM. The series remains a focused forum for strategic leadership research and international research collaboration.

Scientific committee

Tine Buyl, Tilburg University
Alejandro Esriba Esteve, University of Valencia
Marko Reimer, WHU, Otto Beisheim School of Management

Organizing committee

Laura Hoekx
Sofie Meerten
Kelsey Schepers
Kris Thys
Pieter Vandekerkhof

Contact | Kris Thys, kris.thys@uhasselt.be

[workshop website]

Hosted by Hasselt University
Research Center for Entrepreneurship and Family Firms (RCEF)

RCEF
RESEARCH CENTER FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND FAMILY FIRMS
UHASSELT