Family businesses are a prominent organizational form in nearly every country and have vast effects on national employment, gross national product, and wealth creation (Beckhard & Dyer, 1983; Feltham, Feltham, & Barnett, 2005; Kelly, Athanassiou, & Crittenden, 2000; Shanker & Astrachan, 1996). Much research is emerging around understanding the multi-level effects associated with family entrepreneurship (Bettinelli, Fayolle, & Randerson, 2014). Research related to family entrepreneurship seeks to understand the emergence and influences of entrepreneurial behaviors on outcomes such as firm start-up, growth, diversification, CSR and sustainable development, philanthropy, and beyond (Bergamaschi & Randerson, 2016; Randerson, Bettinelli, Dossena & Fayolle, 2016). However, understanding the entrepreneurial behaviors of the individual, family, and family firm becomes more complex when contextual influences are considered (Randerson, Bettinelli, Fayolle & Anderson, 2015), noting that effects may manifest differently across communities and countries (Seaman, Bent, & Unis, 2015).

An institutional perspective offers the potential to gain insight into the contextual influences affecting family and family firm entrepreneurial behavior (Randerson et al., 2015). Institutions, or “the rules of the game” (North, 1991: 98), range from formal pressures of government regulation to more latent, socially constructed cultural influences (Bruton, Ahlstrom, & Li, 2010; Javidan et al., 2006; Scott, 1995, 2005; Stephan & Uhlaner, 2010). Although institutions are noted to affect entrepreneurial activity (Zahra & Wright, 2011), approaches differ. According to the institutional void perspective (Dacin, Dacin, & Matear, 2010; Estrin, Mickiewicz, & Stephan, 2013), resource scarce environments are conducive to entrepreneurial behaviors given that individuals or families behave entrepreneurially to provide services or create infrastructures that the government lacks. Conversely, the institutional support perspective posits that entrepreneurial activity flourishes in countries with more developed governments that support entrepreneurial behaviors (Evans, 1996; Korosec & Berman, 2006; Zahra & Wright, 2011).

The variation in institutional voids and institutional support (i.e., institutional context) is noted to affect the form of the family business (e.g., Barrédy, 2016), succession options (e.g., Jaskiewicz, Heinrichs, Rau, & Reay, 2016), structural and relational social capital (e.g., Daspit & Long, 2014), corporate social responses (e.g., Berrone, Cruz, Gomez-Mejia, & Larraza-Kintana, 2010), and other factors across various levels. This primary purpose of this special issue is to extend understanding of the institutional context and investigate how such forces (alone or together) affect entrepreneurial behaviors and outcomes at the individual, family, and family business levels. A non-exhaustive list of possible topic areas for this special issue includes:

- How the institutional context affects entrepreneurial behavior within the individual, family, family business, and/or family business group level(s);
- How the institutional context affects family firm start-up, development, growth, innovation, social capital, and corporate entrepreneurship.
• Whether institutional factors influence the family’s pursuit of family-centered, noneconomic goals and socioemotional wealth;
• What institutional contexts are most supportive of family firm internationalization and family business groups;
• How are family logics altered by interactions with external stakeholders who may be necessary to overcome institutional constraints;
• What institutional contexts support/hinder the family’s interactions with external business partners and the consequences on the family firm;
• What individual, group, and firm behaviors and outcomes (e.g., employee satisfaction, family harmony, family legacy, succession, innovation, diversification, internationalization, CSR actions) are affected by institutional contexts and how; and
• How institutional forces at various levels interact to affect the family and/or family business.

**Submission Guidelines:** We invite both theoretical and empirical papers that explore the institutional context and their outcomes. All submissions are subject to the standard double-blind review process. Manuscripts must be original, unpublished works not concurrently under review for publication at another outlet and are expected to follow the standard formatting guidelines and submission process for the journal.

**References**


