

# Next-Generation Information Systems Theories

## Special Issue Editors

*Andrew Burton-Jones, University of Queensland* (abj@business.uq.edu.au)

*Brian Butler, University of Maryland* (bsbutler@umd.edu)

*Susan Scott, London School of Economics* (S.V.Scott@lse.ac.uk)

*Sean Xin Xu, Tsinghua University* (xuxin@sem.tsinghua.edu.cn)

**Submission Deadline:    Extended Abstracts due November 15, 2018**  
**Full Papers submissions due April 1, 2019**

## Focus and Motivation of the Special Issue

As a research field evolves, it is important to periodically take stock and reflect on how its core theoretical ideas are developing and be open to radical innovation. Do existing theoretical ideas need significant revision? Should well-known ideas be dropped? Are new ideas required? Have important ideas been forgotten? Are opportunities for new ideas not being taken because of academic silos or a failure to adopt innovative models of enquiry? This Special Issue provides an opportunity to take stock and reflect on theoretical progress in Information Systems and forge exciting new theoretical avenues for the future.

Now is a particularly opportune time for the Information Systems field to take stock of its theoretical progress and develop next-generation IS theories. We are witnessing fundamental changes in the field's core phenomena as well as major changes in our data, methods, and categories of knowledge. This Special Issue offers an opportunity to energize the best theoretical minds in the field to see if we can lay the foundations for a new generation of research.

This will be the second *MIS Quarterly*'s Special Issue devoted to theory papers.<sup>1</sup> As a result, this Special Issue represents an opportunity for *MISQ* to publish not only the best theoretical work, but also the best of the theory paper genre. While not wishing to limit the structure of papers submitted to the Special Issue, we suggest three examples that might work for many authors:

1. **Pure theory papers:** Papers that provide a detailed review of theory in a focal domain but where the new theoretical contribution departs from the prior literature and the focus is on the new theory being generated.
2. **Review-oriented theory papers:** Papers that provide a very detailed review of theory in a focal domain and where the new theoretical contribution stems from the authors' synthesis of that review (e.g., through its critique or reformulation).
3. **Empirically enhanced theory papers:** Papers that focus on the generation of new theory but where data plays an important developmental, illustrative, or justificatory role.

---

<sup>1</sup>In March 1999, *MIS Quarterly* issued a Call for Submissions for a Special Issue on Redefining the Organizational Roles of Information Technology in the Information Age. The issue was motivated by transformations occurring throughout the 1990s. The papers for that Special Issue appeared in the September 2002 issue (Volume 26, Number 3).

If a given submission is in the grey area between a theory paper and another style of paper, the Editors of the Special Issue will make a final decision on the paper's appropriateness for the issue.

The Special Issue takes a broad and inclusive view of theory and encourages all and any type of theoretical contribution related to IS. While being open to substantial variety, the common element underlying all successful papers in the Special Issue will be that they offer incisive and important theoretical contributions that change the way we think in the IS field.

Summing up, attractive papers for the Special Issue will be those that

- **Motivate:** Strong papers will identify areas in which there is inadequate theorization and motivate the need for new theory with evidence and arguments for why the limitations of current theories, or the lack of theory altogether, has real, substantive consequences.
- **Create:** Papers will either develop a significant theoretical advance to existing theory (whether through revising or challenging it) or create entirely new theory.
- **Mobilize:** Effective papers will be written so as to excite a significant portion of the *MISQ* audience to take on the challenges and pursue the possibilities arising from their ideas.

## Process and Time Lines

The Special Issue will follow a two-stage submission process.

### **Stage 1:** *Submission of extended abstracts, due November 15, 2018*

Submission of an extended abstract is not necessary in order to submit to the Special Issue, but it is highly encouraged. Authors will submit the extended abstracts through the *MIS Quarterly* ScholarOne submission system, which will be open from November 1, 2018, to November 15, 2018. High-level feedback will be provided on each abstract by January 15, 2019. (*MISQ*'s ScholarOne submission site is located at <https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/misq>)

### **Stage 2:** *Paper submission, due April 1, 2019*

Full papers are due April 1, 2019, via the *MIS Quarterly* ScholarOne submission system. All papers will be submitted in the Special Issue category. The system will be open for submissions to the Special Issue from March 1, 2019, to April 1, 2019.

## Key Dates:

- Submission of extended abstracts: November 15, 2018
- Feedback on extended abstracts to authors: January 15, 2019
- First round submission: April 1, 2019
- First round decisions to authors: July 1, 2019 [i.e., 3 month review cycle]
- Theory development workshop: August 1, 2019
- Second round submission: December 1, 2019 [i.e., 5 months for revisions]
- Second round decision to authors: March 1, 2020 [i.e., 3 month review cycle]
- Third and final round submissions: July 1, 2020 [i.e., 4 months for revisions]
- Third and final round decisions to authors: September 1, 2020 [i.e., 2 month review cycle by the editors only, not reviewers]

To view the full Call for Papers, go to the *MIS Quarterly*'s home page at <https://misq.org>