



International Journal of Globalisation and Small Business

Special Issue on: "From Local Roots to Global Reach: Sustainable Entrepreneurship in BRICS and Emerging Economies"

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This special issue addresses a critical gap in the literature by examining how sustainable entrepreneurship unfolds in BRICS and other emerging or transitioning economies, building on recent insights by Kantis & Angelelli (2020) and Stam & van de Ven (2021), while providing comparative perspectives from developed markets. The growing pace of climate change, globalisation, and socio-economic inequality has altered how small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) respond to social and environmental factors in support of the achievement of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (Rodaro et al., 2025). SMEs form the foundation of national economies, yet only in recent decades have they begun competing internationally alongside multinational corporations (MNCs) (Dabic et al., 2020). In BRICS and other emerging markets, this transition is shaped by institutional volatility, resource constraints, and distinctive socio-cultural factors (Fischer & Comini, 2023; Guerrero et al., 2023).

With the global market shifting towards sustainability-conscious investors and customers, sustainable entrepreneurship has become a driver of competitiveness, innovation, and inclusive growth (Di Vaio et al., 2022). Defined as the pursuit of business opportunities that align with social and ecological objectives (Dias-Sarachaga & Ariza-Montes, 2022), it is no longer exclusive to large corporations. SMEs, particularly in emerging and transitioning economies, are leveraging digital technologies, eco-innovation, and green business models to expand their impact (Rodaro et al., 2025, Ferraro et al., 2025). Originating in local contexts, these ventures embody values of social responsibility, resource efficiency, and environmental stewardship. Yet, in BRICS and similar

economies, academic coverage of how these ventures scale sustainably while maintaining local authenticity remains limited (Belitski et al., 2022; Leal Filho et al., 2023). Aligned with IJGSB's remit and recent IJGSB studies on sustainability performance (Panfilo et al., 2025), gender and inclusivity (Zannoni, 2024), digitalisation and export performance (Goldooz and Zakery, 2024), and born globals (Téoule-Dorey and Reeve, 2024), we foreground how globalisation mechanisms shape sustainable entrepreneurship in small businesses, including participation in global value chains, platform-enabled internationalisation, and born-global trajectories (Avdiaj et al., 2024).

We aim to prioritise research on BRICS and emerging economies while also integrating comparative perspectives from developed markets. The focus is on how small businesses integrate sustainable practices into global value chains and how they balance global scalability with local authenticity.

Intersectionality and Context

We will address the intersection of entrepreneurship, sustainability, gender, and digital transition in emerging contexts. Women-led and minority-owned firms are often central to socially conscious entrepreneurship (Han, 2024), yet they face systemic barriers to internationalisation (Sadraei, 2024). In BRICS economies, these challenges may be amplified by uneven access to finance, limited digital infrastructure, and weaker institutional support. Likewise, the global shift towards green entrepreneurship—ventures aiming to solve environmental challenges through innovation—offers SMEs new opportunities to position themselves as agents of ecological transformation. Evidence on green jobs and resource-efficiency investments indicates how human and financial resources jointly shape SMEs' sustainable practices in emerging contexts (de Andrade, Benfica, de Oliveira, & Suchek, 2024). However, the diffusion and contextual adaptation of green technologies in emerging markets, especially in rural and women-led ventures, remains underexplored. We also invite contributions on diaspora and transnational network effects, climate and blended finance, and the roles of accelerators, clusters, and universities in capability building for sustainable internationalisation in emerging contexts (da Fonseca et al., 2023).

We invite scholars to examine innovative practices, policy interventions, and institutional support structures that moderate sustainable entrepreneurship from a global perspective. The highlights of this issue shall inform not only debates within academia but also business ecosystems, policymakers, and support institutions in working towards more resilient and future-ready SMEs. By drawing contributions from various settings, that is, both developed and developing nations, urban and rural regions, and diverse industrial areas, this issue aims to offer a rich, multidimensional understanding of how entrepreneurship and sustainability can intersect in the domain of small businesses.

We invite contributions from scholars working on BRICS and other emerging economies, as well as comparative studies with developed markets.

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Subject Coverage

Suitable topics include, but are not limited, to the following:

Women in Sustainable Entrepreneurship

- How do women-led SMEs in BRICS and emerging economies integrate sustainability principles while navigating systemic barriers?
- What role does social capital play in enabling their internationalisation?
- Comparative policy analysis between emerging and developed markets

Green Entrepreneurship and Green Technologies

- How do SMEs in resource-constrained environments adopt green technologies to remain competitive?
- Drivers and barriers to green innovation in BRICS sectors with global growth potential
- Contribution of green entrepreneurship to local and global circular economy transitions

Digital Technology and Global Reach

- Role of digital platforms in integrating locally rooted SMEs from emerging economies into global value chains
- How digital tools and data analytics enhance eco-innovation and market access for small firms
- Unintended environmental and social consequences of digitalisation in sustainable entrepreneurship
- Evidence on platform-mediated market entry and resilience to shocks such as pandemics, wars, and trade fragmentation

Cross-Country and Cross-Cultural Studies

- Influence of institutional environments in shaping sustainable practices across BRICS, transitioning, and developed economies
- Cultural values and traditions as enablers or constraints in scaling sustainable SME models
- How emerging due diligence and sustainability standards reshape upgrading prospects for small suppliers in global value chains

Intersectionality and Inclusivity

- How gender, ethnicity, and socio-economic background shape sustainable entrepreneurship in emerging markets
- Global institutional frameworks promoting inclusive and sustainable SME ecosystems

Notes for Prospective Authors

Submitted papers should not have been previously published nor be currently under consideration for publication elsewhere. (N.B. Conference papers may only be submitted if the paper has been completely re-written and if appropriate written permissions have been obtained from any copyright holders of the original paper).

All papers are refereed through a peer review process.

All papers must be submitted online. To submit a paper, please read our [Submitting articles](#) page.

Important Dates

Manuscripts due by: *31 March, 2026*

Notification to authors: *30 June, 2026*

Final versions due by: *28 February, 2027*