

ifera's dedication to quality family business research forms the foundation of our vision and mission. In order to ensure our role in the process of quality research submitted to our conferences, we must be thorough and consistent in our reviews. It is the quality of the Review Board feedback that helps improve ifera's commitment to academic excellence.

The Review Process

Timeliness and Confidentiality

In order for the conference and Special Issue to run smoothly, we must take our deadlines seriously. Providing our authors with sufficient time to revise their submissions is very important for staying on track throughout the entire review process.

- **Fast Feedback:** The faster the reviewer feedback, the faster the authors hear back from ifera about their submission. The more efficient we are, the more eager and appreciative our authors will be.
- **Late Reviews:** Late reviews cause a back-lag in the process leading to a domino-effect delaying the entire process. If you are unable to meet the deadline, please contact the guest editors as soon as possible in order to allow time for finding another reviewer.
- **Double-blind Reviews:** The author and reviewer do not identify themselves to each other in order to avoid potential bias. If you have any doubt being objective in the review, please contact the guest editors and request NOT to review the manuscript.
- **Confidentiality:** It is crucial that you do not discuss the manuscript with anyone other than the guest editors. This is cutting-edge research and out of respect for the authors and their work, it deserves to be kept confidential.

Thorough Reviews

The point of reviews is so the authors learn from the feedback and are provided with detailed and useful suggestions on how to improve their manuscript. That being said, it is more important to include why you like or dislike the submission, and how the authors could revise and improve in future versions.

- **Be particular:** It is vital that you explain what the problems are and how they can be addressed. Be thorough in your comments and suggestions. Please number your comments to ensure clear and coherent communication for the authors and guest editors. At the same time, while specific points need to be addressed, don't forget to consider the overall contribution of the manuscript. A submission may be theoretically sound and technically perfect, but unless it offers a useful contribution, it has little to offer.
- **Balance Strengths and Weaknesses:** While identifying significant limitations to the manuscript is necessary, it is also important to mention major strengths. This helps authors to further improve the quality and contribution of their research.
- **Be Constructive:** It may be that the paper seems beyond repair. Nonetheless, please remain constructive so that even if the manuscript cannot be improved, offer suggestions for future submissions.
- **Non-native Speakers:** Considering ifera's international network of family business researchers, it is obvious that many submissions are written by authors with English as their second language. In these cases, it is essential to distinguish between the quality of the language, and the quality of the concepts. Poor grammar and vocabulary doesn't mean poor ideas.
- **Recommendation:** Please address your recommendation as a) accept, b) reject, or c) revise. Please **DO NOT** include your recommendation in the author comments, but **ONLY** in private to the guest editor responsible for making the final decision.

IFERA is Friendly

As a reviewer, you can be challenged with seriously flawed manuscripts. One of the most difficult tasks can be to maintain a positive and friendly tone in your author reviews. As fellow family business researchers, you all know the amount of time, effort, and thought involved in research papers.

ifera supports all research efforts and always encourages newcomers to the field. Therefore, it is imperative that all manuscripts and authors are treated with respect and consideration, no matter how you feel about the contribution.

- **Support:** Always try to include supportive comments. A tip is to 'sandwich' the negative comments between a positive start and positive end. It makes the 'bad news' a little easier to swallow.
- **Be consistent:** Being friendly doesn't mean you can't be honest. Be sure your private comments to the editor are as negative/positive as the author review. Otherwise, the guest editors may be faced with a difficult situation. The author may not understand why his/her manuscript was rejected despite a positive review.
- **Don't personally comment on the authors:** Remember: it's the *paper* not the *person* you are reviewing.

Structure and Content of the Review

- **Theory:** Are main concepts clearly defined? Does the manuscript test, create or extend business theory? Does it increase our understanding of previous family business concepts or theories?
- **Literature Review:** Does the paper provide a thorough and coherent review of existing literature? Are existing works properly acknowledged and credited for their contributions? Be sure to include important references the authors may have neglected.
- **Method:** How is the validity of the samples, measures, methods, observations, procedures and statistical analyses? Are the statistical procedures accurately and appropriately applied? Are the main assumptions well-met with no violations?
- **Integration:** Does the study provide a useful test of the theory and hypotheses, including enough empirical reasoning as a foundation for new theory? Is the method (qualitative or quantitative) a good fit for the research question and theory?
- **Contribution:** Is the contribution of the manuscript new and meaningful to family business literature in terms of theoretical and conceptual knowledge for the field? Is the topic interesting and significant?
- **Citations:** Do the citations correctly reference the original source of the information used?

These guidelines are meant to provide consistency and clarity for ifera's Review Board and authors. We greatly appreciate your time, effort and commitment to supporting ifera's quest in advancing the family business field through high quality research.

**Thank you for being a part of the ifera Review team!
See you at the Conference soon!**