

**Special Issue Call for Papers**  
**Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management**

**Re-Conceptualizing *Good* Research in Organization and Management Studies**

Special Issue Editors:

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**Thematic Focus of the Special Issue (SI)**

Criteria for evaluating the rigor and trustworthiness of qualitative research were popularized with Guba's (1981) focus on credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. These guidelines, however, have been criticized not only for stemming from positivist research—mirroring reliability and validity measures—but also because of the attempt to universally apply these criteria to justify what constitutes *good* research (e.g. Amis & Silk, 2008; Brinkmann, 2007; Devers, 1999; Johnson, Buehring, Cassell, & Symon, 2006; Tracy, 2010). In this Special Issue (SI), we play with the “virtual cult of criteria” (Tracy, 2010, p. 838), aiming to provoke a conversation about what makes *good* qualitative research, from different theoretical traditions. As the parameters of what makes for *good* qualitative research sway, so do the ways in which researchers depict the qualitative research process. However, as Punch (1986) suggests, “[A]uthentic and candid accounts of the backstage story of research projects are few and far between” (p. 18). A number of scholars working within various qualitative traditions (e.g., Behar, 1996; Cole, 2013; Cunliffe & Alcadipani, 2016; Davies & Spencer, 2010; Donnelly, Gabriel, & Özkazanç-Pan, 2013; Koning & Ooi, 2013; Peticca-Harris, deGama, & Elias, 2016) have begun to unpack how qualitative research is conducted, suggesting that it may not be a politically- or emotionally- neutral or straightforward process. While these scholars have endeavored to problematize the dominant tendency to neuter the research process and to present it as a ready-made and by-plan design, the majority of published qualitative studies continue to omit, sanitize, or gloss over the difficult encounters and micro-politics that researchers inevitably experience in the field, thus marginalizing and stigmatizing these critical experiences.

As Donnelly et al. (2013) have attested in their SI in *Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management*, there are “stories behind the stories, inclusive of the emotions, frustrations, and challenges that go along with research” (p. 5). We would like to build on this body of research to continue challenging the way in which a certain kind of methodological rigor and relevance has been elevated and privileged within academic research. That is, our objective is to interrogate, unsettle, disturb, and disrupt the idea of parameters, criteria, rigor, and trustworthiness for qualitative research. In doing so, we seek

paper submissions that problematize what is *good* research by revealing dilemmas and choices that we, as researchers, are forced to navigate, some arising from the hegemonic, institutionalized pressures that blanket and silence the political landscape of academia (see Koning & Ooi, 2013). We aim to render the *invisible* aspects and vulnerabilities of research *visible* while creating a space for greater methodological pluralism (e.g. Harley, 2015). The result, we hope, is to create a forum for discussion about the alternative ways in which *good* qualitative methods and methodologies can be imagined, evaluated, and accepted in the broad research community.

### **Outline of the Call for Papers**

We invite submissions that advance qualitative inquiry, either theoretically or empirically, by exposing and exploring researchers' "blind wanderings" (Van Maanen, 2011, p. 153) and the emotional baggage that they carry as they navigate the research process. As Cunliffe and Alcadipani (2016) suggest, "we need to 'relax the taboo'" (p. 2) when we share our own emotionally- and politically-laden 'tales from the field.' As such, our SI attempts to problematize the process of what makes *good* research by promoting a new wave of reflections on traditional qualitative questions; in doing so, we hope to turn the interrogative gaze onto ourselves. We are looking for narratives that are critically reflexive of the research process; those that question, for example, our own selfish desires to be the *good* academic while ignoring not only *ourselves*, but also *others*—our research participants.

Overall, paper submissions should aim to answer the following question: How can we problematize and re-conceptualize *good* research in organization and management studies? We invite papers that explore—but are not restricted to—the following questions:

- How do current expectations and understandings of *good* research affect the research process? How can these be problematized (if at all) as a means to advance qualitative inquiry and the way we publish our work?
- How is research legitimated as *good*? What does this process look like and what are the power dynamics at play?
- What are potential tensions arising from the pressure to conduct *good* research? How are these currently being (mis)managed in academia?
- What propels researchers to hide their research struggles and what are the implications of academic secrets to the research process?
- What ethical dilemmas do qualitative researchers face when trying to do *good* research? What is the role of corporeality and materiality in *good* field research? How do researchers' bodies and material artifacts affect the research process and interactions with research participants?
- How might the current discourse surrounding *good* research be re-imagined and re-constituted?

## Anticipated Deadlines

The deadline for submission is **March 31, 2017**. Manuscripts should be a maximum of 10,000 words in length (including tables, figures and references) and should conform to the normal submission guidelines for *Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management*:

[http://www.emeraldgrouppublishing.com/products/journals/author\\_guidelines.htm?id=qrom](http://www.emeraldgrouppublishing.com/products/journals/author_guidelines.htm?id=qrom)

Please also note that there will be a pre-submission 2-day paper development workshop for interested authors at Grenoble Ecole de Management in Grenoble, France **January 25 – 26, 2017**. For those who are unable to physically attend the workshop, we will also be offering this workshop in an online format. The deadline for paper proposals (up to 2 pages) for the writing workshop is **November 30, 2016**. Paper proposals should be emailed directly to the guest editors. Although participation in the workshop is recommended, it is not a prerequisite for submitting a paper to the SI. For further information about the SI or the pre-submission writing workshop, please contact the guest editors of the SI:

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