



**The UK Society for Co-operative Studies (UKSCS), the EMES International Research Network (EMES), and the European Research Institute for Co-operative and Social Enterprise (EURICSE) invite you to submit a paper to the *Journal of Co-operative Studies* as part of new joint call.**

We welcome short think pieces (approx. 1,000 words), short articles (4,000 words) or full academic articles (7,000 words). Please see the [guidelines for submissions](#).

## Call for Papers on New Cooperativism

### Key Dates

Call opens	1st March 2021
Deadline for 'think pieces' and extended abstracts	31st May 2021 (1,000 - 1,200 words)
Initial decisions	1st August 2021
Deadline for full papers	31st December 2021
Revisions by	30th June 2021
Production/Publication by	31st December 2022

### Co-editors for the first special issue

- Rory Ridley-Duff (Chair, UKSCS; EMES Member and EMPOWER-SE Work Group Leader), FairShares Institute, Sheffield Business School, Sheffield Hallam University
- Mary O'Shaughnessy (EMPOWER-SE Scientific Missions Coordinator; EMES Board Member), University College Cork Business School

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## **Why ‘New Cooperativism’? Why now?**

A new (and open) cooperativism has been proposed as a viable conceptualisation for the rapid (re)development of cooperative values and principles rooted in grassroots movements rather than the institutions of ‘old’ (consumer-based) co-operatives (Vieta, 2010, 2018; Ridley-Duff, 2021). There are various points in history theorised as significant to the development of new cooperativism, including: the social co-operatives of Italy that developed in the 1970s and led to new co-operative laws in 1991 (Restakis, 2010); the subsequent rise of social and community co-operatives in Italy (Borzaga and Depredi, 2014; Vieta, Depedri, Carrano, 2017); the ‘multi-stakeholder turn’ in cooperative thinking in the 1970s that fuelled development of social enterprise in the UK in the late 1980s/early 1990s (Ridley-Duff, 2015; Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2019a); the enactment of legislation in Quebec in 1995 that led to a rise in the number of multi-stakeholder and solidarity co-operatives in North America (Lund, 2011); the rise of grassroots movements in South America (Vieta, 2010; 2018) particularly after the 2001 crisis in Argentina that led to the creation of a movement of ‘recovered companies’ (Howarth, 2007; Ruggeri and Vieta, 2015; Vieta, 2020). Adding to regional experiences, Sacchetti and Borzaga (2020) and Sacchetti and Birchall (2018) have identified the features of organisations that aim at producing public value, developing an economic justification of inclusive governance and multi-stakeholding that builds on the negative external costs of exclusion.

Common threads in the ‘first wave’ of new cooperativism (dating from the mid-1970s to early 2000s) include: solidarity between producers and consumers; egalitarian organising principles; labour and community solidarity; a renewed community development orientation and a greater concern for sustainable development (Vieta, 2010; Ridley-Duff, 2015). However, the growth of the wider social solidarity economy (Utting, 2015) suggests there is now a ‘second wave’ of new cooperativism arising in global networks using digital resources to spread ideas and intellectual property, such as the P2P Foundation, Commons Transition Network and FairShares Association (Ridley-Duff, 2021). This second wave shows a greater interest in, and commitment to the concept of Prosumers, to peer-to-peer commons production and the creation of commons resources (Vieta, 2016; Bauwens and Pantazis, 2018; Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2020) through distributed co-operatives (DisCOs) and platform co-operatives (Scholz, 2017), supported by crowd-based financial institutions (Lehner and Nicholls, 2014; Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2019b). Notable examples like the SMart Co-operative have attracted the attention of members from different research networks and traditions (Conaty, Bird, Ross, 2018; Nogales, 2018).

A significant theme in this development is gender and minority group sensitivities in multi-stakeholder co-operatives. While co-operatives operate on a principle of economic democracy, there is a need to investigate the construction of gender relations in such firms. Many studies find that women are under-represented as co-operative members, hold a lower status, and participate less than men do in making business decisions (Miller, 2012). Recent research points to how ‘diversity regimes’ focusing on employee participation and diversity management opens up investigations of the interaction of these two providing insights into how the workplace democracy of worker co-operatives can be understood (Meyers and Vallas, 2016). Gender and minority inequalities can be both addressed and disrupted in co-operatives (Sobering, 2016).

## **What is new cooperativism? How new is ‘new cooperativism’?**

In the new cooperativism of the first decade of the 2000s, it was noted how it was both a cooperatively driven defensive response and proactive solution to socio-economic crises. This response mostly stemmed from the worst effects of austerity and neoliberal agendas on local communities (Vieta, 2010). Rooted tightly in local needs and broader social movements, Vieta (2018) identified six features of the new cooperativism: (1) it espouses values and practices of subsidiarity

and community-led development; (2) it directly responds to crises; (3) it is ethical and sustainable; (4) it is inclusive; (5) it is horizontal, democratic, and co-managed; and (6) it practices collective ownership and equitable distribution of social wealth (pp. 59-60).

Responding to Vieta's work, Ridley-Duff (2021) reviewed debates about a new open cooperativism at the P2P Foundation, Commons Transition Movement and FairShares Association. Building on Vieta's theory, he updated it after finding consistent references to additional features: (1) calls for multi-stakeholder ownership and governance, not only as a political response to a desire for producer-consumer solidarity but also to enfranchise and reward providers of 'other' capitals (natural, human, social, intellectual, manufactured); (2) an emergent focus on 'commoning' and the production of commons resources, primarily through digital distributed co-operatives (DisCOs); (3) a renewed emphasis on enfranchising labour through participation in ownership, governance and management.

Have co-operatives not always addressed these themes, or are we entering a new era for co-operatives? It raises the question of how 'new' the new cooperativism is? Were many of these issues not addressed at the start of the co-operative movement in the 1820? Or, is re-appropriating (labour) commons from private interests a new feature? What is being (re)discovered? Is 'new cooperativism' mainly a political provocation to 'old' cooperativism? Or, is this an inter-generational shift towards adherence to co-operative principles 6 and 7? How much is it a reaction to 40 years of neo-liberalism? In short, how innovative is the new cooperativism?

## **The Partners: UKSCS, EMES and EURICSE**

The UK Society for Co-operative Studies (UKSCS) board is supporting an online lecture series in 2021 to aid work on the production of a book for Palgrave ('The Roads to New Cooperativism'). This online lecture series enables members participating in three different research networks (UKSCS, EMES, EURICSE) to liaise with each other and broaden the conversation about new cooperativism. We want to move beyond a single book to a series of special journal issues on this subject.

Members of EMES have been active researching social co-operatives, community co-operatives, energy co-operatives and 'recovered' worker co-operatives. We see an established interest in new forms of cooperation that builds on the early work by members of EURICSE to identify legal changes that support new cooperativism across Europe (Galera and Borzaga, 2009, Composta, 2018). More recently, the recognition afforded to social co-operatives and mutual financial institutions in the International Comparative Social Enterprise Models (ICSEM) study provides another reference point for developing collaboration between research networks (Defourny, Nyssens and Brolis, 2020). Members of the UKSCS journal editorial board have also undertaken research into mutuals identified as important within the ICSEM study (see Myers, Scott-Cato and Jones, 2012).

Furthermore, members of EMES have taken a keen interest in the participatory and democratic traditions that are evolving in Nordic countries. EMES members have co-edited a book exploring the heritage of cooperation and participatory democracy on the development of social enterprises and social entrepreneurship (Andersen, Gawell, Spear, 2016), while UKSCS has maintained an interest in the Nordic experience with keynote speakers to its annual conferences in 2016 (Ana Puusa, Finland) and 2018 (Susanne Westhausen, Denmark) to report on innovations and co-operatives' resilience after the 2008 financial crash.

## Themes for Special Journal Issues on New Cooperativism

*The journal editorial board has prepared a plan to host online research seminars, supported by Sheffield Hallam University, the FairShares Association and Palgrave Macmillan. These will explore each theme in forthcoming special issues. We will publish the seminar programme later in March.*



### Theme 1 - New Cooperativism and Sustainable Development

We welcome contributions that explore how new co-operatives are responding to the United Nations initiative on sustainable development. Do sustainable development goals (SDGs) help or hinder new cooperativism? What is the level of alignment between co-operative values and principles and specific SDGs? How do SDGs provide a framework for evaluating initiatives in new co-operatives?

### Theme 2 - Updating Co-op Values and Principles

In addition to papers about revising co-operative values and principles, we welcome contributions that explore new frameworks that potentially align new cooperativism with the social solidarity economy (e.g. transformative social innovation; FairShares Model). Do these extend, develop or replace existing co-operative values and principles? How do they compare to the 2015 guidance of the International Co-operative Alliance (ICA)? What updates to co-operative values and principles are prompted by new cooperativism? See works by Vieta (2018) and Ridley-Duff (2021) as key reference points for this discussion.

### Theme 3 – Legal Innovations for Multi-Stakeholder Governance

How can companies, co-operative societies, partnerships and associations be re-configured to support new cooperativism? Following new classification work by the ICA (Eum, Carini, Bouchard, 2019), how can solidarity co-operatives be structured legally? What legal and governance innovations have emerged to support multi-stakeholding and community involvement? What legal and governance innovations are emerging to support the alignment of co-operatives with sustainable development?

### Theme 4 - Funding and Incentives in New Cooperativism

How should co-operatives use, and respond to, the rise of crowd-funding, crowd-lending and crowd-investing? As investment platforms create wider reach and open up the potential for global membership, will this undermine the local community focus of funding mechanisms for co-operatives? What can be learnt from platforms like Kiva, Kickstarter and Indiegogo? What co-operative platforms exist (or are developing) for new co-operatives to re-invent 'co-operative shares' that raise cooperative capital and regulate the distribution of surpluses?

### Theme 5 - Learning for New Cooperativism

New cooperativism often advocates a radical re-organisation of power, favouring labour and solidarity projects to create and manage common resources (Vieta, 2014, 2019). How does this affect the learning and development of co-operators, and influence curricula to support cooperative entrepreneurship (Ridley-Duff, Schmidtchen & Arnold-Schaarschmidt [+6 more authors], 2020)? What learning and development methods (both formal and informal) contribute to effective workplace democracy? What innovations in cooperation education and curricula might stimulate youth co-operatives (MacPherson, 2015)?

### **Theme 6 - Policy Initiatives and Spaces for New Cooperativism**

What new spaces are opening for co-operative development? How do crises in the economy (financial, medical) generate opportunities for new cooperativism? Should the ICA and other co-operative infrastructure bodies support new cooperativism? How can they do so? What new policy initiatives would build bridges between grassroots movement and existing ecosystems? Do existing ecosystems for co-operative support hinder and disrupt new cooperativism?

### **Theme 7 - Gender/Minority Group Sensitivities in Multi-stakeholder Co-operatives**

We invite papers that reflect and analyse how gender (and minority group) sensitivities and issues can be theorised. How can they be empirically investigated in multi-stakeholder co-operatives and new spaces for cooperativism? Can gender and minority issues be addressed and disrupted? If yes, in which ways, with what pre-requisites, overcoming which barriers, and achieving what outcomes?

### **Theme 8 - Conceptions of (Co-operative) Wealth**

We call for papers that explore the arguments for integrated accounting and social auditing, and papers that consider the relevance of a changed perspective on wealth and sustainable development in new co-operatives. What recognition and rewards are given for contributions of natural, human, social, intellectual, manufactured and financial capital? How is the concept of 'capital' being conceptualised in the spaces for new cooperativism? What is the importance of the Prosumer concept to wealth creation in new co-operatives?

### **Theme 9 - Digital and Platform Co-operatives**

Multinationals have dominated the platform economy. Seven companies belong to the world's ten wealthiest enterprises, but none are based in Europe. As the social media battle between Rupert Murdoch and Facebook in Australia has shown, problems arise out of the clash between market forces and monopoly interests, disrupting small and medium-sized enterprises. How can new co-operative business models offer alternatives and/or promote co-operatives that renegotiate user rights on privately owned platforms (see Hill 2017, Wieg 2020)?

### **Theme 10 – Co-operative Communications and Publishing**

The growing interest in distributed co-operative organisations (DisCos) depends on new forms of communication through digital networks that connect members within and across co-operative movements. As we approach the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Co-op Press, how might DisCos transform co-operative publishing, or usher in community-led reporting? Are there platforms to challenge Facebook and Google that co-operatives can work with, or enhance/transform into new co-operatives (e.g. WT.social, Ecosia)?

## **Submission**

The Journal of Co-operative Studies accepts practitioner think pieces (around 1,000 words), short articles (around 4,000 words) and full academic articles (around 7,000 words). For further guidance on the nature of different submissions, see the [guidelines for submissions](#).

Submit your think piece, or an extended abstract (1,000 - 1,200 words) by 31st May 2021 to:

[r.ridley-duff@shu.ac.uk](mailto:r.ridley-duff@shu.ac.uk)

[mary.oshaughnessy@ucc.ie](mailto:mary.oshaughnessy@ucc.ie)

Full papers will need to follow the [guidelines for submissions](#) on formatting and style, and be sent to **guest editors** of the Journal of Co-operative Studies by **31<sup>st</sup> December 2021** for peer-review. Any general questions about the journal can be sent to [editor@ukscs.coop](mailto:editor@ukscs.coop).

## Useful References

*In preparing your submissions, the following papers (cited in the call) may provide useful starting points different aspects of your discussions.*

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