

BAM 2025 CONFERENCE

Kent
Business School

Management and Business History Track

Track Chair:

- James Fowler, University of Essex

This track encourages the growing number of management and business historians who work in business schools and social science departments to engage in constructive debate with a wide range of management scholars. The 2025 conference theme is '***On the Border: Management Challenges, Business Opportunities and Disrupted Institutional Contexts***' which offers plenty themes through which to explore the value of historical study for current management.

In this track we specialize in chronologically or longitudinally motivated research. Histories of organizations, industries and institutions give us the opportunity to understand how managers have dealt with reinventing themselves in the past. History abounds in disrupted institutional contexts. We would welcome papers that explore how businesses and managers have responded to challenges, opportunities and disruptions. How did this happen, and how successful were they? History allows us to both challenge and develop theory by exploring its explanatory power in relation to real events where the outcomes are already known.

We welcome papers, symposia or workshop proposals either using new and innovative methodologies or applying archival methodology to a new disciplinary context. We are also interested in context specific papers using more traditional historical methodologies but which take innovative approaches to relate their findings to wider social science concerns including the diversity of experience in present day businesses, regions and communities. While the main conference theme ought to feature in submissions, we encourage cross-disciplinary papers and workshop submissions that link different Tracks.

As a group we are inherently multi-disciplinary and believe in the application of theory to historical analysis, and there is no single epistemology for approaching this. We aim to encourage theoretically orientated social science history with a clear relationship to present day debates in the management discipline. Contributions should focus on the economic or social history of business, historical case studies for theory building, theoretical contributions on the relevance of history to management studies, the uses of history, and history as a method for management studies. Please note though that while we are open-minded, work without a major historical dimension as its principal focus will not be accepted.

New Book Opportunity:

If you are interested in contributing to new and challenging book in the field of Business History '*Management History: Revisiting Theories and Methods to Illuminate Future Practices*', please do not hesitate to get in touch.

This article is a useful initial point of reference paper contributions:

Tennent, K. (2020). Management and business history – a reflexive research agenda for the 2020s. *Journal of Management History*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JMH-09-2020-0061>.

These articles offer commentary on the 'dual integrity' of business history methods as a combination of social science and historical craft:

Decker, S., Usidken, B., Engwall, L. & Rowlinson, M. (2018). Special issue introduction: Historical research on institutional change. *Business History*, 60(5). pp613-627. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00076791.2018.1427736>

Maclean, M., Harvey, C. and Clegg, S.R., (2016). Conceptualizing historical organization studies. *Academy of Management Review*, 41(4), pp.609-632. DOI: [10.5465/amr.2014.0133](https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2014.0133)

Some theoretical and empirical examples of the genre of work that we seek to welcome include:

Fowler, J., & Edwards, R. (2023). Passengers, citizens, customers: London transport transformed 1977–1987. *Business History*, ahead-of-print, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00076791.2023.2247343>

Fowler, J., & Gillett, A. (2021) Making a hybrid out of a crisis: historical contingency and the institutional logics of London's public transport monopoly, *Journal of Management History*, 27(4), pp. 492-518. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JMH-01-2021-0003>

Gillett, A. & Tennent, K. (2018). Shadow hybridity and the institutional logic of professional sport: Perpetuating a sporting business in times of rapid social and economic change. *Journal of Management History*, 24(2), pp.228-259. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1108/JMH-11-2017-0060>

Lane, J. (2019) Secrets for Sale? Innovation and the Nature of Knowledge in an Early Industrial District: The Potteries, 1750–1851, *Enterprise and Society*, 20(4), pp861-906. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/eso.2019.8>

Maclean, M., Shaw, G., Harvey, C. and Booth, A., (2020). Management learning in historical perspective: Rediscovering Rowntree and the British interwar management movement. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 19(1), pp.1-20. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amle.2018.0301>

Tennent, K., Gillett, A. and Foster, W., 2020. Developing historical consciousness in management learners. *Management Learning*, 51(1), pp.73-88. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1350507619869669>

Wilson, J.F., Corker, C. and Lane, J. eds., 2022. *Industrial Clusters: Knowledge, Innovation Systems and Sustainability in the UK*. Routledge.