

## Editorial

# Letter from the Editors

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## AIB Insights

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The fourth *AIB Insights* issue of 2025 contains five articles addressing topics related to charitable bribes, a nature-based classification of firms, multinationals as complex adaptive systems, the psychology of distance perceptions in internationalization strategies, and international business education in the age of disruption.

Welcome to the fourth *AIB Insights* issue of 2025, which is the first to contain articles accepted by all four members of our expanded editorial team: Desislava Dikova and Matevz (Matt) Raskovic (our newest members), along with Beth Rose and Bill Newburry. This issue features five eclectic articles, written by scholars in Canada, Mexico, Slovenia, Switzerland, and the United States.

The first article in this issue, by Yujin Jeong (American University, USA) and Jordan Siegel (University of Michigan – Ann Arbor, USA), is titled: “Charitable Bribes? The Concealed Form of Corporate Influence and a Road to Greater Transparency Worldwide.” The authors identify three forms of corporate influence: regulated lobbying, politically-connected charity, and bribery. These forms are differentiated in terms of their levels of legality, transparency and ethical risk. The authors then develop a series of actionable recommendations for both policymakers and corporate leaders, focused on strengthening transparency and accountability in charitable giving. In doing so, Jeong and Siegel identify policy and governance goals, respectively, for policymakers and corporate leaders, along with associated actionable recommendations.

Miguel Cordova (Tecnologico de Monterrey, Mexico), Marina Schmitz (IEDC-Bled School of Management, Slovenia), Livija Marko-Wieser (The Institute for Ethnic Studies, Slovenia), and Tjaša Cankar (ZRC SAZU Institute for Cultural and Memory Studies and IEDC-Bled School of Management, Slovenia) authored the second article, “Wanted Alive, Not Dead: An Alternative Nature-based Classification for Firms.” In the article, the authors propose a classification of multinational firms based on three nature-based categories: (i) living, (ii) dead, and (iii) zombie. Living firms are positively balanced and neutral with respect to environmental concerns; dead firms are inadvertently harmful, unaware of the system-wide effects of their operations; and zombie firms are purposefully harmful. The authors identify a hierarchy of competencies associated with each of the firm categories, along with short- and long-term strategies to address competency deficiencies. They also provide actionable recommendations for both MNCs and government

policymakers with respect to sustainability practices associated with these firm types.

The next article, “Orchestrating Decentralized Evolution: Multinational Corporations as Complex Adaptive Systems,” is authored by Sokol Celo and Mark Lehrer (both of Suffolk University, USA). The authors build upon theory related to complexity and complex adaptive systems to assist in better managing intricacies associated with international business. They note how multinational corporations need to adapt to complex and rapidly changing environments in a dynamic fashion, while also maintaining strategic coherence. The authors provide an example based on Zhejiang Geely’s acquisition of Volvo, to illustrate a framework of nearly decomposable systems as it applies in an MNC context. They conclude by overviewing strategic implications of MNC managers using a complexity theory-based approach, in terms of being able to adapt more effectively to continually changing global business environments.

Emmanuelle Reuter (University of Neuchâtel, Switzerland) authored the fourth article, “Managing the Psychology of Distance Perceptions in Internationalization Strategies.” This article’s review was initiated as part of the 2024 special issue on mental models and cognitive frames in international business (Celo & Newburry, 2024). Building on literature from the field of psychology, Reuter develops a typology of four motivated psychic distance perceptions based on the need for diversity level and the need for openness level. The paper further identifies a fit between the four distance perspectives developed within this typology, and the four strategies associated with the integration-responsiveness framework. Reuter then develops actionable recommendations regarding how to manage the psychology of distance perceptions in organizations and create a cognition–strategy fit.

The fifth article of this issue, “International Business Education in the Age of Disruption,” is authored by Vanessa Hasse (Ivey Business School, Canada). Hasse notes that the increasingly frequent occurrence of rare, but impactful, events, such as the Covid-19 pandemic and artificial intelligence, has created pedagogical conundrums for interna-

tional business educators in terms of preconceived certainties regarding knowledge. Building on Bloom's taxonomy, Hasse proposes a framework based on knowledge context and learner agency facilitation to differentiate among knowledge reception, knowledge mastery, knowledge dissipation and knowledge co-creation. The framework builds into what Hasse classifies as a "fire-mindset," which is guided by six principles across three elements: spark, stoke, and sustain. Hasse provides course design examples across each of the six principles to help guide international business educators in their classroom efforts. The article provides a nice complement to our 2025 special issue on innovating teaching strategies in international business, developed in cooperation with the AIB's Teaching and Education Special Interest Group (Fletcher & Calixto, 2025).

We hope that you gain valuable and practical insights from this issue. Please look out for our forthcoming issues on the 2025 AIB Annual Meeting Theme of Making International Business Scholarship Matter (October 2025), our annual awards issue featuring the finalists for the AIB Best Dissertation Award and interviews with the winners of the AIB Fellows Awards (December 2025), and a two-part special issue on International Business in Africa (January and March 2026). As always, please continue to submit your applied international business research to the journal!

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