

## Introduction to the Minitrack on Emerging Issues in Distributed Group Decision-Making: Opportunities and Challenges

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This mini track addresses emerging issues, such as diversity, culture, adaptability, mobility and agility related to teams in distributed group decision-making, as well as the underlying theories of group dynamics, coordination, and communications in both swift and ad-hoc groups. The papers submitted specifically examined the emerging issues related to team configuration, communication challenges and performance in a distributed environment.

The mini track attracted several papers related to various aspects of distributed decision making. Accepted papers study Multi generation teams, agile teams in a information systems development (ISD) environment and WikiTribune project, a “hybrid” model of peer production. The first paper developed a framework oriented toward well-being for a system with a multi-generational team. Their findings reveal motivation, engagement, and positive emotion (interest and joy) can be found in all three collaborative innovation activities. This finding indicates that these determinants play an essential role in IGC. Their study contributes to the IS community by providing five dimensions of barriers to IGC and the corresponding well-being determinants for positive system design. In the second paper authors develop a framework to theorize their effectiveness in generating cohesion within distributed teams. Their study finds that their effectiveness is influenced by the nature of the boundary objects themselves but also by team members’ willingness to address differences in contextual factors. Authors identified three contextual factors - structure, identity, and culture - that are critical to supporting team members crossing knowledge boundaries within distributed teams. In addition, their findings suggest that while boundary objects can indeed foster team cohesion in agile distributed ISD, there are other less explored aspects to their role

In the third paper authors present a theoretical framework to analyze case study findings from the WikiTribune project, a “hybrid” model of peer production. The project is characterized as an open collaborative journalism model that combines elements of commercial firm-based production with that of commons-based peer production. Authors identify several signals, each signal arising from the different modes of production, authors suggest resultant challenges must be addressed through policy formation, platform design choices, and visibility of production process information.

Each of the above paper is timely, as they address emerging issues related to distributed group decision-making. The distributed group decision making area is still emerging and research is conflicting. As long as research produces mixed results, there will be continual need for validation and replication of experiments and development of new underlying theories.