Understanding the heterogeneity of corporate entrepreneurship programs

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In today's volatile market environments, companies must be able to continuously innovate. In this context, innovation does not only refer to the development of new products or business models but often also affects the entire organization, which has to transform its structures, processes, and ways of working.

Corporate entrepreneurship (CE) programs are often used by established companies to address these innovation and transformation challenges. In general, they are understood as formalized entrepreneurial activities to (1) support internal corporate ventures or (2) work with external startups.

The organizational design and value creation of CE programs exhibit a high degree of heterogeneity. On the one hand, this heterogeneity makes CE programs a valuable management tool that can be used for many purposes. On the other hand, it can be seen as a reason for the current challenges that companies experience in effectively using and managing CE programs.

By systematically analyzing 54 different cases in established companies in Germany, Switzerland, and Austria, this study contributes to a better understanding of the heterogeneity of CE programs. The taxonomic approach provides clearly defined types of CE programs that are distinguished according to their organizational design and the outputs they generate.

BEING ENTREPRENEURIAL MEANS SHAPING THE FUTURE

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