

Editorial: Zeitschrift für KMU und Entrepreneurship Becomes Journal for SME and Entrepreneurship (ZfKE)

By Jochen R. Pampel*

With a legacy of 68 years, the *Zeitschrift für kleine und mittlere Unternehmen und Entrepreneurship* (ZfKE) ranks among the pioneering journals devoted to research on small and medium-sized enterprises. Supported by the publishing house Dunker & Humblot and shaped by the commitment of numerous editors, co-editors, and reviewers, the journal established itself as a central forum in the DACH region for this important field of inquiry. Over time, its scope expanded to encompass entrepreneurship research.

Although published exclusively in German, the ZfKE has attained a solid “C” rating in the JOURQUAL ranking of the German Association of University Professors of Business Administration (VHB). Articles, carefully assessed and frequently refined through multiple rounds of a rigorous double-blind review process, have addressed a broad spectrum of topics and methodological approaches – ranging from theory-driven analyses to practice-oriented research contributions.

Research has become increasingly international, with authors seeking to disseminate their ideas more widely, to be read, and to be cited globally. While firmly rooted in the DACH region, the ZfKE now aspires to broaden its reach by transforming into an English-language journal. Accordingly, future contributions will be submitted in English and evaluated through an international review process. At the same time, the journal expressly invites its largely German-speaking community to continue engaging with this familiar medium while benefiting from the expanded global audience and from international topics, questions, and data.

* Prof. Dr. Jochen R. Pampel is Professor for Controlling at the University of Potsdam and since 2020 the editor in chief of the Journal for SME and Entrepreneurship. He is also the speaker of the scientific board of trustees of BAUM e.V., which is the largest association of sustainability-oriented managed companies in Germany. His research is currently focusing on analyses of the opportunities and risks of different incentive systems for managing ecological transformation in companies and the impact of advancing digitalization, and in particular artificial intelligence, on the effectiveness and efficiency of the controlling functions planning and control as well as information provision.

To mark this transition, the first issue published entirely in English presents translations of selected articles originally published over the past five years. This curated selection illustrates the breadth and quality of the journal's content across its three categories – *Research*, *State-of-the-Art*, and *Entrepreneurship Compact* – and ensures that these contributions gain the wider recognition and dissemination they deserve.

In line with the established structures of international journals, the *ZfKE* will soon establish a small group of Deputy Editors who will assume greater responsibility and a more active operational role. With their specialized expertise, they shall contribute to shaping the journal's future direction and strengthening its reviewer community. To enable this transition, the current team of Department Editors is recognized in this issue as the outgoing editorial board. The *ZfKE* extends its sincere gratitude for their dedicated support over the past years. The composition of the new editorial boards is open to suggestions – and then will be announced in forthcoming issues.

Not everything will change. The well-established initials of the journal, *ZfKE*, will be retained, as they have become a recognizable acronym in the field. More importantly, however, is our hope that you, as readers and authors, will remain engaged with the journal's contributions, find continued inspiration in its articles, and actively enrich the *ZfKE* by submitting your own work within the broad domain of SMEs and entrepreneurship, which certainly also involves family firms.