I am delighted to introduce to you the Social Enterprise Journal’s (SEJ) first edition of 2018 (Volume 14, Issue 1) published by Emerald publishers. First, I would like to thank the journal board, the selected reviewers and of course the authors for the papers enclosed. Since 2007, I have edited 32 issues of the SEJ and this will be my final issue as editor. I have found the experience to be the most rewarding, and the collective effort of those in the social enterprise field has been an inspiration which has fuelled the growth of SEJ. I am delighted to pass on the baton to Simon Teasdale who has been a very supportive associate editor for the past four years. I wish Simon well and I have no doubt Simon will take the journal to a new level beyond the boundaries of the management discipline.

Now to the seven papers for this issue of SEJ. The first paper is co-authored by Carole Howorth (University of York) and Matt MacDonald (Manchester Metropolitan University) is titled, “Roots of social enterprise: entrepreneurial philanthropy England 1600-1908”. The article provides valuable insights into the roots of social enterprise. The paper examines histories of charitable service and compares current understandings of social enterprise. Social enterprise models of welfare provision are evidenced from the seventeenth century onwards, and persistent themes that provide insights for current practice and understanding are identified. It is excellent to see this historical perspective finally published in SEJ.

The second paper is authored by a collaboration led by Anthony Samuel (Cardiff University), Gareth White (University of South Wales), Paul Jones (Coventry University) and Rebecca Fisher (Coventry University) titled, “Social enterprises operating in the South Wales valleys: a Delphi study of persistent tensions”. This paper examines the factors that influence and collectively conspire to inhibit social enterprises’ abilities to flourish in geographies of economic and social deprivation. Drawing upon the extant literature, it deploys a Delphi study to rank the relative importance of these factors. Our third paper is authored by Sarah Woodside (Cansius College-management, New York) and is titled, “Dominant Logics: US WISEs and the tendency to favour a market dominant or social mission dominant approach”. This paper investigates how WISE founders perceived the relationship between logics and how they managed any resulting tensions, to help determine if they are effective vehicles for alleviating unemployment.

Our fourth paper results from a collaboration by Rosemary Lysaght (Queens University, Ontario, Canada), Michael James Roy (Glasgow Caledonian, Scotland), Jack Rendall (Glasgow Caledonian, Scotland), Terry Krupa (Queens University, Ontario, Canada), Liam Ball (Queens University, Ontario, Canada) and Janessa Davis (Queens University, Ontario, Canada). The article is titled, “Unpacking the foundational dimensions of work integration social enterprise: the development of an assessment tool”, and the paper develops and tests a tool that identifies foundational dimensions of Work Integration Social Enterprises (WISEs) for use in empirical studies and enterprise self-assessment. The fifth paper is authored by Brad Jackson (Victoria University, Wellington, New Zealand), Matthew Nicoll (Victoria University, Wellington, New Zealand) and Michael James Roy (Glasgow Caledonian University, Scotland) and the paper is titled, “The distinctive challenges and opportunities for creating leadership within social enterprises”. The article presents a systematic assessment of the distinctive challenges and opportunities associated with creating leadership within the realm of social enterprise. A modified and expanded form of Grint’s
leadership lenses heuristic framework (i.e. person, position, process, performance, purpose and place) are used to examine and highlight what is particular about creating leadership in social enterprises by virtue of their distinctive missions, strategic contexts, legal forms and organisational structures and cultures. Based on this initial exploration, five research priorities are identified to better understand and develop leadership practice in the social enterprise realm.

The sixth paper is this issue is authored by Rama Kummitha (Politecnico di Milano Dipartimento di Ingegneria Gestionale – School of Management, Milan) titled, “Institutionalising design thinking in social entrepreneurship: a contextual analysis into social and organizational processes”. The paper makes an attempt to analyse various social and organisational processes that promote social enterprises to adopt design thinking to create products, which are relevant and viable among user groups. The article finds that by adopting design thinking, social enterprises portray their product innovation genre, thereby represent their fashion in addressing wicked problems more effectively.

The seventh paper is authored by myself titled, “Research in the Social Enterprise Journal – from the margins to the mainstream”. The article provides a history and the impact of SEJ since 2005. The paper shows the development of the journal from being UK-focused and positive to being international and critical. The paper also shows the growth of the journal in terms of international downloads, citations and downloads.

I would also like to draw your attention to three SEJ special issues. The first one is edited by Chris Mason, Cristina Neesham & Jo Barraket on “Social enterprise in Oceania: evidence, opportunities and challenges”. This call for papers is already up on the SEJ home page. The second special issue on “Social enterprise and networks” is also available on the website and will be guest edited by Dr David Littlewood at the University of Sheffield (david.littlewood@sheffield.ac.uk) and Dr Zaheer Khan (khan.zaheer@gmail.com). The third is on “Promoting vibrant social enterprise in Southeast Asia” please contact by email: Dr Hieu Ngo (hngo@ucalgary.ca), Dr Janelle Kerlin (jkerlin@gsu.edu), Dr Sothy Khieng (sothykhieng@gmail.com) or Isaac Lyne (i.lyne@uws.edu.au).

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