



## Innovation Research Seminar

**Sebastian Schäfer, M.Sc.**

Overcoming Distance in Tournament-Based Crowdsourcing Contests:  
The Mediating Role of Diversely Composed Solver Teams



**Summary:** Oftentimes, external actors (solution providers) can provide solutions to complex technical problems internally unresolvable to organizations. Consequently, firms turn to solution providers by means of crowdsourcing contests to generate solutions they are unaware of. Anyhow, firms' decision to select the "best" solution is often biased by their functional, geographical, cultural, linguistic, and social backgrounds. Solution providers distant to solution seekers in any of these domains may be discriminated in their prospect of winning a contest owing to the organization's prior experience, limited attention, and established routines. First empirical results demonstrate that working in diverse solver teams helps solution providers to overcome these distances and be successful in innovation contests. After presenting the research context, empirical model, and first quantitative results I want to explore possible theoretical avenues that help to reason for and against distances in crowdsourcing contests and diverse teams as vehicles to bridge the gap between solution seekers and providers.

When and where:

**18 June 2015**

2pm to 3.30pm

**TIM Social Area**

Kackertstraße 7

3<sup>rd</sup> Floor



Find Sebastian  
Schäfer online

**Speaker Bio:** Sebastian Schäfer is a research associate and doctoral student at the Innovation, Strategy and Organisation Group. He studied business economics at the University of Cologne, the Ruhr-University Bochum and the California State University. In his doctoral studies, Sebastian Schäfer tries to shed further light on the domain of crowdsourcing and innovation contests, multinational innovation, and collaboration across boundaries. Together with Professors Salge and Piening, he succeeded to submit studies at the AoM Annual Meeting 2014 and the SMS Annual Conference 2013.

**Explorative Format:** Seminar participants are invited to discuss several theoretical avenues and provide arguments that help to develop the theory and hypotheses sections of this study.