

Call for Papers - Special Issue of *Labour and Industry*

Work and Employment: COVID-19 and Beyond

This special issue volume invites papers that analyse the issues and policy responses in the context of COVID-19 impacts. It is anticipated that authors will address the social, organisational and institutional aspects of work and a way forward for the post COVID-19 world. Currently, there is a range of literature on managing redundancies and business closures (see Bailey et al, 2014; Roche et al, 2009), research is now needed that emphasises the work, industrial relations and human resource management nexus during times of crisis.

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Key Dates

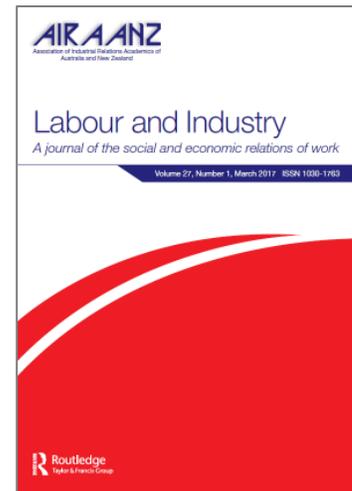
- Papers submitted – **January 31, 2021**
- Authors receive first round of feedback – **March, 2021**
- Authors submit revised papers - **May, 2021**
- Authors receive second round of feedback - **June/July, 2021**
- All papers complete - **August, 2021**
- Introduction – **September, 2021**
- Publication – **October, 2021**

Types of Papers

- Full research paper
- Research note
- Discussion paper

Overview of Special Issue

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to disruption of the international economy. The speed and intensity of the current crisis is unprecedented - travel has been curtailed, businesses have closed, unemployment has sky-rocketed and social isolation has been widely imposed across the globe. Consequently, a dichotomy has developed between the global, online world and the local and restricted, offline world, with populations confined to a region or city. Communication, business, employment and entertainment is being maintained at arm's length and/or virtually through advancements in digital technologies (see WEF, 2020). What this devastation means to the resilience of communities and workplaces after COVID-19 is currently unknown. To date, many governments around the world (e.g. Australia and New Zealand) have intervened to support their economies, employers, and employees. However, changes to all aspects of life will be profound and long-lasting with the need to focus on different types of resources - not just financial resources (see Dhakal, 2018). Rebuilding economies and workplaces post COVID-19 will require enormous effort, resources and expertise. Predictions as to the efficiency and effectiveness of recovery are unknown, although Tirole (2020) posits that an optimistic scenario, may mean that "an economic stimulus will facilitate the transition back to normal, boosted by the budgetary and monetary efforts already underway". That said, he cautions that we should "take advantage of the pandemic to act on social norms and incentives together ... working towards a less individualistic, more compassionate society". To achieve such outcomes, it will be important to examine the ongoing changes in the work, labour regulation and potential recovery from the COVID-19 crisis, as well as readiness for future pandemics. Until now, governments have equated the national 'good' with economic growth, yet in a short space of time this approach has changed to focus on the well-being of the workforce. It remains to be seen whether post COVID-19, Australia and New Zealand can avoid a return to 'business as usual' where an employee's value depends on their contribution to the economy. Alternatively, as Hamilton (2020) advocates, will various stakeholders (governments, businesses, non-profits and others) come together and collectively promote the equitable workplace, especially the most vulnerable? To address such questions, this special issue invites full research papers, research notes and discussion papers that consider an examination of the work and industrial relations nexus in the context of



the impacts of COVID-19, as well as the expected changes and future research needs for the post COVID-19 world.

Topics may include the following themes (but are not restricted to):

- **Dependence on Technology:** For example, has the growing usage of and reliance on digital tools and technologies, such as ZOOM™ and artificial intelligence (AI), exacerbated or helped bridge the fairness divide in the community and the workplace? Has there been an anticipated rise in employee/manager cyberbullying, and employee job control?
- **Disruption in Employment:** For example, who was laid off, who was retained and who was hired? Was there an uneven distribution of the burden of the crisis as well as the opportunities that may have opened up? To what extent were employment standards and collective agreements circumvented by the pressures of crisis?
- **Distribution of Support Measures:** For example, business concessions and job subsidies have been widely used, but have they been applied selectively? How have responses differed between urban and regional/rural centres? What roles and pressures were placed on trade unions to alleviate the impact on members and constituencies?
- **Nature of effective business and political leadership:** For example, how are governments; educational institutions and leaders working to revitalise work and employment? What industrial relations and human resource management policies and practices are evident and what are the potential impacts?
- **Work after COVID-19:** For example, has COVID-19 influenced the skills and competencies that are valued in relation to work and society? What are the implications for remote and vulnerable workers? Has remote working led to a rise in employee/manager cyberbullying, and employee job control? How are workers who lost their jobs being re-integrated into workplaces?

All methodological approaches are welcome – conceptual, empirical/theoretical papers, case studies, and research notes, with an emphasis on the work and industrial relations nexus during times of this COVID-19 crisis.

Please check the *Labour and Industry* website for formatting requirements for submissions, the process of submission and submit your papers at this website (<https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rlab20>).

If you any questions about the special issue, please contact the special issue editors. For any queries regarding the submission process, please contact the *Labour and Industry* Systems Manager, Jane Halteh at jane.halteh@gmail.com

References

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- Hamilton, A. (2020). *Imagining life after COVID-19*. Available at: <https://probonoaustralia.com.au/news/2020/03/imagining-life-after-covid-19/> accessed 3/4/2020
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- World Economic Forum [WEF], 2020. How next-generation information technologies tackled COVID-19 in China. Available at: <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/04/how-next-generation-information-technologies-tackled-covid-19-in-china/> accessed 3/4/2020

Labour and Industry achieved a '2' ranking in the Chartered ABS Academic Journal Guide (AJG, released 14 March, 2018) and has a B status in the ABDC rankings.