

## CALL FOR PAPERS

### THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

#### SPECIAL ISSUE:

#### Repatriate Management in a Volatile Global Landscape: Strategies for Resilience and Success

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Recent global events, such as the COVID-19 pandemic and ongoing geopolitical tensions, have significantly impacted global mobility in MNCs, introducing new complexities in repatriate management (Caligiuri et al., 2020). A repatriate is an employee who returns to their home country after completing an international assignment (Baruch et al., 2016). Repatriates play a crucial role in MNCs by bringing back valuable skills, knowledge, and global perspectives that enhance organizational capabilities. Despite this critical role, existing literature has predominantly focused on expatriation, leaving significant gaps in understanding the complexities of repatriate management. This has led to challenges in leveraging repatriates' skills and knowledge and adverse consequences for the repatriates, including difficulties in readjusting to their home country and advancing in their careers (Chiang et al., 2017; Ho et al., 2023; McNulty & Brewster, 2017).

Addressing challenges of effective repatriate management is crucial for enhancing organizational resilience and supporting repatriates successfully. The proposed Special Issue aims to make several theoretical contributions to the field of international human resource management (HRM) and international business (IB). First, it seeks to advance theoretical understanding by integrating insights from contemporary global disruptions, such as the COVID-19 pandemic and geopolitical tensions, into existing repatriate management frameworks. By acknowledging the impact of these disruptions on repatriate experiences and organizational dynamics, the Special Issue aims to develop new theoretical models and frameworks that capture the complexities of repatriation in volatile global contexts.

Second, the Special Issue endeavors to uncover the distinctive hurdles confronting repatriates amid volatile global contexts, where rapid and capricious shifts in political, economic, and social landscapes pose formidable challenges (Cooke et al., 2024). Within this dynamic milieu, repatriates grapple with heightened levels of uncertainty, ambiguity, and complexity, profoundly impacting every facet of their reintegration journey (Ho et al., 2023). By delving into these challenges through diverse theoretical lenses, the Special Issue aims to unravel the underlying mechanisms shaping repatriate outcomes and unveil how factors like organizational agility and cultural adaptation strategies interact with the global context to influence repatriate experiences.

Third, the Special Issue explores advanced strategies in repatriate management, emphasizing the transformative potential of technologies like generative AI and digital tools.

Organizations increasingly adopt innovative solutions to address repatriation complexities (Sahakiantz & Dorner, 2021; Huang et al., 2023). Generative AI and digital tools offer scalable, data-driven solutions tailored to repatriates' needs (Ghauri et al., 2021). This Special Issue examines how emerging technologies can support repatriates and enhance their reintegration into organizations through empirical evidence and theoretical insights.

Fourth, the Special Issue aims to provide actionable recommendations for HRM practitioners to refine repatriation policies and practices, emphasizing on optimizing repatriates' well-being and facilitating their seamless reintegration into organizational structures. Through the operationalization of theoretical insights into pragmatic guidelines, the Special Issue bridges theoretical frameworks with practical applications, enabling the implementation of evidence-based strategies within organizational contexts (Cave et al., 2022).

### **Themes and exemplary research questions for the Special Issue**

We seek scholarly contributions that can help advance our understanding of repatriate management in a volatile global landscape. We welcome submissions of empirical studies using a diverse range of research methods, including quantitative and qualitative approaches, as well as conceptual and theoretical contributions. The following are examples of potential empirical research questions that align with our special issue theme, though this list is not exhaustive.

- **Theoretical frameworks and models:** How can existing theoretical models in international HRM be adapted or expanded to account for the complexities introduced by global disruptions? What new theoretical frameworks in international HRM and IB can be developed to better understand the repatriation process in the context of contemporary global challenges? How can interdisciplinary approaches enhance our understanding of repatriate management in volatile environments?
- **Impact of global disruptions:** How do global disruptions such as the COVID-19 pandemic and geopolitical tensions affect the repatriation experiences, including mental health, emotional well-being, and work-life balance of expatriates? What are the challenges faced by repatriates in balancing professional responsibilities with personal and family life during periods of global volatility? How do repatriation strategies differ between MNCs from developed and emerging economies, and what lessons can be learned from these differences?
- **Organizational support and integration:** What role does organizational support play in mitigating repatriation challenges, such as cultural readjustment and career progression? What are the best practices for managing repatriates in industries particularly affected by global volatility? What strategies can organizations implement to support the psychological resilience of repatriates during periods of significant global volatility? How can organizations create supportive environments that help repatriates manage the intersection of work and life demands effectively? How can sustainable HRM practices be integrated into repatriation strategies to promote long-term organizational resilience and repatriate well-being?
- **Technological innovations:** How can advanced technologies, such as generative AI and digital tools, be leveraged to support repatriates and enhance their reintegration into the organization? What are the potential unintended consequences of using

advanced technologies in repatriate management, and how can these be mitigated to ensure positive outcomes?

- **Knowledge transfer and organizational learning:** How do global disruptions affect repatriates' willingness to share knowledge and their effectiveness in transferring knowledge within the organization? How does the uncertainty and volatility in the global environment impact repatriates' intentions to stay with their home organization and share their acquired knowledge? What strategies can MNCs implement to ensure effective knowledge transfer from repatriates during periods of significant global disruptions?
- **Talent retention and development:** How can organizations effectively train and develop repatriates to enhance their long-term engagement and retention amidst global uncertainties? What strategies can be employed to ensure that repatriates remain valuable assets to the organization in a volatile global landscape?

### Provisional Timeline and Review Process

- Full manuscript submission window: August 1-30, 2025
- 1st round review outcome due: November 30, 2025
- 1st round revision and resubmission due: March 30, 2026
- 2nd round review outcome due: June 30, 2026
- 2nd round revision and resubmission due: September 30, 2026
- Final outcome due: December 30, 2026

Papers must be original and comply with *IJHRM* submission guidelines. In the online system, prospective contributors should ensure they submit their papers for consideration under the Special Issue titled 'Repatriate Management in a Volatile Global Landscape: Strategies for Resilience and Success'.

Questions and enquiries should be directed to: [candy.lu@mq.edu.au](mailto:candy.lu@mq.edu.au).

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