

## **Book excerpt: Making science sustainable**

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*Excerpted from 'The Vietnamese Social Sciences at a Fork in the Road', Edited by Quan-Hoang Vuong and Trung Tran [1], with the permission from the editors.*

As Vietnam gradually transitions to become a more liberalized and internationally integrated economy [2], its higher education system also moves forward in this direction. However, for a business of science to capitalize on this wave of internationalization and decentralization, institutions and individual scientists in Vietnam must address the following challenges.

First, there must be a stronger presence of an entrepreneurial spirit among organizations and individual researchers in Vietnam [3]. University academics and managers must see the rectors and vice-rectors of research as an “entrepreneur”; and, the research office must be perceived as more effective in on “planning” and “leading” roles. This is perhaps an expression of the absence of entrepreneurial spirit among public universities in Vietnam. Rather than planning research activities based on long-term strategies, the universities have chosen a compliance-based planning approach. More specifically, the universities must proactively create long-term deliberate strategies to secure government grants. Besides the government grants, researchers in these universities are eligible to apply for funding from a wide range of international and domestic organizations. Not only is there a lack of entrepreneurial spirit at the university and institution level, there is also insufficient experience among academic staff in Vietnam when it comes to the commercialization of scientific production.

Another challenge that should be addressed is the contradictory legal mandates between different ministries [4]. In this regard, one can argue that private universities and institutions, which are not the subject of the law on public employees, cadres and civil servants, enjoy relatively more freedom to create a better incentive system for research activities in Vietnam. However, there are many more researchers working for public universities and institutions than in private ones in Vietnam. The contradiction in different legal mandates remains an obstacle for the development of the business of science in Vietnam in the near future.

In recent years, the frenzied development of advanced computational platforms, social networks and high-speed Internet connectivity has generated business opportunities in velocity and volume the world has never seen. These developments have provided new platforms and opportunities to help science becoming more sustainable. The business of science is a business where research and research-based activities and contents are the products. More specifically, this business would offer services such as research, science communication, science journalism, data collection, data analysis, and software developments, to name a few. The obvious examples of science-based business are the commercialization of scientific products, which has been taking place in various fields.

### **Note:**

The *Vietnamese Social Sciences at a Fork in the Road*, utilizing an object-oriented structured database on the productivity of Vietnamese researchers, seeks to provide a comprehensive overview of the development of Social Sciences and Humanities in Vietnam from 2008 to 2018.

The book can be ordered from [De Gruyter Online](#) or [Amazon](#).

### **References**

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