

Centre for Business History, Norwegian School of Management (BI) has the pleasure to invite you to the conference:

**Research Agendas for the Future: Business History in Perspective**

Time: May 5 and 6, 2011

Venue: Norwegian School of Management BI, Oslo

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**Theme:**

Alfred Chandler's pioneering work, *Strategy and Structure* (1962), *The Visible Hand* (1977), and *Scale and Scope* (1990) significantly reshaped the field of business history in the United States and beyond. But Chandler's marked influence on this scholarship has begun to wane. Today's business historians increasingly employ a wider range of research objectives, theoretical perspectives and methods making it hard to define the field as a specific branch of history or as a "coherent whole". Contemporary historiographies reveal a field that is steadily more pluralistic and fragmented.

At the same time, there is arguably a strong continuity. Key objects or interests remain in the centre of focus: the corporation, financial systems, business strategies and management and the role of economic policy-making and the relations between the state involvement and the private sector. Equally, business history has been less affected by paradigmatic changes and disciplinary developments elsewhere, such as the linguistic turn and new cultural history. Business history has also developed without significant cross-fertilization with other sub-disciplines of history or the historical discipline at large.

This workshop sets out to ask to what extent business history has become too fragmented and secluded and whether the field possesses the theoretical and methodological resources needed to pose the best questions, and offer the relevant answers, for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Business history will therefore be discussed and investigated from various perspectives with the aim of understanding business history in the past and present with an eye for future development.

- Program -

Thursday

- 10.00 Welcome and practical information about the seminar  
A brief introduction to the seminar's theme and program  
*by Knut Sogner, Professor of economic history, BI*
- 10.15-12.30 Session 1: The History of Business History  
Sverre Knutsen/Business History in Norway

Lennart Schön / Theories on Different Levels? Business History vs. Economic History?

12.30-13.30 Lunch

13.30-15.30 Session 2: Management and Leadership

Susanna Fellman/ A Class apart: Finnish Leadership in a Nordic Perspective

Knut Øyangen / Management and the Art of Firing Torpedoes: Information Integration at Kongsberg, 1955-1987

16.00-17.00 Session 3: Roundtable discussion – With business history into the future

Christine Myrvang

Martin Jes Iversen

Pål Sandvik

Sverre A. Christensen

19.30 Dinner

Friday

09.15-11.00 Session 3: Culture and Identity

Andrew Godley/The Rise of Global Chicken: The Impact of Technological Change and Consumer demand in the Emergence of the Modern Poultry Industry

Eirinn Larsen / The Masculine Foundation of Business Education: Or How to Bridge the Gap between Business History and Gender History?

11.30-13.00 Session 2: Synthesis and Comparisons

Leslie Hannah: Chandler's America: Constructive – or a False Construct?

Knut Sogner: A Child of National Traditions or its International Placements: Norwegian Capitalism Summed Up.

13.00-14.00 Lunch