



IN MEMORY OF PROFESSOR MARIO RAFFA

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Abstract

In this note, the Editor-in-chief and the Editorial Team of Piccola Impresa/Small Business would like to remind the memory of Professor Mario Raffa, who recently passed away. Mario Raffa served as co-editor of our journal for several years and made a significant contribution to the consolidation of its editorial project and the development of research on entrepreneurship and SMEs. He was a prestigious scholar, a lively mind, a fundamental point of reference for colleagues and students, and a great innovator, capable of looking ahead, devising ever new projects and involving others in facing ever new challenges. We thank him for his generous contribution to the Journal and for the dedication with which he animated the community of entrepreneurship and small business scholars.

In the first issue of the year 2022, the Editor-in-chief and the Editorial team of the journal *Piccola Impresa / Small Business* wish to remember Professor Mario Raffa, who passed away on March 10th.

Professor Mario Raffa served as Co-editor-in-chief of our Journal for several years, contributing to the consolidation of its editorial project and, more generally, to the development and dissemination of studies and research on entrepreneurship and innovative SMEs. In 2009 he was nominated as a White Wilford Fellow (first Italian since 1977, the year in which the prestigious ICSB - International Council for Small Business - was established) thanks to his scientific, cultural, and political contributions on the issues of entrepreneurship and the birth and development of new businesses. In 2016 he was appointed as an ECSB Fellow (the first Italian to be awarded this position by the European Council for Small Business and Entrepreneurship) for his contributions to entrepreneurship research and teaching.

We would also like to remember that Mario Raffa was truly inquisitive and innovative in his field of research. He also demonstrated great civic commitment both to carrying out academic activities at the University of Naples Federico II and to serving the city of Naples. As an academic, he was a full professor of management engineering at the University of Naples Federico II, where he held, among others, the positions of Chair of the Board of the Graduate Program in Management Engineering (from 1995 to 2002) and Head of DIEG - Department of Economic and Management Engineering (from 2000 to 2005), and scientific director of ODISSEO, Observatory on technological innovation and organization. From 2003 to 2008 he was in charge of the Start Cup Federico II; in 2007 he was Scientific Director of the PNI - National Award for Innovation. In the Prodi Government, he was part of the "Research and Innovation" Working Group of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers. From May 2008 to June 2011 he was also Councilor for Development of the Municipality of Naples, trying to put his skills as a scholar at the service of citizens. In a note by the past Rector of the University of Naples Federico II, Guido Trombetti, it was emphasized that Prof. Raffa *"In over fifty years of teaching and research was a fundamental point of reference for colleagues and students, who were able to appreciate his ability to mobilize people and involve them in increasingly relevant challenges, in the conviction that an innovator has a moral obligation never to be satisfied with the results achieved, but must be an engine of initiatives and social aggregation"*.

The community of entrepreneurship and small business scholars has lost a lively mind, a prestigious scholar, and a tireless supporter of *Piccola Impresa / Small Business*. Prof. Mario Raffa started publishing in our Journal in 1992 with the article written in collaboration with Giuseppe Zollo entitled *"The relationship between technological innovation and organization in small innovative enterprises"* and continued to support the Journal throughout the past few years.

Our fond memory and special thanks go out to him for his generous contribution to our Journal and the whole community of entrepreneurship and small business scholars.