

Debate Forum Editorial

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The debate forum in this volume addresses the relationship between information systems (IS) research and design science, a topic which has spurred increasing interest and debate in the IS community over the last decade. The opening essay of the debate forum is provided by Juhani Iivari, who has conducted influential work on IS development since the 1980s. His essay discusses ontological, epistemological and methodological aspects of IS as a design science, and also addresses ethical and value-related concerns of this research approach.

In response to Iivari's essay, a strong panel of international experts present their positions related to the debate topic: Tone Bratteteig (Norway), Sven Carlsson (Sweden), Alan Hevner (US), Björn Niehaves (Germany), Sandeep Puroo (US), Matti Rossi (Finland), and Maung Sein (US/Norway). In their position papers, these researchers discuss and challenge the theses presented in Iivari's essay, and also contribute new perspectives on the debate topic. While the SJIS editors normally do not take part in the debate forum we make an exception this time. Together with his co-authors Puroo and Sein, Matti Rossi is allowed to respond to Iivari's critique of their view on the relationship between design science and action research. The debate forum never lets the opportunity for an engaged discourse pass by!

I would like to thank the authors for their insightful contributions. The papers presented in this debate forum together provide comprehensive insight into current issues related to the nature and role of IS as a design science. While there are some differing perspectives among the authors, they all agree on the importance of critically addressing these issues to further our understanding of IS design research. This debate forum provides an important resource for further reflection and research on the topic.

