

Weiss, Lysander; Kanbach, Dominik K.

**Article — Published Version**

## Leveraging new business innovation for strategic renewal: An organizational framework for strategic corporate venturing

Creativity and Innovation Management

**Provided in Cooperation with:**

John Wiley & Sons

*Suggested Citation:* Weiss, Lysander; Kanbach, Dominik K. (2023) : Leveraging new business innovation for strategic renewal: An organizational framework for strategic corporate venturing, Creativity and Innovation Management, ISSN 1467-8691, Wiley, Hoboken, NJ, Vol. 32, Iss. 2, pp. 316-339,  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/caim.12553>

This Version is available at:

<https://hdl.handle.net/10419/288011>

**Standard-Nutzungsbedingungen:**

Die Dokumente auf EconStor dürfen zu eigenen wissenschaftlichen Zwecken und zum Privatgebrauch gespeichert und kopiert werden.

Sie dürfen die Dokumente nicht für öffentliche oder kommerzielle Zwecke vervielfältigen, öffentlich ausstellen, öffentlich zugänglich machen, vertreiben oder anderweitig nutzen.

Sofern die Verfasser die Dokumente unter Open-Content-Lizenzen (insbesondere CC-Lizenzen) zur Verfügung gestellt haben sollten, gelten abweichend von diesen Nutzungsbedingungen die in der dort genannten Lizenz gewährten Nutzungsrechte.

**Terms of use:**

*Documents in EconStor may be saved and copied for your personal and scholarly purposes.*

*You are not to copy documents for public or commercial purposes, to exhibit the documents publicly, to make them publicly available on the internet, or to distribute or otherwise use the documents in public.*

*If the documents have been made available under an Open Content Licence (especially Creative Commons Licences), you may exercise further usage rights as specified in the indicated licence.*



<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

# Leveraging new business innovation for strategic renewal: An organizational framework for strategic corporate venturing

Lysander Weiss<sup>1</sup>  | Dominik K. Kanbach<sup>1,2</sup> 

<sup>1</sup>Chair of Strategic Entrepreneurship, HHL Leipzig Graduate School of Management, Leipzig, Germany

<sup>2</sup>School of Business, Woxsen University, Hyderabad, India

## Correspondence

Lysander Weiss, Chair of Strategic Entrepreneurship, HHL Leipzig Graduate School of Management, Jahnallee 59, Leipzig, Germany.  
Email: [lysander.weiss@hhl.de](mailto:lysander.weiss@hhl.de)

To adapt their competitive advantages for successful strategic renewal, established companies must apply suitable innovation activities. One way to achieve this is the establishment of corporate venturing units that create organizationally consequential new business innovation for their parent company. However, the understanding of the distinctive organizational characteristics for such strategic corporate venturing is limited. To address this gap, our abductive study develops a conceptual organizational framework by linking key concepts of strategic renewal with corporate venturing. This framework is subsequently compared with insights emerging from the qualitative data of 29 corporate venturing units. This comparison allows us to define six types of units with different possible roles for the strategic renewal of the parent company, and a final exploratory organizational framework with distinctive organizational characteristics for strategic corporate venturing. These include a set of dynamic capabilities with corresponding resources as possible enablers for a planned innovation logic that requires interlinked-ambidextrous structures. These findings provide a foundation for an empirical model of strategic corporate venturing, as well as novel insights for establishing dynamic capabilities and ambidexterity within inter-linked organizational entities. Practitioners can build on these findings to leverage corporate venturing units as a systematic and organized innovation activity for strategic renewal.

## KEYWORDS

continuous innovation, corporate innovation, corporate venturing, corporate venturing units, dynamic capabilities, innovation management, new business innovation, organizational ambidexterity, strategic corporate venturing, strategic renewal

## 1 | INTRODUCTION

'In view of technological developments, current trends and volatile market conditions, the automotive industry is confronted with seemingly impossible tasks. [The company] must also face megatrends such as digitisation, robotics, and industry 4.0, and develop new solutions for itself and its customers'. (#28<sup>1</sup>)

This statement from a leading automotive supplier exemplifies the challenges facing almost every established company worldwide in dealing with exponential technological growth, shorter product life cycles, ever-increasing customer demands, and other dynamic changes (Barreto, 2010; Brews & Purohit, 2007; Du & Chen, 2018). In such a fast-changing and uncertain environment, carefully built and protected competitive advantages no longer guarantee growth for established companies (Basu & Wadhwa, 2013; Graetz, 2002).

This is an open access article under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/) License, which permits use, distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

© 2023 The Authors. *Creativity and Innovation Management* published by John Wiley & Sons Ltd.

Instead, companies must engage in strategic renewal to continually adapt their competitive advantages, including their capabilities, resources, know-how, business model, and other aspects of their competitive profile (Hill & Georgoulas, 2016; Reimsbach & Hauschild, 2012).

Most traditional strategic management and planning approaches do not provide solutions to the stated strategic renewal challenge because they focus on building the most efficient way to exploit and optimize existing sustainable competitive advantages (Dogan, 2017; Glaser et al., 2015). Instead, established companies must engage in innovation to develop new competitive advantages (Basu & Wadhwa, 2013; Bouncken et al., 2007; McGrath, 2013). The research domain of 'corporate entrepreneurship' encompasses all entrepreneurial activities that promote such innovation in established companies (Guth & Ginsberg, 1990; Kuratko et al., 2015).

Within corporate entrepreneurship, Corporate Venturing (CV) represents one focused innovation activity, which is often undertaken by so-called Corporate Venturing Units (CVUs)—dedicated organizational entities tasked with the creation of new business innovation in the form of new product/market combinations (Birkinshaw & Hill, 2005; Gutmann, 2019; Kuratko & Audretsch, 2013; Remneland Wikhamn & Styhre, 2019). CVUs exist in many different organizational forms, such as digital innovation labs, hubs, incubators, accelerators, company builders and venture-client units, that are regularly examined and classified in the academic literature (e.g., Battistini et al., 2013; Bierwerth et al., 2015; Gutmann, 2019; Holotiuk & Beimbom, 2018; Kanbach & Stubner, 2016; Weiss & Kanbach, 2022). These many emerging variations underline the popularity of CV as an innovation activity in recent years, which also shows in the market data: 90% of DAX companies in Germany currently operate one or more CVUs (mm1, 2020), and an open CVU database from the consulting company 'hy' (2023) identifies over 200 such units across Germany, Austria, and Switzerland. A McKinsey and Company (2021) study showed that, globally, 55% of executives view business building as a top-three priority for 2022 (up from 28% in 2018–2020). Likewise, research from Capgemini (2021) and Thompson et al. (2020) determines that 75% of companies regard CVUs as a leading source for innovation in the next 5 years, up from only 2% in the last 5 years.

Based on this importance of CV for modern innovation management, many scholars suggest leveraging it for strategic renewal (e.g., Basu & Wadhwa, 2013; Hill & Georgoulas, 2016; Narayanan et al., 2009). In this case, 'strategic corporate venturing' (SCV) would need to develop organizationally consequential new business innovations that could lead to new competitive advantages for the parent company (Covin & Miles, 2007; Vanhaverbeke & Peeters, 2005; Weiss & Kanbach, 2022). While this suggestion provides an important possibility to systemize and organize innovation for strategic renewal, literature that specifies such possible interconnection of CV and strategic management is thin, and a commonly accepted framework for SCV is currently missing (Hill & Birkinshaw, 2008;

Kola-Nystrom, 2008; Reimsbach & Hauschild, 2012; Weiblen & Chesbrough, 2015). This leaves a relevant gap in research: to develop a better empirical understanding of SCV that explains how to leverage CV for strategic renewal (Bierwerth et al., 2015; Campbell et al., 2003; Hill & Georgoulas, 2016).

CV is first and foremost an organizational phenomenon (Burgers & Jansen, 2008; Narayanan et al., 2009). Especially with the presented various emerging organizational forms of CVUs, their organizational characteristics are thus an important focal point of analysis to determine their stronger or weaker role in the strategic renewal of the parent company. Indeed, scholars often examine the different ways to organize CVUs regarding their influence on successful new business creation—but mostly without adopting a strategic renewal perspective (Dushnitsky & Birkinshaw, 2016; Hill & Georgoulas, 2016; Kullik et al., 2018; Makarevich, 2017; Sharma & Chrisman, 1999; Uittenbogaard et al., 2005). Consequently, a specific research question can be formulated as a first step to address the stated research gap: *'what are the distinctive organisational characteristics that can determine the role of CVUs in the strategic renewal of the parent company?'*

To address this question, the study applies an abductive research process (Adler, 2006; King et al., 2021). Following a theoretical conceptualization of a framework for SCV, this process includes the inductive collection and analysis of qualitative data from contemporary CVUs in 29 European companies. Subsequent insights are compared with the conceptual framework's proposed organizational characteristics in a more deductive analysis to classify and identify different types of CVUs from the strategic renewal perspective and develop a final, exploratory framework of SCV grounded in empirical data and theory.

The findings suggest distinctive organizational characteristics to better leverage CVUs for strategic renewal. These characteristics reflect established key concepts from strategic renewal theory that are applied to CV and specified through the insights from qualitative data. That way, the developed organizational framework for SCV contributes to corporate entrepreneurship by defining the underresearched link between CV and strategic management (Hill & Georgoulas, 2016). Furthermore, the findings offer new insights for the integration of currently disconnected key concepts concerning the antecedents and process logics of strategic renewal (Schmitt et al., 2018). Finally, the study underlines the importance of corporate venturing (units) as a relevant tool in modern innovation management, as suggested for instance by Battistini et al. (2013), or Vanhaverbeke and Peeters (2005). Hereby, SCV offers an organized and systematic approach for organizationally consequential (new business) innovation, which is especially important in today's business environments with high complexity and uncertainty (Tidd, 2001). Accordingly, corporate managers can use the findings to better address the strategic renewal challenge through CV, and CV managers can assess and potentially adjust the organization of their units to better leverage them for strategic renewal, while innovation managers can better assess and choose suitable CVU types for their intended innovation purposes.

## 2 | THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

### 2.1 | Strategic renewal through innovation

While no commonly accepted definition exists for strategic renewal (Agarwal & Helfat, 2009; Schmitt et al., 2018), it usually involves changes in organizational structures or corporate-level strategy (Sharma & Chrisman, 1999), resources (Guth & Ginsberg, 1990), competitive positioning (Huang, 2009), business models (Basu & Wadhwa, 2013) or other aspects of companies' status quo (Miles & Covin, 1999). Therefore, this study understands strategic renewal as a targeted change of companies' status quo through the development of new competitive advantages in the pursuit of future profitable growth.

Strategic renewal is only relevant in uncertain and fast-changing environments in which traditional strategic management and planning approaches that focus on sustaining and efficiently exploiting competitive advantages are of limited value (Dogan, 2017; Glaser et al., 2015; McGrath, 2013). Following contingency theory (Tidd, 2001), established, complex companies in such environments face the organizational challenge to develop and apply a capability for innovation to continuously develop new competitive advantages for future growth in an organized and systematic way (Boer & Gertsen, 2003; Cantarello et al., 2012; Vanhaverbeke & Peeters, 2005). How this challenge can be resolved remains an ongoing debate in the literature, for which scholars recently propose to adopt a more multidimensional perspective (Schmitt et al., 2018; Van Lieshout et al., 2021).

### 2.2 | Corporate venturing as an innovation activity for strategic renewal

The required change in the strategic management and planning approaches of established companies led to the emergence of the new research domain of 'corporate entrepreneurship' (Kuratko et al., 2009). Defined by Guth and Ginsberg (1990) and Stopford and Baden-Fuller (1994), it encompasses all entrepreneurial behaviours and processes to promote innovation in established companies. Consequently, an examination of specific corporate entrepreneurial innovation activities is crucial for addressing the strategic renewal challenge (Basu & Wadhwa, 2013; McGrath, 2013).

Within corporate entrepreneurship, CV presents such a specific innovation activity, focused on creating new business for existing organizations (Birkinshaw & Hill, 2005; Gutmann, 2019; Kuratko & Audretsch, 2013; Uittenbogaard et al., 2005). 'New business' usually refers only to product/market combinations (including services and business models) that are new to the company, its industry, or globally – in contrast to improvements of existing products, new processes, incremental business model changes, or other forms of innovation (Kuratko et al., 2009). Thus, CV complements traditional innovation activities, such as research and development or new product development, with a faster, more open, and more flexible process, specifically for the creation of such new business (Battistini

et al., 2013; Kola-Nystrom, 2008; Michalski et al., 2006; Richter et al., 2018; Vanhaverbeke et al., 2008). Highly uncertain and complex business environments, driven by accelerating technology cycles, the importance of business model innovation, and trends like open innovation and customer-driven innovation, require such an innovation process (Tidd, 2001). Accordingly, many scholars highlight CV as an important activity for modern innovation management that usually has to deal with such environments (e.g., Gobble, 2018; Gold & Berg, 2017; Hill & Birkinshaw, 2008; Richter et al., 2018; Selig et al., 2019; Vanhaverbeke et al., 2008).

As a specific innovation activity, CV includes processes for building, partnering with, or investing in new ventures which can lie internally or externally of the company (Birkinshaw & Hill, 2005; Gutmann, 2019; Hill & Birkinshaw, 2008; Kuratko & Audretsch, 2013). It is often employed in dedicated corporate venturing units, providing a systematic and organized approach to innovation (Gold et al., 2010; Makarevich, 2017; Remmeland Wikhamn & Styhre, 2019; Uittenbogaard et al., 2005). Due to CVUs' varying, and always-emerging, organizational specifications, different terms apply to them in practice (and often also in theory), such as innovation labs, hubs, incubators, new business development units, company builders, or accelerators (Gutmann, 2019).

Due the importance of CV as a focused approach for new business innovation, many scholars suggest a high potential to leverage it for successful strategic renewal (e.g., Burgelman, 1983; Burgers et al., 2009; Dushnitsky & Lenox, 2005; Glinyanova et al., 2021; Hill & Georgoulas, 2016; Huang, 2009; Narayanan et al., 2009). Realizing this potential requires CV to change an organizations' status quo through new business innovation (Bierwerth et al., 2015; Burgelman, 1983; Burgers et al., 2008; Hill & Birkinshaw, 2008; Kola-Nystrom, 2008; Reimsbach & Hauschild, 2012). In contrast to more peripheral innovation activities, such SCV must hence lead to the creation of *organizationally consequential* new business for the strategic renewal of established companies' competitive advantages (Weiss & Kanbach, 2022).

In their extensive literature review, Hill and Georgoulas (2016, p.18) point out that 'little attention (...) has been devoted to the central issue of how strategy and venturing relate to each other'. More specifically, they see more theoretical underpinnings of a potential SCV missing. Indeed, the few existing studies on the intersection of CV and strategy do not propose a holistically and theoretically grounded concept for SCV but instead focus only on the examination of specific elements. These include the role of middle managers (Burgelman, 1984), organizational linkages (Tidd & Taurins, 1999), processes (Kola-Nystrom, 2008), organizational types (Hill & Birkinshaw, 2008; Weiss & Kanbach, 2022) or the different relationships between CV and strategy (Basu & Wadhwa, 2013; Covin & Miles, 2007; Vanhaverbeke & Peeters, 2005).

Besides these few exceptions, the focus of CV research and practice usually lies in the effective creation of new business independent of the existing organization, and not on the development of new competitive advantages for the strategic renewal of the parent company. This reflects the separation of CV from other innovation activities in

the corporate entrepreneurship domain, notably from 'strategic entrepreneurship' (Guth & Ginsberg, 1990; Kuratko & Audretsch, 2013). Following this logic, strategic entrepreneurship includes all activities that lead to changes within an existing organization, while CV innovates separately to it (Corbett et al., 2013; Kuratko et al., 2009). Only a few scholars question this proposed dichotomy and suggest a complementarity of the two activities in the sense of SCV (e.g., Hill & Georgoulas, 2016; Simsek & Heavey, 2011; Urbano et al., 2022).

Consequently, this dominant research focus hinders to fully leverage CV for strategic renewal purposes, as no commonly accepted framework for SCV exists (Bierwerth et al., 2015; Campbell et al., 2003; Narayanan et al., 2009). Indeed, CV is called-on to deliver peripheral activities only, instead of organizationally consequential innovations (Burgers et al., 2008; Burgelman & Välikangas, 2005; Campbell et al., 2003). A deeper understanding how CVUs can engage in strategic renewal is therefore required to address this general gap and develop a holistic organizational framework of SCV (Hill & Georgoulas, 2016; McGrath et al., 2006; Selig et al., 2019).

Gaining such an understanding is complex, as many different organizational CVU forms exist, and keep emerging (Weiss & Kanbach, 2022). While these are theoretically classified in various typologies and frameworks (see Gutmann, 2019, for an overview), their limitations do not allow the specification of CVU types relevant for strategic renewal: no typology is commonly accepted; older ones do not cover the many contemporary CVU types; and none explicitly present specifications for SCV (Hill & Georgoulas, 2016; Weiss & Kanbach, 2022). Overcoming these limitations requires the identification and specification of distinctive organizational characteristics for SCV to define potentially relevant types of CVUs for strategic renewal (Hill & Birkinshaw, 2008; Reimsbach & Hauschild, 2012; Weiblen & Chesbrough, 2015).

## 2.3 | Strategic corporate venturing

A first conceptual basis for an SCV framework with possible distinctive organizational characteristics can be derived from the theoretical integration of CV with established antecedents and process logics of strategic renewal. Based on Schmitt et al. (2018), antecedents include the key concepts of dynamic capabilities and organizational ambidexterity as possible sources of strategic renewal, and the process dimension differentiates between induced or autonomous logics regarding the initiation and unfolding of strategic renewal initiatives. According to this existing theory, any CVU would need to embrace these concepts to successfully develop new competitive advantages through organizationally consequential new business for its parent company.

### 2.3.1 | Dynamic capabilities as antecedents for SCV

A resource-based view on strategic renewal considers competitive advantages to be rooted in a company's resource base (Barney, 1991; Schmitt et al., 2018). From this perspective, (continuously) developing

new competitive advantages requires 'dynamic capabilities' to extend and reconfigure this resource base (Teece et al., 1997; Teece & Pisano, 1994). Despite the concepts great popularity, the question how dynamic capabilities manifest in practice remains a strong debate (Birkinshaw et al., 2016; Leemann & Kanbach, 2021). Adding to this debate, CVUs would need to establish and apply dynamic capabilities to enable strategic renewal. Indeed, some scholars associate dynamic capabilities with innovation processes and routines, such as new product development, partnerships and alliances, research and development, and business model innovation (e.g., Björkdahl & Börjesson, 2012; Eisenhardt & Martin, 2000; Schmitt et al., 2018; Shoemaker et al., 2018; Simsek & Heavey, 2011; Zahra et al., 2006). Furthermore, dynamic capabilities are considered to allow rapid innovation and distinctive new business models (Shoemaker et al., 2018), which relates them directly to CV as a focused innovation activity. The required link between dynamic capabilities and CV is thus possible, although rarely examined explicitly (Phan et al., 2009). The few studies investigating this link often apply Teece's (2007) analytical framework that proposes specific sensing, seizing, and transforming capabilities for the development of new competitive advantages. 'Sensing' describes the identification or creation of new opportunities for the company; 'seizing' the exploitation of these opportunities with relevant solutions for the market; and 'transforming' the adaptation of the required processes and resources to scale and capitalize on the new solutions. CV is usually associated with some of the capabilities only, specifically sensing and seizing (Hill & Birkinshaw, 2008; Hill & Georgoulas, 2016; Narayanan et al., 2009). Such a perspective would not necessarily allow SCV, as the transforming capability is especially relevant for strategic renewal (Burgers et al., 2008; Shoemaker et al., 2018). In that sense, Roseno et al. (2013) argue that CV requires a specific set of dynamic capabilities, and Enkel et al. (2012) propose specific sensing, seizing and organizing capabilities for new business creation. This existing literature therefore suggests that CVUs could potentially engage in a strategic renewal process, enabled by a specific set of dynamic capabilities (Enkel & Sagmeister, 2020; Vanhaverbeke & Peeters, 2005). Accordingly, dynamic capabilities are a potentially distinctive organizational characteristic for CVUs to enable its development of organizationally consequential new business.

### 2.3.2 | Ambidexterity as an antecedent for SCV

Another possible antecedent for strategic renewal draws from the learning-based view (Schmitt et al., 2018). This perspective focuses on the challenge of simultaneously exploring new business for future profitable growth while exploiting the existing business for current profits (March, 1991). Balancing these two activities is usually seen as a trade-off, as 'exploitation' builds on established, optimized routines and processes, while 'exploration' requires flexibility, independence and adjustment (Madsen, 2010; March, 1991). To engage in strategic renewal and continuous innovation, established companies must resolve this trade-off through 'organisational ambidexterity': the

ability to leverage existing assets and capabilities to gain competitive advantages in new areas (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2008, 2013; Tushman & O'Reilly, 1996; Van Looy et al., 2005). Following this learning-based perspective, SCV would need to establish and apply organizational ambidexterity to combine the exploration with new opportunities with the exploitation of the current business. This perspective complements the described antecedent of dynamic capabilities, as both concepts are usually regarded as distinct from one another: dynamic capabilities deal with the strategic choices to be made for successful strategic renewal, while ambidexterity focuses on organizational configurations that allow strategic renewal to take place in a running, established business (Schmitt et al., 2018; Zimmermann & Birkinshaw, 2015). However, the exact relationship between these two complementary concepts is still not sufficiently examined (Popadiuk et al., 2018). Despite the two concepts' distinction, most authors in the strategic renewal domain understand ambidexterity as a dynamic capability (Van Lieshout et al., 2021; Weiss & Kanbach, 2022). Only few scholars offer a more differentiated picture. Birkinshaw et al. (2016) suggest the combination of the organizational configuration for ambidexterity with an associated set of dynamic capabilities, which together determine whether a company—or here: a CVU—engages in strategic renewal. To further strengthen this proposed complementarity, they match exploration with sensing capabilities and exploitation with seizing capabilities, while the transforming capability then refers to the organizational configuration for ambidexterity.

Weiss and Kanbach (2022) built on this proposition to suggest the possibility of CVUs to engage in sensing (exploration) and/or seizing (exploitation), as well as potentially transforming to combine exploration and exploitation. This suggestion goes in line with a study of Hill and Birkinshaw (2014) who pointed out that CVUs can develop an ambidextrous orientation themselves, that is, building new assets (exploration) based on existing resources (exploitation). In that sense, ambidexterity is understood as a nested phenomenon that can exist on different levels of analysis within an organization, such as CVUs (Hill & Birkinshaw, 2014). However, the role that CVUs can play to enable an interplay of exploration and exploitation remains insufficiently explored, and only few scholars currently engage in this perspective (e.g., Burgers et al., 2009; Hill & Georgoulas, 2016; Raisch & Birkinshaw, 2008). In contrast, most literature considers only supporting roles of CV for ambidexterity as they employ the traditional, organization-wide level of analysis (Birkinshaw et al., 2016). This perspective includes especially the structural separation between organizational entities focusing on exploration (e.g., R&D, product development, business development) and others focusing on exploitation (e.g., business units) in the sense of dual structures (Christensen, 1997; Duncan, 1976). In this organizational configuration, CVUs are usually regarded only as exploratory functions, or sometimes also as exploitative—but not as ambidextrous themselves (e.g., Gutmann, 2019; Hill & Birkinshaw, 2008; Schildt et al., 2005). Another possible role for CV follows the concept of conceptual ambidexterity, which suggests employees or teams to switch between exploration and exploitation behaviours individually (Gibson &

Birkinshaw, 2004). CV is then not organized in specific units, but companies rather provide the organizational frame, such as intra-preneurship programs or project support, for individual employees and teams to explore new business alongside their existing daily business and thus achieve organizational ambidexterity (Gibson & Birkinshaw, 2004; Raisch & Birkinshaw, 2008).

Despite the broad application of these organizational configurations, it remains questionable if they can resolve the ambidexterity challenge, as they only push the exploration/exploitation dilemma down on the level of lower organizational units, or to individual employees (Birkinshaw & Gupta, 2013). Indeed, in neither of these traditional roles do CVUs establish or apply organizational ambidexterity directly, which hinders leveraging them for strategic renewal (Weiss & Kanbach, 2022). This dilemma suggests following the perspective of ambidexterity as a nested phenomenon and take a unit-level perspective, allowing for ambidextrous CVUs that could directly contribute to strategic renewal. In this perspective, the organizational ambidexterity within a CVU unit acts as another, distinctive organizational characteristic for SCV, which is complementary to its dynamic capabilities.

### 2.3.3 | SCV as a deliberate strategy process

The process logic represents another key concept for strategic renewal, as it explains how strategic renewal initiatives unfold (Schmitt et al., 2018). Scholars usually differentiate between deliberate or autonomous processes (Burgelman, 2002; Kraus & Kauranen, 2009). An autonomous strategy process unfolds independently from an existing strategic direction, usually through bottom-up initiatives from a company's lower levels (Schmitt et al., 2018). Usually, CV is seen as such an autonomous process, as it provides new strategic options that lie outside a planned strategic direction (Burgelman, 2002, 1983; Raisch & Birkinshaw, 2008).

However, SCV may need to exhibit a more deliberate strategy process to provide strategic renewal, as some scholars doubt the possibility of initiating relevant strategic change through uncoordinated, autonomously emerging initiatives (Hamel & Prahalad, 1989; Schmitt et al., 2018). In their view, strategic renewal initiatives follow a desired direction formulated and planned by corporate management. Indeed, some studies describe the possibility of CVUs to match their innovation initiatives with the business strategy (e.g., Burgelman, 1983, 2002; Covin & Miles, 2007; Michalski et al., 2006; Vanhaverbeke & Peeters, 2005). Examining this possibility, Kuratko et al. (2009) argue that more successful corporate ventures originate as planned initiatives in contrast to opportunistic innovations. Thus, the engagement in a deliberate strategy process that allows CVUs to conduct planned innovation initiatives is considered another potentially distinctive organizational characteristic for SCV that could enable the development of organizationally consequential new business. As existing literature rarely takes a multidimensional perspective of the different key concepts for strategic renewal, if and how such a deliberate strategy process relates with dynamic capabilities and



ambidexterity remains a question for the following empirical research (Schmitt et al., 2018).

### 2.3.4 | Conceptual framework of SCV

CVUs can be seen as a relevant organizational tool for strategic renewal, as they apply a systematic and focused approach to new business innovation. However, exploiting this potential requires them to establish and apply distinctive organizational characteristics for SCV that allow them to develop organizationally consequential new business. Taking a multidimensional perspective, we propose that these organizational characteristics should reflect the established antecedents and process logics of strategic renewal somehow together. Based on the presented theoretical background, these required key concepts include organizational ambidexterity, dynamic capabilities and a deliberate strategy process that potentially allow the creation of new competitive advantages through the creation of organizationally consequential new business. This proposition leads to a first conceptual framework of SCV (Figure 1).

This framework visualizes strategic renewal as a change of a companies' competitive advantages, for which SCV could potentially provide a concrete process if it can incorporate the required key concepts. As the specific relationships between these key concepts cannot clearly be determined from the existing literature, only their potential complementarity and reciprocal nature is visualized through multiplication signs ( $\times$ ). Accordingly, this conceptual framework requires further grounding in empirical data to possibly identify CVUs types that possess such distinctive organizational characteristics for strategic renewal. Such empirical data then allows the specification of the proposed (and possibly additional) organizational characteristics and their relationships to derive an enhanced organizational framework for SCV grounded in theory and data.

## 3 | METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 | Research design

For the further development from a conceptual towards an exploratory SCV framework, this study applies an abductive research design (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2007; King et al., 2021; Klag & Langley, 2013; Locke et al., 2008; Reichertz, 2007). It combines a discovery-driven, inductive collection and first analysis of qualitative data from a multiple-case study of contemporary CVUs with a deductive

comparison of the emerging insights with the proposed organizational characteristics from the conceptual framework (Arino et al., 2016; Klag & Langley, 2013; Locke et al., 2008; Suddaby, 2006). To maximize trustworthiness and transparency, the research design follows established best practices for exploratory qualitative research, as briefly described in the data sampling, collection, analysis and synthesis steps of the structured research process (Eisenhardt, 1989, 2021; Goffin et al., 2019; Langley et al., 2013; Yin, 2009).

### 3.2 | Data sampling

The investigation of potentially distinctive organizational characteristics for SCV requires a relevant set of contemporary CVUs in which these can occur. Accordingly, the study applied a theoretical sampling of CVU cases based on shared criteria that provide the required comparability of cases for the focal phenomenon, and distinctive criteria that provide the required differentiation to offer potential insights across cases (Corbin & Strauss, 1990; Eisenhardt, 2021). Shared criteria include specifically the common definition of a CVU (paraphrased from Hill & Birkinshaw, 2014, p. 1900) as a 'distinct organisational entity that the parent firm controls, with responsibility for developing and/or investing in business opportunities that are new to the organisation'. Other shared criteria include the size of the parent company (>EUR 50 million in annual revenue or >250 employees), its age (>5 years), the company's location (Europe), and age of the CVU (>1 year).

Distinction criteria included different industries for the company and different practical designations for the CVUs, for example, innovation labs, hubs, incubators, venture-client, or accelerators. These increase the possibility of good differentiation between organizational characteristics and types due to potentially diverging strategic renewal needs from different industries and diverging organizational designs from differently designated CVU types.

Based on these criteria, we collected a final sample of 29 CVU cases until reaching theoretical saturation, with no further novel evidence (in the sense of new organizational characteristics) appearing and sufficient coverage of the distinctive criteria (Table 1).

### 3.3 | Data collection

To apply the strategic renewal perspective to CV, the data collection aimed at gaining first-hand insights into the organizational characteristics of the different CVUs with a focus on the possible creation of



FIGURE 1 Conceptual framework of strategic corporate venturing (SCV).

**TABLE 1** CVU sample overview.

#	Company	Country <sup>a</sup>	Industry	Age years	Size employees	CVU	Age years	Size employees
1	Van Marcke	Belgium	Wholesale/Trading	92	1500	Innovation management	4	1
2	NOZ (Digital)	Germany	Media/Publishing	54	3000	HHLab	3	13
3	Rehau	Germany	Engineering	73	20,000	Unlimited X	4	12
4	Luminus	Belgium	Energy	43	2000	Innovation Management	5	5
5	Henkel	Germany	Chemical Industry/Consumer Goods	144	50,000	Henkel dX Ventures	3	35
6	Triglav	Slovenia	Financial Services	120	5000	Digital Strategy and Innovation	4	25
7	Bayer	Germany	Pharmaceuticals	157	100,000	CoLaborator	9	n/a
8	Lufthansa	Germany	Airline/Logistics	68	138,000	Lufthansa Innovation Hub	7	50
9	Airbus	Germany	Aerospace/Defence Supply	51	133,000	BizLab	6	53
10	Brit Insurance	UK	Financial Services	26	710	BritX	2	4
11	ZF	Germany	Automotive & Industrial Supply	105	150,000	Innovation Lab	8 (3)	18
12	Wärtsilä	Finland	Machine Manufacturing	186	19,000	SparkUp	4	3
13	HELLA	Germany	Automotive & Industrial Supply	122	36,000	FastForward	7	11
14	Post Finance	Switzerland	Financial Services/Banking	115	3660	VNTR	6	15
15	KfW	Germany	Public Services/Banking	73	7300	Digital Business Development	3	6
16	Müller	Switzerland	Consumer Goods/Nutrition	132	26,600	Müller Ventures/Incubator	3	4
17	BSH	Germany	Household Appliances	54	60,000	Startup Kitchen	3	5
18	MHP (Porsche)	Germany	Professional Services	25	2800	MHP Agile Innovation	2	8
19	Sparkasse	Germany	Financial Services	145	1500	Innovationhub/Innovation Management	3	3
20	MediaMarkt Saturn	Germany	Retail	41	53,000	N3XT	7	10
21	TUI	Germany	Travel & Hospitality	97	48,000	Innovation & Strategy Dpt.	4	5
22	Merck KGaA	Germany	Pharmaceuticals & Chemical Industry	353	58,100	Merck Innovation Centre	6	70
23	Hypoport	Germany	Software Services	20	2131	Step Innovation Hub	2	20
24	Reckitt (RB)	UK	Healthcare & Consumer Goods	135	43,500	Digital Innovation	10	n/a
25	Johnson & Johnson	Germany	Pharmaceuticals	135	132,000	New Business Division	7	150
26	OBI	Germany	Retail	51	48,000	NEXT	1(4)	5
27	HIMA	Germany	Engineering Services	113	800	Himalaya Exploration Lab	1	4
28	Continental	Germany	Automotive & Industrial Supply	149	236,000	Co-Pace	4	14
29	Körber	Germany	Machine Manufacturing	26	10,500	Körber Digital	2	150

<sup>a</sup>Note: While some CVUs operate in multiple countries, the main responsibility lies in the same country as the company's headquarters.

organizationally consequential new business (instead of new business independent of the parent company). These insights were collected through semi-structured interviews, based on a carefully crafted interview guide that was regularly refined during the simultaneous data analysis (Corbin & Strauss, 1990; Eisenhardt, 2021; Yin, 2009). To follow an inductive approach to the data collection and avoid any narrow 'testing' of assumptions, the proposed organizational characteristics from the conceptual framework were used as inspiration for the interview guide, but not directly discussed with the participants. Instead, we included more open question around the CVU's tasks, processes,

structures, behaviours and similar possible themes that reflect the inherent perspectives of organizational learning, resource configuration and strategy-making.

Based on the focus on CVUs' organizational characteristics, relevant actors in CVUs were used for data collection, assuming they know the inner workings and organizational setups of their units best. We avoided asking the responsible managers in the parent company about the perceived impact of the CVU on strategic renewal, as this could have led to a premature determination of relevant organizational characteristics for strategic renewal based on anecdotal



evidence, instead of from the comparison with prior theory as defined in the abductive research design.

In preparation for the data collection, pilot interviews ensured the comprehensibility and relevance of the questions and demonstrated that multiple accounts per case did not provide significant additional value, as the discussed topics covered general organizational characteristics that tended to be factual in nature (Goffin et al., 2019). Thus, using one company representative per case only could provide a sufficient account of the organizational characteristics of each CVU, and free-up research resources to include a more diverse set of CVUs in the study and reach theoretical saturation. Consequently, other

specific measures were taken to triangulate the data. These included the use of archival data gathered from external and internal documents, and additional review and validation of the results with the participants (Goffin et al., 2019). More than half the CVUs participated in this, with additional colleagues acting as 'knowledgeable agents' (Gioia et al., 2013) who could confirm the initial information and resulting interpretation.

During the data collection between September 2020 and April 2021, we conducted 29 interviews via videoconferencing in English or German that averaged 50 minutes, accompanied by archival data, as shown in Table 2.

**TABLE 2** Data collection overview.

#	Company	CVU case	Interview duration in minutes	Language	Archival data
1	Van Marcke	Innovation management	50 min	English	Internal presentation, company website
2	NOZ (Digital)	HHLab	49 min	German	Internal presentation, CVU website, CVU LinkedIn
3	Rehau	Unlimited X	56 min	German	Internal brochure, CVU website, CVU LinkedIn
4	Luminus	Innovation Management	69 min	English	Internal presentation, Wikipedia, CVU website
5	Henkel	Henkel dX Ventures	58 min	German	Internal presentation, CVU website, CVU LinkedIn
6	Triglav	Digital Strategy and Innovation	67 min	English	Internal presentation, company website, Emails
7	Bayer	CoLaborator	42 min	English	Internal articles, internal presentation, CVU website
8	Lufthansa	Lufthansa Innovation Hub	56 min	German	Business magazine study, internal brochure, CVU website
9	Airbus	BizLab	33 min	German	Internal articles, CVU website
10	Brit Insurance	BritX	49 min	English	Internal presentation, press articles, annual report
11	ZF	Innovation Lab	46 min	German	Internal presentation, CVU website
12	Wärtsilä	SparkUp	62 min	German	Internal brochure, company website, annual report
13	HELLA	FastForward	53 min	German	Internal presentation, press articles
14	Post Finance	VNTR	55 min	German	Internal presentation, CVU website, internal book, emails
15	KfW	Digital Business Development	50 min	German	Internal presentation, company website
16	Müller	Müller Ventures/Incubator	51 min	German	Internal brochure, CVU website, CVU LinkedIn page
17	BSH	Startup Kitchen	46 min	German	Internal presentation, CVU website, CVU LinkedIn
18	MHP (Porsche)	MHP Agile Innovation	46 min	German	Internal brochure, company website
19	Sparkasse	Innovationhub/Innovation Management	23 min	German	Company website, CVU podcast, press articles
20	MediaMarkt Saturn	N3XT	44 min	German	Internal brochure, CVU website, press articles
21	TUI	Innovation & Strategy Dpt.	55 min	German	Company website, press releases
22	Merck KgaA	Merck Innovation Centre	1 h	English	Internal blog articles, company website
23	Hypoport	Step Innovation Hub	45 min	German	Internal articles, CVU website, CVU LinkedIn
24	Reckitt (RB)	Digital Innovation	40 min	English	Company website, press articles
25	Johnson & Johnson	New Business Division	38 min	German	Internal brochure, company website, press articles
26	OBI	NEXT	53 min	German	CVU website, press releases
27	HIMA	Himalaya Exploration Lab	53 min	German	CVU website, CVU LinkedIn, press releases
28	Continental	Co-Pace	55 min	German	CVU website, annual report, press releases
29	Körber	Körber Digital	36 min	German	CVU website, business magazine study

**TABLE 3** Overview of analytical results.

Dimension	Cross-case analysis		Cross-case synthesis of differentiating characteristics	
	Common characteristics	Differentiating characteristics	Descriptive characteristics	Distinctive characteristics
<u>Ambidexterity</u>	Exploration	Exploitation Balancing		Only exploring Exploring/exploiting in parallel Balancing (ambidextrous)
<u>Anchoring</u>	Independent			
<u>Capabilities</u>	Sensing	Seizing Transforming		Only sensing Sensing + seizing Sensing, seizing + transforming
<u>Criteria for innovation</u>	Business/resource fit Customer/market fit			
<u>Direction</u>		From inside From outside To inside To outside	Inside-in Outside-in Inside-out Outside-out	
<u>(Human &amp; Financial) resources</u>		None Access (project-based) Control (own)		None Only access (project-based) Control (own)
<u>Function</u>		Build Partner Invest	Build Partner Invest	
<u>Governance</u>		Cost Centre Profit Centre	Cost Centre Profit Centre	
<u>Innovation logic</u>		Opportunistic Planned		Opportunistic Planned
<u>KPIs</u>	Qualitative	Quantitative: Activity-based Quantitative: Impact-based	Qualitative Qualitative + activity-based Qualitative + impact-based	
<u>Objectives</u>	Strategic objectives	Financial objectives	Strategic objectives Strategic + financial objectives	
<u>Organization</u>		Integrated Separated	Integrated Separated	
<u>Process</u>		Partly structured Structured	Only partly structured Structured	
<u>Structures</u>	Link to business units/ functions	Link to corporate strategy Link to top management team Link to ecosystem		Separated (business units + ecosystem links) Separated-integrated (business unit + TMT <sup>a</sup> links) Contextual (business units links only) Interlinked (all)

TABLE 3 (Continued)

Dimension	Cross-case analysis		Cross-case synthesis of differentiating characteristics	
	Common characteristics	Differentiating characteristics	Descriptive characteristics	Distinctive characteristics
Type of innovation		Incremental	Only incremental	
			Only non-incremental	
		Non-incremental	Incremental + non-incremental	
No. of characteristics	9	29	21	15

<sup>a</sup>TMT: Top management team (including corporate management, corporate strategy).

### 3.4 | Data analysis

The analysis consists of multiple steps that can be divided into different stages (Eisenhardt, 1989; Yin, 2003, 2009). Firstly, we conducted a within-case analysis to define all possible organizational characteristics from the analysis of each case individually. This analysis combined a first inductive coding of the empirical data with a subsequent deductive categorization and synthesis of the emerging insights in comparison with the proposed conceptual framework (Klag & Langley, 2013; Suddaby, 2006). Secondly, we performed a cross-case analysis to specify common and differentiating characteristics from the comparison of all cases; and thirdly, we undertook a cross-case synthesis to identify and specify the distinctive organizational characteristics for strategic renewal.

The transcribed interviews together with archival data and manual research notes provided the basis for this qualitative data analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 2014; Suddaby, 2006). We used coding of this raw data as the primary underlying analysis process from which to eventually propose exploratory insights gained by comparing the qualitative data with the existing literature. The definition of lower- and higher-level codes enabled a stepwise abstraction and categorization of primary insights to derive higher-level concepts—specifically, ‘characteristics’ aggregated in ‘dimensions’ to define possible ‘types’ (Charmaz, 2006; Corbin & Strauss, 1990; Eisenhardt, 2021; Gehman et al., 2018). Firstly, we highlighted all potentially relevant insights and quotes about organizational characteristics in each case, following an inductive approach to derive insights from the data. We then applied open coding to these insights to derive possible case-specific organizational characteristics. We applied a more deductive approach here, as we compared them with the key concepts for strategic renewal as described in the conceptual framework, as well as with existing CV frameworks (Corbin & Strauss, 1990; Suddaby, 2006). Next, axial coding on the open codes, again in comparison with existing theory, allowed the abstraction of aggregated dimensions for the identified organizational characteristics as a basis for the subsequent cross-case analysis and synthesis.

While all raw data could be coded in the same way on a textual basis, a mix of digital and analogue tools supported these different stages of analysis for structured and creative insights (Corbin & Strauss, 1990; Maher et al., 2018; Pratt et al., 2020; Walsh et al., 2015). Furthermore, discussions between the co-authors and the exchange of early analysis results within a broader research group,

with practitioners, and eventually with the participating CVUs, helped avoiding a strong single-researcher bias.

The initial, inductive data collection and coding of each case covers 29 transcripts and 88 documents resulting in 1171 quotes concerning possible organizational characteristics. Through open and axial coding and comparison with existing literature, these quotes could be aggregated into 41 organizational characteristics in 15 aggregated dimensions as the basis for the cross-case analysis. Consequently, these included some dimensions with corresponding characteristics that were derived purely from the qualitative data, specifically ‘Financial Resources’, ‘Human Resources’, ‘KPIs’, ‘Criteria for Innovation’, ‘Governance’, ‘Process’ and ‘Structure’. Other dimensions could be formulated from the comparison with the proposed conceptual framework, namely ‘Ambidexterity’, ‘Capabilities’ and ‘Innovation logic’; or from the comparison with existing CV typologies and frameworks, including ‘Anchoring’, ‘Direction’, ‘Objectives’, ‘Function’, ‘Organisation’ and ‘Type of Innovation’.

For the subsequent cross-case analysis of these dimensions and characteristics, the individually analysed cases were regarded as a heterogeneous sample. Cross-case comparison allowed to derive nine common organizational characteristics that appeared in all cases, and 29 differentiating organizational characteristics that appeared in some, but not all cases only (Table 3).

The last step of the analysis, the cross-case synthesis, involved comparing the differentiating characteristics from the cross-case analysis with the proposed conceptual framework, and testing different grouping and filtering possibilities for the appearance of specific sets of these characteristics across different CVUs. Eventually, this procedure allowed us to specify 21 descriptive characteristics in eight dimensions, and 15 distinctive characteristics in five dimensions (Table 3). The descriptive characteristics did not offer further opportunities for classification. For instance, they appeared in a few cases only, or multiple times but in random combinations with other overlapping characteristics. Nor did they appear to be relevant when compared with existing theory on strategic renewal. Consequently, they were not considered to be relevant for the final conceptualization of different CVU types from a strategic renewal perspective. In contrast, the distinctive characteristics appeared as clear patterns that led to specific groups of cases and are possibly relevant for SCV based on the comparison with the conceptual framework of SCV. Thus,

different groups of CVUs each share a set of these distinctive organizational characteristics that differs from other groups, which allows us to derive different types of CVUs from a strategic renewal perspective.

## 4 | FINDINGS

Our findings address the research question by describing different types of contemporary CVUs based on identified sets of distinctive organizational characteristics that can potentially serve to determine the role of a CVU in the strategic renewal of the parent company. Consequently, the findings section focuses on these distinctive organizational characteristics, which occupy five dimensions: capabilities, resources, innovation logic, ambidexterity, and structures. Based on this focus, the identified common (as well as the purely descriptive differentiating) organizational characteristics are not further discussed because they provide general insights into the organization of CVUs but no significant added value for the research question.

### 4.1 | Distinctive organizational characteristics for SCV

#### 4.1.1 | Capabilities

The capabilities dimension specifies the organizational skills a CVU possesses, manifested in their activities. Based on the comparison with the conceptual framework, the inherent organizational characteristics include sensing, seizing, and transforming capabilities. One CVU even applied this theory directly by setting up sensing, seizing, and transforming teams. Thus, this theorized analytical framework can be grounded in our empirical data. Following this categorization, eight CVUs only cover sensing capabilities to identify new opportunities that the organization then must pick up: *'We have New Venture Lead 'Scouts' and Partnering Offices embedded in further innovation hot spots across the world'* (#25). Covering a further step, 12 CVUs also possess seizing capabilities. They can address identified opportunities by establishing projects to examine, conceptualize and test them before they are executed outside the CVU: *'All innovations are tested and further developed [here] before they reach the markets'* (#26). Nine CVUs add transforming capabilities to display all three capabilities. Beyond identifying and addressing opportunities, they also drive the execution inside or outside the organization by allocating, recombining, or building the required resources to scale the opportunity into a new business and align it with the organization: *'The lab is doing the pilot projects. And today we can go as far as running the venture until the moment it reaches a certain maturity'* (#26). As a result, the capabilities dimension offers an ideal foundation to determine the role of a CVU from a strategic renewal perspective, as a unit that possesses all dynamic capabilities should have the best starting point from which to create organizationally consequential new business for SCV.

#### 4.1.2 | Resources

The establishment and application of sensing, seizing, and transforming capabilities require specific financial and human resources. Consequently, differentiating between 'no resources', 'access to resources from the organisation upon request', and 'direct control of resources independent of specific needs' aligns with the units' dynamic capabilities. The nine CVUs covering all dynamic capabilities also have direct control over their resources and, thus, a high degree of autonomy in allocating them: *'We really have a lot of resources, and we also build everything ourselves'* (#29). In contrast, the 12 CVUs covering sensing and seizing capabilities only have project-based access to resources from the rest of the organization. This limits their independence and eventually the units' influence in organizational change: *'I have the overview of all the different projects and then I work with the project team. And all the projects have project-based resources'* (#4). Lastly, the eight CVUs that possess sensing capabilities only have no resources or access to the relevant resources to further address or execute the identified opportunities. Thus, all seizing and transforming activities depend on the rest of the organization, which must therefore build the required dynamic capabilities outside the unit: *'The financial and human resources for these projects are not located in the innovation area but in other units for further implementation'* (#25). While resource availability provides a first indication of how to establish the required capabilities within a unit, it does not offer a further distinction for differentiating organizational approaches. However, it again underlines the strong potential of CVUs that cover all sensing, seizing, and transforming capabilities to have a direct strategic renewal impact provided they have control of the required financial and human resources to apply them autonomously.

#### 4.1.3 | Ambidexterity

As with the concept of dynamic capabilities, the dimension of organizational ambidexterity was derived from the conceptual framework yet proved visible in the empirical data directly: *'Organisational ambidexterity is essential for our long-term success'* (#14). In this context, CVUs could be expected to fulfil the exploration role in which they identify and develop new competitive advantages for the future business independently of the existing organization: *'The goal is to find ideas and business models and possible products that at first glance seem to be outside of the classic company strategy'* (#11). Surprisingly, we identified only three purely exploratory CVUs. Ten units cover exploitation activities in parallel with exploration but did not combine them: *'The [support of core business/exploitation] is 20 - 30 percent of the lab capacity'* (#3). Unexpectedly, 16 CVUs not only engage in exploration and exploitation in parallel but combine both to leverage the core business for new opportunities by connecting with both the external environment and internal stakeholders. In contrast to separate, autonomous units, these 'ambidextrous' CVUs manage to increase the potential success of their venturing projects by connecting them with existing 'unfair' competitive advantages of the core business – and,

reciprocally, the success of the core business with new competitive advantages from the ventures: *'[The new business] should already be something where we have some kind of Unfair Advantage that we can leverage. In any form. It doesn't just have to be assets that we own as a company, but maybe also a partnership that we have with a supplier or with other companies, that exist there'* (#5). For instance, this combination of exploration and exploitation can include to place people from the internal organization directly within the CVU to leverage their know-how for specific projects: *'We got them on a six months commitment, because the innovation team that we set up, none of us had specialist industry knowledge (...). So we needed that support within our team to be able to even do the design of the projects, because it enabled us not to be too dependent on the different business units or functions'* (#10). These insights thus underline the need—and possibility—of ambidexterity in CVUs to successfully develop organizationally consequential new business.

#### 4.1.4 | Structures

The structures—in the sense of interfaces with the internal organization and external environment—offer some background on the diverging CVU ambidexterity. While clearly observable in the data, the important role of this dimension is also described in some existing literature, especially in Hill and Birkinshaw (2014) and Weiss and Kanbach (2022), who highlight the importance of a relational context with internal and external interfaces for ambidextrous CVUs. This allows us to categorize the different structural logics according to Weiss and Kanbach's (2022) proposed classifications with separated, separated-integrated, contextual, and interlinked-ambidextrous CVUs. In this context, the three strictly exploratory CVUs are somewhat separate from the organization. They display strong links to the external environment but only weak interfaces with the internal business units and even less with the strategy or top management team (TMT), which may sometimes hinder their further development: *'What is missing at the moment, and this is something I would actually like to see different, is a strong connection with strategy'* (#20). The three CVUs covering exploration and exploitation in parallel offer a way to solve this challenge: a separated-integrated structure. They bridge their organizational separation with a connection to the top management team or corporate strategy, which must then provide the required strategic balance between exploration and exploitation activities: *'We have come to terms with corporate strategy quite well in the meantime and can both work very well together. With the divisions, it is much more difficult and complex to get into the processes'* (#11). This balance can also be reached through a well-established connection to the employees in the business units rather than the top management team. Seven other CVUs that are also engaged in parallel exploration and exploitation rely on such a setup. They provide a framework that allows the core business employees to balance exploration and exploitation themselves, usually with temporary project teams: *'We need a team that commits and says: 'I want this. I want to run this''* (#18).

In contrast to these different structures for organizational ambidexterity, the 16 directly ambidextrous units achieve a combination of exploration and exploitation through strongly interlinked structures. They connect with the business units, corporate strategy function, and top management team, as well as the external environment: *'We are an authentic part of the technology ecosystem but feel equally at home in the corporate environment. By linking both worlds, we discover unique potentials and build bridges to use them'* (#8). Based on these differences that correspond to the ambidextrous orientation of the CVUs, the structural interfaces do not offer another distinctive dimension of their own. Instead, they add important aspects to the understanding of the displayed ambidexterity by differentiating 'interlinked-ambidextrous' from 'separated' exploring, as well as 'contextual' and 'separated-integrated' exploring and exploiting units.

#### 4.1.5 | Innovation logic

The innovation logic dimension specifies the strategy process characteristic. As proposed in the conceptual framework, CVUs in our sample apply either a planned or opportunistic logic for their innovation initiatives, depending on their involvement with the corporate strategy. Accordingly, the 13 CVUs with an opportunistic innovation logic engage in autonomous strategic renewal as they collect, filter, and execute various ideas independently of the company's formal strategy: *'The initial idea can arise somehow in all places. It can arise from an internal need or from external observations. And there is no framework or whatever, or even just a thematic focus'* (#15). This innovation logic fulfils the essential function of a venturing or innovation unit, addressing emerging ideas and opportunities, but does not provide for creating organizationally consequential new business. In contrast, 16 CVUs employed a planned innovation logic in which new ventures flow from their involvement in a deliberate strategy process. *'We are organised in such a way that we have a very clear search strategy and a clear orientation as to where we want to go. And this strategic orientation is always ultimately a guideline for action and a benchmark for what we are looking for'* (#25). The required engagement of these CVUs in a collaborative strategy process with corporate management or strategy functions starts early-on to define a general focus for the CVU's activities: *'when we set up an innovation team, we spent three months basically focused on strategy. We connected [the companies] business strategy to our incubation delivery to make sure there was a crossover'* (#10). Subsequently, the continuous iteration of strategy defines and aligns more specific strategic search fields for the innovation activities: *'Once we've got a first working title, a first search field, we then challenge that with the strategy team'* (#14). Thus, the planned innovation logic results from the combination of strategy and innovation: *'The way that we approached it, was aligning innovation to our strategic goals and setting out our view of the future and the strategic objectives of innovation. So straight from the outset, trying to intertwine strategy and innovation in one entity'* (#10). The innovation logic for the innovation initiatives that results from this CVU's engagement in deliberate, collaborative

strategy processes can thus be seen as another distinctive organizational characteristic for SCV. Notably, the 16 CVUs with a planned innovation logic are the same that display interlinked-ambidextrous structures. A possible explanation is that these ambidextrous-interlinked structures permit the required collaborative strategy-making for the planned innovation logic.

## 4.2 | CVU typology

The appearance of the described distinctive characteristics across some, but not all, CVUs allows us to identify different clusters of CVUs with common sets of distinctive organizational characteristics each (Table A1). As a result, a typology can be defined from these clusters to visualize and explain the corresponding types among the main dimensions. As presented in the previous section, some dimensions align with others (i.e., 'resources' with 'capabilities', and 'structures' with 'ambidexterity' and 'innovation logic'). From this set, 'innovation logic' could therefore be chosen as the first main dimension due to its clear division into planned or opportunistic approaches, which were also mentioned in theory as a variable that may be relevant for CV success and strategic renewal (Kuratko et al., 2009; Schmitt et al., 2018). From the other dimensions, 'capabilities' was chosen as a second axis as dynamic capabilities represent a meta-level on the configuration of 'resources', which thus have less explanatory power as a distinct dimension and is thus linked with the capabilities dimension here. Based on these two main dimensions, 'ambidexterity' and 'structures' could be matched according to the six resulting types of CVUs that are differentiated explicitly by their sensing, seizing,

and/or transforming capabilities and their planned or opportunistic innovation logic.

We label these resulting types 'Scout', 'Enabler', 'InnovationLab', 'Connector', 'Developer' and 'StrategyLab' (Figure 2). To address the research question, they are briefly described below, and we explain their potential role in the strategic renewal of the company. This serves as a basis for the subsequent development of the final exploratory organizational framework for SCV in the discussion section.

Among the types with an opportunistic innovation logic, *Scout* units focus on exploring new opportunities outside the existing organization to invest in, or partner with, start-ups. As separated CVUs with no significant resources for further addressing or executing identified opportunities directly, they focus on sensing, and predominantly appear in corporate venture capital or other separate units that engage with external start-ups. Due to their limited interlinks to the main organization, restricted capabilities and opportunistic approach, they are not well suited to directly engage in strategic renewal but rather for capturing and better understanding unforeseen opportunities.

Compensating for some of the *Scout* units' strategic renewal deficiencies, *Enabler* units can access the required resources to further address identified opportunities with employees and project teams from the organization. They provide a frame to explore or exploit new or existing opportunities, respectively, to build new business. Consequently, further execution and resource allocation for transforming capabilities depend on the innovative employees not located within the unit. Due to their opportunistic innovation logic and restricted capabilities, the possible leveraging of this contextual structure for strategic renewal is reduced. Instead, these units, typically internal

Innovation logic				Capabilities
	<u>Connector</u>	<u>Developer</u>	<u>StrategyLab</u>	
planned	ambidextrous (balancing) interlinked no resources  <i>e.g., VentureClient, Digital Ventures, Strategic Partnering</i>	ambidextrous (balancing) interlinked resource access  <i>e.g., Innovation Management, Corporate/Business Development, Digital Innovation</i>	ambidextrous (balancing) interlinked resource control  <i>e.g., Digital lab/unit, Corporate Venture Builder, Innovation Hub</i>	
opportunistic	<u>Scout</u>  exploring separated no resources  <i>e.g., Corporate Venture Capital, external accelerator/incubator</i>	<u>Enabler</u>  exploring / exploiting contextual resource access  <i>e.g., internal incubator/accelerator, intrapreneurship programs, innovation centre</i>	<u>InnovationLab</u>  exploring / exploiting separated-integrated resource control  <i>e.g., Innovation Lab, Innovation Hub</i>	
	sensing	sensing + seizing	sensing, seizing + transforming	

**FIGURE 2** Corporate Venturing Unit (CVU) typology.



incubators and accelerators or similar units, support intrapreneurship to ensure that the organization addresses emerging internal opportunities.

In contrast to the previous types, the *InnovationLab* units possess sensing, seizing, and transforming capabilities, and control the required financial and human resources within the unit to directly drive venturing projects. However, these CVUs do not follow a planned innovation logic when applying these capabilities, instead focusing on the opportunistic exploration of new opportunities, and sometimes exploiting existing ones, to build (and possibly partner with or invest in) new business. As they do not combine exploration and exploitation, the top management team (which is usually directly responsible for or strongly connected with the unit) must achieve the balance between exploration and exploitation to overcome the potential tensions inherent in their separation. This setup is visible in so-called innovation hubs, digital labs, or comparable units that bundle the required skills and resources to innovate independently of the core business. Such CVUs can benefit companies by diversifying their offering with separate businesses. However, the opportunistic approach, without an ambidextrous combination of exploration and exploitation within the unit, hinders the systematic creation of organizationally consequential business for strategic renewal, despite capabilities and resources being available.

The remaining three types display the same differentiation with their directly available capabilities and respective resources but can be distinguished from the former CVUs by their planned innovation logic, and their corresponding interlinked structures and ambidexterity. *Connector* units focus on sensing targeted opportunities from the external environment in coordination with the current business. Through their organizational links, they balance internal business needs with external solution possibilities and match them to enable value creation. CVUs of this type, such as so-called 'venture client' vehicles, digital venture units, or strategic partnerships, are well positioned to enable the pursuit of organizationally consequential new business. However, with limited capabilities and resources, their degree of strategic impact ultimately depends on the organization and the development and execution with external parties.

Further strengthening the possible strategic impact, *Developer* units also focus on targeted opportunities but complement their sensing with seizing capabilities to address them. As with *Enabler* units, they achieve this through project-based access to required resources but can request these directly for a planned project rather than depending on employees to come up with initial ideas. Their interlinked structures allow them to leverage the current business for new opportunities ambidextrously, which can be seen in units such as innovation management, digital innovation teams, and corporate/business development. However, they still need the transforming capabilities of the organization to execute the potential new competitive advantages for future profitable growth.

Like the *InnovationLab*, the *StrategyLab* closes the remaining capability gap by possessing the additional transforming capabilities with high autonomy regarding the required financial and human resources. As a planned innovation type, it uses these capabilities

intentionally to build, partner with, or invest in new business by leveraging the existing competitive advantages of the current business. This ambidextrous behaviour is again achieved through interlinked structures, connecting the operationally independent unit with relevant core business units, corporate functions, the top management team, and the external ecosystem. Consequently, those units, such as digital labs, corporate venture builders and some of the innovation hubs, can directly create organizationally consequential new business for the strategic renewal of their companies' competitive advantages, acting as a 'hybrid model' between strategic development and the innovation function.

Overall, the typology shows that the proposed organizational characteristics for SCV can indeed be identified (and specified) in some CVUs (Table A2). Accordingly, interlinked-ambidextrous CVUs with a planned innovation logic may be leveraged for the strategic renewal of the company, as they actively link innovation activities with strategic management. Among this group, the *StrategyLab* type represents the strongest contender for direct impact on the strategic renewal of the parent company, as this type also possesses all required dynamic capabilities for creating and executing organizationally consequential new business. This result is directly observable in the empirical data as well, as these units tend to deliberately differentiate their approach from other CVUs and claim to have a significant impact on the organization: *'I am not a fan of these post-it's painting 'I want the world reinvented' people who haven't got into the strategy or the core cost leverage' (#26)*. As suggested in existing theory, the high strategic legitimacy of such a CV approach could also lead to higher success for the CVU itself: *'There is no other venturing approach that has worked so well so far. So, I really believe that we have cracked the code' (#29)*.

As these descriptions show, classifying the CVUs by the identified distinctive characteristics and corresponding types allows to determine different potential roles for them in the strategic renewal of the parent company. As CVUs rarely achieve the intended strategic renewal task (Narayanan et al., 2009), such a typology provides a clearer view of the required organizational design for SCV and an empirical foundation for the subsequent development of the final exploratory framework for SCV.

## 5 | DISCUSSION: CONTRIBUTIONS AND AVENUES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

### 5.1 | Implications for theory

The proposed typology of contemporary CVUs strongly differs from existing CV framework and classifications, which underlines the argument that these usually do not adopt a strategic renewal perspective that focuses on the creation of organizationally consequential new business. Instead, organizational characteristics in existing literature usually concern differences in new business creation only, for instance differentiating between external and internal CV, strategic and financial objectives, or exploration and exploitation (Gutmann, 2019; Hill &

Birkinshaw, 2008; Reimsbach & Hauschild, 2012; Weiblen & Chesbrough, 2015). Based on our analysis from a strategic renewal perspective, CVUs differ in other dimensions. The resulting typology thus allows to better explain the different possible roles of CVUs in the strategic renewal of the parent company, based on their distinctive organizational characteristics.

Consequently, the following discussion focuses on the distinctive characteristics that were proposed in the conceptual framework and identified and specified in the empirical data. This focus allows us not only to compare the findings with existing research in the domains of strategic renewal, corporate entrepreneurship and innovation management but also to develop the conceptual framework into an exploratory framework of SCV that is grounded in theory and data.

### 5.1.1 | Dynamic capabilities with corresponding resources as enablers of SCV

Based on the evidently possible differentiation of CVUs by their dynamic capabilities, it is surprising that existing CV frameworks and typologies rarely consider them as distinctive organizational characteristics (Enkel & Sagmeister, 2020). Instead, CV is often generally associated with sensing and seizing capabilities but not with the transforming capability that is required to reconfigure the resource base of the parent company when creating organizationally consequential new business (Birkinshaw et al., 2016). Thus, our findings with CVUs that possess sensing, seizing and transforming capabilities support the few studies that did propose a larger set of possible dynamic capabilities within CVUs, such as Enkel and Sagmeister (2020), Roseno et al. (2013) and Enkel et al. (2012). Additionally, we can specify that the full set of dynamic capabilities is only visible in CVUs that also have full control over resources. Thus, the set of dynamic capabilities and the corresponding degree of resource control may influence the direct impact of a CVU on strategic renewal (Schmitt et al., 2018).

This finding contributes to corporate entrepreneurship by clarifying the possible use of CV for strategic benefits, differentiated by their inherent capabilities and resources. Within the domain of innovation management, the finding underlines the use of CV as a systematic and organized approach to innovation, as CVUs can possess all required capabilities and resources for the creation of new business. For strategic renewal theory, the findings may help to overcome the dominating dichotomy between organizational ambidexterity and dynamic capabilities (Schmitt et al., 2018) and show that—at least in the case of SCV—both concepts play a role as possible antecedents of strategic renewal.

These contributions can also enhance the dynamic capabilities concept, in which evidence of where and how dynamic capabilities emerge is still rare (Leemann & Kanbach, 2021; Schilke et al., 2018; Shoemaker et al., 2018; Teece & Augier, 2009). Indeed, the debate how dynamic capabilities manifest themselves is still ongoing, ranging from their identification in routines and behaviours (Zollo & Winter, 2002) over specific processes (Eisenhardt & Martin, 2000) to specific operational practices (Teece, 2007). Contributing to this

debate, our study suggests that an organization can delegate the establishment and application of dynamic capabilities, at least in part, to dedicated organizational entities with specific processes (in our case, CV), when offering the required access to, or control of, resources.

These novel insights provide a relevant avenue for further research to specify the antecedents and processes that lead to dynamic capabilities within CVUs or other dedicated organizational units. Additionally, future studies could test the proposed relevancy of dynamic capabilities in CVUs for strategic renewal in a broader sample to enhance the theory of SCV.

### 5.1.2 | Planned innovation logic as an enabler of SCV

Most existing frameworks do not explicitly consider a planned innovation logic for CV and instead share a common view of autonomous or opportunistic CV initiatives as proposed by Burgelman (1983). From their perspective, the opportunistic innovation logic appears axiomatic for CV, leaning towards entrepreneurship in which the opportunity discovery and creation happen as peripheral 'greenfield' projects independent of current organizational plans or restrictions. In that sense, these studies view innovation as a common key element of CV without further distinction (e.g., Glinyanova et al., 2021; Waldkirch et al., 2021). In contrast to this established view, the identification of a planned or opportunistic innovation logic in our empirical data supports the few scholars who differentiate the possible emergence of innovation initiatives in CV (e.g., Garrett & Covin, 2007; Kuratko et al., 2009). Due to this possible differentiation and the importance of a deliberate strategy process for strategic renewal, a planned innovation logic presents an important distinctive characteristic for CVUs to develop organizationally consequential new business innovations.

Within the corporate entrepreneurship domain, this important insight enables the better differentiation of different CV approaches, in which CVUs with a planned innovation logic may gain higher strategic legitimacy, which is an important factor for their survival (Göcke et al., 2021; Kuratko et al., 2009). This possible strategic legitimation also underlines the importance of CV in modern innovation management, as innovation becomes a core focus in the strategic management of established companies (Bouncken et al., 2007). Lastly, the identified innovation logic also provides new insights for a key theoretical tension within the strategic renewal domain. Here, the possibility of CVUs engaging in a deliberate strategy process together with higher-level organizational functions (i.e., corporate management) bridges the competing perspectives of intended (top-down) versus autonomous (bottom-up) processes (Schmitt et al., 2018). This is possible, as our typology includes both process perspectives, which are usually examined separately (Schmitt et al., 2018). Future research could build on these contributions and deepen the understanding of the planned innovation logic stemming from collaboration in deliberate strategy making, for example by specifying the process activities and routines in CVUs that display a planned innovation logic.

Furthermore, the connection between a planned innovation logic and strategic renewal could be generalized and validated through quantitative testing of the impact from the identified CVU types on relevant outcomes of strategic renewal, such as company survival, company growth, business diversification or strategic fit over time.

### 5.1.3 | Interlinked-ambidextrous structures as a requirement for planned innovation logic

Literature on the possible roles of CVUs to enable exploration and exploitation is still scarce (Hill & Georgoulas, 2016). Our typology can provide new insights for this debate as it shows a differentiation between exploring, exploiting, and ambidextrous CVUs. Specifically, the identification of interlinked-ambidextrous CVUs underlines and extends the few CV frameworks that took organizational structures and ambidexterity into account. For instance, Hill and Birkinshaw (2014) propose a relational context with interlinks to the top management team, business functions and external venture capitalists as an enabler for ambidextrous behaviour in CVUs. Weiss and Kanbach (2022) and, recently, Weiss et al. (2023) also see such structures as an important organizational characteristic of ambidextrous CVUs. Jansen et al. (2009) describe the importance of organizational interlinks for ambidexterity more generally, while Burgelman (1983) highlights the role of organizational links for corporate ventures with a high strategic importance and operational relatedness. As described in the theoretical background, most other CV typologies and frameworks rather refer to established structural or contextual approaches, in which ambidexterity is established and applied within the organization and not in a specific unit (e.g., Gibson & Birkinshaw, 2004; Gutmann, 2019; O'Reilly & Tushman, 2013). Our study proposes that interlinked-ambidextrous structures are required for CVUs to engage in deliberate strategy-making for the described planned innovation logic. As a relevant debate remains around the question how organizations become ambidextrous (Cantarello et al., 2012), the identification and specification of these interlinked-ambidextrous structures contributes directly to organizational ambidexterity theory, as it proposes that exploration and exploitation can be combined in dedicated organizational entities. This identification of ambidexterity on the CVU level contributes to the scarce literature that consider ambidexterity as a nested phenomenon, complementing the established approaches of structural or contextual ambidexterity, in which the top management team or individual employees, respectively, balance exploration and exploitation activities (Gibson & Birkinshaw, 2004).

The domain of innovation management can profit from this finding, as it reduces the dependence on the corporate management or individual employees (Van Looy et al., 2005).

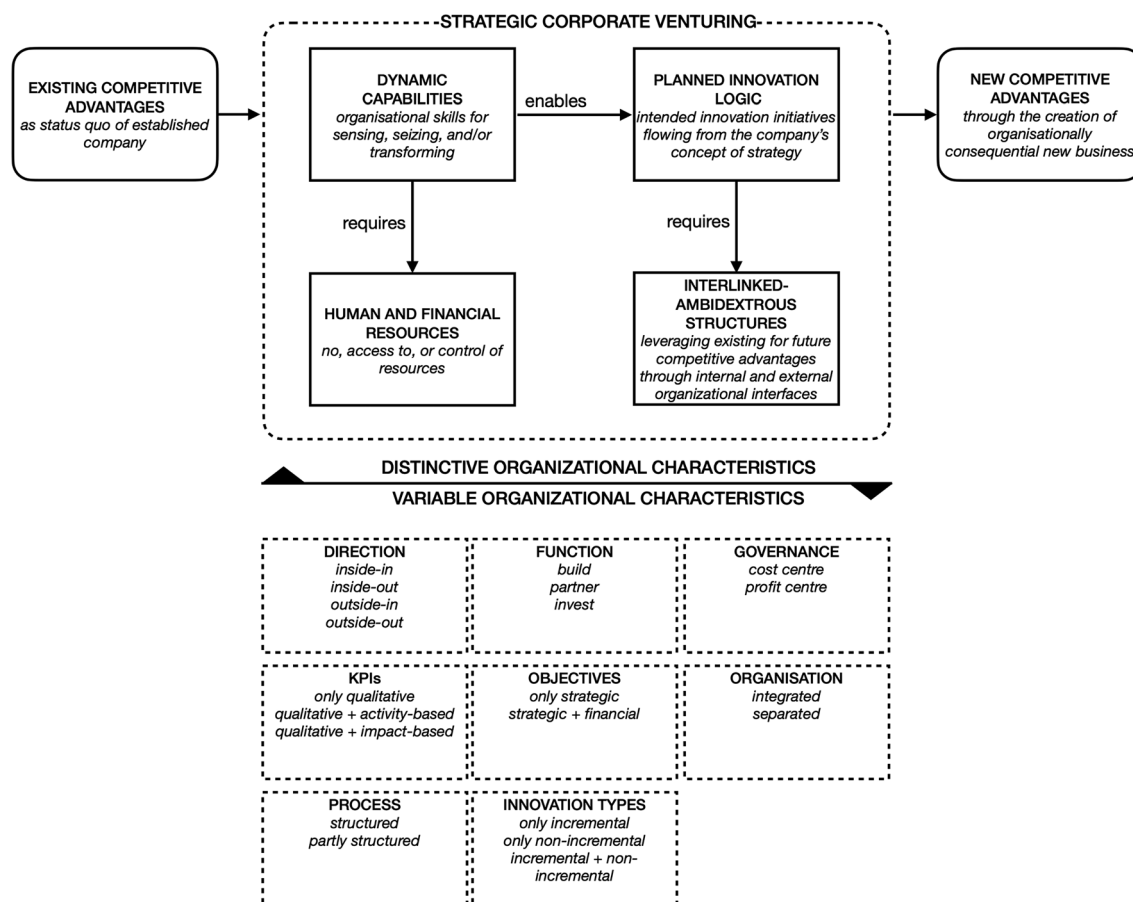
Besides empirically testing their impact on the strategic renewal of the parent company, future research could enhance the understanding of the identified interlinked-ambidextrous CVUs. For instance, a deeper investigation could be made into the organizational interlinks and investigate how they are established through different

formal and informal mechanisms. Overall, a focus on ambidextrous-interlinked (CV) units in future research will help to strengthen these contemporary approaches for establishing and applying ambidexterity in incumbent companies.

### 5.1.4 | Exploratory framework of SCV

The identification and specification of the proposed distinctive organizational characteristics in some types of CVUs allows us to enhance and modify the conceptual framework. This leads to the final exploratory framework that provides the distinct organizational characteristics and their proposed relationships as possible explanations for SCV (Figure 3). Specifically, it points out that the planned innovation logic that is required to develop organizationally consequential new business requires both interlinked-ambidextrous structures, as well as dynamic capabilities with the corresponding resource access.

Based on these findings, the study provides a foundation to address the stated research gap and increase the understanding of how to leverage CV for strategic renewal. As reflected in the framework, the three interlinked-ambidextrous CVUs that apply a planned innovation logic could play a role in the strategic renewal of the company by engaging in SCV. From this set, the StrategyLab type remains essential, as it covers the full array of dynamic capabilities to create organizationally consequential new business. Overall, the concept of SCV matches and enhances the existing, but sparse, literature that proposes an intertwined strategy and CV approach (e.g., Covin & Miles, 2007; Hill & Birkinshaw, 2006; Sakhdari, 2016; Weiss & Kanbach, 2022). Following the call of Hill and Georgoulas (2016), these findings clarify the possible suitability of CVUs for strategic renewal and provides deeper theoretical grounding of (strategic) corporate venturing through the integration of key concepts from strategic renewal, that could also be identified in the empirical data. That way, it not only contributes to CV theory but also to the strategic renewal literature, in which a relevant debate revolves around the possible combination of organizational ambidexterity and dynamic capability perspectives (Birkinshaw et al., 2016; Popadiuk et al., 2018; Schmitt et al., 2018). While our framework supports the complementarity stream, the typology does not align with the suggestions to directly match both concepts, that is, sensing with exploration, seizing with exploitation, and transforming with ambidexterity (Birkinshaw et al., 2016; Weiss & Kanbach, 2022). Instead, both concepts appear to contribute independently from each other to the required planned innovation logic. Consequently, any application of sensing, seizing, and transforming capabilities should involve the combination of exploration and exploitation, proposing that a complete set of dynamic capabilities is required in combination with interlinked-ambidextrous structures to fully leverage CVUs for strategic renewal. In all other cases, some CVU types balance exploration and exploitation themselves but still require involving the wider organization to apply the missing dynamic capabilities for strategic renewal. These findings exemplify and specify the proposition of Zimmermann and Birkinshaw (2015) that both concepts are distinct but mutually interrelated and



**FIGURE 3** Exploratory organizational framework for strategic corporate venturing (SCV).

interdependent. Therefore, they offer new theoretical bridges across the learning (ambidexterity) and resource (dynamic capabilities) perspective that are required in the strategic renewal literature (Schmitt et al., 2018). That way, the study follows up on recent attempts to connect dynamic capabilities with innovation management concepts (Teece, 2020; Van Lieshout et al., 2021), as it suggests that CV is not only a standalone concept for innovation but can also be seen as a process through which the organization enables dynamic capabilities and organizational ambidexterity.

To fully address the gap in research with an empirical concept of SCV, future research should test the proposed framework quantitatively to validate the suggested explanations and clarify the proposed relationships. Similarly, the role of the proposed types of CVUs on strategic renewal could be measured to verify the suggested importance of the StrategyLab type. In addition to such quantitative research, the understanding of SCV could be further enhanced. For instance, a longer-term investigation of CVUs could reveal the specific motives and drivers of the different configurations, as the existing data already hint at significant changes over time within CVUs. A precise examination of the individual distinctive dimensions and their inherent characteristics could help to explain their establishment and application. Specifically, further examinations could specify ambidexterity as a complementary antecedent for strategic renewal, as an

enabler for dynamic capabilities (or vice versa), or as a mediator in the application of dynamic capabilities for strategic renewal within CVUs (Popadiuk et al., 2018).

Thus, while the concept of SCV still needs further investigation, our results suggest that it is a viable innovation approach for established companies to address the strategic renewal challenge. That way, our study positions CV as an important tool for innovation, providing an often-missing link between these two research streams of corporate entrepreneurship and innovation management (Lassen et al., 2006; Rose et al., 2020).

## 5.2 | Implications for practice

The proposed typology and organizational framework have concrete implications for corporate managers dealing with the strategic renewal challenge, as well as more operative middle managers who are responsible for managing CVUs or innovation in established companies. For corporate managers, the findings propose SCV as a relevant innovation activity to address the renewal challenge. Specifically, it suggests that the relevant antecedents for strategic renewal, organizational ambidexterity and dynamic capabilities, can be established and applied within dedicated organizational (CV) units. With these antecedents,

they can engage these CVUs in a deliberate strategy process that leads to planned venturing initiatives for the development of new competitive advantages.

Middle-managers responsible for CVUs can use the proposed framework to better leverage CVUs for strategic renewal through a suitable organizational design. Follow-up discussions with the participating companies on the developed typology have already shown that it can help to define the status quo and the future vision for CVUs, depending on the intended tasks and objectives. Based on the general understanding of possible CVU types and their different roles for the strategic renewal of the company, practitioners can use the described distinctive and variable organizational characteristics when designing new, or adapting existing, CVUs.

Likewise, innovation managers that are more broadly responsible for the different innovation activities and functions of a company can use the findings to add (strategic) CV to their toolbox. They can build on the proposed typology to set up suitable CVUs to engage in strategic renewal or other innovation purposes.

These practical implications highlight the overall relevance of the examined topic for established companies that must deal with fast-changing, uncertain environments in which carefully built and protected competitive advantages no longer guarantee profitable growth. Through a better understanding of SCV and the possible roles of CVUs in the strategic management of the company, these companies can find a new way to engage in strategic renewal for the continual adaption of their competitive advantages.

## 6 | LIMITATIONS AND CONCLUSION

The described theoretical and practical contributions must be considered within the individual, methodological and practical limits of the research. Regarding individual limitations, the subjective views of the researchers influence the results (Eisenhardt, 2021). While this cannot be entirely avoided, the issue is addressed through a transparent description of the research process and analysis. Furthermore, we discussed the findings with other knowledgeable practice agents and fellow researchers to minimize bias and misinterpretations.

The qualitative research design and abductive analysis constitute methodological limitations regarding the generalizability of the findings. An abductive approach can propose possible explanations only, suggesting that one thing (in this case, SCV) 'may be' the consequence of something else (that is, a specific set of organizational characteristics) (Locke et al., 2008). In the abductive research process, the comparison of qualitative data with the conceptual framework from existing theory during the analysis and conceptualization allowed us to propose such possible explanations. These limitations were deliberately accepted as discovery-driven work was required as a first step towards a better understanding of SCV before any quantitative examinations could be applied. On the other hand, purely inductive research would not have been suitable, as extant theory could already propose potentially relevant organizational characteristics (Suddaby, 2006). Only further testing of the proposed types and

characteristics for their impact on the strategic renewal of established companies will fully resolve this issue.

As generalizability could thus not be fully achieved due to the research design, we focused on increasing the credibility and trustworthiness of the research to provide comprehensible findings on which other researchers can build. To accomplish this, we built on established best practices for qualitative research with a rigorous application of a repeatable research design, transparent data collection and analysis, and a complete audit trail that is available from the authors upon request (Corbin & Strauss, 1990; Gioia et al., 2013). However, we cannot disregard practical restrictions that limited the application of the research process. Regarding the sampling, specific criteria were applied to select possible cases, however they were limited by access, as not all (internal) CVUs are externally identifiable, and not every identified case is available for research. However, the resulting considerable variety in the sizes and industries of the companies in our sample is not seen as a limiting factor, as all match the defined criteria to represent established companies, and the strategic renewal impact is not directly measured, for which the size or industry would have to be considered as possibly influencing variables. Regarding the data collection, more resources, time, and open access could have provided richer data points, specifically through the possible inclusion of more participants per case. However, given the resource and time constraints, we took the best decision to maximize cases rather than participants per case to suit the research question, as described in the methodological section. As also pointed out there, we deliberately decided to not include corporate managers outside the CVUs as participants to avoid any anecdotal evidence about the role of CVUs for strategic renewal, preferring to derive possible explanations from our comparison with existing theory. We therefore hope to provide a more unbiased framework for further testing of the proposed CVU roles and characteristics.

Thus, the current research is limited as it does not offer any evidence from practice for the suggested roles of CVUs in the strategic renewal of the company. However, the comparison with existing theory and the discussion of the results with other representatives of the participating companies could confirm the relevance of our findings. For instance, the typology was presented to many case companies with multiple participants. Each company had to guess its type of CVU based on the presented framework. In almost all cases, the guess matched our analysis, which speaks to the validity of our data. However, future (quantitative) research should include participants from the strategic management level to understand their view on the role of CVUs in the strategic renewal of the company.

Acknowledging these limitations, we can nevertheless state that the study confirms the identified research gap, as our focus on contemporary CVUs provides possible explanations for SCV with identified distinctive organizational characteristics and corresponding types. Thus, these findings are a first step towards a better theory of SCV grounded in data. On this basis, the proposed exploratory organizational framework suggests the distinctive and variable organizational characteristics and their relationships to leverage CVUs for the strategic renewal of established companies. This can serve as a basis to test



the impact of the characteristics and their interplay on the strategic renewal of the company to confirm or adjust the model.

These findings offer relevant implications for theory. In addition to the described better understanding of SCV within the corporate entrepreneurship domain, these implications include the possible establishment and application of ambidexterity (through interlinked structures) and dynamic capabilities (with the required resources) within CVUs. Furthermore, the identification of a planned innovation logic suggests CVUs as a possible interface between strategy and innovation, which could legitimate the CV function in the organization and establish it as a future strategic management concept. These contributions also underline the high relevancy of CV, which should be further included in innovation management theory and practice as a systematic and organized approach for (new business) innovation.

In practice, the findings provide a concrete approach to address the strategic renewal challenge through SCV with clearly described characteristics for the design of new or existing CVUs. This should help innovation managers to leverage CV for the strategic renewal of established companies through the creation of organizationally consequential new business. Overall, this research serves as a foundation for further investigations of SCV and strategic renewal to assist established companies adjust to fast-changing, uncertain environments.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Open Access funding enabled and organized by Projekt DEAL.

## DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy or ethical restrictions.

## ORCID

Lysander Weiss  <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5638-9201>

Dominik K. Kanbach  <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0956-8009>

## ENDNOTE

<sup>1</sup> All numbered quotes refer to case numbers in Table 1

## REFERENCES

- Adler, J. (2006). Epistemological problems of testimony. In E. N. Zalta (Ed.), *The Stanford encyclopedia of philosophy*. The Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University.
- Agarwal, R., & Helfat, C. E. (2009). Strategic renewal of organizations. *Organization Science*, 20(2), 281–293. <https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1090.0423>
- Alvesson, M., & Kärreman, D. (2007). Constructing mystery: Empirical matters in theory development. *Academy of Management Review*, 32(4), 1265–1281. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2007.26586822>
- Arino, A., LeBaron, C., & Milliken, F. J. (2016). Publishing qualitative research in academy of management discoveries. *Academy of Management Discoveries*, 2(2), 109–113.
- Barney, J. (1991). Firm resources and sustained competitive advantage. *Journal of Management*, 17(1), 99–120. <https://doi.org/10.1177/014920639101700108>
- Barreto, I. (2010). Dynamic capabilities: A review of past research and an agenda for the future. *Journal of Management*, 36(1), 256–280. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206309350776>
- Basu, S., & Wadhwa, A. (2013). External venturing and discontinuous strategic renewal: An options perspective. *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, 30(5), 956–975. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jpim.12039>
- Battistini, B., Hacklin, F., & Baschera, P. (2013). The state of corporate venturing: Insights from a global study. *Research-Technology Management*, 56(1), 31–39. <https://doi.org/10.5437/08956308X5601077>
- Bierwerth, M., Schwens, C., Isidor, R., & Kabst, R. (2015). Corporate entrepreneurship and performance: A meta-analysis. *Small Business Economics*, 45(2), 255–278. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11187-015-9629-1>
- Birkinshaw, J., & Gupta, K. (2013). Clarifying the distinctive contribution of ambidexterity to the field of organization studies. *Academy of Management Perspectives*, 27(4), 287–298.
- Birkinshaw, J., & Hill, S. (2005). Corporate venturing units: Vehicles for strategic success in the new Europe. *Organisational Dynamics*, 34(3), 247–257. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.orgdyn.2005.06.009>
- Birkinshaw, J., Zimmermann, A., & Raisch, S. (2016). How do firms adapt to discontinuous change? Bridging the dynamic capabilities and ambidexterity perspectives. *California Management Review*, 58(4), 36–58. <https://doi.org/10.1525/cmr.2016.58.4.36>
- Björkdahl, J., & Börjesson, S. (2012). Assessing firm capabilities for innovation. *International Journal of Knowledge Management Studies*, 5(1–2), 171–184. <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJKMS.2012.051970>
- Boer, H., & Gertsen, F. (2003). From continuous improvement to continuous innovation: A (retro)(per) spective. *International Journal of Technology Management*, 26(8), 805–827. <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJTM.2003.003391>
- Bouncken, R. B., Koch, M., & Teichert, T. (2007). Innovation strategy explored: Innovation orientation's strategy preconditions and market performance outcomes. *Zeitschrift für Betriebswirtschaft*, 77(2), 19–43.
- Brews, P., & Purohit, D. (2007). Strategic planning in unstable environments. *Long Range Planning*, 40(1), 64–83. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lrp.2006.12.001>
- Burgelman, R. A. (1983). Corporate entrepreneurship and strategic management: Insights from a process study. *Management Science*, 29(12), 1349–1364. <https://doi.org/10.1287/mnsc.29.12.1349>
- Burgelman, R. A. (1984). Managing the internal corporate venturing process. *Sloan Management Review*, 25(2), 33–48.
- Burgelman, R. A. (2002). Strategy as vector and the inertia of coevolutionary lock-in. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 47(2), 325–357. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3094808>
- Burgelman, R. A., & Välikangas, L. (2005). Managing Internal Corporate Venturing Cycles. *MIT Sloan Management Review*, 46(4), 26–34.
- Burgers, J. H., & Jansen, J. J. (2008). Organizational ambidexterity and corporate entrepreneurship: The differential effects on venturing, innovation and renewal processes. In: *Frontiers of Entrepreneurship Research 2008: Proceedings of the 28th Annual Entrepreneurship Research Conference*, 1–15.
- Burgers, J. H., Jansen, J. J., Van den Bosch, F. A., & Volberda, H. W. (2009). Structural differentiation and corporate venturing: The moderating role of formal and informal integration mechanisms. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 24(3), 206–220. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusvent.2009.01.006>
- Burgers, J. H., Van Den Bosch, F. A., & Volberda, H. W. (2008). The impact of corporate venturing on a firm's competence modes. In *Competence building and leveraging in interorganizational relations*. Emerald Group Publishing Limited. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0749-6826\(07\)11005-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0749-6826(07)11005-2)
- Campbell, A., Birkinshaw, J., Morrison, A., & van Basten Batenburg, R. (2003). The future of corporate venturing. *MIT Sloan Management Review*, 45(1), 30.
- Cantarello, S., Martini, A., & Nosella, A. (2012). A multi-level model for organizational ambidexterity in the search phase of the innovation process. *Creativity and Innovation Management*, 21(1), 28–48. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8691.2012.00624.x>



- Cappgemini. (2021). Lifting the lid on corporate innovation in the digital age. <https://www.cappgemini.com/research-and-insight/digital-economy/>
- Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis*. Sage Publications.
- Christensen, C. M. (1997). *The innovator's dilemma*. Harvard Business School Press.
- Corbett, A., Covin, J. G., O'Connor, G. C., & Tucci, C. L. (2013). Corporate entrepreneurship: State-of-the-art research and a future research agenda. *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, 30(5), 812–820. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jpim.12031>
- Corbin, J. M., & Strauss, A. (1990). Grounded theory research: Procedures, canons, and evaluative criteria. *Qualitative Sociology*, 13(1), 3–21. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00988593>
- Covin, J. G., & Miles, M. P. (2007). Strategic use of corporate venturing. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 31(2), 183–207. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6520.2007.00169.x>
- Dogan, E. (2017). A strategic approach to innovation. *Journal of Management Marketing and Logistics*, 4(3), 290–300.
- Du, J., & Chen, Z. (2018). Applying Organisational ambidexterity in strategic management under a “VUCA” environment: Evidence from high tech companies in China. *International Journal of Innovation Studies*, 2(1), 42–52. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijis.2018.03.003>
- Duncan, R. B. (1976). The ambidextrous organization: Designing dual structures for innovation. *The Management of Organization*, 1, 167–188.
- Dushnitsky, G., & Birkinshaw, J. (2016). Corporate venturing virtual special issue. *Strategic Management Journal*, 37(13), E6–E10. <https://doi.org/10.1002/smj.2360>
- Dushnitsky, G., & Lenox, M. J. (2005). When do incumbents learn from entrepreneurial ventures?: Corporate venture capital and investing firm innovation rates. *Research Policy*, 34(5), 615–639. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.respol.2005.01.017>
- Eisenhardt, K., & Martin, J. (2000). Dynamic capabilities: What are they? *Strategic Management Journal*, 21, 1105–1121. [https://doi.org/10.1002/1097-0266\(200010/11\)21:10<1105::AID-SMJ133>3.0.CO;2-E](https://doi.org/10.1002/1097-0266(200010/11)21:10<1105::AID-SMJ133>3.0.CO;2-E)
- Eisenhardt, K. M. (1989). Building theories from case study research. *Academy of Management Review*, 14(4), 532–550. <https://doi.org/10.2307/258557>
- Eisenhardt, K. M. (2021). What is the Eisenhardt method, really? *Strategic Organization*, 19(1), 147–160. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1476127020982866>
- Enkel, E., Rosenø, A., & Mezger, F. (2012). Dynamic capabilities for new business creation: A cross-industry study. In *ISPIIM conference proceedings*. The International Society for Professional Innovation Management (ISPIIM).
- Enkel, E., & Sagmeister, V. (2020). External corporate venturing modes as new way to develop dynamic capabilities. *Technovation*, 96, 102128. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.technovation.2020.102128>
- Garrett, R. P., & Covin, J. G. (2007). A model of corporate entrepreneurship as a strategic adaptation mechanism. In *Entrepreneurial Strategic Processes*. Emerald Group Publishing Limited. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1074-7540\(07\)10002-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1074-7540(07)10002-7)
- Gehman, J., Glaser, V. L., Eisenhardt, K. M., Gioia, D., Langley, A., & Corley, K. G. (2018). Finding theory-method fit: A comparison of three qualitative approaches to theory building. *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 27(3), 284–300. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1056492617706029>
- Gibson, C. B., & Birkinshaw, J. (2004). The antecedents, consequences, and mediating role of organisational ambidexterity. *Academy of Management Journal*, 47(2), 209–226. <https://doi.org/10.2307/20159573>
- Gioia, D. A., Corley, K. G., & Hamilton, A. L. (2013). Seeking qualitative rigor in inductive research: Notes on the Gioia methodology. *Organizational Research Methods*, 16(1), 15–31. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1094428112452151>
- Glaser, B., & Strauss, A. (2014). Applying grounded theory. *The Grounded Theory Review*, 13(1), 46–50.
- Glaser, L., Fourné, S. P., & Elfring, T. (2015). Achieving strategic renewal: The multi-level influences of top and middle managers' boundary-spanning. *Small Business Economics*, 45(2), 305–327. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11187-015-9633-5>
- Glinyanova, M., Bouncken, R. B., Tiberius, V., & Ballester, A. C. C. (2021). Five decades of corporate entrepreneurship research: Measuring and mapping the field. *International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal*, 17(4), 1–27. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11365-020-00711-9>
- Gobble, M. M. (2018). The varieties of corporate venturing. *Research-Technology Management*, 61(2), 58–63. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08956308.2018.1421384>
- Göcke, L., Hülsebusch, K., & Menter, M. (2021). The legitimacy of corporate entrepreneurship: A structured literature review. *Management Review Quarterly*, 72, 385–416. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11301-021-00246-5>
- Goffin, K., Åhlström, P., Bianchi, M., & Richtner, A. (2019). Perspective: State-of-the-art: the quality of case study research in innovation management. *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, 36(5), 586–615. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jpim.12492>
- Gold, B., & Berg (2017). *Silicon Valley start-ups and corporate innovation*. Springer Gabler.
- Gold, B., Michl, T., & Picot, A. (2010). Ambidextrous Corporate Venturing: The Spin-Along Approach. In: Workshop der Wissenschaftlichen Kommission Organisation (WKOrg) [German Academic Association for Business Research—Scientific Workshop on Organization].
- Graetz, F. (2002). Strategic thinking versus strategic planning: Towards understanding the complementarities. *Management Decision*, 40(5), 456–462. <https://doi.org/10.1108/00251740210430434>
- Guth, W. D., & Ginsberg, A. (1990). Guest editors' introduction: Corporate entrepreneurship. *Strategic Management Journal*, 5–15.
- Gutmann, T. (2019). Harmonizing corporate venturing modes: An integrative review and research agenda. *Management Review Quarterly*, 69(2), 121–157. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11301-018-0148-4>
- Hamel, G., & Prahalad, C. K. (1989). Strategic Intent. *Harvard Business Review*, 67(3), 63–78.
- Hill, S. A., & Birkinshaw, J. (2006). Ambidexterity in corporate venturing: Simultaneously using existing and building new capabilities. *Academy of Management Proceedings*, 2006, C1–C6. <https://doi.org/10.5465/ambpp.2006.22898139>
- Hill, S. A., & Birkinshaw, J. (2008). Strategy–organization configurations in corporate venture units: Impact on performance and survival. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 23(4), 423–444. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusvent.2007.04.001>
- Hill, S. A., & Birkinshaw, J. (2014). Ambidexterity and survival in corporate venture units. *Journal of Management*, 40(7), 1899–1931. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206312445925>
- Hill, S. A., & Georgoulas, S. (2016). *Internal corporate venturing: A review of (almost) five decades of literature*. Handbook of research on corporate entrepreneurship. Edward Elgar Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781785368738.00007>
- Holotiuk, F., & Beimbom, D. (2018). Digital innovation labs as a new Organisational Design for Digital Innovation. *Academy of Management Global Proceedings*, 2018, 1–5.
- Huang, Y. F. (2009). Strategic renewal within an information technology firm: Exploration, exploitation and corporate venturing. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior and Research*, 15(4), 436–452. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13552550910983013>
- hy. (2023). Ecosystem Manager List of Innovation Units in DE/AT/CH. Retrieved February 19, 2023, from <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/16rloB91gAHStlR1aRvf0vUtrXBcXhBD7-R6L51s0AsE/edit?usp=sharing>
- Jansen, J. J., Tempelaar, M. P., Van den Bosch, F. A., & Volberda, H. W. (2009). Structural differentiation and ambidexterity: The mediating

- role of integration mechanisms. *Organization Science*, 20(4), 797–811. <https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1080.0415>
- Kanbach, D. K., & Stubner, S. (2016). Corporate accelerators as recent form of startup engagement: The what, the why, and the how. *Journal of Applied Business Research*, 32(6), 1761–1776. <https://doi.org/10.19030/jabr.v32i6.9822>
- King, A. A., Goldfarb, B., & Simcoe, T. (2021). Learning from testimony on quantitative research in management. *Academy of Management Review*, 46(3), 465–488. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2018.0421>
- Klag, M., & Langley, A. (2013). Approaching the conceptual leap in qualitative research. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 15(2), 149–166. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2370.2012.00349.x>
- Kola-Nystrom, S. M. (2008). In search of corporate renewal: Focus on corporate venturing. *International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Innovation Management*, 8(2), 196–215. <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJEIM.2008.019053>
- Kraus, S., & Kauranen, I. (2009). Strategic management and entrepreneurship: Friends or foes? *International Journal of Business Science & Applied Management*, 4(1), 37–50.
- Kullik, O., Hölzle, K., Halecker, B., & Hartmann, M. (2018). Company Building—A New Phenomenon of Corporate Venturing? In *ISPIM conference proceedings*. The International Society for Professional Innovation Management (ISPIM).
- Kuratko, D. F., & Audretsch, D. B. (2013). Clarifying the domains of corporate entrepreneurship. *International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal*, 9(3), 323–335. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11365-013-0257-4>
- Kuratko, D. F., Covin, J. G., & Garrett, R. P. (2009). Corporate venturing: Insights from actual performance. *Business Horizons*, 52(5), 459–467. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bushor.2009.05.001>
- Kuratko, D. F., Hornsby, J. S., & Hayton, J. (2015). Corporate entrepreneurship: The innovative challenge for a new global economic reality. *Small Business Economics*, 45(2), 245–253. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11187-015-9630-8>
- Langley, A., Smallman, C., Tsoukas, H., & Van de Ven, A. H. (2013). Process studies of change in organization and management: Unveiling temporality, activity, and flow. *Academy of Management Journal*, 56(1), 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2013.4001>
- Lassen, A. H., Gertsen, F., & Riis, J. O. (2006). The nexus of corporate entrepreneurship and radical innovation. *Creativity and Innovation Management*, 15(4), 359–372. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8691.2006.00406.x>
- Leemann, N., & Kanbach, D. K. (2021). Toward a taxonomy of dynamic capabilities—a systematic literature review. *Management Research Review*, 45(4), 486–501. <https://doi.org/10.1108/MRR-01-2021-0066>
- Locke, K., Golden-Biddle, K., & Feldman, M. S. (2008). Making doubt generative: Rethinking the role of doubt in the research process. *Organization Science*, 19(6), 907–918. <https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1080.0398>
- Madsen, E. L. (2010). A dynamic capability framework: Generic types of dynamic capabilities and their relationship to entrepreneurship. In *Strategic Reconfigurations*. Edward Elgar Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781849805629.00019>
- Maher, C., Hadfield, M., Hutchings, M., & de Eyto, A. (2018). Ensuring rigor in qualitative data analysis: A design research approach to coding combining nVivo with traditional material methods. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 17(1), 1609406918786362.
- Makarevich, A. (2017). Organizing for success in internal corporate venturing: An inductive case study of a multinational consumer goods company. *Creativity and Innovation Management*, 26(2), 189–201. <https://doi.org/10.1111/caim.12213>
- March, J. G. (1991). Exploration and exploitation in organisational learning. *Organization Science*, 2(1), 71–87. <https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.2.1.71>
- McGrath, R. G. (2013). *The end of competitive advantage: How to keep your strategy moving as fast as your business*. Harvard Business Review Press.
- McGrath, R. G., Keil, T., & Tukiainen, T. (2006). Extracting value from corporate venturing. *MIT Sloan Management Review*, 48(1), 50.
- McKinsey & Company. (2021). 2021 global report: The state of new-business building. Retrieved December 21, 2022 from <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/mckinsey-digital/our-insights/2021-global-report-the-state-of-new-business-building>
- Michalski, T., Nafe, S., & Usein, A. (2006). Innovation success through corporate venturing: An empirical analysis of the relevant success factors. *International Journal of Management and Decision Making*, 7(2–3), 295–312. <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJMDM.2006.009150>
- Miles, M. P., & Covin, J. G. (1999). Corporate entrepreneurship and the pursuit of competitive advantage. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 23(3), 47–63.
- mm1. (2020). Startup- und Innovationsmonitor 2020. DACH-Studie der Startup- und Innovationsprogramme. Retrieved December 21, 2022 from: [https://mm1.com/fileadmin/user\\_upload/Landing\\_Pages/DACH-Studie/mm1\\_DACH\\_Studie\\_Startup-\\_und\\_Innovationsprogramme.pdf](https://mm1.com/fileadmin/user_upload/Landing_Pages/DACH-Studie/mm1_DACH_Studie_Startup-_und_Innovationsprogramme.pdf)
- Narayanan, V. K., Yang, Y., & Zahra, S. A. (2009). Corporate venturing and value creation: A review and proposed framework. *Research Policy*, 38(1), 58–76. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.respol.2008.08.015>
- O'Reilly, C. A., & Tushman, M. L. (2008). Ambidexterity as a dynamic capability: Resolving the innovator's dilemma. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 28, 185–206. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.riob.2008.06.002>
- O'Reilly, C. A., & Tushman, M. L. (2013). Organisational ambidexterity: Past, present, and future. *Academy of Management Perspectives*, 27(4), 324–338. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amp.2013.0025>
- Phan, P. H., Wright, M., Ucbasaran, D., & Tan, W. L. (2009). Corporate entrepreneurship: Current research and future directions. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 24(3), 197–205. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusvent.2009.01.007>
- Popadiuk, S., Luz, A. R. S., & Kretschmer, C. (2018). Dynamic capabilities and ambidexterity: How are these concepts related? *Revista de Administração Contemporânea*, 22, 639–660. <https://doi.org/10.1590/1982-7849rac2018180135>
- Pratt, M. G., Kaplan, S., & Whittington, R. (2020). Editorial essay: The tumult over transparency: Decoupling transparency from replication in establishing trustworthy qualitative research. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 65(1), 1–19.
- Raisch, S., & Birkinshaw, J. (2008). Organisational ambidexterity: Antecedents, outcomes, and moderators. *Journal of Management*, 34(3), 375–409. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206308316058>
- Reichert, J. (2007). Abduction: The logic of discovery of grounded theory. In *The SAGE handbook of grounded theory* (pp. 214–228). Sage. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781848607941.n10>
- Reimsbach, D., & Hauschild, B. (2012). Corporate venturing: An extended typology. *Journal of Management Control*, 23(1), 71–80. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00187-012-0151-1>
- Remneland Wikhamn, B., & Styhre, A. (2019). Corporate hub as a governance structure for coupled open innovation in large firms. *Creativity and Innovation Management*, 28(4), 450–463. <https://doi.org/10.1111/caim.12338>
- Richter, N., Jackson, P., & Schildhauer, T. (2018). Outsourcing creativity: An abductive study of open innovation using corporate accelerators. *Creativity and Innovation Management*, 27(1), 69–78. <https://doi.org/10.1111/caim.12252>
- Rose, R., Hölzle, K., & Björk, J. (2020). More than a quarter century of creativity and innovation management: The journal's characteristics, evolution, and a look ahead. *Creativity and Innovation Management*, 29(1), 5–20. <https://doi.org/10.1111/caim.12361>
- Roseno, A., Enkel, E., & Mezger, F. (2013). Distinctive dynamic capabilities for new business creation: Sensing, seizing, scaling and separating. *International Journal of Technology Marketing*, 8(2), 197–234. <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJTMKT.2013.054072>

- Sakhdari, K. (2016). Corporate entrepreneurship: A review and future research agenda. *Technology Innovation Management Review*, 6(8), 5–18. <https://doi.org/10.22215/timreview/1007>
- Schildt, H. A., Maula, M. V., & Keil, T. (2005). Explorative and exploitative learning from external corporate ventures. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 29(4), 493–515. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6520.2005.00095.x>
- Schilke, O., Hu, S., & Helfat, C. E. (2018). Quo vadis, dynamic capabilities? A content-analytic review of the current state of knowledge and recommendations for future research. *Academy of Management Annals*, 12(1), 390–439. <https://doi.org/10.5465/annals.2016.0014>
- Schmitt, A., Raisch, S., & Volberda, H. W. (2018). Strategic renewal: Past research, theoretical tensions and future challenges. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 20(1), 81–98. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijmr.12117>
- Selig, C. J., Gasser, T., & Baltes, G. H. (2019). Effects of internal corporate venturing on the transformation of established companies. In *Digital Entrepreneurship*. Springer. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20138-8\\_7](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20138-8_7)
- Sharma, P., & Chrisman, J. J. (1999). Toward a reconciliation of the definitional issues in the field of corporate entrepreneurship. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 23(3), 11–28. <https://doi.org/10.1177/104225879902300302>
- Shoemaker, P. J., Heaton, S., & Teece, D. (2018). Innovation, dynamic capabilities, and leadership. *California Management Review*, 61(1), 15–42. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0008125618790246>
- Simsek, Z., & Heavey, C. (2011). The mediating role of knowledge-based capital for corporate entrepreneurship effects on performance: A study of small-to medium-sized firms. *Strategic Entrepreneurship Journal*, 5(1), 81–100. <https://doi.org/10.1002/sej.108>
- Stopford, J. M., & Baden-Fuller, C. W. (1994). Creating corporate entrepreneurship. *Strategic Management Journal*, 15(7), 521–536. <https://doi.org/10.1002/smj.4250150703>
- Suddaby, R. (2006). From the editors: What grounded theory is not. *Academy of Management Journal*, 49(4), 633–642. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2006.22083020>
- Teece, D., & Pisano, G. (1994). The dynamic capabilities of firms: An introduction. *Industrial and Corporate Change*, 3(3), 537–556. <https://doi.org/10.1093/icc/3.3.537-a>
- Teece, D. J. (2007). Explicating dynamic capabilities: The nature and microfoundations of (sustainable) enterprise performance. *Strategic Management Journal*, 28(13), 1319–1350. <https://doi.org/10.1002/smj.640>
- Teece, D. J. (2020). Hand in glove: Open innovation and the dynamic capabilities framework. *Strategic Management Review*, 1(2), 233–253.
- Teece, D. J., & Augier, M. (2009). Dynamic capabilities and the role of managers in business strategy and economic performance. *Organization Science*, 20(2), 410–421. <https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1090.0424>
- Teece, D. J., Pisano, G., & Shuen, A. (1997). Dynamic capabilities and strategic management. *Strategic Management Journal*, 18(7), 509–533. [https://doi.org/10.1002/\(SICI\)1097-0266\(199708\)18:7<509::AID-SMJ882>3.0.CO;2-Z](https://doi.org/10.1002/(SICI)1097-0266(199708)18:7<509::AID-SMJ882>3.0.CO;2-Z)
- Thompson, N. C., Bonnet, D., & Ye, Y. (2020). Why Innovation's future isn't (just) open. *MIT Sloan Management Review*, 61(4), 55–60.
- Tidd, J. (2001). Innovation management in context: Environment, organization and performance. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 3(3), 169–183. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2370.00062>
- Tidd, J., & Taurins, S. (1999). Learn or leverage? Strategic diversification and Organisational learning through corporate ventures. *Creativity and Innovation Management*, 8(2), 122–129. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8691.00126>
- Tushman, M. L., & O'Reilly, C. A. (1996). Ambidextrous organizations: Managing evolutionary and revolutionary change. *California Management Review*, 38(4), 8–29. <https://doi.org/10.2307/41165852>
- Uittenbogaard, B., Broens, L., & Groen, A. J. (2005). Towards a guideline for design of a corporate entrepreneurship function for business development in medium-sized technology-based companies. *Creativity and Innovation Management*, 14(3), 258–271. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1476-8691.2005.00346.x>
- Urbano, D., Turro, A., Wright, M., & Zahra, S. (2022). Corporate entrepreneurship: A systematic literature review and future research agenda. *Small Business Economics*, 59, 1–25. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11187-021-00590-6>
- van Lieshout, J. W., van der Velden, J. M., Blomme, R. J., & Peters, P. (2021). The interrelatedness of organizational ambidexterity, dynamic capabilities and open innovation: A conceptual model towards a competitive advantage. *European Journal of Management Studies*, 26(2/3), 39–62. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EJMS-01-2021-0007>
- Van Looy, B., Martens, T., & Debackere, K. (2005). Organizing for continuous innovation: On the sustainability of ambidextrous organizations. *Creativity and Innovation Management*, 14(3), 208–221.
- Vanhaverbeke, W., & Peeters, N. (2005). Embracing innovation as strategy: Corporate venturing, competence building and corporate strategy making. *Creativity and Innovation Management*, 14(3), 246–257. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8691.2005.00345.x>
- Vanhaverbeke, W., Van de Vrande, V., & Chesbrough, H. (2008). Understanding the advantages of open innovation practices in corporate venturing in terms of real options. *Creativity and Innovation Management*, 17(4), 251–258. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8691.2008.00499.x>
- Walldkirch, M., Kammerlander, N., & Wiedeler, C. (2021). Configurations for corporate venture innovation: Investigating the role of the dominant coalition. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 36(5), 106137. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusvent.2021.106137>
- Walsh, I., Holton, J. A., Bailyn, L., Fernandez, W., Levina, N., & Glaser, B. (2015). What grounded theory is ... a critically reflective conversation among scholars. *Organisational Research Methods*, 18(4), 581–599. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1094428114565028>
- Weiblen, T., & Chesbrough, H. W. (2015). Engaging with startups to enhance corporate innovation. *California Management Review*, 57(2), 66–90. <https://doi.org/10.1525/cmr.2015.57.2.66>
- Weiss, L., & Kanbach, D. K. (2022). Toward an integrated framework of corporate venturing for organisational ambidexterity as a dynamic capability. *Management Review Quarterly*, 72(4), 1129–1170. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11301-021-00223-y>
- Weiss, L., Kanbach, D. K., Kraus, S., & Dabić, M. (2023). Strategic corporate venturing in interlinked ambidextrous units: An exploratory model. *European Management Journal* (Pre-Print). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.emj.2023.02.003>
- Yin, R. K. (2003). Designing case studies. *Qualitative Research Methods*, 5(14), 359–386.
- Yin, R. K. (2009). *Case study research: Design and methods* (Vol. 5). Sage.
- Zahra, S. A., Sapienza, H. J., & Davidsson, P. (2006). Entrepreneurship and dynamic capabilities: A review, model and research agenda. *Journal of Management Studies*, 43(4), 917–955. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6486.2006.00616.x>
- Zimmermann, A., & Birkinshaw, J. (2015). Reconciling capabilities and ambidexterity theories: A multi-level Perspective. In D. Teece & S. Heaton (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of dynamic capabilities* (online ed.). Oxford Academic. September 10, 2015.
- Zollo, M., & Winter, S. (2002). Deliberate learning and the evolution of dynamic capabilities. *Organization Science*, 13, 339–351. <https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.13.3.339.2780>

**How to cite this article:** Weiss, L., & Kanbach, D. K. (2023).

Leveraging new business innovation for strategic renewal: An organizational framework for strategic corporate venturing.

*Creativity and Innovation Management*, 32(2), 316–339.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/caim.12553>

## APPENDIX A

**TABLE A1** Clustering of organizational characteristics.

Dimension	Characteristic	Strategy lab	Developer	Connector	Innovation lab	Enabler	Scout
<u>Ambidexterity</u>	Only exploring	x	x	x	x	x	✓
	Exploring/exploiting in parallel	x	x	x	✓	✓	x
	Ambidextrous (balancing)	✓	✓	✓	x	x	x
<u>Capabilities</u>	Only sensing	x	x	✓	x	x	✓
	Sensing + seizing	x	✓	x	x	✓	x
	Sensing, seizing + transforming	✓	x	x	✓	x	x
Direction	Inside-in	✓	✓	x	-	✓	x
	Outside-in	✓	✓	✓	-	-	✓
	Inside-out	-	-	x	-	-	x
	Outside-out	-	-	x	x	-	x
<u>(financial and human) resources</u>	None	x	x	✓	x	x	✓
	Only access (project-based)	x	✓	x	x	✓	x
	Control (own)	✓	x	x	✓	x	x
Function	Build	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	x
	Partner	-	-	-	-	x	-
	Invest	-	-	✓	-	-	-
Governance	Cost Centre	-	✓	✓	-	-	-
	Profit Centre	-	x	x	-	-	-
<u>Innovation logic</u>	Opportunistic	x	x	x	✓	✓	✓
	Planned	✓	✓	✓	x	x	x
KPIs	Only qualitative	x	-	-	-	-	x
	Qualitative + activity-based	x	-	-	-	-	-
	Qualitative + impact-based	✓	-	x	x	-	-
Objectives	Strategic	-	-	✓	-	-	-
	Strategic + financial	-	-	x	-	-	-
Organization	Integrated	-	✓	✓	-	✓	-
	Separated	-	x	x	-	x	-
Process	Structured	✓	-	-	✓	-	x
	Partly structured	x	-	-	-	-	✓
<u>Structure</u>	Separated (BU + ecosystem)	x	x	x	x	x	✓
	Separated-integrated (BU + TMT) <sup>a</sup>	x	x	x	✓	x	x
	Contextual (BU only)	x	x	x	x	✓	x
	Interlinked (all)	✓	✓	✓	x	x	x
Type of innovation	Only incremental	-	-	-	x	x	x
	Only non-incremental	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Incremental + non-incremental	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total cases		6	5	5	3	7	3
Cases # (cf. Table 1 for case numbers)		5,8,10,14,26,29	1,619,24,28	12,13,17,21,25	2,3, 27	4,9,11,15,18,22,23	7,16,20

✓ = YES; x = no; - = variable.

<sup>a</sup>BU = business unit, TMT = top management team.

**TABLE A2** CVU types and their characteristics.

Dimension	Strategy lab	Developer	Connector	Innovation blab	Enabler	Scout
<b>Innovation logic</b>	Planned	Planned	Planned	Opportunistic	Opportunistic	Opportunistic
<b>Capabilities</b>	Sensing, seizing + transforming	Sensing + seizing	Sensing only	Sensing, seizing + transforming	Sensing + seizing	Sensing only
<b>(financial and human) resources</b>	Control (own)	Access only (project-based)	None	Control (own)	Access only (project-based)	None
<b>Ambidexterity</b>	Balancing (ambidextrous)	Balancing (ambidextrous)	Balancing (ambidextrous)	Exploring/ exploiting	Exploring/ exploiting	Exploring only
<b>Structures</b>	Interlinked	Interlinked	Interlinked	Separated-integrated	Contextual	Separated
<b>Objectives</b>	<i>Strategic + possibly financial</i>	<i>Strategic + possibly financial</i>	<i>Strategic + possibly financial</i>	Strategic only	<i>Strategic + possibly financial</i>	<i>Strategic + possibly financial</i>
<b>Function</b>	<i>Build + possibly partner and/or invest</i>	<i>Build + possibly partner and/or invest</i>	Partner + possibly invest	<i>Build + possibly partner and/or invest</i>	<i>Build + possibly partner</i>	Partner and/or invest
<b>Governance</b>	Cost or profit Centre	Cost Centre	Cost Centre	Cost or profit Centre	Cost or profit Centre	Cost or profit Centre
<b>Organization</b>	<i>Integrated or separated</i>	Integrated	Integrated	<i>Integrated or separated</i>	<i>Integrated</i>	<i>Integrated or separated</i>
<b>KPIs</b>	<i>Qualitative + impact-based</i>	<i>Qualitative + possibly impact and/or activity-based</i>	<i>Qualitative and/or impact-based</i>	<i>Qualitative + possibly activity-based</i>	<i>Qualitative + possibly impact and/or activity-based</i>	<i>Qualitative + activity-based and/or impact-based</i>
<b>Direction</b>	<i>Inside-in, outside-in + possibly inside-out and/or outside-out</i>	<i>Inside-in, outside-in + possibly inside-out and/or outside-out</i>	Outside-in	<i>Inside-in and/or outside-in and/or inside-out</i>	<i>Inside-in + possibly outside-in, inside-out, outside-out</i>	Outside-in
<b>Innovation type</b>	<i>Incremental and/or non-incremental</i>	<i>Incremental and/or non-incremental</i>	<i>Incremental and/or non-incremental</i>	<i>Incremental and/or non-incremental</i>	<i>Incremental and/or non-incremental</i>	<i>Incremental and/or non-incremental</i>
<b>Process</b>	Structured	<i>Structured or partly structured</i>	<i>Structured or partly structured</i>	Structured	<i>Structured or partly structured</i>	<i>Partly structured</i>
<b>No. of cases</b>	6	5	5	3	7	3

**AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES**

**Lysander Weiss** is a Candidate at the Chair of Strategic Entrepreneurship at HHL Leipzig Graduate School of Management in Germany. His research focuses on the domains of corporate innovation and entrepreneurship, strategic management, and organizational science. Besides, Lysander Weiss is partner at the Germany-based management consulting firm Venture Idea GmbH and author of several management books on Innovation, Strategy, and the Future of Work.

**Dominik K. Kanbach** is a Full Professor and Chairholder of the Chair of Strategic Entrepreneurship at HHL Leipzig Graduate School of Management in Germany. He leads the Strategic Entrepreneurship Research Group and serves as the Academic Director of Research at HHL. Additionally, he is the Academic Director of DIGITAL SPACE – The HHL Digital Transformation Platform focused on incubating digital business models. His research interest covers the fields of strategic management, entrepreneurship and innovation management.