

COMPETITIVE PROJECTS

Entrepreneurship Institute (EEI)

Hub B30

Hub B30 – Beyond circularity – “Startup Zero Waste”

**PRINCIPAL
INVESTIGATORS:**

Lisa
Hohenberger



Josep
Alias

PERIOD:

September 2021 – August 2023

FUNDING BODY:

Generalitat de Catalunya - RIS3CAT

COORDINATING INSTITUTION:

Ajuntament de Cerdanyola

RESEARCH TEAM:

Davide Rovira, Laura Castellucci, Victoria Cochrane,
Montse Jimenez

The project, with a total budget of 3,9 million euros, has been funded 50% by the Generalitat de Catalunya within the framework of the PO FEDER de Catalunya 2014-2020.

**SUMMARY:**

The Territorial Specialization and Competitiveness (PECT) project “HUB B30. Beyond circularity”, is the joint strategy and operational plan agreed by the councils of Cerdanyola del Vallès, Mollet del Vallès, the Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB), the UAB Research Park Foundation, the Foundation ESADE, and the EURECAT Foundation, committed to overcoming the circular economy and moving towards a model in which all waste can be transformed into a raw material from a point of view that maximizes sustainability while avoiding:

- The generation of avoidable waste
- The disposal of waste in landfills and incinerators that can be reused, recycled or composted
- The generation of waste that cannot be assimilated by the environment and / or for which there is no sustainable technology that can integrate it or transform it into a new product.

The PECT is structured in 3 projects that each contain specific operations. Each of these operations is led by a single partner and consists of different actions carried out by this partner in collaboration with other agents in the territory. Esade leads Operation 6-Start-up: Zero Waste, comprising support programs and activities for pre-acceleration and acceleration of entrepreneurial projects in zero waste, as well as the creation of an Impact Community and the organization of a Hackathon using processes of co-creation, open innovation, design thinking and multidisciplinary dynamics to solve challenges identified in the territory (in other PECT operations).

More info: <https://www.circularb30.cat/>

UBERWOLD



How UBER's strategies are shaping the modern world: from internationalization challenges to driver nudging

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:



Bilgehan Uzunca

PERIOD:

September 2021 – August 2024

FUNDING BODY:

MICINN-MCIU

REFERENCE:

PID2020-114785GA-I00

SUMMARY:

As the poster child of disruptive technology platforms, Uber has been transforming the fundamental issues in strategy. Its competitive approach incorporates direct and indirect interference via application of big data, machine learning and algorithmic management, as well as its corporate ownership structure, mobilization and lobbying when managing market and non-market participants, including drivers, riders, incumbent taxi companies, local/national governments, shareholders, and other ride-hailing platforms. Within this research program, we aim to look at how Ubers strategies are shaped at different levels (i.e., individual, firm, country) as well as the performance implications of these strategies that shape its environment (i.e., driver manipulation/satisfaction, competitive dynamics, ban/exit decisions, and scaling up globally).

For the individual level, we extrapolate the power and knowledge asymmetries and no employment contracts between Uber and its drivers and investigate how the company resorts to behavioral strategies and algorithmic management, including nudging i.e., liberty-preserving approaches that steer people in particular directions when managing this large, disaggregated workforce. The use of nudges is seldom analyzed in the platform governance literature, and we aim to develop and conduct a survey and an experiment among Uber drivers to understand whether nudging is an effective form of platform governance.

For the firm level, we will look at internationalization strategies of Uber and its corporate ownership structure. Ubers strategies to scaleup globally has been influenced from fragmented/local network effects, which allowed regional ride-hailing platforms, such as Grab (Singapore), Ola (India) and Didi (India), to reach critical masses with lower prices. Furthermore, common ownership of Softbank in all these companies (30% Grab, 25% Ola, 20% Didi, 16.3% Uber) presents

itself as a unique and underexplored type of external friction that can influence competitive dynamics. Interestingly, following Softbank's investment in Uber, the company abruptly decided to exit Southeast Asian markets after selling its regional units in exchange for significant stakes in these local competitors. To test our predictions about competitive interference of common owners, we will familiarize ourselves with and analyze the Common Ownership Dataset provided by Backus, Conlon, & Sinkinson (2020).

For the country level, we aim to study how collectively organized incumbents challenge the entry of firms with disruptive business models in regulated markets. We suggest that the tactics incumbents' resort to as part of their non-market strategy are not all equally effective in controlling competition, and that some tactics and frames are more likely to force new entrants out of the market. In particular, we plan to look at the effect of different types of taxi protests, such as lawsuits, strikes, public demonstrations and violence, as well as how taxi companies frame their grievance in these protests, e.g., regulation, unfair competition, tax avoidance, or labor issues in order to get Uber banned from the market. We have started collecting a novel dataset of anti-Uber protests in 22 European countries in the period 2013-17, and we would like to expand this dataset towards 2021 as many developments and ban decisions have taken place in several European countries.

SustainableFBGs

Strategy, innovation and growth as drivers of sustainable performance: The case of Family Business Groups

PRINCIPAL**INVESTIGATORS:**Jan
HohbergerMaría José
Parada**PERIOD:**

September 2021 – August 2024

FUNDING BODY:

MICINN-MCIU

REFERENCE:

PID2020-112648GA-I00

RESEARCH TEAM:

Xavier Mendoza Mayordomo, Alberto Gimeno Sandig

**SUMMARY:**

Family businesses are considered engines of most economies, given their capacity to contribute to job creation and the development of their communities. Family businesses represented 90% of commercial companies in Spain and were responsible for 60% of gross added value and 70% of employment generated by the Spanish private sector as a whole (FBI, 2013). Despite the growing evidence of the importance of this type of organizations, we still have a long way to go to understand how they develop, grow, innovate and use strategies to achieve long-term sustainability. One important caveat about the study of family businesses is that they are usually treated as single units.

However, many of them have grown over time and have developed several businesses, under the organizational form of Family Business Groups (FBGs). We define business groups as a set of firms linked together by formal ties such as ownership links- or informal ties such as family kinship- whose main aim is the shared use of common resources, both nationally and across countries. Although there have been advances on the understanding of FBGs, the area of FBGs offer some interesting avenues to explore. What is still unclear is the extent to which FBGs exist; the internal complexity they must manage in order to thrive; their growth strategies or how they innovate to transform their business models leading to sustainable performance.

We see the need to study more how FBGs overcome challenges that allow them to grow. In other words, how they develop their growth strategies to allow them to survive over time, cope with crises and create value for society. The project follows four main lines of research:

1. Unveiling FBGs and their complexity: aims at filling this knowledge gap by mapping FBGs in Spain and their growth strategies and exploring how do owners of FBGs manage their internal complexity.

2. Innovation strategies of FBGs. Understanding how these firms grow via internationalization and diversification strategies and analysing how these firms innovate is critical for understanding where they create value, how they create value and how they make it possible to survive in the long term.
3. Corporate governance in FBGs. Four main research questions regarding ownership and governance structures of FBGs are included in this research line: (1) analyzing the heterogeneity of different ownership structures of business groups, (2) understanding how business groups invest in foreign subsidiaries and the role of pyramidal ownership structures in entering new markets, (3) understanding the development of governance structures over time, and (4) studying the engagement of family members in the process of institutionalization of governance structures.
4. Understanding their sources and transmission of resilience for long-term Sustainability. We aim at expanding this important line of research by studying how resilience is transmitted across generations, understanding narratives as an important source for values transmission and resilience capacity.

EXPAND



EXPAND - A Challenge-Based Idea Accelerator and Toolbox

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:



Lisa Hohenberger

PERIOD:

January 2021 – December 2023

FUNDING BODY:

European Union – Erasmus Plus Programme

REFERENCE:

621727-EPP-1-2020-1-BE-EPPKA2-KA

COORDINATING INSTITUTION:

Impact Shakers

SUMMARY:

EXPAND will develop a toolbox for implementing 'Challenge Based Idea Accelerators' and run a first Idea Accelerator focused on homelessness. The toolbox is aimed at higher education teaching staff and will enable a practical new method responding to the need for more civic engagement, developing new problem-solving skills and stimulate social entrepreneurship in students.

The proposed project builds on the creativity of students combined with design thinking and challenge-based education to tackle societal challenges, with a focus on homelessness in the pilot programme. It will bring together students, innovators, creative thinkers, tech people and the higher education world, in particular, to join forces and bring heavyweight social challenges in the spotlight.

The main outputs of the project will be:

- An ecosystem map.
- The challenge-based idea accelerator programme itself.
- The toolbox aimed at higher education teaching staff.
- The business cases resulting from the first idea accelerator.
- Reports with insights on the local ecosystems working on homelessness.

More info: <https://expandaccelerator.eu/>

Governance and Responsible Ownership in Family Firms



**PRINCIPAL
INVESTIGATOR:**



María José
Parada

PERIOD:

May 2019 – April 2020

FUNDING BODY:

ACM

REFERENCE:

ACM/R6/2018

COORDINATING INSTITUTION:

Esade

RESEARCH TEAM:

Alberto Gimeno, Lina Eze, María del Mar Escutia

SUMMARY:

This project was a joint research initiative between Esade and the University of Deusto focusing on the governance of family businesses and the role of responsible ownership, and created case studies of Spanish companies in the region of Catalonia and the Basque Country.

INNOPRISE



The Founding and Scaling-up of Innovative Enterprises

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS:

Jan
Hohberger



Dimo
Ringov

PERIOD:

January 2019 – December 2021

FUNDING BODY:

MICINN-MCIU

REFERENCE:

PGC2018-098610-B-100

RESEARCH TEAM:

Lisa Hohenberger, Luisa Alemany, George Chondrakis

SUMMARY:

Innovation and the foundation of entrepreneurial ventures are seen as key requirements for economic development. Indeed, there is robust evidence that localities with increased start-up activity have a disproportionately large contribution to growth, employment, taxation etc. These trends are likely to be reinforced in the future, given the ever-increasing rate of technological change and corporate obsolescence. The process of creative destruction has accelerated and necessitates the continuous redeployment of productive resources across different uses.

The entrepreneurial firm is the preferred conduit for this process, as it provides a relatively efficient mode of acquiring resources and aligning incentives between innovators and providers of capital.

This project aims to develop a coherent framework to understand the reasons behind failure in entrepreneurial ventures. Moreover, we wish to identify different strategies adopted by innovative firms that can increase their chances of success. Instead of examining different phenomena in isolation (e.g. founding team characteristics or access to venture capital), our proposal aims to integrate two key steps that have been hitherto analyzed in isolation. First, the determinants of success when setting up entrepreneurial ventures and, second, the determinants of success in scaling up entrepreneurial ventures. The project explores new and original questions with a view to understanding the conditions under which firms can be successfully established and scaled up.

Grup de Recerca en Iniciativa Emprenedora (GRIE)



**PRINCIPAL
INVESTIGATOR:**

Jan
Brinckmann

PERIOD:

January 2017 – September 2021

FUNDING BODY:

AGAUR

REFERENCE:

2017 SGR 986

RESEARCH TEAM:

Marcel Planellas Aran, Luisa Alemany Gil, Xavier Busquets Carretero, Alberto Gimeno Sandig, Lotta Hassi, Pedro Parada Balderrama, Jaume Villanueva Aguilà, Lourdes Elvira Urriolagoitia Doria Medina, Maika Valencia Silva, Lisa Hehenberger, Maria Jose Parada Balderrama, Luis Vives de Prada, Ruth Aguilera Vaqués, Dimo Ringov, Georgios Chondrakis, Xavier Mendoza, Alfred Ignasi Vernis, Guillermo Casanovas, Eleunthia Elinguer, Natalia Mityushina, Lina Nonyelum Eze, François Collet

SUMMARY:

The aim of these grants from the Catalan Government is to promote the activities of research groups that allow to strengthen the scientific, economic and social impact of research, as well as promote its international projection.

BLINDSPOT

Diversity and Performance: Networks of Cognition in Markets and Teams

**PRINCIPAL
INVESTIGATOR:**Matteo
Prato

PERIOD:

September 2016 – August 2021

FUNDING BODY:

EU H2020

REFERENCE:

GA 695256

**SUMMARY:**

Prof. Matteo Prato collaborated in this ERC-Advanced Grant awarded to Prof. David Start at the University of Warwick. The research question central to the project was whether and, if so, how diversity contributes to performance. The project's three-sub goals, addressed using different research designs:

1. Testing how social context, understood at the most basic level as the composition of a small collectivity, affects behaviour. To do so, we used experimental methods to test how racial diversity affects decision-making.
2. Testing how the social structure of attention affects valuation. The activities studied involve error correction and accuracy of prediction in estimates by securities analysts; the method is two-mode network analysis; and the structure and diversity of attention networks are the effects to be tested.
3. Examining relations within and across collaborative teams. In studying the network properties of creativity, the challenge is innovation, the activity is jazz music, the method is cultural network analysis, and the effects to be tested are stylistic diversity and social structure indicated by patterns of prior collaboration.

More info: [https://cordis.europa.eu/project/
id/695256/](https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/695256/)

