

Position Description

1. General Information

Name of the position	Regenerative Ecosystems
Foreseen enrolment date	September 2025
Position is funded by	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COFUND, Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA), Horizon Europe, European Union • Kaunas University of Technology (KTU) • RMIT University
Research Host	Kaunas University of Technology (KTU)
PhD awarding institutions	Kaunas University of Technology (KTU) & RMIT University
Locations	Primary: Kaunas, Lithuania Secondary: Melbourne, Australia
Salary	36,336 EUR annual gross salary (incl. paid vacation) (3,028 monthly gross salary)
Supervisors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lina Dagilienė, Professor, KTU • Viktorija Varaniūtė, Associate Professor, KTU • Mark Leenders, Professor, RMIT University • RMIT Associated Supervisor TBC
Group of discipline	Management research, Regeneration

2. Research topics (only one of these projects will be funded)

Project 1: *Organisational collaboration for regenerative ecosystem*

Regenerative future implies a greater and more diverse need for inter-organisational collaboration. Sustainable and circular transformation of ecosystem requires the participation and collaboration of a broad range of actors (business organisation, consumer, public authority, local communities, non-governmental organisations). Inter-organisational collaboration (or rather a lack of it) is often seen as an obstacle or a challenge in the development and scaling of regenerative business models or developing regenerative ecosystems. This calls for the need to develop new forms of multi-stakeholder collaboration. However, organisations struggle to arrange proper business collaborations and cross-sector partnerships, since the inter-organisational systems (e.g. value (supply) chains, alliances, ecosystems) are characterized by multiple systemic paradoxes and tensions.

Combining paradox management theory and a multi-stakeholder approach, the proposition will seek to understand how organisations create regenerative modes of collaboration, anticipate and manage emerging tensions. Potential candidate shall conduct qualitative inductive cases studies of different kind partnerships.



Supervisors: Lina Dagilienė (KTU), Viktorija Varaniūtė (KTU), Mark Leenders (RMIT)

Research Fields: Sustainability, Circular Economy, Organizational Studies

Project 2: *Digital transparency for regenerative ecosystem*

Due to increasing reporting regulation, data and greenwashing trends, the topic of greening value chains and organisations through ESG (sustainability) reporting needs a specific attention. Stakeholders are demanding greater visibility both on organisations' environmental and social impacts, and beyond. Value chain transparency highlights issues such as supplier sustainability practices, labour conditions, raw material sourcing, local communities and waste management. ESG reporting is becoming an important mechanism to reflect organisations' externalities. However, ESG reporting in value chains is a complex process, because of multiple information sources and plurality of stakeholder' objectives and needs. The current methods of collecting and processing environmental and social information for ESG reporting and assurance are insufficient and infrequent, impairing stakeholders' decision-making.

By combining a multi-stakeholder theory approach and digital technologies, the research would seek to propose how digital technologies could improve ESG (sustainability) reporting processes and demonstrate a novel assurance system framework that could allow companies to collect and report environmental information in real time. Mixed methods will be used.

Supervisors: Lina Dagilienė (KTU), Viktorija Varaniūtė (KTU), Mark Leenders (RMIT)

Research Fields: Sustainability, Digital Technologies, Data Analytics

Project 3: *Measurement indicators for regenerative ecosystem*

Current ESG (sustainability) reporting frameworks often generalize regenerative economy metrics and indicators, failing to account for the distinct characteristics, material flows, and environmental impacts of specific industries operating in value chains. Existing ESG frameworks often adopt a "one-size-fits-all" approach, which fails to address the sector-specific nuances of regenerative practices. This research is critical because it identifies industry-specific metrics that reflect the unique material flows, resource dependencies, and waste management challenges faced by different sectors.

By developing sector-specific metrics, this research advances academic discourse on sustainability measurement and accountability, providing a more context-sensitive approach to ESG reporting. By employing a case study approach, this study aims to highlight best practices and sectoral differences in ESG (sustainability) reporting, thereby enabling the development of tailored, industry-relevant regenerative practices. The findings can support companies in aligning their reporting with regulatory requirements and stakeholder expectations, while also contributing to the refinement of ESG rating methodologies and sectoral sustainability benchmarks.

Supervisors: Lina Dagilienė (KTU), Viktorija Varaniūtė (KTU), Mark Leenders (RMIT)

Research Fields: Sustainability, Circular Economy, Regenerative Business Practices



3. Employment Benefits and Conditions

Kaunas University of Technology (KTU) offers a 48-month full time work contract. The total working hours per week are 40.

The remuneration, in line with the European Commission rules for Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant holders, will consist of a **gross annual salary** of yearly 36,336 EUR per year (which is of monthly 3,028 EUR). Of this amount, the **estimated net salary** to be perceived by the Researcher is 1,832 EUR per month. However, the definite amount to be received by the Researcher is subject to national tax legislation.

Benefits include:

- Becoming a Marie Skłodowska-Curie fellow and be invited to join the Marie Curie Alumni Association
- Access to all the necessary facilities at KTU and RMIT University
- Tuition fees exemption at both PhD awarding institutions
- Travel allowance to cover flights and accommodation for participating in DREAM+PLAN events
- Up to 12 months in Australia
- 20 days paid holiday leave
- Social security coverage
- Sick leave
- Parental leave.

4. PhD enrolment

Successful candidates for this position will be enrolled by the following institutions and must comply with their specific entry requirements, in addition to DREAM+PLAN's conditions.

Kaunas University of Technology (KTU)

To enrol in a Doctorate program, you must meet the general conditions, namely:

- The requirements for enrolling in a doctoral program are listed here:
<https://admissions.ktu.edu/phd/#application-for-the-admission>

More information: <https://admissions.ktu.edu/phd/#dates-and-deadlines-to-doctoral-studies-coordinated-by-the-KTU>

RMIT University

Visit the website: <https://www.rmit.edu.au/research/research-degrees/how-to-apply>

