

Position Description

1. General Information

Name of the position	Building resilient entrepreneurial firms for regenerative innovation
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 • LUT University • RMIT University
Research Host	LUT University
PhD awarding institutions	LUT University & RMIT University
Locations	Primary: Kouvola, Finland Secondary: Melbourne, Australia
Salary	32 600 EUR annual gross salary (2 716 EUR monthly gross salary)
Supervisors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marko Torkkeli, Professor, LUT University • Adeel Tariq, Post Doctoral Researcher, LUT University • Usha Iyer-Raniga, Professor, RMIT University • Akvan Gajanayake, Lecturer, RMIT University
Group of discipline	Industrial Engineering and Management, Entrepreneurship

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

Project 1: Exploring Organizational Capabilities for Resilience and Regenerative Innovation in Entrepreneurial Firms and Entrepreneurial Ecosystems

This PhD project aims to explore the organizational capabilities that underpin resilience in entrepreneurial firms and examines their role in fostering regenerative innovation. Moreover, it would be interesting to examine how these entrepreneurial firms contribute to resilience of overall entrepreneurial ecosystems through their Resilience and Regenerative Innovation capabilities. By identifying and analyzing key capabilities—such as adaptability, resource reconfiguration, dynamic capabilities, and collaborative networks—the study seeks to understand how these enable firms to respond to external challenges while simultaneously innovating in ways that promote sustainability and regeneration. The findings aim to provide actionable insights for enhancing entrepreneurial resilience and contributing to sustainable business practices in rapidly changing environments. We encourage command of different methodologies to provide robust and generalizable findings. Candidate should possess a strong set of skills to effectively conduct both experimental and cross-sectional research. This includes the ability to design, implement, and analyze controlled experiments to test hypotheses, as well



as the capability to conduct cross-sectional studies that involve collecting and analyzing data at a single point in time from various subjects or variables.

Supervisors: Marko Torkkeli (LUT), Adeel Tariq (LUT), Usha Iyer-Raniga (RMIT), Akvan Gajanayake (RMIT)

Research Fields: Innovation, Entrepreneurship, Organizational Capabilities

Project 2: Adaptation and Thriving in Uncertainty: Pathways to Regenerative Innovation in Entrepreneurial Firms

This topic focuses to the mechanisms of developing resilient business models that enable the technology SMEs to maintain sustainable over time. Resilience is especially important in Technology SMEs as the operating environment is highly competitive and volatile and the resources often are more limited than in larger companies. This requires new sophisticated management capabilities and processes from the entrepreneurs and managers. This project leans on the concepts of resilient business models and Sustainable business model innovation. The sustainable growth strategies and strategic capabilities of an SME and stakeholder approach are also in the focus. The research question focuses for example to: How companies develop sustainable business models over time? What are the mechanisms through which sustainable business models are developed? or What implications do sustainable business model development have for growth and company survival? One specific focus might be the role of digitalization in building resilience capabilities. This project Applies qualitative methodology. Especially longitudinal case study methodologies, where observing and analysing business model development over time would be utilized. The research aims to enhance understanding and develop the conceptual understanding of how technology SMEs can develop and maintain resilient and sustainable business. The findings will offer insights into the mechanisms of sustainable business model development and their implications for growth and long-term survival of the technology SMEs.

Supervisors: Marko Torkkeli (LUT), Adeel Tariq (LUT), Usha Iyer-Raniga (RMIT), Akvan Gajanayake (RMIT)

Research Fields: Regenerative Innovation, Entrepreneurship, Business Models

Project 3: Embedding Sustainability and Circularity in Innovation: Strategies and Impacts in Resilient Entrepreneurial Firms

This project can examine the processes and strategies that resilient entrepreneurial firms employ to integrate sustainability and circularity into their regenerative innovation practices. It can explore how these firms embed regenerative principles within their business models and operations, identifying key mechanisms that support sustainable transformation. Furthermore, the study can evaluate the measurable environmental, economic, and social impacts of regenerative innovations, providing a comprehensive understanding of their contributions to sustainability. The findings aim to offer actionable insights for fostering resilient and impactful entrepreneurial ecosystems. Candidate should possess a strong set of skills to effectively conduct both experimental and cross-sectional research. This includes the ability to design, implement, and analyze controlled experiments to test hypotheses, as well as the capability to conduct cross-sectional studies that involve collecting and analyzing data at a single point in time from various subjects or variables.

Supervisors: Marko Torkkeli (LUT), Adeel Tariq (LUT), Usha Iyer-Raniga (RMIT), Akvan Gajanayake (RMIT)

Research Fields: Sustainability, Circularity, Innovation

3. Employment Benefits and Conditions



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon Europe research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement N° 101179842

LUT University offers a 48-month full time work contract (12-month term, extended for 36 months provided that the studies progress satisfactorily). There is a probation period of 6 months and the annual workload for researchers is 1,612 hours / year.

The remuneration, in line with the European Commission rules for Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant holders, and in line with the General collective agreement for Finnish universities, will consist of a **gross annual salary** of est. 32 600 EUR (excl. holiday bonus) with salary increases up to 44 700 EUR as the studies proceed. Of this amount, the estimated first year **net salary*** to be perceived by the researcher is 2 080 EUR per month. However, the definite amount to be received is subject to national tax legislation.

For more information on Finnish taxation visit here https://www.vero.fi/en/individuals/tax-cards-and-tax-returns/tax_card/tax-percentage-calculator/.

**Net salaries can fluctuate in accordance with an individual's personal circumstances (marital status, age, disability, family and dependents, etc. The above indicative net salaries offer an approximation of what a single person in their early 20s could expect to receive in their bank account after taxes.)*

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 LUT University 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
- Occupational health care
- Paid sick leave for a limited period
- Holiday bonus
- 6 weeks paid holiday + Finnish public holidays (all together about 8 weeks).
- Social security coverage

4. PhD enrolment

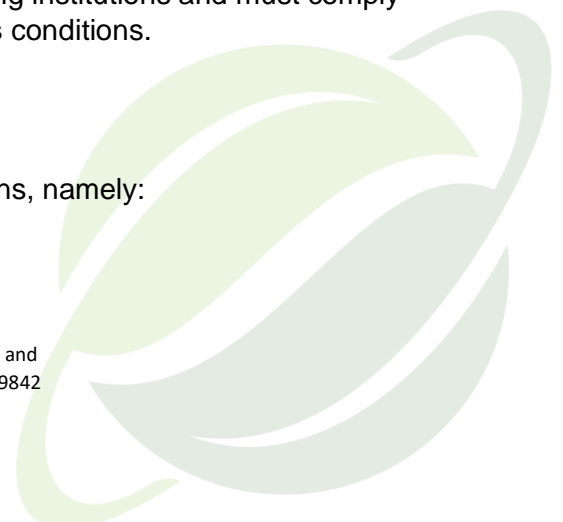
Successful candidates for this position will be enrolled by the following institutions and must comply with their specific entry requirements, in addition to DREAM+PLAN's conditions.

LUT University

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



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- a relevant Master's degree awarded by a university
- a relevant Master's degree awarded by a university of applied sciences; or
- a relevant applicable study programme abroad which in the awarding country gives eligibility for the corresponding level of higher education.

International degrees:

- The degree has to be an official or recognised degree in its country of origin.
- As a rule, at least four-year of education is required including a master's thesis or corresponding final thesis.
- In all cases the doctoral programme in question considers case by case whether degrees earned abroad provide a sufficient foundation for postgraduate studies at LUT University.

- The precondition for the recognition of European degrees is that the degree is a university degree combination earned in accordance with the Bologna Process principles (3+2 years). The applicant is required to submit information in English (for example a Diploma Supplement) on the scope and the level of the degree/s obtained abroad when applying to LUT.
- If you apply for the right to study for a doctoral degree with an international degree please contact LUT Doctoral School for additional instructions before submitting study right application documents.
- **Economics and Business Administration:** One-year (60 ECTS credits) MBA-degrees do not generally qualify for doctoral studies. Candidates with an MBA-degree and their eligibility to apply will be considered case-by-case.

More information: <https://www.lut.fi/en/research/doctoral-school>

RMIT University

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



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