

Position Description

1. General Information

Name of the position	Navigating challenges in sustainable entrepreneurship and management (Research Assistant / PhD student)
Foreseen enrolment date	September 2025
Position is funded by	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SERI University of St.Gallen, Institute of Responsible Innovation
Research Host	University of St.Gallen, Institute of Responsible Innovation
PhD awarding institution	University of St.Gallen
Location	St.Gallen, Switzerland
Salary	Annual gross approx. 47,748.00 CHF (est. 51,213 EUR) / monthly gross approx. 3,979.00 CHF (est. 4,267.78 EUR)
Supervisors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Charlotta Sirén, Associate Professor, University of St.Gallen Silvia Stroe, Assistant Professor, University of St.Gallen
Group of discipline	Entrepreneurship, Management, Sustainability Management

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

Project 1: *The hidden challenges of entrepreneurial ventures in going green*

Sustainability is arguably the most important existential challenge facing all types of organizations. Organizations face the challenge of navigating sustainability transitions, which requires overcoming the paradox of sustainability—a balancing act between the benefits of achieving positive sustainability outcomes and their associated economic costs. For entrepreneurs, sustainability paradoxes may pose unique challenges, as resource constraints, innovation demands, and ethical considerations intersect with broader ecological and societal pressures. In management context but especially in entrepreneurship, very little research has examined the potential (un)intended spillover effects of sustainability transitions and the factors affecting them. Particularly underexplored are the negative effects of these transitions on the broader institutional, societal, and entrepreneurial ecosystems in which organizations and ventures operate. This research project aims to explore the (un)intended spillover effects of sustainability transitions and the factors that influence them. In this project we are open to different methodological approaches. This project is ideal for candidates who are passionate about sustainability and its intersection with entrepreneurship and management. Candidates with strong analytical skills, a curiosity about the broader impacts of sustainability transitions, and an interest in exploring innovative research methods will find this project especially rewarding. Whether you have a background in qualitative or quantitative research, this project offers an opportunity to contribute to a pressing area of study with real-world implications.

Supervisors: Charlotta Sirén (U. St.Gallen), Silvia Stroe (U. St.Gallen)



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

Research Fields: Entrepreneurship, Management, Sustainability Management

Project 2: *Satellite data driven opportunities to advance sustainability research and initiatives*

Addressing the sustainability paradox and supporting companies in resolving it demand innovative approaches that extend beyond traditional methodologies and data sources. Sustainability management, in particular, stands to gain significantly from integrating objective, large-scale data, such as satellite imagery and remote sensing data. At the University of St.Gallen, our team actively incorporates satellite data into sustainability research, unlocking new dimensions of understanding and decision-making. This research project offers candidates the opportunity to leverage our team's expertise and advanced infrastructure to explore the potential unintended consequences of sustainability certifications. By employing satellite data, candidates can uncover patterns and impacts that are often overlooked in conventional analyses, contributing to a more nuanced understanding of how these certifications influence environmental and social outcomes on a global scale. This project is ideally suited for individuals with strong programming skills and confidence in working with large datasets. It provides a unique chance to apply cutting-edge technology to tackle pressing sustainability challenges, blending rigorous data analysis with practical insights that can drive meaningful change.

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Research Fields: Entrepreneurship, Management, Sustainability Management

Project 3: *The role of managerial cognition in driving sustainability transitions*

Management literature, although rich in discussing factors influencing strategic decision making, is very limited in explaining decision-making concerning the sustainability paradox. Understanding the cognitive side of the business sustainability decision-making, together with the larger institutional and societal aspect where the decision is embedded provides a route to new scientific inquiry. This research project seeks to deepen understanding at the individual level by analyzing the factors that shape decision-making related to the sustainability paradox. It aims to answer the important question of how do cognitive factors, such as biases, emotions, and the values of decision-makers, influence how they manage sustainability tensions? This research question will be explored by using neurophysiological measurements such as electroencephalogram (EEG) and eye-tracking in a series of experiments both in the laboratory and in the field. Some of the methodologies used are novel to the field of management granting the access to reliable data that would not be possible to access through traditional methods. This research project is ideal for candidates interested in the intersection of cognitive science, management, and sustainability. It offers a unique opportunity to contribute to groundbreaking research, shedding light on the psychological and cognitive drivers of sustainability transitions while leveraging innovative scientific tools to expand the boundaries of management research.

Supervisors: Charlotta Sirén (U. St.Gallen), Silvia Stroe (U. St.Gallen)

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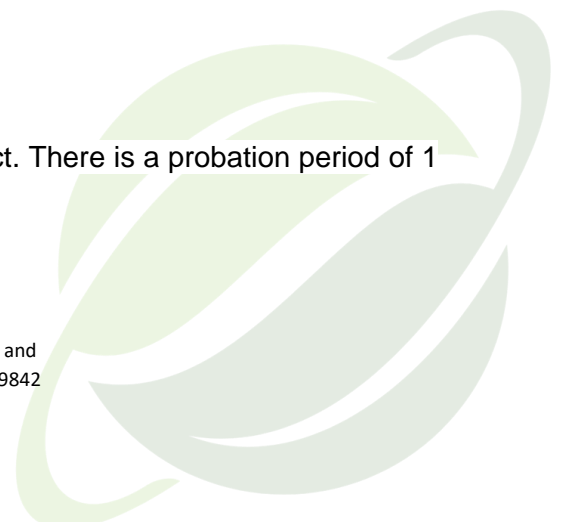
3. Employment Benefits and Conditions

The University of St.Gallen offers a 48-months full-time work contract. There is a probation period of 1 month and the total working hours per week are 42.



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The remuneration, in line with the European Commission rules for Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant holders, will consist of a **gross annual salary** of yearly approx. 47,748.00 CHF (approx. 51,213 EUR), which is monthly approx. 3,979.00 CHF (approx. 4,267.78 EUR). Of this amount, the estimated net salary to be perceived by the Researcher is approx. 2,900.00 – 3,200.00 CHF per month (approx. 3,076.60 – 3,394.87 EUR). However, the definite amount to be received by the Researcher **is subject to individually chosen payments for the pension fund and national tax legislation.**

Benefits include:

- Access to all the necessary facilities at U. St.Gallen and RMIT University
- Up to 12 months in Australia
- 23 days paid holiday leave
- Social security coverage
- Sick leave
- Parental leave
- Flexible working hours at the U. St.Gallen (HSG)
- Training programs
- Network - We promote our culture of cross-divisional cooperation
- Balancing family and career
- Equal opportunities
- Integration of responsibility & sustainability in all of our activities

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.

University of St.Gallen

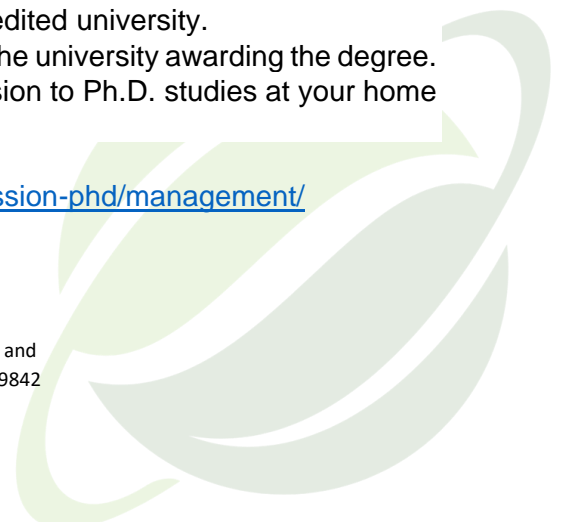
To enrol in a Doctorate program, you must meet the general conditions, namely:

- An equivalent Master's degree in economic sciences, social sciences or law from a recognised university, or in a discipline related to those taught at the HSG's School of Management.
- A minimum average grade of 5.00 (not rounded) is required. This is equivalent to a minimum average grade of 2.00 (not rounded) in Germany and Austria.
- Depending on your previous university degree, additional programme-specific requirements may be imposed upon admission.
- The programme language is German and/or English.

Your degree programme will be recognised if among other the following criteria are fulfilled:

- Your degree was awarded by a university, which is recognised in the country where you attended the course.
- You have completed all course work at a recognised or accredited university.
- You have completed at least half of the course work onsite at the university awarding the degree.
- You fulfil the minimum requirements for unconditional admission to Ph.D. studies at your home university.

More information: <https://www.unisg.ch/en/studying/admission/admission-phd/management/>



RMIT University

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



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