

## Master/Bachelor Thesis

### “Mission Drift: A systematic literature review”

#### Background

In The New York Times editorial, Nobel Peace Prize laureate Muhammad Yunus expressed worries about some microfinance institutions showing signs of "mission drift", i.e., a drift towards prioritizing profitability at the expense of their core identity, focused initially on serving impoverished communities and advancing social inclusivity. Expanding on this perspective, Battilana and Lee (2014) advocated for more extensive research into the phenomenon of mission drift, asserting that it represents a significant contemporary challenge. This challenge has long been confined to a specific type of organization: social or sustainable enterprises, which operate at the crossroads of economic and sustainability logic and embrace multiple and sometimes conflicting organizational principles (De Clercq and Voronov 2011). Yet recently, scholars have pointed out that mission drift is a pressing strategic challenge that extends beyond social entrepreneurship to any company accused of deviating from its original mission (Grimes & Zhao, 2019). We witness a continuously growing body of research on mission drift and its spillovers in multiple literature. A systematic analysis of this body of research could be beneficial in conceptualizing it and identifying promising areas to guide future research.

#### Introductory Readings

- De Clercq, D., & Voronov, M. (2011). Sustainability in entrepreneurship: A tale of two logics. *International Small Business Journal*, 29(4), 322-344.
- Grimes, M. G., Williams, T. A., & Zhao, E. Y. (2019). Anchors aweigh: The sources, variety, and challenges of mission drift. *Academy of Management Review*, 44(4), 819-845.
- Battilana, J., & Lee, M. 2014. Advancing research on hybrid organizing. *Academy of Management Annals*, 8: 397–441

#### Tasks and Goals

This thesis is closely related to the current research of the chair and includes a systematic literature review analyzing the development and current state of research on Mission Drift in organizations. The main tasks are: 1) identifying and collecting articles in influential peer-reviewed journals; 2) systematically reviewing and categorizing research and developing a coherent literature structure; 3) Using existing/developing a new framework to classify and synthesize literature and its concepts; 4) Assessment of the research's impact and evaluation of future research potentials.

#### Requirements

- Excellent English skills and interest in sustainable entrepreneurship
- Independent, reliable, and diligent working style
- Advanced Seminar *Sustainable Entrepreneurship* with a minimum grade of 2.0 (for Master Thesis)
- Course *Corporate Sustainability* with a minimum grade of 2.0 (for Bachelor Thesis)

#### Details

- Supervisors: Prof. Dr. Frank-Martin Belz and Dr. Alessia Argiolas
- Start: Flexible / As of now
- Working time: 6 months

#### Contact

If you are interested in writing your thesis at our chair or have questions about this topic, please contact Dr. Alessia Argiolas ([alessia.argiolas@tum.de](mailto:alessia.argiolas@tum.de)). To apply, send an email including your CV, and the current transcript of records (as one PDF file). We are looking forward to working together with you!