# International PhD Seminar 2011

## Strategic Entrepreneurship: Alliances, Mergers and Networks

**Organised by**
Amsterdam Business Research Institute (ABRI)
VU University Amsterdam

**Target Group**
PhD candidates, 20 - 25 persons

**Period**
5–8 June, 2011

**Deadline for Applications**
22 May, 2011

**Contact Person**
Content inquiries: Johannes Drees
(j.m.drees@vu.nl)
Practical inquiries: Margriet Buseman
(m.buseman@vu.nl)

**Website**
Ctrl+Click here.

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### Purpose and Content

Strategic entrepreneurship, as an area of research, borrows from, and integrates entrepreneurial and strategic theoretical perspectives in an attempt to explain competitive advantage and entrepreneurial activity. Discovering and exploiting opportunities is the cornerstone of the entrepreneurial challenge of (emerging) organisations, while strategic management is about advantage seeking actions of organisations. The combination of these two perspectives and areas of research generates interesting new theoretical vistas and research questions for examining central organisational phenomena, such as alliances, mergers and innovation networks.

Over the past decades, we have witnessed enormous growth in alliance and mergers activity, and the use of networks to access critical information and knowledge. Within this course, we will bring these three related organisational phenomena together using the strategic entrepreneurship lens. Alliances have emerged as an important way to acquire the resources and capabilities necessary to compete. They provide access to new resources or novel markets, which may improve their ability to discover opportunities or strengthen their competitive position. The network perspective is of interest because it focuses on the role of social capital. Networks involve relationships with customers, suppliers, and competitors among others and often go beyond industry boundaries. Network ties provide firms with information and knowledge about markets and technologies. Firms are able to structure their networks to profit from the social capital embedded in the ties that connects them to their industry and stakeholders. The strategic perspective of mergers is well established. But what about the strategic entrepreneurship perspective? Some recent studies have explained acquisitions or mergers in terms of strategic entrepreneurship, suggesting, for example, that it
improves our understanding of recent mergers/acquisitions by firms from emerging economies of Western-based firms.

In summary, the three phenomena can be examined from both an opportunity seeking perspective and an advantage seeking perspective and can therefore be positioned at the crossroads of the strategy and entrepreneurship field. There are clear advantages to be derived from a closer integration of the theory and method applications across the entrepreneurship and strategy domains. However, such integration will not be without its challenges and within the course we will discuss theories and methods from a comparative perspective, and also suggest ways in which particular theory strands or methods at different levels of analysis can be bridged and connected.

The general aim of the course is to offer advanced theories, insights and methods on the recent developments and key building blocks of strategic entrepreneurship. In particular, recent contributions to this domain from the entrepreneurship and strategy field and from work on alliances, mergers and network will be discussed in order to gain knowledge about the recent advances, research challenges and to create a future research agenda.

**International Faculty**

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<tr>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Institution</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prof. dr. Joep Cornelissen</td>
<td>VU University Amsterdam</td>
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<td>Prof. dr. Tom Elfring (chair)</td>
<td>VU University Amsterdam</td>
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<td>Prof. dr. Anoop Madhok</td>
<td>York University</td>
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<td>Prof. dr. Niels Noorderhaven</td>
<td>Tilburg University</td>
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<td>Prof. dr. Jeffrey Reuer</td>
<td>Purdue University</td>
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<td>Dr. Wouter Stam</td>
<td>Hong Kong University Business School</td>
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**Format**

The course is designed to develop the insights and skills of PhD and early career researchers (post-docs) in theory development and methods. Internationally recognised faculty in strategy and entrepreneurship will discuss recent theoretical and methodological advances, and will also provide a hands-on demonstration of their own research projects. This allows participants to gain further understanding of theoretical underpinnings and recent empirical applications. Students will engage in intensive sessions with faculty, as part of the course, where they will receive feedback on their own research. Moreover, the format of the entire course provides ample opportunity for faculty and students to discuss students’ own work in progress. Besides these content-related sessions, we will also have a general session on writing, reviewing and publishing led by the faculty, which includes editors of leading journals covering strategy and entrepreneurship research (Strategic Management Journal, Journal of Management Studies).

**Required Readings**

In order to prepare for attendance, the seminar will require prior reading. Readings include several classics that constitute the foundations of the perspectives discussed during the seminar, as well as some faculty papers and related contemporary publications, the faculty
papers can be found below. Those applicants who are selected for participation will receive a syllabus with further reading materials.

**Selection of key publications**


**Programme**

<table>
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<th>TIME</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>5 June – Sunday</strong></td>
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<td>@ Zuidas Symphony</td>
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| 13:00 – 14:00         | Welcome & introduction  
**Tom Elfring**                 |
| 14:00 – 16:00         | Presentation and discussion on information economics and strategic entrepreneurship explanations of networks and mergers  
**Jeff Reuer**                 |
| 16:00 – 16:30         | Break                       |
| 16:30 – 17:30         | Forum discussion on writing and publishing in leading Journals (1)  
**Joep Cornelissen, Jeff Reuer, Wouter Stam & Anoop Madhok** |
| 17:30 -               | Opening Dinner              |
| **6 June - Monday**   |                                                                            |
| @ VU University       |                                                                            |
| 09:00 – 11:00         | Presentation and discussion on understanding alliances and mergers by firms in emerging economies from a strategic entrepreneurship perspective  
**Anoop Madhok**         |
| 11:00 – 11:30         | Coffee Break                |
Participants who want to receive ECTS credits for the course are required to hand in a paper (5000-7000 words) within two-three months after completion of the PhD course, in which the literature discussed during the course is applied to the research project of the respective PhD candidate. Papers will be reviewed by the faculty, where manuscripts graded as ‘sufficient’ result in a certificate and 6 ECTS credits.
Admission Requirements
Applicants should currently be enrolled in a PhD programme and have completed at least one semester of studies. The selection committee looks forward to admitting students from a variety of backgrounds and universities. In particular, the committee will be interested in applications showing a clear connection to the entrepreneurship/strategic management interface and a strong interest in at least one of the three perspectives discussed during the seminar.

Fees and Expenses
Participation in the PhD seminar requires a € 450 registration fee. Upon admittance to the seminar, an invoice will be send to your academic institution. All participants will be responsible for their own travel and accommodation arrangements and associated costs. In general, catering is not included in the seminar fee. Selected candidates will receive more information regarding the appropriate accommodation arrangements and may also contact Margriet Buseman with further questions.

Application Procedure
Interested PhD candidates are asked to register via www.abri.vu.nl, and submit all required documents before 22 May, 2011 to Johannes Drees (see bullets 2 & 3 below).

1. Completed application form on ABRI's Website,
2. Biographical sketch to be distributed among the participants (0.5 page),
3. A summary of their research work in progress (e.g. papers and research proposals) that will be discussed and developed during the seminar (max. 2 pages).

Acceptance will be decided upon by a scientific committee composed of faculty members and will be communicated to all applicants within a week of their application. The course will accept a maximum of 25 participants.

Contact details
For further information please contact Johannes or Margriet, or visit the Strategic Entrepreneurship Seminar website. The website will continuously be updated with developments in the programme as well as other information.

URL

Content inquiries          Practical inquiries
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