



PhD Position in Strategy (Warwick Business School)

The Strategy & International Business (SIB) Group at Warwick Business School is currently seeking applications for one full-time PhD scholarship (4 years), starting from October 2020, on the following research project:

“Corporate Transformations: Process and Learning Challenges in Corporate Development and Split-Ups”

We are looking for a top-talented and motivated candidate with strong analytical and methodological skills in social sciences (preferably qualitative and/or mixed methods research skills) who is eager to join in an interdisciplinary and international research project and interact with industry and academia. The project offers potential unique access and opportunity to learn from and engage with leading multinationals to develop academic theory on corporate transformations. The eligible candidate has explicit excitement for both academic excellence and industry engagement.

The **WBS Scholarship** will be available for the exceptional candidate. The Scholarship covers the full tuition and training. The successful candidate maybe able to extend the scholarship to include the opportunity to interact with leading technology and expert advisory firms expert in the topical domain of the PhD. There is current interest from several firms to support this research project.

The attainment of a PhD title in Strategy at Warwick Business School requires meeting all the training according to Warwick University standards as well as full-time study and engagement in research activities during the four-year period.

The **Strategy & International Business (SIB) Group at Warwick Business School** has a strong commitment to excellence as well as impact in its research and teaching activities. Warwick Business School currently is one of Europe’s leading Business Schools and aims to be among the Top-3 U.K. Business Schools. The doctoral program is very international and aims to offer PhD education to educate graduates that are held in highest esteem. For more information about the PhD program, see www.wbs.ac.uk/phdprogram.

The PhD School of Warwick Business School will offer a top doctoral program, high-quality training and supervision at the intersection of academia and business, and opportunities to connect with other leading scholars and present at world-class conferences.

BRIEF PROJECT DESCRIPTION

With global Mergers & Acquisitions hitting \$3.9tn last year, companies continue to engage in megadeals to secure business growth. Despite the difficulty to succeed, many firms rely on acquisitions and divestitures to respond to environmental disruption. While some companies have succeeded to transform themselves, others such as Kodak and Nokia have notably failed in remaining competitive in such dynamic settings. There is interesting variety in corporate transformations. Typically firms shed less profitable assets to acquire new businesses; others like Dow-DuPont and Philips have taken a different approach, they acquire to then split the joint company through initial public offering (IPO).

Prior research looks at the processes that have enabled leading companies, e.g., IBM or Intel, to transform their corporate portfolio to remain competitive in highly volatile industries. Yet while corporate transformation is at the heart of strategy, little is known about the sequencing of different corporate development activities, such as acquiring, divesting (legacy) businesses, and IPO'ing. Similarly, research typically considers these activities in isolation. As a consequence, little is known about the timing and relating of these different corporate transformation activities. Hence, important questions remain about how companies develop the capability to transform themselves, specifically about what processes and sequences are central to successful corporate transformations.

Given the topic, there are potential opportunities to closely connect with senior executives to study how industry leaders realize successful corporate transformation. Specifically, research aims will be directed at gathering fine-grained, qualitative data to study the transformational processes that enable these companies to serially divest and acquire over longer periods of time.

Also, there may be opportunities for the successful applicant to connect with other leading academic institutions that the project lead is affiliated with which include several other top schools across the globe.

APPLICATION

Candidates are requested to apply through the formal application system at the following page: <https://www.wbs.ac.uk/courses/doctoral/phd/apply/>. Please list the topic scholarship “Corporate transformations: Process and learning challenges in corporate development and split-ups” in the application.

There are clear instructions on the website which will answer many of your questions on eligibility criteria and the application process. Please note the deadline for applications is April 5, 2020 (5PM CET). No applications are considered after this date.

The successful applicant is capable to deliver a convincing motivation letter, has strong topical affinity, preferably skills in qualitative methods, and expresses an intent to relate to the SIB colleagues and research interests at the SIB group. Also, the applicant holds a (research) Master level degree, has experience with independent research, demonstrable ability to work independently, manage time and prioritize tasks, and is fluent in English.

To apply, please go to the WBS PhD website. For content-related questions and initial expressions of interest, please contact the project lead Professor Koen H. Heimeriks (koen.heimeriks@wbs.ac.uk).