

# Developing more crisis-proof organizations and business models

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## Summary

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*Taltech School of Business and Governance, Department of Business Administration offers a 4-year PhD position in Organizational Development and Management*

Research field:	Economics and finance
Supervisor:	Susanne Durst
Availability:	This position is available.
Offered by:	School of Business and Governance Department of Business Administration
Application deadline:	Applications are accepted between June 01, 2020 00:00 and July 03, 2020 23:59 (Europe/Zurich)

## Description

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The Coronavirus came suddenly and unexpectedly. Yet, we already see its worrisome effects on organizations in the form of switches to short-time work, applications for state support and even first closures. The increasing focus on crisis management which is being put by the big consulting companies such as McKinsey and the likes suggests that organizations have a vast amount of catching up in this respect. The current Coronavirus spread has shown us all how fragile organizations are, the smaller companies in particular. We have learned that the majority of companies have no or an underdeveloped approach to crisis management, thus the crisis (will) hit them hard, and many of the organizations may not survive it. The consequences for both society and the economy are obvious. Nevertheless, a crisis requires immediate and decisive action by an organization regardless of size and type. In sum, the crisis has shown there is a need for developing more crisis-proof organizations, particularly smaller ones.

COVID-19, on the other hand, also provides the basis for business model innovation, which can be viewed as an activity of modifying an existing business model or designing and implementing a new one. In other words, business model innovation is about being more adaptable to changes in the surroundings. One can already see, based on necessity, that many organizations have started trying and testing new ways of serving their customers. Many of these solutions have been made possible through the progressive digital transformation. In this regard, one may also conclude that former reservations about using digital tools and solutions have somewhat been reduced.

From a research perspective, there is a strong need to discuss business model innovation and its role in developing more crisis-proof organizations; smaller ones in particular given their impact on the majority of economies. Additionally, researchers should critically study digital transformation and the fields of risk management and crisis management to reach this aim.

We are looking for a PhD candidate who is interested in investigating with us opportunities and challenges related to the study of business model innovation for developing crisis-proof organizations. We appreciate but do not demand interdisciplinary PhD projects between business administration and other disciplines. The selected PhD candidate will be granted independence regarding her/his choice of theoretical frame, research philosophy, and methodology.

The PhD candidate should already have learned or is willing to learn one or more research methodologies and methods for example experiments, surveys and related statistical techniques, case-study analysis, and methods for analysing longitudinal quantitative and/or qualitative secondary data.

It is highly appreciated that the applicant comes up with own research ideas about what is an interesting and relevant phenomenon in the specified topic area. We expect that the selected candidate's thesis will contribute new knowledge to the above-mentioned research fields.

The doctoral candidate will be working within the Research Group Organization and Management at the Department of Business Administration and she/he is expected to contribute to on-going research projects conducted in the group.

The candidate's main task will be to prepare a doctoral thesis in the field of Organizational Development and Management under the supervision of Professor Susanne Durst. The candidate is also expected to engage in the facilitation across production/product managers and students, and small-scale teaching, with support of the immediate supervisors and colleagues.

## Qualifications

The applicants should fulfill the following requirements:

- Candidates are required to hold a Master's degree, or its equivalent, from a university in management or a related field.
- Applicants should be fluent in English in speaking and writing, engaged and ready to work independently, but also be interested in doing joint research with others, supervised under the direction of Professor Susanne Durst.
- Previous background in disciplines such as Management, Strategy, Innovation, Organization Development, Crisis and Risk Management is desirable, but any discipline can be considered.
- Applicants should have an interest in reading peer-reviewed international articles and provide evidence of advanced academic writing skills.
- Strong communication and analytical skills are crucial for the successful completion of the PhD project.
- The post is suitable for someone with both qualitative and quantitative research skills. Solid quantitative skills are a clear asset.
- The candidate should be able to communicate well with different stakeholders such as national and international businesses, government departments and bodies, and academic community; and interested in further developing the research group's international academic networks.



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