## Category Corporate Finance

**Title: (Female) Entrepreneurship in the FinTech era**
**Supervisor: Pomme Theunissen** (p.theunissen@maastrichtuniversity.nl)
**Short text:** This thesis topic builds on the possibilities offered by FinTech and other new digital technologies as a contribution to (female) entrepreneurship research.
To entrepreneurs, access to finance is often the main hurdle that impedes the growth of their business (Block et al., 2018; Cumming et al., 2019) . In this thesis topic, the student is requested to investigate the potential opportunities and drawbacks offered by FinTech and other digital technologies in enhancing the access to finance, and the related impact on their business (Bollaert et al., 2021; Kavuri & Milne, 2019).
Digital technologies are recognized as disruptive (von Briel et al., 2018) and are an important source of transformation of the entrepreneurial environment (Bi et al., 2017; Giones & Brem, 2017). They therewith offer a broader set of opportunities particularly salient for start-ups and prospective entrepreneurs (Dholakia & Kshetri, 2004; Kolokas et al., 2020).
The scope of this topic may be aimed at startups and entrepreneurship in general; Alternatively, the topic can focus on female entrepreneurship (Ughetto et al., 2019).
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**Title: Does Culture Affect Outcomes in Finance and Banking?**
**Supervisor: Stefanie Kleimeier** (s.kleimeier@maastrichtuniversity.nl)
**Short text**: Nowadays, societies, markets and businesses are faced with "globalization", e.g. the growing interdependence between countries, peoples and cultures. Regarding the consequences of this globalization process, proponents of the *convergence* theory argue that globalization will lead to homogenization in individual decision making and to transnational standardization of markets and economies. In contrast, proponents of the *divergence* theory argue that regional differences are rooted in national culture which allowed them to persist over a long time period and which will allow them to persist in the

future despite the pressure of globalization. The theory of divergence thus predicts that economic, financial or accounting characteristics should differ strongly across countries, even in a globalized economy, and that cultural traits can explain these uniquely national characteristics.

Guiso et al. (2006) describe the research field of “cultural economics” starting from the premise that culture is largely a 'given' to individuals – through religion or ethnicity – and cannot be changed easily.  In turn, culture affects economic decision making. For example: In trusting cultures, banks might be less likely to require collateral or guarantees from borrowers as they trust in the borrower’s intention to repay the loan. Cross-border mergers might be more successful when the managers of the different business units are used to the same business culture with respect to power and hierarchy in managerial decision making. Investors might exhibit a large home bias in their stock and bond portfolios if they feel culturally very different from the foreign markets in which they could invest. Countries might trade more with each other when they share a common culture due to a historical colonial relationship.

Reuter (2011) and Karolyi (2016) discuss the different approaches for measuring culture and provide an overview of different research areas. Their surveys show that a wide variety of analyses are possible in this topic area and that many questions are as yet unexplored. In a thesis, students can investigate the impact of culture at different levels ranging from (1) decision level analyses, (2) firm level analyses, to (3) country level analyses. Here are a few examples for cultural studies in Finance and Banking: Kleimeier and Chaudhry (2015) is an example of a decision level analysis and illustrates how *cultural differences* between the bank and the company can affect the structure of the loan contract. – Heuchemer et al. (2009) and Sander et al. (2016) are examples of country-level studies that show how *cultural differences* across countries affect cross-border banking. Note that the data used in these two studies are now publically available in Table 6.2 of the BIS’ Locational Banking Statistics. – Costa et al. (2013) is an example of a country level analysis and illustrates how *national culture* affects IPO underpricing. – Orij (2010), Holderness (2016) and Díez-Esteban et al. (2019) are examples of firm level analyses and illustrate how *national culture* affects corporate social disclosure levels, ownership structures and corporate risk taking respectively. Note that Holderness’ (2016) study was published in a special issue of the *Journal of Corporate Finance* on the culture-finance link and more related studies can be found in this special issue.

**Sources for cultural data on a country level**:
Hofstede’s cultural dimensions: http://www.geerthofstede.nl/dimension-data-matrix or http://globe.bus.sfu.ca/
World Value Survey: www.worldvaluessurvey.org
European Social Survey: http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/

**Sources for cross-border banking data on a country level**:
BIS Locational Banking Statistics, Table 6.2:
https://www.bis.org/statistics/bankstats.htm?m=6%7C31%7C69

**Please note that during the last couple of years, several SBE students have investigated this topic with specific focus on the effect of cultural differences on the performance of cross-border M&A. Thus, new thesis proposals on this specific sub-topic will not be accepted.**

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**Title: International evidence on the time varying propensity to pay-out Dividends; Revisiting the lifecycle theory**
**Supervisor: Carl Vandenboorn** (c.vandenboorn@maastrichtuniversity.nl)
**Short text**: Pay-out policy has changed over time. Determinants of dividend policy other than earnings changes through crisis-periods & bubbles seem to have caused this. This update study re-examines for a pre- and within crisis timeframe the change in propensity to use dividends as a pay-out tool for different industries.
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Payout Policy Through the Financial Crisis: The Growth of Repurchases and the Resilience of Dividends Eric Floyd,  Nan Li  and  Douglas J. Skinner  Chicago Booth Research Paper No. 12-01