



TWO PHD POSITIONS IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION, FOCUSING ON MARKET DYNAMICS, ADMISSION 2016

The Department of Marketing and Strategy at the Stockholm School of Economics is pleased to announce two fully funded PhD positions, financed by the Torsten Söderbergs Stiftelse. The projects are part of a research program on market dynamics led by Professor Hans Kjellberg. The successful applicants will be part of the SIR Center for the Study of Business Markets under the supervision of Professors Hans Kjellberg and Per Andersson.

GENERAL PROJECT DESCRIPTION

While markets can be effective resource allocation mechanisms under certain conditions, their wider societal significance is linked to their ability to generate change and development. When markets trigger such changes, they themselves change: new offers are introduced and gradually qualified, new customer insights are shaped, new patterns of interaction emerge between buyers and sellers, new types of intermediaries are established, new methods of competition are tried, etc. While such outer signs of market change are well known, our knowledge of specific patterns of change and development in markets is shallow compared to the static analysis of ideal markets.

Increased understanding of market change processes is thus theoretically important but also practically relevant for those pursuing, or being affected by, changes in the organization and function of markets. The research program that the PhD positions are part of is based on a dynamic and actor-centred view of markets (Araujo et al 2010). This directs attention to how different actors seek to alter markets and how markets actually change as a result of such efforts. Theoretically we can define processes as developmental event sequences (Van de Ven 1992) and distinguish between teleological, dialectical and evolutionary change processes. Empirical market change processes, however, can be expected to borrow traits from each of these process types. The purpose of the program is to identify, characterize and explain different types and patterns of empirical market change, and generate strategically relevant insights for actors seeking to change markets (be they consumers, firms, authorities, or civil society organizations). While the available funding ties each PhD project to a specific empirical context (the emergence of the sharing economy and the deregulation of the US market for air travel, respectively, see below) the successful applicants will be able to significantly influence the research design in their respective projects.

PROJECT 1. THE EMERGENCE OF THE SHARING ECONOMY

During recent years, an alternative market form based on exchange between peers, rather than between companies and consumers, has emerged (Sundararajan 2013). Several successful companies have been established based on this logic, including AirBnB, GetAround, Uber. The rapid growth of this business model has been facilitated by new information technology simplifying exchange between equals (Hamari et al. 2015). The expansion has also given rise to controversies. Established market actors have chosen different strategies for facing the new competition. Some have chosen to invest in the new model, e.g. Avis recent acquisition of ZipCar. Others have sought to prevent its expansion by legal means, e.g. the efforts of incumbent taxi operators to prevent Uber from establishing in their geographical markets. Authorities have also expressed concerns about how the sharing economy fits into the wider economic system, e.g. that Uber drivers do not pay taxes, as they



should. In some cases the introduction of sharing solutions has given rise to protracted legal battles, which in some cases have led to convictions (e.g. in the case of The Pirate Bay).

While the basic logic of a barter economy is well known from economic history and anthropology (Malinowski 1922, Polanyi et al. 1957), research on its recent incarnation ('the sharing economy') is quite modest. The phenomenon is of particular interest since it concerns how an alternative market form is challenging established market conceptions. This provides excellent opportunities to study market dynamics that display clear signs of creative destruction (Schumpeter 1962 (1950)) and competition between alternative market forms (Palamountain 1955). The ubiquity of sharing solutions provides a wide range of potential empirical cases to focus on in the project.

The project will be supported by Associate Professor Susi Geiger, University College Dublin, who will participate as an external supervisor. Professor Geiger will also offer the successful applicant opportunity to spend part of his/her PhD-studies in Dublin.

PROJECT 2. THE DEREGULATION OF THE US MARKET FOR AIR TRAVEL

The Airline Deregulation Act, passed by the US congress in 1978, was the first major market deregulation initiative in modern times (Victor 1990). Its sometimes surprising effects for commercial air travel was not limited to the US since the Act came to serve as a model for many subsequent deregulations (Kahn 1988). The deregulation also gave rise to several market innovations (Kjellberg et al. 2015), for instance the Frequent Flyer Programs (Araujo and Kjellberg 2015) and the low cost, no frills airlines (Button 2012). Finally, the deregulation effectively highlighted the challenges facing incumbents in trying to find their feet in a new commercial reality, as evidenced by the continuous financial difficulties of the established airlines post deregulation.

The PhD project aims to describe the deregulation process and its dynamic consequences on the market for commercial air passenger transport. The historic character of the case provides good opportunities to study the long term effects and dynamics of market change through (re)regulation. This also means that the project primarily will be based on historical methods (archival sources), to some extent complemented by interviews with key stakeholders. The wealth of available material related to the deregulation and the range of consequences associated with it, will give the successful applicant a wide selection of specific issues to focus on as part of her/his PhD.

The project will be supported by Professor Luis Araujo, Manchester Business School, who will participate as an external supervisor. Professor Araujo will also offer the successful applicant opportunity to spend part of his/her PhD-studies in Manchester.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

All applications to the SSE PhD program in Business Administration must be made through the web-based application system: <https://www.hhs.se/en/Education/PhD/business-administration/admission/>. There you will find complete information about prerequisites as well as required contents of your application (see the box "Application Step by Step" at the bottom of the page). **The application deadline is February 1, 2016.**

For further information about the two specific positions, please contact Professor Hans Kjellberg (hans.kjellberg@hhs.se). Since the positions in question are tied to pre-specified projects, applicants interested in them should clearly indicate their interest in either or both of the positions in their applications.