

Call for Applications:

A two-year Masters' scholarship to study hybrid organising in value chains, with a focus on African organisations

We are inviting urgent applications for a generous two-year scholarship to conduct a research project on the topic of **hybrid organising in value chains**. Empirical work will be done on hybrid organisations in Africa that are promoting inclusive and sustainable practices in value chains. The research will be conducted from February 2023 to December 2024 in the UCT Graduate School of Business as part of the MPhil Programme in Inclusive Innovation. The project will be co-supervised by Dr Annika Surmeier, Graduate School of Business, University of Cape Town and Dr Christopher Foster, Global Development Institute, University of Manchester.

The MPhil programme

The GSB's MPhil in Inclusive Innovation seeks to develop students' knowledge and practical skills for addressing complex social and environmental challenges. The programme comprises a self-directed, supervised research project, a vibrant community of research students, extensive peer support and modular work, including supporting the development of the research proposal. Students must attend four week-long modules in person in Cape Town throughout 2023, and from 2024 may work independently from wherever they would like. More information is available here: <https://www.gsb.uct.ac.za/academic-programmes/mphil>. Questions about the program may be directed to the MPhil Director, Prof Jess Auerbach (jess.auerbach@uct.ac.za).

Project background

Economic activities are often linked through global value chains (GVCs) that connect actors across the world and regional value chains (RVCs) that link producers and consumers not globally but within world regions. GVCs and RVCs have created significant employment opportunities particularly in emerging economies, but they have simultaneously accelerated rising inequalities, precarious working conditions, and environmental exploitation. While researchers and practitioners agree on the urgent need to promote inclusive and sustainable practices in value chains, there are still limited insights on how this can be achieved. Current research offers limited insights into opportunities and barriers for the creation of inclusive and sustainable value chains, and particularly the role of African organisations as drivers of change has been largely overlooked.

There is an interdisciplinary research strand on hybrid organisations, which are organisations that simultaneously try to pursue economic and social goals. Navigating tensions and trade-offs between divergent goals is often challenging but can also be a driver of innovation. In fact, hybrid organisations often move beyond existing business models innovate in their organisational practices and in the contexts in which they are embedded. The research on hybrid organising and GVC/RVC dynamics are rarely put in conversation but can complement each other in explaining how inclusive and sustainable innovation can be created, implemented and scaled in value chains.

Project purpose and tasks

The goal of the research project is to **interrogate how hybrid organisations can promote inclusive and sustainable innovation in value chains**. The research will predominantly be based on qualitative research approaches and will empirically analyse the strategies of hybrid organisations in Africa. The hybrid organisation for empirical fieldwork will be identified together with the supervisors. We are currently interested in organisations **in Malawi, Uganda or Tanzania** – but open for other suggestions, for example organisations in South Africa.

The tasks of the research student will include:

- Using the concepts of hybrid organising and value chains to investigate opportunities and barriers for promoting inclusive and sustainable innovation in value chains.
- Conducting (mainly qualitative) empirical data collection within African countries and communities, including data analysis.
- Submitting the MPhil dissertation within two years.
- Co-authoring peer-reviewed academic journal articles, both in collaboration with the supervisors.

Requirements

- Interest to conduct research on hybrid organising in value chains
- Background in qualitative data collection and analysis
- Experience in conducting fieldwork in African countries and communities
- Ideally knowledge of African languages

Eligibility Criteria

The student must be accepted by UCT's MPhil in Inclusive Innovation (application deadline: 15 Jan 2023) and register for a master's by dissertation (100 %) for their first year of study. Students employed full time are not eligible.

Scholarship value

- A grant of ZAR 130,000 per year will be allocated to the student to cover tuition fees and other personal expenses (ZAR 260,000 in total).
- Additional funds are available for travel and fieldwork.

Application process

Please **URGENTLY** reach out to Annika Surmeier (annika.surmeier@uct.ac.za) with your CV and a letter explaining your interest and why you think you are well suited and prepared for this research. The application will need to be completed by 15 January 2023. Shortlisted candidates may be invited for a short interview online. Please note that the selected candidate would still be required to formally apply for entry into the MPhil programme.