

Foreword

In the last decades the way how companies are doing business has changed dramatically. In the past, barriers of doing business abroad seemed to be high and therefore mainly well established companies tried to venture new markets or global activities. Today more and more newly established companies are going global directly. To be able to do so these early internationalizing firms seem to manage their business and international expansion very efficiently. This way even small and recently founded firms are able to join the globalization of business activities. As a consequence business, even for multinational companies, is changing. For this reason the field of *International Entrepreneurship* is highly important for management research in general and for supply chain research especially, as supply chains have to be adapted to the new conditions. Despite all the existing research, even more research is still needed to explore the highly important field of *International Entrepreneurship*. The Chair of Supply Chain Management at the Friedrich-Alexander-University of Erlangen-Nurnberg focuses on performing research not only in the direct area of Supply Chain Management but also in topics that are drivers of supply chains and have great impact on business research in general. One of those topics is *International Entrepreneurship* which is addressed with four theory-based articles in this dissertation.

All articles of this dissertation contribute to the topic of *International Entrepreneurship* in various ways. Article one focuses on firms that are internationalizing early in their life cycles and how they manage to overcome liabilities of foreignness. In the second article the performance antecedents of those early internationalizing firms are analyzed. The third article demonstrates and further analyzes the impact of institutional coordination on national entrepreneurship. Article four finally focuses on the organizational design as one of the key managerial tools to leverage international business activities and analyzes this on firm level.

As the development of *International Entrepreneurship* has already shown over the last years, even a further acceleration of speed of internationalization can be expected for the future. In any case the changed business environment and new possibilities how to manage internationalization will influence also yet well established companies in their

further development. Therefore the Chair of Supply Chain Management will continue its research in the area of *International Entrepreneurship* to deliver high quality research on this topic.

I would like to congratulate Mr. Rättich on this extraordinary research and I wish him well for his personal future.

Prof. Dr.-Ing. Evi Hartmann

Acknowledgements

Despite all the insights I gained through my research, the statement of one of today's most successful international entrepreneurs will stay with me, always reminding me of the importance of the "soft" success factors in international entrepreneurship: *"More than any other element, fun is the secret of Virgin's success"* (Richard Branson)

During my doctoral dissertation endeavor, fun was also one of the main driving factors. For this reason I am really thankful for all the great persons that I met and the fun we had during the different stages of my research. First of all, I want to thank Prof. Dr.-Ing. Evi Hartmann for all her guidance, patience and faith in me and my research project. Secondly I would like to extend my appreciation to my colleague Kim Clark for all those chats, discussions and hard team work. And I will miss all the great moments with my fellow doctoral candidate (and fellow sufferer) Daniel Kern as we shared the ups and downs of our doctoral dissertation journeys.

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Gordian Rättich