



**POLITECNICO**  
MILANO 1863

## Supervisor Expression of Interest MSCA-IF Marie Sklodowska Curie Action- Individual Fellowship 2019

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Department Name:	Department of Management, Economics and Industrial Engineering (DIG)
Research topic:	Entrepreneurship and innovation in family firms: Exploring the role of family ties and diversity in the Top Management Team
MSCA-IF Research Area Panels	<input type="checkbox"/> CHE_Chemistry <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>ECO_Economic Sciences</b> <input type="checkbox"/> ENG_Information Science and Engineering <input type="checkbox"/> ENV_Environmental and Geosciences <input type="checkbox"/> LIF_Life Sciences <input type="checkbox"/> MAT_Mathematics <input type="checkbox"/> PHY_Physics <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>SOC_Social Sciences and Humanities</b>
Politecnico di Milano Areas:	<input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Heritage <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Smart Cities</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Territorial Fragilities <input type="checkbox"/> Health <input type="checkbox"/> Industry 4.0
Brief description of the Department and Research Group (including URL if applicable):	Federico Frattini, Josip Kotlar and Cristina Rossi-Lamastra belong to the Family Business Research Group of the Department of Management, Economics, and Industrial Engineering of Politecnico di Milano, which helps family firms of all sizes tackle the challenge of technological disruption in order to succeed and grow in fast-changing competitive environments. Research results have been published in top management and entrepreneurship journals including the <i>Academy of Management Journal</i> , <i>Journal of Management Studies</i> , <i>Journal of Business Venturing</i> , <i>Journal of Product Innovation Management</i> , <i>Entrepreneurship Theory &amp; Practice</i> , and <i>Family Business Review</i> , among others. Members of the research group hold leadership roles in international research networks, such as the Research Directorship of the International Family Enterprise Research Academy (IFERA), and editorial roles in leading journals such as <i>Strategic Management Journal</i> , <i>Strategic Entrepreneurship Journal</i> , <i>Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice</i> , <i>Family Business Review</i> , and the <i>Journal of Family Business Strategy</i> .



**Brief project description:**  
**(max 1 page)**

Family firms play a major role in European productive systems, accounting for a sizable portion of the firms active in European countries. Thus, the development and growth of family firms are expected to engender beneficial effects on the overall European economy. Moving from these premises, the present project aims to study the drivers of performance and growth of European family firms, focusing in particular on professionalization, defined as the integration of non-family managers and the enhancement of diversity in the Top Management Team. The literature in economics and management concurs that enhancing professionalization and diversity of the Top Management Team is a key condition for family business growth and sustained performance. However, we still lack a fine-grained picture of the antecedents, dimensions and consequences of family business professionalization. The project aims at advancing this stream of research by developing new theoretical insights and providing extensive empirical evidence at the European level. We will do so in the following steps:

1. We will perform a review of the academic literature on family business professionalization, with a focus on the role of non-family managers and the diversity of the Top Management Team (TMT) in order to provide the state of the art of theory and evidence on the topic.
2. We will develop a large longitudinal database on European family firms, with fine-grained information on family ownership and the composition of the TMT. Taking advantage of data analytics techniques, and combining multiple data sources including those already available in databases (e.g., Cheetah, Orbis) with new data extracted from secondary sources (e.g., LinkedIn), we will identify and provide reliable measures of fundamental dimensions of TMT diversity (e.g., family ties, gender, nationality, education, functional background and experience).
3. We will analyze the data to unearth relations between the TMT and firms' growth dynamics and performance. We will explore the following research questions:
  - *What dimensions of TMT professionalization and diversity drive growth in family firms?*
  - *How do family business TMTs influence innovation, corporate entrepreneurship, and financing for the scaling of their business?*
  - *How does the TMT influence family firms' ability to achieve and sustain competitive advantage?*