SUPERVISOR/S: Antoine Gilbert-Saad

PROJECT TITLE: Empathic accuracy and entrepreneurial experience

FIELD: Entrepreneurship / Strategic Management

DIVISION/SCHOOL: WMS - School of Management & Marketing

PROJECT LOCATION: Hamilton

PROJECT ABSTRACT:

Why are some entrepreneurs successful at inferring the future perceived value of their value propositions while others are not?

Entrepreneurship generally considers that successful entrepreneurs possess superior entrepreneurial judgment. However, the exact nature of this judgment remains unclear, leading some scholars to consider it a tautological concept. Others, however, consider that the concept of empathic accuracy, the ability to infer the thoughts and feelings of others accurately, can be used to infer entrepreneurial judgment.

While the idea that entrepreneurial judgment can be represented by empathic accuracy is appealing, it has not been tested empirically. This is surprising as the tools to assess empathic accuracy have been used and refined in psychology for several decades, and clarifying the elusive construct of entrepreneurial judgment would greatly contribute to entrepreneurship research.

This summer scholarship project is a modest attempt at establishing a first empirical link between levels of empathic accuracy and entrepreneurial expertise.

The student will be expected to:

1. Become familiar with the literature on entrepreneurial judgment and empathic accuracy
2. Address the research question “Do serial (successful) entrepreneurs display higher levels of empathic accuracy than the general population?” To this end, the students will:
   a) Create and administer an online survey that combines information on the participants’ entrepreneurial experience and psychometric questions to assess the participants’ empathic accuracy levels. The supervisor will recruit the participants.
   b) Analyse the data for potential links between the empathic accuracy levels and entrepreneurial characteristics.

The main expected output of this project is a dataset that could be used either in a standalone publication or within a broader research project, depending on the student’s aspirations.

STUDENT SKILLS:

- Knowledge of entrepreneurship theories (familiarity with entrepreneurial judgment preferred)
- Interest in, or ideally expertise in, psychology (concepts and tools)
- Basic statistical knowledge (correlation; potentially t-test and one-way ANOVA)

PROJECT TASKS:

- Become familiar with the literature on entrepreneurial judgment and empathic accuracy
- Create an online questionnaire to assess levels of empathic accuracy and capture information on the participants and their ventures
- Administer the online questionnaire
- Once enough responses are collected, extract the data from the online questionnaire
- Analyse the correlation between empathic accuracy levels and entrepreneurial success and experience
- (Optional) Write a draft presenting the results

EXPECTED OUTCOMES:

- Student’s Research Poster (as per clause 6 of the Scholarship regulations)
- A dataset linking entrepreneurial experience, success, and empathic accuracy
- (Optional) A short paper presenting the findings