

## Cooperation within the section

By Laura de Graaf, Executive Secretary Section Business Science

This month the section board had its 50th meeting. This means that for four years the chairs of our section meet, work together and share experiences. This cooperation in the section board feels fruitful and resulted recently in the decision to finance five PhDs at section level around the theme Business Science for Sustainability. This investment stimulates interdisciplinary work, by binding two supervisors of different chair groups to a PhD who will work on the intersection of the expertise of these two supervisors. Every chair group of our section will be in the lead for one of these five research projects. Soon the whole group that will work on this theme will meet and be led by one of the chair holders of our section. It's great news that the one PhD financed from the Open WASS call has been approved! The whole project is a great opportunity to enhance cooperation within the section.



More opportunities for cooperation within the section may emerge when people from different chair groups get in contact with each other more often. We could think of research seminars on section level, a social platform, some app or tool to read quickly about one another's research topics. I would like to invite you to discuss in [Microsoft Teams](#) about the best ways to connect and stimulate cooperation. Your input is much valued!

## Imagine a world where drones could be more human

An interview with João Valente, Assistant Professor of UAVs, Robotics & Artificial Intelligence

João Valente is Assistant Professor of UAVs, Robotics & Artificial Intelligence at the Information Technology group. His mission is to bridge the gap between people and drones. When drones were still an idea, he was already working on drones. By programming software, he was one among many who helped to make drones more than an idea. Today, he helps students to use drones to solve the problems that the life sciences seeks to solve. "Drones can be used to solve problems in many areas. For example, in fisheries, livestock, agriculture and ecology." Drones can be do so by monitoring animals, spotting diseases in crop lands or by spotting illegal hunting or fishing activities.

Together with his students, João Valente uses drones to create a Digital Twin for farmers. "Drones can help to make a farmers life easier. They can serve as an extension of the senses of a farmer. Determining whether crops are ripe for harvest, spotting diseases or pests, drones can see what the farmer sees. We gather data from the farmers. How do they walk, where do they look? By understanding their cultural practices, we become able to develop a digital twin for the farmer. Now, the drones can help him to do his work." Drone technology has come a long way since those early days, when João Valente programmed software for them. "Still, I want drones to be more accessible to people. Every famer should be able to work with them. In fact, I would like it to be so simple that even his six year old son can work with them."



João Valente is coordinator of the Drones for Agriculture: Prepare and Design Your Drone (UAV) Mission course of the Information Technology group. During the course students learn how to apply drone technology. The course was developed to meet a need. "Students of the University of Wageningen who were interested in drone technology came to me. There was no place where they could learn about drone technology." As a professor in robotics, he was able to answer their questions. He started an online course on EdX, together with Lammert Kooistra, who is an Associate Professor in Geo-Information Science and Remote Sensing at the Wageningen University & Research. Together they laid the groundwork for the Drones for Agriculture course, which they also teach together. Here, students interested in drone technology can learn more about drones.

Besides that, there is also the SAID Lab. This is short for Social Artificial Intelligent Drones lab. The lab is a place where students can work with drones. The SAID lab is also the home for the Robotics Association Wageningen, or RAW. Here the impact of the pandemic is felt the most by João Valente. "What I would really like to do is to invite a number of students to have fun with technology. For a couple of hours we could experiment with robots. There is not really a goal, what's really important is to be creative. Maybe we can get lights to blink, or a motor to move. It doesn't have to make sense. Like I said, it is about being creative and discovering the possibilities of robotics." Due to the COVID 19 measures, it is impossible to have such a fun, creative time with each other. It is something to look forward to.

The Drones for Agriculture course and the SAID Lab provide the answer to a need among students. The aim of the Local Business is to encourage conversations between the members of our section. This is why we would like to invite you to join us on [Microsoft Teams](#) and share which innovations you feel could be made more accessible to students.



## Why people do what they do

An interview with Gert Jan Hofstede, professor in Artificial Socialty at the Information Technology group

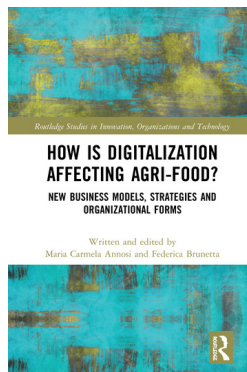
Humans are, most of the time, rather intelligent creatures. We can measure the thickness of the Polar ice, and predict its disappearance. We are able to determine the age of the Earth. It is important that we make smart choices, to ensure that humanity continues its existence in a sustainable and pleasant way. People, however, do not always make smart decisions. Sometimes they act rather stupidly. Gert Jan Hofstede is Professor in Artificial Socialty for the chair group Information Technology. He works on models that help to explain why people do what they do. "We do what we do because we want to be loved" he explains, summarizing years of research in one sentence. He continues "that is why we do what we do. To receive the love that we desire, we make choices that can be smart or stupid."

His understanding of human behaviour is influenced by the work of T.D Kemper. "Kemper writes about the role of status and power in human relations. Within the groups that people are part of, they give and receive "status", meaning respect, attention, or love. A family is a reference group, for example. Children who obey their parents because of their affection for them give status to their parents. Power is used when punishment or coercion are used to force someone to show desirable behaviour. By being loved well, people will love well. If we are not loved in our infancy, our love can become misguided. People may begin to follow political leaders who make unwise decisions, or inspire others to do stupid things. Just as we have reference groups, we can become a point of reference for another person."



It is a delicate dynamic, that all people partake in. Every day, we give and receive status. And maybe we use power, too, or come into contact with those who use it. As a teacher, Gert Jan Hofstede is very aware of the dynamics of status and power. "When I interact with students, I do it in such a way that I give them status. For example, I will try to involve students that aren't paying attention to my lesson by asking them questions. By paying attention to them, I invite them to pay attention to me. I avoid using power. When you punish others, they will punish you, when given the chance." For Gert Jan Hofstede, the power-status game plays an important role in understanding human culture. "Human culture is like the waves of the ocean. Our status-power relational nature is the ocean."

If you would like to read more about why people do what they do, please visit [Gert Jan Hofstede's blog](#).



### Congratulations for Maria Annosi on releasing her new book

Maria Annosi is Assistant Professor of Innovation Management and Organisational Behaviour at the Business Management and Organisation group.

Together with Federica Brunetta she published *How is Digitalization Affecting Agri-food? New Business Models, Strategies and Organizational Forms*. Federica Brunetta is Assistant Professor of Management and Competitive Strategy at the Department of Business and Management of Luiss Guido Carli University in Rome.

The book helps to understand the impact of digitalization and information technologies on the agri-food industry by aiming to understand the direction of this change. It provides insight in the new business models, strategies and organizational forms that have come into existence because of the changes in digitalization and information technology.

### IFAMA goes Digital - live webinar: Open Innovation as a remedy for pandemic crisis in agri-food

Maral Mahdad of the Business Management and Organisation group organises a panel discussion on the 26th of November. Several speakers will discuss the topic of open innovation as a remedy for crisis recovery in the agrifood sector, highlighting best practices, challenges and opportunities. You can register [here](#).

