

NILOOFAR ABOLFATHI

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Academic Appointment

Singapore Management University Assistant Professor of Strategy and Entrepreneurship	July 2023–Present
National University of Singapore Visiting Assistant Professor (Non-tenure track)	2019–2023
WU Vienna University of Economics and Business Assistant Professor (Non-tenure track)	2017–2019

Education

Bocconi University (Milan, Italy) Ph.D. in Business Administration and Management Dissertation title: “Essays on organizations and competition” Committee: Charles Williams (chair), Anupama Phene (GWU), Nilanjana Dutt	2018
George Washington University (US) Visiting Research Scholar	Fall 2015
Allameh Tabatabai University (Tehran, Iran) MSc. in Industrial Management Thesis title: “A model for prioritizing firm strategies using multicriteria decision making techniques”	2010
K.N.Toosi University of Technology (Tehran, Iran) BSc. in Industrial Engineering	2008

Research Interests

Areas: Competitive strategy, Entrepreneurship, Firm scope, New market entry, Demand-side perspective.

Methods: Field experiment, Difference-in-Differences, Panel data analysis.

Publications

- Abolfathi, N.** (2026). Multihoming and single-homing complementors’ responses to intensified between-platform competition: Evidence from the YouTube-Twitch rivalry. *Strategic Management Journal*. 47(1), 141–188. doi.org/10.1002/smj.70016
– Strategic Management Society Best Proposal Award for Rigor in Research Finalist (2024).
- Santamaria, S., **Abolfathi, N.**, & Mahmood, I. P. (2024). Demand pull versus resource push training approaches to entrepreneurship: A field experiment. *Strategic Management Journal*. 45(3), 564–587. doi.org/10.1002/smj.3560
– wISE Scholarship in Oceania Best Paper Award (2023).

3. **Abolfathi, N.**, Fosfuri, A., & Santamaria, S. (2022). Out of the trap: Conversion funnel business model, customer switching costs, and industry profitability. *Strategic Management Journal*. 43(9), 1872–1896. doi.org/10.1002/smj.3388
 - Strategic Management Society Best Paper Prize Honorable Mention (2021).
4. **Abolfathi, N.**, Santamaria, S., & Williams, C. (2022). How does firm scope depend on customer switching costs? Evidence from mobile telecommunications markets. *Management Science*. 68(1): 316–332. doi.org/10.1287/mnsc.2020.3913
 - Academy of Management Strategic Management Division Glueck Best Paper Award (2020).

Other Publications

5. **Abolfathi, N.**, & Santamaria, S. (2020). Dating disruption—How Tinder gamified an industry. *MIT Sloan Management Review*. 61(3), 7–11. sloanreview.mit.edu/article/dating-disruption-how-tinder-gamified-an-industry
6. **Abolfathi, N.**, Santamaria, S. & Williams, C. (2020) Market frictions and competitive positions: Lessons from the mobile telecommunications market. *Academy of Management Best Paper Proceedings*. doi.org/10.5465/AMBPP.2020.119

Selected Working Papers & Work In Progress

- **Abolfathi, N.**, Kacperczyk, A., & Wang, H. When do advisors help with startup fundraising? Evidence from a field experiment.
- Kotha, R., Xu, G., **Abolfathi, N.**, Jiang, L., & Dimov, D. Evaluating entrepreneurial potential with human and AI.
- **Abolfathi, N.** Niche expansion strategy: Explaining leadership change in the mobile dating app industry.
- **Abolfathi, N.** & Phene, A. Demand-side perspective on firm performance after new technology introduction: The role of customer complementary assets.

Research Grants

- Singapore’s Ministry of Education Tier 1 Grant, Number 24-LKCSB-SMU-099 (2026–2027)
- Singapore’s Ministry of Education Tier 1 Grant, Number 22-LKCSB-SMU-084 (2023–2025)

Awards & Honors

- Strategic Management Society Best Proposal Award for Rigor in Research Finalist (2024)
- Best Paper Award, wISE Scholarship in Oceania co-organized by AOM STR (2023)
- Best Paper Prize Honorable Mention, SMS Annual Conference (2021)
- Glueck Best Paper Award, Strategic Management Division of AOM (2020)
- Outstanding Reviewer Award, Strategic Management Division of AOM (2016)
- CoCoCo Research Grant, Bocconi University (2016–2017)
- Fondazione CARIPOLO (Research Visit Grant and Travel Awards), Bocconi University (2014–2016)
- Ph.D. Fellowship, Bocconi University (2012–2016)
- Graduated with honors, Allameh Tabatabai University (2010)

Selected Invited Seminar & Conference Presentations

- SMS Annual Conference (Berlin) 2026
- DRUID Conference (Copenhagen) 2026
- Entrepreneurship & Inequality Workshop (Copenhagen) 2026
- 8th Asian Management Research Consortium (Singapore) 2026
- AOM Annual Meeting (Copenhagen) 2025
- Strategy Science Conference (Barcelona) 2025
- Barcelona School of Economics Summer Forum (Barcelona) 2025
- SMS Special Conference (Palermo) 2025
- 7th Asian Management Research Consortium (Hong Kong) 2025
- Strategic Entrepreneurship Journal Workshop (Singapore) 2025
- SMS Annual Conference (Istanbul) 2024
- DRUID Conference (Nice) 2024
- 6th Asian Management Research Consortium (Singapore) 2024
- Organization Science Workshop (Singapore) 2024
- European Digital Platform Research Network (Milan) 2023
- SIE Virtual Workshop 2023
- wISE Scholarship in Oceania (Sydney) 2023
- ESSEC Business School 2022
- ESADE 2022
- IESE Business School 2022
- Rotterdam School of Management (RSM) 2022
- University College London (UCL) 2022
- University of Melbourne 2022
- University of Sydney 2022
- China Europe International Business School (CEIBS) 2022
- Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU) 2022
- City University of Hong Kong (CityUHK) 2022
- Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) 2022
- Singapore Management University (SMU) 2022
- Copenhagen Business School (CBS) 2022
- Frankfurt School 2022
- KU Leuven 2022
- Michigan Ross School of Business 2021
- University of Tehran (Faculty of Entrepreneurship) 2021
- SMS Annual Conference (Virtual) 2021
- NUS Business School 2021
- NUS BizWIP Seminar Series 2020
- AOM Annual Meeting (Virtual) 2020
- Before 2020: SMS Special Conference (Frankfurt, 2019), DRUID Conference (Copenhagen, 2019), SMS Annual Conference (Paris, 2018), SMS Special Conference (Oslo, 2018), AOM Annual Meeting (Atlanta, 2017), Formal Models in Strategy Workshop (Paris, 2017), SMS Annual Conference (Berlin, 2016), AOM Annual Meeting (Philadelphia, 2014).

Teaching Interests

Strategy, Entrepreneurship, Innovation.

Teaching Experiences

Instructor

1. Singapore Management University
 - MGMT102 Strategy (BSc course: Spring 2024, Spring 2025, Fall 2025)
 - PhD Pro-Seminar (PhD course: Fall 2023, Fall 2024, Fall 2025)
2. NUS Business School
 - BSP3701 Strategic Management (BSc course: Fall 2019, Fall 2020, Fall 2021, Fall 2022)
3. WU Vienna University of Economics and Business
 - 6028 Elective – Advanced Innovation Management (MSc course: Fall & Spring 2017–2019)
 - 4074 E&I Project 2 – Digitalization and Business Model Innovation (BSc course: Fall 2017, Spring 2018)
4. Bocconi University
 - 20147 – Innovation Management (MSc course: Spring 2017)

Teaching Case

Abolfathi, N., & Santamaria, S. (2024). [Vibefam: Raising the Bar\(bell\) in the Singapore Fitness Industry](#). Singapore Management University.

Service

Service to Academic Organizations

- Reviewer for journals: Strategic Management Journal, Management Science, Organization Science, Academy of Management Journal, Administrative Science Quarterly, Strategic Organization, Journal of Management Studies, Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes
- Reviewer for conferences: Best Paper Reviewer for SMS Annual Conference (2023–2024), Best Dissertation Reviewer for TIM Division of AOM (2024), Strategic Management Society, Academy of Management
- Representative-at-Large, Competitive Strategy Interest Group, Strategic Management Society (2026–2027)
- Media Innovations Team Member, Strategic Management Society (2022–2024)
- Conference discussant: DRUID (2024), AMRC (2024)
- Conference session chair: SMS (2021), DRUID (2019)

Service to Singapore Management University

- Seminar Series Coordinator, Strategy & Entrepreneurship Area (2023–Present)
- Research Summer Camp Co-organizer, Strategy & Entrepreneurship Area (2025)
- Undergraduate Admissions Screening Member, Lee Kong Chian School of Business (2024–Present)
- PhD Students Mentor (2023–Present)
- Startup Pitch Competition Judge, Women in Entrepreneurship Incubator (2023)

Others

- Startup Pitch Competition Judge, Singapore Week of Innovation and Technology (SWITCH), organized by Enterprise Singapore (2023)
- Committee member, CEMS Program Master's Admissions Selection, WU Vienna (2017–2019)
- PhD and Master's thesis supervisor, WU Vienna (2018–2019)
- Session Chair, Post-Seminar PhD Meetings, Bocconi University (2016–2017)
- PhD Buddy for Incoming Students, Bocconi University (2016-2017)

Media Contributions & Mentions

- These Gen Z artists cracked the code to getting a stable paycheck: snail mail clubs. [Business Insider](#). (2026, April 16).
- Pledge your allegiance? [Platform Papers](#). (2026, January 19).
 - Summary of “Multihoming and single-homing complementors’ responses to intensified between-platform competition”
- Lower switching costs a win for providers and consumers: study. [iTWire](#). (2022, September 1).
 - Covering “Out of the trap: Conversion funnel business model, customer switching costs, and industry profitability”
- Make the right call: Telcos benefit when customers can retain numbers when switching firms. [BizBeat](#). (2022, August 30).
 - Covering “Out of the trap: Conversion funnel business model, customer switching costs, and industry profitability”
- 超级应用崛起 谁是下个乱“市”英雄? [Rise of the super apps: Which one will be the next big thing?]. [Lianhe Zaobao](#) (Singapore). (2022, August 14).
 - Covering “How does firm scope depend on customer switching costs?”
- Don't trap your customers. [SMS Explorer](#). (2021, June 15).
 - Covering “Out of the trap: Conversion funnel business model, customer switching costs, and industry profitability”
- Generation Robinhood: How the trading app conditioned its inexperienced users to obsessively play the market. [Business Insider](#). (2021, February 8).
 - Covering “Dating disruption”
- The Korean Chatroulette-style dating app quietly taking over the world. [Rest of World](#). (2021, May 13).
 - Covering “Dating disruption”
- When do super apps dominate the market? South China Morning Post. Page B3. [Link](#). (2021, May 19).
 - Commentary on “How does firm scope depend on customer switching costs?”
- The Different Strategies of WhatsApp and WeChat. [ViaSarfatti25](#). (2021, June 21).
 - Opinion on “How does firm scope depend on customer switching costs?”

Other Professional Experiences

Research Associate at Sharif University Energy Research Institute (Iran, 2010–2012).

Skills

- Languages. Farsi (native), Azerbaijani (native), English (fluent), Italian (intermediate), German (basic).
- Statistical software. Stata, Python.