

2026 ISSUE 1 · JULY

# CMS NEWSLETTER

CMS is a Division of the Academy of Management



## Editor's Note

BY KESHAV KRISHNAMURTY

Dear Colleagues,

The 86th Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in July 2026 returns to the United States after last year's jaunt across the Atlantic to Copenhagen, Denmark. This year we skip our February newsletter (due to technical difficulties) and jump straight to July. We continue Daniela Aliberti's wonderful "Conversations that Resist" series and include a message from our outgoing Chair, Penelope Muzanenhamo. We also include profiles of our CMS division scholarship winners .

If you would like to respond to a piece in the CMS Newsletter, become a contributor, issue a call for papers, or anything else, please get in touch with me at either [keshav.krishnamurty@acadiu.ca](mailto:keshav.krishnamurty@acadiu.ca) or [keshav.krishnamurty@iiml.org](mailto:keshav.krishnamurty@iiml.org).

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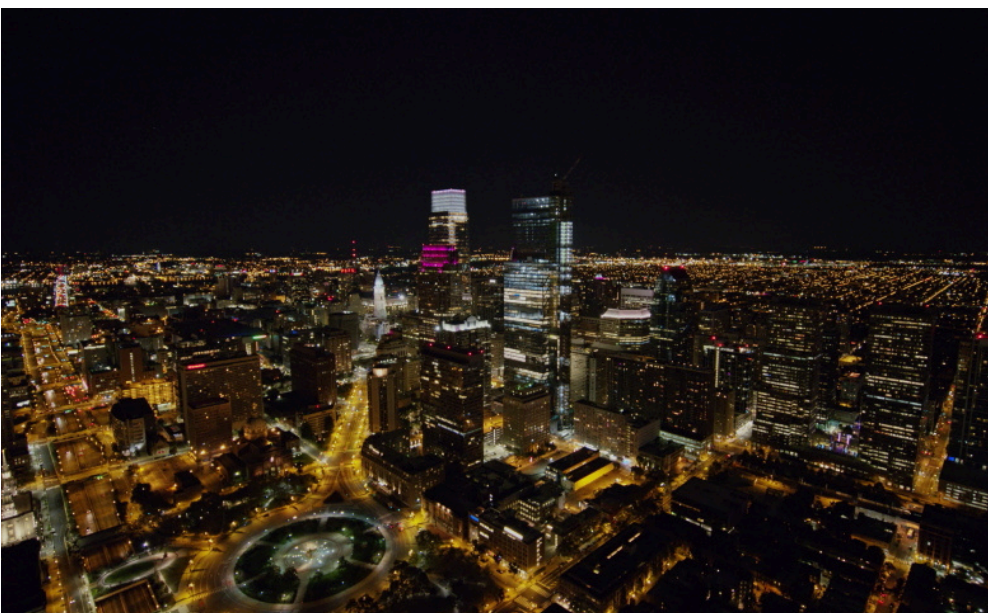
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Critical  
Management  
Studies

A Division of the Academy of Management

# STATEMENT FROM THE CHAIR

PENELOPE MUZANENHAMO



Dear Colleagues,

I am delighted to inform you that, following the submission of our 3-year strategic plan, the Academy of Management Board officially renewed the Critical Management Studies Division status. This reflects an important milestone, and our collective resilience as a scholarly community.

To accompany this announcement, I am pleased to share a brief executive summary of our Division review. It highlights the significant progress we have made in membership growth, scholarly engagement, member participation and financial stability. I would be very happy to discuss the review in greater detail with any member who is interested in learning more about our division strategy, or in offering suggestions on how we might continue to build an even stronger and more inclusive globally engaged community of CMS scholars.

## OVERVIEW:

**Growth trends:** In the period, 2022-2025, the Critical Management Division demonstrated strong resilience and recovery, achieving its largest membership surge in 2025 (+24.8%) after a dip in 2024 (-9%). This rebound, which coincided with AoM first annual meeting outside the US, was primarily driven by international growth that offset a notable decline in US (-14%). The academic and emeritus segments led the recovery, whereas the executive segment slightly declined (-5.4%). Student membership experienced a modest overall growth (+0.64%) with a strong rebound in 2025 (+22.3%). Across the 3 years, despite a sharp decline in 2024, total submissions (paper and symposia submissions) grew by over 75% reflecting robust scholarly engagement. Member participation in elections remained solid, constantly above 20%.

**Member satisfaction:** Based on the AoM survey conducted in 2025 (see appendix 2), CMS members report high overall satisfaction (>77%), with component-wise metrics including: Diversity and inclusion of individuals—satisfied, very satisfied and extremely satisfied: >67%; Sense of community—satisfied, very satisfied and extremely satisfied: >65%; Social and networking, paper sessions, symposia, and professional development workshops—satisfied, very satisfied and extremely satisfied: >67% for each dimension). Primary motivations for joining the Division include gaining and sharing research relevant information—important/very important: >87%. However, 53-54% face financial and geographical barriers to attending the annual meeting. In summary, despite fragile member retention during the last 3 years, the Division remains resilient and highly valued as reflected by survey results and international growth.



**Strengths and Weaknesses:** The Division's **strengths** include demonstrable potential for rapid membership recovery driven by an international segment, sustained overall membership satisfaction exceeding 77% among survey respondents, sustained collaboration with diverse journal sponsors of best paper awards, disciplined financial management, and robust international growth. **Weaknesses** lay in membership retention particularly post-conference, and limited executive engagement. **Opportunities** exist in expanding student participation, re-engaging past chairs, leveraging international partnerships, and strengthening global leadership by appointing a geographically diverse executive committee, and implementing activities at regional level. **Threats** include institutional, regional and geopolitical pressures that appear to drive membership decline.

The Critical Management Division's 3-year strategic roadmap prioritizes **stabilizing membership, sustaining growth** through mentorship and regional initiatives, and **stronger long-term retention and creating leadership pathways** for international members. Jointly, these initiatives can strengthen the Division's value proposition and support continued growth and international impact.

Thank you for your continued commitment and contributions to our community. Your elected representatives are Looking forward to what we will continue achieving as a community over the next three years and beyond. We are looking forward to hosting you at the 86th Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management (AOM 2026), Philadelphia.

Best wishes,  
Penelope Muzanenhamo PhD, Chair, AOM CMS

# CHAIR'S RANDOM FACTS CORNER: DO YOU KNOW WHO THE PREVIOUS CHAIRS ARE?

PENELOPE MUZANENHAMO

Critical Management Division Past Chairs	Service Year(s)	
Paul S. Adler	15/08/2003	14/08/2004
Paul S. Adler	15/08/2004	14/08/2005
Ralph Stablein	15/08/2004	14/08/2005
David Jacobs	10/08/2005	09/08/2006
Stephen J Jaros	15/08/2006	14/08/2007
Rosemary Batt	15/08/2007	14/08/2008
Bill Cooke	12/08/2008	11/08/2009
Jean Helms Mills	14/08/2009	13/08/2010
Albert J. Mills	14/08/2009	13/08/2010
A L. Cunliffe	15/08/2010	14/08/2011
Craig Prichard	15/08/2011	14/08/2012
Sarah Stookey	15/08/2012	14/08/2013
Alexandre Faria	15/08/2013	14/08/2014
Gavin Jack	15/08/2014	14/08/2015
Raza A Mir	15/08/2015	14/08/2016
Emma Bell	15/08/2016	14/08/2017
Scott Taylor	15/08/2016	14/08/2017
Nimruji Jammulamadaka	15/08/2017	14/08/2018
Paul Donnelly	15/08/2018	14/08/2019
Banu Ozkazanc-Pan	15/08/2018	14/08/2019
Mark Learmonth	15/08/2019	14/08/2020
Stephen Cummings	15/08/2020	14/08/2021
Ajnesh Prasad	15/08/2020	14/08/2021
Marcos Pereira Fernandes De Barros	15/08/2021	14/08/2022
Patrizia Zanoni	15/08/2021	14/08/2022
Amon Barros	15/08/2022	14/08/2023
Fernanda Filgueiras Sauerbronn	15/08/2022	14/08/2023
Ozan Nadir Alakavuklar	15/08/2023	14/08/2024
Alison Pullen	15/08/2023	14/08/2024
Caroline Clarke	15/08/2024	14/08/2025
Richard Longman	15/08/2024	14/08/2025
Alexandra Bristrow	14/08/2025	15/08/2026
Ghazal Zulfiqar	14/08/2025	14/08/2026
Penelope Muzanenhamo (co-Chair with Mariana Paludi: PDW and main Scholarly Program 2022-2024)	30/07/2025	04/08/2026



# MEET YOUR CMS DIVISION EXECUTIVE TEAM

DIVISION EXECUTIVE (BEGINNING AUGUST 2026)

Past Co-Chair	Penelope Muzanenhamo
Co-Chairs	Marcus Gomes Paulina Segarra
Co-Chairs Elect	Seray Ergene Jennifer Manning
Main Scholarly Programme Co-Chairs	Marco Distinto Victor Perez-Moraga
PDW Co-Chairs	Vijayta Doshi Fabio Prado Saldanha
Treasurer	Konan A. Seny Kan
RAL: Communication – Newsletter	Keshav Krishnamurty
RAL: Communication – Social Media	Ann S. Lee
RAL: Ethics and Inclusion	Katherine Parsons
RAL: Membership and Outreach	Marke Kivijärvi
RAL: PhD and ECR	Adam Saifer
Division Volunteer	Maria Rogieri Pelissari



**Critical Management Studies:**  
A Division of AOM



**ACADEMY OF  
Management**



# CALL FOR PARTICIPATION

## CMS PhD & Early Career Scholar Consortium 2026

Join us at AoM in Philadelphia for the  
**Critical Management Studies (CMS)**  
Doctoral & Early Career Scholar Consortium!



**Connect.  
Share knowledge.  
Advance critical  
management  
together.**



**Friday, July 31st, 2026**



**8:30 – 10:30 AM**



**Philadelphia Convention Center  
(Room 104 A)**



This interactive roundtable session offers PhD students at any stage of their program and early career scholars an opportunity to connect with like-minded peers and engage with experienced CMS scholars. Participants will have the chance to share knowledge and discuss key aspects of Critical Management Studies, including research, teaching, and academic praxis.

While the consortium is primarily intended for members of the CMS Division, we also warmly welcome critical scholars from other divisions.

Discussions will focus on topics such as **PhD dissertation challenges, research and publishing, teaching and critical pedagogy, engagement and impact, and broader early career concerns.**



### HOW TO PARTICIPATE:

**1**

Complete the application form  
(deadline: July 20th, 2026)

**2**

Register for the AoM Conference  
(Please note that participants must be  
registered for the AoM conference.)



**PLACES ARE LIMITED**  
(first come, first served)



*We look forward to hearing from you!*

# PHD AND EARLY CAREER CONSORTIUM : CALL FOR REGISTRATIONS

BY FABIO PRADO SALDANHA



The CMS Doctoral and Early Career Scholar Consortium offers PhD Students at any stage in their program and Early Career Scholars an opportunity to connect with like-minded individuals and share knowledge about Critical Management Studies research, teaching and academic praxis. While the consortium is primarily for those affiliated with the CMS Division, we also welcome critical scholars from other Divisions, whose scholarship is critical.

The Consortium will be held from 8:30 am to 10:30 am on Friday, July 31st, at the Philadelphia Convention Center (room 104 A). The workshop will use an interactive round-table format to enable participants engage in focused discussions with experienced CMS scholars. To ensure that the Consortium is tailored to the developmental needs of the participants, the attached [application form](#) asks participants to note areas of discussion that they would be interested in. These may relate to specific issues relating to the PhD Dissertation (PhD candidates); Research and Publishing; Teaching and Critical Pedagogy; Engagement and Impact and Early career challenges.

To sign up for the consortium, please complete these two steps:

- 1) Complete the [application form](#) and send by the deadline (Monday, July 20th, 2026).
- 2) Register for the [AOM conference](#) (please note that participants must be registered for the AOM conference).

Please note that places are limited and will be assigned on a first-come, first-served basis.

Additionally, we would like to draw early career colleagues' attention to our [International Mentorship Scheme](#) (IMS), whereby we will pair you with an academic mentor in the CMS community. Mentors and mentees will meet periodically throughout the year, depending on their availability and on the needs they mutually establish. For those attending AOM, the first meeting may, but does not necessarily have to, take place during the conference. As an IMS participant, you will also be invited to attend a series of professional development workshops. NB it is not necessary to attend the Consortium or the AOM Meeting, nor be a member of AOM in order to take part in the IMS. More information about IMS is available via this [link](#).

We look forward to hearing from you!

Fabio, Alex and Ghazal - Organizers of the Consortium

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# DARK SIDE XXV: THE WINNER AND THE CASE

BY JENNIFER CHERNESKI

WINNER, DARK SIDE XXV

NORTHERN ALBERTA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, EDMONTON, CANADA

This case examines the experiences of **Connie Stacey**, founder and CEO of **Grengine**, a Canadian clean energy technology company developing advanced battery systems for off-grid and industrial use. While Grengine's technology aligns with global climate and sustainability goals, the company struggles to access growth capital. The case exposes how venture capital, impact investing, and public funding ecosystems reproduce gendered and structural inequities, forcing a justice-oriented founder to navigate power relations she grapples with scaling growth while participating in systems that reproduce exclusion. Written from a critical organizational perspective, this story invites students to interrogate how capital markets discipline founders, normalize exclusion, and frame discrimination as "risk."

I learned of Edmonton entrepreneur Connie Stacey and her company Grengine in an article where she described her vision to address energy poverty through an innovative decentralized energy storage system. Her endgame – providing affordable, clean electricity to households, businesses, and off-grid communities. I was teaching corporate social responsibility and sustainability at the time, and after reading the article I immediately thought, [my students need to hear from her](#).

I contacted the author of the article, who connected me with Connie. She agreed to speak to my class, and it quickly became apparent why she had been featured. She spoke candidly about entrepreneurship, innovation, sustainability, and the realities of building a company with a social mission. My students were engaged, asking thoughtful questions long after the scheduled class had ended.

Afterward, Connie and I continued talking which marked the beginning of our friendship. Over the years, I came to understand the remarkable technology Grengine developed and the many obstacles Connie encountered while trying to grow the company. Despite developing groundbreaking battery energy storage technology, securing international recognition, and building a company committed to solving global energy poverty, she repeatedly found herself confronting barriers that had little to do with the quality of her innovation.

This formed the basis of a teaching case for my social responsibility and sustainability course. An initial draft focused primarily on Grengine as a purpose-driven business, examining its sustainability strategy, stakeholder relationships, and commitment to addressing energy poverty. While those themes were important, I increasingly felt that they were only part of the story.

As Connie shared more about her experiences raising capital, navigating investor expectations, and confronting assumptions about her credibility as a woman leading a deep-tech company, I realized the case was fundamentally about something deeper. It was about the hidden structures that shape entrepreneurial success and failure; how bias becomes normalized as "risk," how legitimacy is unevenly distributed, and how organizations committed to justice often struggle within systems designed to reward different priorities.

## DARK SIDE XXV (CONTINUED)

When I saw the call for submissions to the Academy of Management's Critical Management Studies Division Best Dark Side Case Competition, I knew I needed to rethink the case. Rather than centering it primarily on social issues or sustainability, I rewrote it through a critical management lens – the systemic inequities, institutional barriers, and gendered assumptions that had become impossible to ignore. The competition provided the perfect opportunity to share the story of an innovative, mission-driven company, and also the story of the systems that shape who is “allowed” to succeed.

Writing the case became a collaborative and iterative process, as Connie shared her experiences with remarkable honesty and vulnerability. This allowed me to dig deep into the successes of Grengine and also the frustrations, disappointments, and difficult decisions that accompanied building a purpose-driven venture in the deep-tech sector. The resulting case asks students to grapple with questions that have no easy answers: Can organizations remain true to their social purpose while competing in systems that reward rapid growth and shareholder returns? How do gendered assumptions shape entrepreneurial finance? When does adapting to institutional expectations become a strategic necessity, and when does it risk compromising the very purpose that inspired the venture?

Prior to submitting the case, I first wanted to understand the degree of student engagement. Connie returned to my classroom during the Fall 2025 and Winter 2026 semesters, presenting the case herself and participating in rich student discussions. Their insights, questions, and analyses helped refine both the narrative and the teaching approach. Those classroom experiences reinforced my belief that the case resonated because it challenged students to move beyond individual explanations for entrepreneurial success and failure and instead examine the institutional systems that shape them.

Although Grengine is centered on one entrepreneur's experience, the case ultimately seeks a broader understanding about how we define innovation, legitimacy, and success. It explores the paradox of a company whose technology was recognized by leading defence and innovation organizations (e.g., membership in Canada's Defense Industry Advisory Group) while simultaneously struggling to secure the investment needed to scale. It also encourages students to critically examine how seemingly neutral investment practices can reproduce institutional bias, particularly for women founders operating in capital-intensive industries.

Receiving the Critical Management Studies Division's Best Dark Side Case Award is an honour. I am grateful to the reviewers and judges for recognizing the importance of bringing these conversations into management education. Cases have tremendous power to shape how students understand organizations and the assumptions they carry into their future careers. I want this case to provide encouragement for students to question those “rules,” recognize systemic inequities, and imagine more just and inclusive approaches to entrepreneurship and innovation.

Most importantly, I want to acknowledge Connie Stacey. Her willingness to share her experiences so openly made this case possible. She has remained steadfast in her belief that business can, and should, be a force for social good, even when existing structures make that path considerably more difficult. It has been a privilege to getting to know Connie, to learn from her experiences, and to tell her story. I hope this case does justice to both her journey and the important conversations it inspires.

# CONVERSATIONS THAT RESIST : SOMETIMES TOO TIRED TO RESIST, BUT STILL HERE



BY DANIELA ALIBERTI

Conversations That Resist is a newsletter offering informal yet deeply reflective conversations—often taking place outside formal academic settings—to document and analyze themes of interest for the CMS community. Curated by Dr. Daniela Aliberti, the newsletter integrates personal reflection, scholarly framing, and community dialogue to highlight how everyday exchanges can serve as critical, caring, and resistant acts within and beyond academia. Rooted in feminist and critical traditions, it aims to inspire alternative ways of thinking, writing, and engaging with the critical management division community.

Each issue will include a summary of the topics touched upon, with some references relevant to the shared reflections, followed by excerpts of conversations that resist, integrated with my reflections.

## #3 JULY 2026: SOMETIMES TOO BUSY AND TIRED TO RESIST, BUT STILL HERE

Over the past few months, I have thought and rethought this: I did not have the time, I did not devote time, to exchange, to thoughts of protest, to resistance. I was overwhelmed, mainly teaching, then many small administrative tasks. Nothing new, right? We know that, as academics, especially as female academics, this form of labor overwhelms us and distracts us from the possibility of being reflexive, in solidarity, and of carrying forward change (Shymko et al., 2024; Vince and Reynolds, 2004). Now that I am an assistant professor and have many teaching hours, I feel the pressure (which I often impose on myself) of having to be a good teacher. I think day and night about what I said in class, about what may have remained in the students' minds (this year they have been extremely attentive, silent — and I do not understand whether it is because they are interested and curious, or whether they no longer know how to interact spontaneously with one another).

Returning to conversations that resist, for months it seemed to me that I did not have the clarity or the attention to (properly, consciously) listen and respond. I often even avoided these conversations (recognizing this lack in myself, often even feeling guilty about it). I replied to that voice message after days, I did not invite that person to dinner, I avoided that outing because I knew it would be filled with emotional outbursts, disillusionment and I was too tired to speak about my own and to listen. In this way I realized that it had begun for me too, that alienation produced by too much operational work, that sense of guilt, and that the consequence was: I remain silent, I complete my tasks, I wait for a better moment.

This is not a better moment; it is one equally loaded, but I feel like I have awakened. I decided to begin a new project motivated by these reflections, to involve other people. I have started breathing again (Pérezts et al., 2025) over the past couple of weeks, partly thanks to having concluded an important course that had placed me under the spotlight, and I let myself be guided by notes and memories, by many voice messages that I listened to again from previous months. I am responding and interacting now, while I continue searching for openings for dialogue.

## CONVERSATIONS THAT RESIST (CONTINUED)



The reflection I briefly share here, then, concerns a theme I have been studying extensively and around which I continue to collect not only notes (in the form of vignettes, as a way to remember these episodes, literally not to forget them), but also theoretical references (what has already been said, why this problem is not solved, why as academics we are no longer freer and lighter in our capacity to reflect, but increasingly overwhelmed — and I am not even that overwhelmed yet, if I look around me; this is only the beginning).

Many scholars have already articulated this very well (and I will share this in my own words): when you are continuously accountable and performative, you no longer have the mental or temporal space for critical distance (De Coster and Zanoni, 2023); our time is devoured by practices of accountability (and of recognition, I would add) that turn us into automatons and make us intellectually dull (while our impression, however, is that we are doing something complex and important, whereas we are obsessing over nothing) (Galuppo et al., 2025); some among us begin to walk a tightrope, academics are continuously “on their toes,” oscillating between compliance and resistance, even pretending, mobilizing acting skills in certain situations (we are literally asked to be who we are not, and we do it, we make it through another day) (Nordbäck et al., 2022; Zawadzki and Jensen, 2020). Campbell and others (2024) remind us that we can write about this together, trying to resist together, bringing out the most disparate emotions that this contradiction leads us to experience on a daily basis and which, we know, for the sake of keeping peace and eventually survival, will sooner or later submerge us.

Now, returning to conversations, therefore to the exchanges I have had with friends and colleagues (here I focus on the few, yet growing in number, with whom exchange is open, but also on some with whom exchange is often mediated by formalities, by the aforementioned structures and pressures, while still allowing a trace of reflection to emerge): we are aware of it, in fact we suffer from it, we tell each other so often, more or less explicitly. Indeed, after a pause from listening, so many stories reached me. And I do not want to recount the deepest exchanges because they are too intimate, but I have literally seen someone collapse, seek support, need to cry and scream on the one hand, and on the other remain in total silence, merely smiling at me or later writing a few words so that I would understand (like: it is too much, I cannot even write it, please understand).

I will only take one very recent message that, in my opinion, synthesizes well, within a broader voice exchange, what I would like to say through this issue:

“Thank you for your messages. I’m sorry if I overwhelmed you with my problems; I also wanted to hear your reflections. Ours is always an exchange grounded in solidarity and resistance, also in listening. I understand what you mean: absorbing what an environment is. It is true... I cannot speak badly of it, this is a place where I learned many things [and here follows a list of words, attitudes that characterize the organization where she works; she refers to the ways people greet each other, write emails, even use punctuation, to how each of our achievements is shared or ignored, and then she tells me about a paper she wants to write, about how she gathered material during the summer, in a moment of calm].”

Partly we are absorbed, partly we respond with an impulsive gesture of resistance: another paper, perhaps autoethnographic.

## CONVERSATIONS THAT RESIST (CONTINUED)



Speaking about this, likely part of the motivation that allowed me to rise again from this moment of silence, perhaps to raise my voice more strongly, is a new publication on a topic I care deeply about. And I reflect on how these results provide us with legitimacy within this system, but also carry a strong emotional value (I tell myself: in the end, I made it). I leave here a reference — if you appreciate this newsletter and the idea that these conversations that resist (and repair, as I add in the paper, and this was a suggestion from an informal review I received, from a person I deeply esteem) (Clavijo and Mandalaki, 2025) are part of a critical way of doing research.

Here I have built a contribution on the theme of friendship and female solidarity :  
<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/gwao.70182>

Sources cited:

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Clavijo, N., and Mandalaki, E. (2025). The wor (l) d is out-You are not alone: Toward a healing organizational autoethnography in/through feminist reading and writing. *Organization*, 32(6), 861-888.

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Galuppo, L., Ripamonti, S., and Lozza, E. (2025). Addressing “Bullshit” work in neoliberal academia: Tales from an audit experience and a call to action. *Management Learning*, 56(4), 787-807.

Nordbäck, E., Hakonen, M., and Tienari, J. (2022). Academic identities and sense of place: A collaborative autoethnography in the neoliberal university. *Management Learning*, 53(2), 331-349.

Pérezts, M., Fotaki, M., Shymko, Y., and Islam, G. (2025). Breathe and let breathe: Breathing as a political model of organizing. *Organization*, 32(1), 136-153.

Shymko, Y., Vershinina, N., Daskalaki, M., Azevedo, G., and Quental, C. (2024). From the cocoon to la chape de plomb: The birth and persistence of silence around sexism in academia. *Gender, Work and Organization*, 31(5), 2113-2137.

Vince, R., and Reynolds, M. (2004). Organizing reflective practice. *Management and Learning*, 33(1), 63-78.

Zawadzki, M., and Jensen, T. (2020). Bullying and the neoliberal university: A co-authored autoethnography. *Management Learning*, 51(4), 398-413.

# BEST PAPER AWARD WINNER: MARIA ROGIERI PELISSARI

PH.D CANDIDATE

THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND BUSINESS SCHOOL

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/maria-rogieri-pelissari/>



I am a Brazilian PhD candidate in Strategy and Entrepreneurship at the University of Queensland Business School in Australia. With a background in Geology and professional experience in energy markets and power trading, my trajectory spans continents, disciplines, and sectors. These diverse environments have exposed me to different cultures, forms of knowledge, embedded power dynamics, and inequalities, shaping how I understand organizations and society. My background and scholarly interests naturally led me to the CMS community, whose commitment to questioning taken-for-granted assumptions about organizations, corporate power, and societal change closely reflects the concerns at the heart of my research.

Throughout my career, climate change has been the central focus of my work. Driven by a deep interest in its multifaceted challenges, my current research examines how corporations maintain and extend their societal dominance. Specifically, I investigate corporate responses to climate change through the lenses of stigma management, hegemony, and non-market strategies.

As a first-time attendee to AoM, I am excited to connect with fellow CMS scholars and present the first paper from my PhD, which explores how corporate influence becomes normalized within civic contexts. Drawing on qualitative data from engagements between fossil fuel companies and universities in Australia, the paper examines how corporate influence is co-created and perpetuated by academics. I am delighted that this work received the AoM Best Paper Award in the CMS division.

Receiving this award alongside a CMS Travel Grant is especially meaningful at this stage of my scholarly journey, signalling recognition from a community whose questions and values I deeply admire. Beyond enabling me to attend the conference and strengthen my research through new conversations, collaborations, and feedback, these honors reinforce my commitment to pursuing critical scholarship that addresses pressing organizational, environmental, and societal challenges.

# A MOMENT OF RECOGNITION, A CALL TO CONTINUE

BY WILSON O. ODEK  
SOUTHAMPTON BUSINESS SCHOOL  
(WINNER OF BEST DOCTORAL PAPER AWARD)



Coming from Kenya, East Africa, which is often geographically distant from, and epistemically marginal to, the centres of global academic convening, it is a profound honour to have my work recognized as the Best Critical Doctoral Student Paper Award. The accompanying travel grant to attend the conference in Philadelphia adds to this sense of gratitude and possibility. This recognition feels particularly significant when considered alongside the distinguished lineage of scholars who have previously received this award, and whose work I deeply respect.

What makes this recognition especially powerful is the nature of the work itself. Drawn from my doctoral dissertation, the award-winning paper examines how marginalized ethnic actors in Kenya navigate tribal identities, historical exclusion, and enduring inequalities to achieve social and economic mobility.

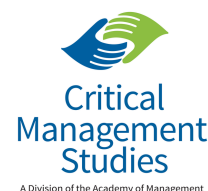
Rather than portraying marginalized communities as passive recipients of structural constraints, the study explores how individuals exercise agency and engage in identity work to navigate systems of power shaped by colonial legacies, ethnic hierarchies, and political marginalization. At its core, the research seeks to bring into management scholarship the experiences, struggles, and agency of those who have too often remained at its margins. More broadly, the paper reflects a commitment to expanding whose experiences count in organization and management studies, and whose voices are heard within it.

This commitment resonates strongly with the ethos of CMS. At a time when critical scholarship faces renewed challenges, including the recent exclusion of several critical and socially oriented journals from the FT50 rankings, this award carries particular significance. It is an important affirmation that alternative voices, questions, and epistemologies continue to matter.

For me, this recognition is therefore more than a personal achievement. It is encouragement to continue pushing critical boundaries, challenging forms of theorizing that have historically racio-ethnocized knowledge production, and creating space for marginalized experiences to inform and reshape mainstream management theory.

# TRAVEL BURSARY AWARD WINNER: CAIO COELHO

UNIVERSITY OF SAO PAULO



I am Caio Coelho, a Brazilian early-career scholar whose research is situated at the intersection of organization studies, political action, corruption, democracy, and critical management studies. My current work focuses on CEO activism and the political role of corporate leaders. I am particularly interested in moving beyond instrumental and stakeholder-alignment perspectives to examine how CEOs, boards, and other organizational actors engage with sociopolitical issues; how their public positions influence democratic debate; and how power, discourse, and institutional structures shape what becomes visible as “activism.”

This connects directly with CMS because it challenges taken-for-granted assumptions about managerial neutrality, corporate responsibility, and the separation between markets and politics. Rather than treating corporations as merely economic actors, my work asks how they participate in broader struggles over legitimacy, inequality, voice, and democratic life.

I see CMS as both an intellectual and political home: a space where scholars can question dominant forms of management knowledge while remaining committed to social justice, reflexivity, and alternative ways of organizing. The CMS Division is where I have felt welcomed and integrated within the Academy of Management. It is also where some of my most personal and experimental ideas—such as writing differently, developing dark-side case studies, and this year’s PDW on mental health—have been accepted, discussed, and shared with the community.

For me, CMS is much more than a venue to present papers. It is a movement of like-minded scholars whose support during graduate studies and early academic careers helps shape our identities and gives renewed meaning to our love for this profession.

Receiving the CMS travel funding is deeply meaningful to me. Based in Brazil, participating in international academic conferences involves significant financial challenges. It represents recognition, encouragement, and an opportunity to build conversations across borders. I am grateful to the CMS Division for supporting early-career and Global South scholars.

# TRAVEL BURSARY WINNER : WANYING ZHENG

PH.D CANDIDATE

UNIVERSITY OF ESSEX BUSINESS SCHOOL



I'm a PhD candidate at the University of Essex Business School. My research examines ideology, power, and worker subjectivity across Chinese organizational contexts, spanning technology and manufacturing workplaces in China, Chinese multinational's operations in Nigeria, and Chinese migrant professionals in the UK. Across this work, Marginalized Stakeholder Theory has become the central theoretical lens through which I make sense of how power operates in these settings, and a framework I am actively working to extend.

The paper I'm presenting at AOM, "Silent Collapse: Moral Crisis and Precarious Subjectivity Among White-Collar Workers in Contemporary China," is drawn from my broader project on contemporary Chinese organizations. Among the interviews conducted for this strand of work, one interview stood out for its depth and analytical richness, and I decided it warranted a dedicated paper rather than treatment as a single case within the larger dataset. The findings offer a fresh theoretical extension of Marginalized Stakeholder Theory, one I look forward to sharing in full at the conference.

This work sits squarely within the concerns of Critical Management Studies. I am interested in how ideology gets internalized as duty, how workers who are formally included can still be denied genuine voice, and how forms of suffering get normalized as ordinary costs of doing business. Giving space to a single, richly told story is also a small act of resistance against the tendency to flatten workers into aggregate data.

This travel grant makes it possible for me to attend AOM in person for the first time, present this work to a global audience, and engage directly with the wider CMS community. I look forward to meeting fellow scholars who share these commitments, exchanging perspectives that challenge and sharpen my thinking, and situating this project within the ongoing conversations that define our field.

# TRAVEL BURSARY WINNER: CARLOS EDUARDO DE LIMA

UNIVERSIDAD ESTADUAL DE LONDRINA



My name is Carlos Eduardo de Lima, and I earned my PhD in Organizational Studies in 2024. I am currently a visiting professor at the State University of Londrina (Universidade Estadual de Londrina), Brazil.

Alongside my academic career, I have worked for more than twenty years in the Brazilian public sector, specifically as a correctional officer. It is through this professional experience that my main research interests emerged, particularly dirty work, occupational identity, emotions at work, organizational misconduct, and the lived experiences of workers in marginalized organizational contexts.

Holding these two professional identities, as both a practitioner and a researcher, has allowed me to develop a deeper understanding of power relations, silence, prejudice, and exclusion within organizations.

These experiences connect my research to marginalized topics that are often overlooked in mainstream Business research but occupy a central place within Critical Management Studies (CMS). My work seeks to bring these realities into academic debate, highlighting how organizations can reproduce inequalities while also creating spaces for resistance, identity construction, and social transformation.

My identification with CMS comes from its openness to interdisciplinary dialogue. The field draws from Sociology, Philosophy, Psychology, Geography, and many other disciplines, allowing scholars to explore organizations through multiple theoretical and methodological lenses. This openness also enables CMS to engage with emerging societal challenges, including technological transformations, climate change, growing social inequalities, and other pressing issues shaping contemporary organizations and work.

Although my undergraduate training was in Economics, it was within Critical Management Studies that I found the intellectual community with which I most strongly identify. CMS has provided a space where the realities I experience professionally can become meaningful research questions. It encourages scholarship that critically examines inequality, violence, exclusion, and power while seeking to make visible organizational phenomena that frequently remain invisible in conventional management research.

# TRAVEL BURSARY WINNER: CARLOS EDUARDO DE LIMA (CONTINUED)



The Academy of Management Annual Meeting in Philadelphia will be my first opportunity to participate in the conference in person. Receiving the CMS Travel Funding has been essential in making this possible. For early career researchers from Latin America, international conferences are often financially inaccessible because of exchange rates and travel costs. This support has therefore made a significant difference.

More importantly, attending the conference represents an opportunity to become part of a scholarly community that has already influenced my academic development. It will allow me to engage directly with researchers whose work has shaped my thinking, receive valuable feedback on my own research, establish long term collaborations, and contribute perspectives from organizational contexts that remain underrepresented in international scholarship.





# Critical Management Studies

A Division of the Academy of Management