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## Personal Statement

Maria joined the Department of Marketing in the University of Strathclyde as a Lecturer in August 2014. She sits on the University's Senate, on the University's Discipline Committee, and on the Business School's Internationalisation Committee. She is also a member of the Department of Marketing UG Programmes Management Team, and Departmental Coordinator for the University's 'Research Interns@Strathclyde' programme.

She completed her PhD in the University of Edinburgh Business School, having received the prestigious Principal's Career Development Scholarship, a position that provided her with many professional development opportunities in both research and teaching. Her thesis investigated the patterns of alignment between consumer and brand personalities, and the influence of this alignment on desirable brand-related outcomes.

She holds a MSc in International Marketing jointly awarded by a cooperation of five European Universities (Athens University of Economics and Business, Greece; University of Leicester, UK; Radboud University, Nijmegen School of Management, Holland; University of Minho, Portugal; Corvinus University of Budapest, Hungary), and graduated 1st in her class.

She also has a BSc in Marketing & Communication from Athens University of Economics and Business (Greece), where she was awarded with a four-year scholarship by the Strifos Foundation, due to high academic competence throughout her undergraduate studies.

## Research Interests

### Research interests & expertise:

Primary research interests revolve around consumer-brand relationships, international marketing, entrepreneurial/small business marketing, and digital marketing.

Maria's research expertise spans across a variety of both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. Maria would welcome proposals for future collaboration in any topic across the span of her research interests and would be happy to supervise PhD candidates interested in those areas. Maria is currently supervising three PhD students in different stages (beginning, middle, write-up phase) and has substantial supervision experience, as ever since her appointment, she has supervised more than 50 Honours and MSc dissertations on various topics and with various methodologies.

### Current research focus:

Maria is currently involved in numerous research projects, including:

- internationalisation enablers and challenges for micro-firms whose core branding strategies revolve around their deep connection with the local settings in which they are embedded
- micro, craft, and artisanal firms' routes to growth (both individual and sectoral/cluster-bound), with a specific focus on the food & drink industry
- customer-brand social media interactions in B2C, B2B, and B2B2C settings
- consumers' interactions with new and smart technologies, such as Internet-of-Things (IoT), Augmented Reality, Virtual Reality, etc.

### Academic citizenship:

Maria regularly presents her research in international, national and regional conferences, such as the Annual Conference of the Association for Consumer Research, of the Academy of Marketing, and of the Academy of Marketing Science, as well as smaller, specialised conferences.

She is a regular reviewer for major journals and conferences in the Marketing discipline, including the Journal of Marketing Management, International Marketing Review, the Journal of Product & Brand Management, the Annual Conferences of the European Marketing Academy, of the Academy of Marketing Science, and of the Academy of Marketing.

She has also been involved in the organisation of research conferences and seminars. Between 2016-2018, she was part of the Organising Committee for the European Marketing Academy Conference which took place in the University of Strathclyde in May 2018. She was the Conference Chair & Organiser of the International Research Conference in Marketing titled "*Reflecting on the Past, Celebrating the Present and Shaping the Future in Marketing Research*", which took place on the University of Edinburgh Business School in September 2013, and she was Member of the Organising Committee of the *Child & Teen Consumption Conference*, which took place in the premises of the University of Edinburgh Business School in April 2014. She has also organised workshops on a range of topics including research funding and academic writing.

### Doctoral research:

Maria's PhD thesis, titled "*An investigation of patterns of self-brand personality alignment*", explored the relationship between consumers' perceptions of own personality traits and their perceptions of their favourite brands' personality traits. By adopting a relational view of consumer-brand interactions and drawing from theories of interpersonal attraction, the study explored the possibility that the alignment between consumers' perceptions of their own personalities and of the personalities of their favourite brands may exhibit a complementarity configuration, besides similarity, that is, consumers might be drawn to brands with traits that complement, rather than mirror their own. Following a mixed-methods approach, an exploratory qualitative phase (in-depth, semi-structured interviews) and a quantitative phase (online survey), the study explored complex aspects of consumers' relationships with their favourite brands, and tested a series of propositions about the structure and composition of consumers' perceptions of brand personality, as well as about alternative forms of self-brand personality alignment and their impact on desirable brand-related outcomes. Besides her thesis, Maria's work during her PhD studies has also examined cross-cultural differences in consumers' perceptions of brand personality, as well as the relationship between consumers' own personalities and their higher-order goals, a piece of work with interdisciplinary implications.

## Teaching Interests

Maria's teaching interests cover a range of topics, including branding, consumer behaviour (across cultures), international marketing and not-for-profit marketing. In the past, she has been nominated by her students for two University of Strathclyde Teaching Excellence Awards: Best Teacher in the Business Faculty, and Most Supportive Teacher across the University. She is a Fellow of Advance Higher Education (previously Higher Education Academy).

She is currently the Class Coordinator for the Strategic Marketing in an International Context module (Year 3 core class) and the Strategic Global Marketing core class in the MSc in International Marketing programme. She also teaches International Business Management (Honours class).

Her experience also includes teaching across a range of undergraduate and postgraduate classes, such as for instance in core, introductory Marketing (undergraduate level) or advanced International Marketing classes (postgraduate level), as well as extensive experience in the design and assessment of a range of modules, such as Business Studies, Consuming & Communicating Brands, Critical Thinking in Marketing, Marketing Communications, Marketing Management, Marketing Strategy and Understanding Brands.

Maria has received extensive training on pedagogy and teaching and assessment methods and regularly attends workshops and webinars held from the Higher Education Academy and the Organisational and Staff Development Unit (University of Strathclyde). She has been awarded the Postgraduate Certificate in Advanced Academic Studies (Practice) and is now a Fellow of the HEA. She has also attended the full series of teaching development courses provided by the Institute for Academic Development in the University of Edinburgh, during her doctoral studies.

She adopts a very interactive approach to teaching, and is particularly focused on providing practical relevance via guest speakers from both academia and industry, case studies, videos, simulation games, exercises, class voting, and examples. Her teaching design always embeds a range of different activities to suit all learning styles and increase engagement, while she uses digital spaces (course website, forum, social media, apps) as a very important supplement to the student experience. Students in her classes receive substantial support before and after coursework submission, and she maintains a multi-channel support system (office hours, drop-in sessions, online forum). Maria considers that students' continuous feedback via formal and informal channels is critical in ensuring an outstanding learning experience that is co-created.

Her reflective approach to teaching led her to the development of a teaching case-study, written in cooperation with colleagues from the University of Edinburgh Business School. The case delves into the issues and opportunities of marketing planning for non-profit organisations, and invites students' critical consideration, as conventional theoretical norms in marketing planning and strategy do not necessarily apply in the charity sector.