

## International Interdisciplinary Research Project

**Title, theme**      **EMPOWER - « Empowering Entrepreneurs from the Inside Out»**

**keywords:**              *Entrepreneurship, Mental health, Psychological well-being, Opportunity, Wellness, Equity, Resilience*

### General information

#### *Project Coordinators*

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#### *Partners involved*

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**Arnaud Carré** - Fondation USMB : Chaire BEST

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**Daniel Françoise** – IREGE – USMB

**Matthieu Cabrol** – IREGE - USMB

**Michael Antoni** – Full Professor in Psychology, University of Miami, USA

**Dianne Welsch** – Full Professor of Entrepreneurship, University of North Carolina, USA & Universidad Catolica de la Santísima Concepcion, Concepcion, Chile

**Robert Courtois** – Full Professor in Psychology, University of Tours, Quality of life and psychological health (QualiPsy), Tours, France

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**Eugene Kaciak** – Full Professor of Business Research and Entrepreneurship, Brock University, St. Catharines, Canada & Kozminski University, Warsaw, Poland

*Related area of excellence of USMB:*

Cultural heritage and **societies in transition**

## Contents

### Academic and societal context

**Entrepreneurship** is both a well-established and dynamic field of research within management and business studies, supported by leading dedicated journals (such as the *Journal of Business Venturing*, *Journal of Business Research*, etc.) and prominent international academic conferences. Among the promising directions in the discipline, the "**humanistic turn**" (Shantz & McMullen, 2024) emphasizes the interconnection between **entrepreneurs' life paths** and their **personal sphere** (Anwar et al., 2023).

This **humanistic turn** is particularly relevant in the context of societal transformation and chronic uncertainty, which is a source of widespread anxiety. The **well-being of entrepreneurs** is emerging as a decisive **strategic variable** (Backman et al., 2023).

Yet, interdisciplinary work between psychologists and entrepreneurship researchers is currently **nonexistent**, with only a few rare exceptions (Lanchimba et al., 2025).

**Stress** and **burnout** are major challenges for entrepreneurs, affecting both their well-being and the quality of their work. Individual approaches, such as **cognitive behavioral therapy**, have shown their effectiveness in reducing **stress** and **burnout** (Iancu, 2018).

In particular, the **CBSM program** (Cognitive Behavioral Stress Management) has demonstrated benefits in reducing stress among individuals with chronic illnesses (Antoni, 2006) and among parents (Urbanowicz, 2023), and also appears promising for professionals. The intervention combines **relaxation training** with techniques from the **cognitive behavioral movement** (Antoni, 2007; Gauchet, 2024).

Moreover, the use of **e-health** could facilitate access to this program, and we could subsequently **assess its effectiveness among these professionals**.

## Project Goals and Relevance

### *Interdisciplinary academic research*

The aim of the project is to build an **interdisciplinary research network** combining the issue of **well-being and mental health** and that of **entrepreneurship**. This network is therefore intended to bring together researchers in **entrepreneurship** and **psychologists**, all interested in the **well-being of entrepreneurs** and **SME managers**.

### *International dimension*

Given the nascent yet promising nature of early interdisciplinary work on this topic at the international level, the project aims to establish and structure an **international interdisciplinary research network** on this theme, at the intersection of psychology and entrepreneurship. A number of academic partners have already been identified and are ready to collaborate (see Table 1a), but the structuring of the network still needs to be completed. The network will rely on researchers from USMB, beyond the project leaders, and will develop partnerships within the **UNITA** and **GEMINAE** alliances. An **international workshop**, to be held in person at USMB (Spring 2026), will serve to:

- officially launch the network while ensuring its visibility
- deepen the **interdisciplinary dialogue** in order to define common themes, identify novel issues arising from the interdisciplinary intersection, and develop original, relevant methodologies for both academic fields, and
- set academic goals of the international network

### *Seed project*

The established network is intended to respond to major calls for projects (e.g., ANR or European projects).

### *Project grounding and collaboration with the entrepreneurial ecosystem*

While the academic ambition of the project is to produce high-impact scholarly publications, this does not detract from its grounding in the **SME landscape of the two Savoies**, and the **entrepreneurial ecosystems** of the partner universities. On such a topic, close collaboration with **entrepreneurs** and the expected outcomes for these **socioeconomic stakeholders** are both essential and decisive.

## APPENDICES

### Appendix A – References

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### Appendix B - The project coordinators

<p><b>Muriel FADAIRO</b> Full Professor of Entrepreneurship</p>  <p>IREGE INSTITUT DE RECHERCHE EN GESTION ET ÉCONOMIE</p>		<p><b>Aurélié GAUCHET</b> Full Professor of Psychology</p>  <p>LIP PC2S</p>	
<b>Significant publications related to the project</b>		<b>Significant publications related to the project</b>	
<p>Welsh, D., Kaciak, E., <b>Fadaïro, M.</b>, Lanchimba, C. Doshi, V. (2023), How to Erase Gender Differences in Entrepreneurial Success: Surveil the Ecosystem. <i>Journal of Business Research</i>, Vol 154, January, 113320. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2022.113320">https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2022.113320</a></p> <p>Lanchimba, C., Welsh, D., <b>Fadaïro, M.</b>, Silva, V-L. The Impact of Strategic Franchisor Signaling on Entrepreneurship in Emerging Markets. (2021). <i>Journal of Business Research</i>. Vol 131, 337-348, 2021. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2021.03.062">https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2021.03.062</a></p> <p>Bitti, E., <b>Fadaïro, M.</b>, Lanchimba, C., Silva, V-L., (2020). Should I Stay or Should I Go? Geographic Entrepreneurial Choices in Brazilian Franchising. <i>Journal of Small Business Management</i>, Vol 57 [2], 244-267. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1111/jsbm.12469">https://doi.org/10.1111/jsbm.12469</a></p>		<p>Michael Antoni, Gail Ironson et Neil Shneiderman. Traduction et adaptation d'<b>Aurélié Gauchet</b>. (2024). <i>Gérer le stress grâce aux TCC</i>. De Boeck.</p> <p>Urbanowicz, A., Shankland R., Rance J., Bennett P., Leys, C., <b>Gauchet, A.</b> (2023). Cognitive Behavioural Stress Management (CBSM) for parents: prevention and reduction of parental burnout. <i>International Journal of Clinical and Health Psychology</i>. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijchp.2023.100365">https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijchp.2023.100365</a></p> <p>Shankland, R., Tessier, D., Sturb, L., <b>Gauchet, A.</b>, Baeyens, C. (2020). Improving mental health and well-being through informal mindfulness practices: A randomized controlled study. <i>Applied Psychology: health and well-being</i>. DOI:10.1111/aphw.12216</p>	