

Dr. [Jury Gualandris](#) at the Ivey Business School (Western University, London, Ontario, Canada) in conjunction with the [Ivey Centre for Building Sustainable Value](#) is seeking to fill a postdoctoral fellowship, ideally with an interest and background in sustainable agriculture. The post-doctoral researcher will support our [Collective Action for Sustainable Agriculture Lighthouse Project](#); the goal of the Collective Action Project (CAP) is to engage innovative, change-ready farmers across agricultural silos (i.e. crop, horticulture, livestock, social-cultural traditions) to establish a community of practice that advances sustainable agriculture in their county. This project is led by the Principal Investigator (Jury Gualandris) and supported by a robust team of interdisciplinary co-investigators from Ivey including [Dr. Diane-Laure Arjaliès](#), [Dr. Isam Faik](#), [Dr. Zoe Kinias](#), [Dr. Laurel Steinfield](#), and [Dr. Sergio Lazzarini](#). The post-doctoral researcher will also liaise with co-investigators from Western Science, researchers from Carleton University, and other partners and stakeholders from the agricultural industry.

The ideal candidate will exhibit the following:

- Some demonstrated ability to work toward research that is original, rigorous and practically relevant;
- Demonstrated abilities in mixed methods (i.e. survey, field interviews and secondary data), with some experience in network analysis preferred;
- Ability to write papers destined for leading journals in management and related subdisciplines in which the supervisors have already published (Journal of Operations Management; Strategy Management Journal; Organization Science; MIS Quarterly; Nature);
- Outstanding organizational and communication skills, and ability to build relationships with key partners in industry;
- A preference will be placed on candidates with interest and familiarity with Agriculture and agri-food systems

The candidate's activities will include supporting the [Collective Action for Sustainable Agriculture Lighthouse Project](#). The candidate will part of the design and delivery of the Collective Action Program (CAP), a regional field intervention that promises to catalyze a just transition toward regenerative agriculture. The candidate will work with a large inter-disciplinary team to design, deliver, and assess the impacts of our CAP. The candidate will be involved in all project modules, each asking a different research question and leading to one or more research papers:

Paper 1 - Economic benefits of regenerative agriculture

RQ: Is regenerative agriculture economically competitive? When does it create net positive economic returns and through what mechanisms (e.g., economies of scope, valorization of ecosystem services, resilience)? The project will analyze up to 4-5 regenerative farms with diverse scales and diverse foods (i.e., fully transitioned, mature 1200 acres regenerative crop farm; fully transitioned, but young 120 acres regenerative livestock farm; looking for a third or fourth case). We will focus on mapping operations and quantify profit/acre, both actual and potential.

Papers 2-4 – Emergence of a regional community of practice for regenerative agriculture

RQs: What inter-personal barriers, trade-offs, and collective dilemmas farmers face when thinking about developing an inclusive, supportive community of practice? What formal and informal structures emerge as farmers discuss problems and explore solutions? How to stimulate collective action in a context that is poorly interconnected and filled with competitive tensions? The module will address these questions in

three distinctive but related components:

Paper a: On the “process of a theory of change” (led by Sergio Lazzarini, Diane-Laure Arjaliès, & Jury Gualandris). Building off work done in a previous project at the Ivey BSV Centre we hope this new project will focus on a more community-based process of theorization in which, with our input and facilitation, communities discuss their problems and potential actions to generate improved outcomes. Therefore, it will be a paper on the "process of theory of change." A potential contribution of this research is to unveil mechanisms of theorization by communities with the support of experts (academics, technical professionals, and so forth), differently from the usual procedure involving theorization by experts with occasional feedback and validation by communities. Another key contribution will be to observe how governance principles "endogenously" emerge as communities discuss their problems and theorize on potential actions to generate potential outcomes. We will pay attention to how deliberation processes unfold and what dynamics describe how community members collectively formulate a theory of change for their region.

Paper b: On the formal and informal structures of a regional community of practice (led by Jury Gualandris, Sergio Lazzarini, Diane-Laure Arjaliès)

Our CAP “intervention” is composed of workshops, social events, and a digital platform that are designed to help a small cohort of 10-15 influential, motivated farmers and agronomists to establish a community of practice in their county. Communities of practice (CoPs) are generally defined as organized groups of people who collaborate regularly around a specific area to achieve predetermined goals. Via field interviews and direct observations, we will assess the formal and informal structures characterizing the emergent community of practice. Formal structures are, for example, committees and rules that govern how the group operates and how resources are contributed by and allocated to diverse community members. Informal structures are implicit organizing principles and social norms guiding actions by the members of community of practice and other stakeholders or rightsholders supported by it. A key contribution would be to illuminate potentially novel forms of collective governance for complex bundles of public and private resources (i.e., equipment, land, water, ecosystem services for regenerative agriculture).

Paper c: On the effectiveness of a program that catalyzes collective action (led by Zoe Kinias, Isam Faik, and Jury Gualandris)

Besides assessing the formal and informal structures of the emergent community of practice, we will also collect pre-post quantitative data and thick qualitative data to assess changes in farmers’ a) openness to share ideas with each other, b) connectivity with each other, c) moral attentiveness, d) understanding of regenerative practices and co-management approaches, and e) their expectations concerning the feasibility of a just transition toward sustainable agriculture in their county. We will assess these changes across three tiers of players: cohort participants; a random sample of their immediate connections; and a random sample of their indirect connections. We will pay attention to how any change unfolds and how diverse components of our program affect such changes. The key contribution will be focused on assessing the effectiveness of our “treatment” and any spillover from the core cohort to the broader community.

The position will remain open until it is filled with a suitable candidate. The start date is as soon as possible. Compensation will be \$70,000 – \$90,000 CAD per year plus benefits, along with an additional research/travel stipend. The is a 3-year, fully funded position with a four-month probationary period.

This position is based at the Ivey Business School in London, Ontario.

The University invites applications from all qualified individuals. Western is committed to employment equity and diversity in the workplace and welcomes applications from women, members of racialized groups/visible minorities, Indigenous persons, persons with disabilities, persons of any sexual orientation, and persons of any gender identity or gender expression. Accommodations are available for applicants with disabilities throughout the recruitment process.

If you are interested in the role, please send the following to Jury Gualandris (jgualandris@ivey.ca):

- A copy of your CV and contact information for two academic references.
- A cover letter that describes how your education, training and experience meet the bullet points above – please elaborate on how your methodological skills can support our research on assessing and catalyzing collective action in agriculture.
- An independent writing sample that demonstrates your analytical skills and theoretical connections.
- Your research interests.