

Management of Complex Systems

– Spring 2026 Speaker Series

Research Area: **People at work & human interaction**



Friday, March 20, 2026: 12:30–1:30pm in SSM 203

Join remotely - <https://ucmerced.zoom.us/j/4752468252>



Dr. Vartuhi Tonoyan

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Bio: Dr. Tonoyan explores research questions at the intersection of gender, entrepreneurship, and social class, as well as entrepreneurship and innovation in mature and emerging markets, and has received multiple research awards (e.g., Academy of Management Meeting's Best Paper Award, Responsible Research in Business and Management Honor Roll, Kauffman Foundation Best Paper Award, and the DIANA International Research Conference). In 2024, she received the Craig School of Business Faculty Award for Research. [[Profile](#)].

Gendered Signals in High-Tech Startup Hiring and Their Implications for Talent Attraction

Tonoyan, Strohmeyer & Jennings. *Working for Jessica or Michael? Implications of gender stereotypes for job application intentions at technology startups*. Strategic Entrepreneurship Journal, 2025

Abstract: We examine a critical yet underexplored aspect of human resource management in nascent technology ventures: employee recruitment. Applying theories of gender stereotyping, we contend that female-led technology startups face greater obstacles in attracting job applicants than their male counterparts. Evidence from a randomized online experiment conducted in 2020/2021 with 777 US job seekers substantiates this barrier, indicating that the disparities are partly rooted in gender-stereotypical perceptions of female technology entrepreneurs as less competent, agentic, and warm, which contribute to less favorable assessments of their ventures' economic potential and employee empowerment potential. Startups with gender-diverse leadership teams appear to overcome these biases. Confirmatory evidence comes from a 2024 replication study with 455 US job seekers, underscoring the need to address gender biases in the technological ecosystem.