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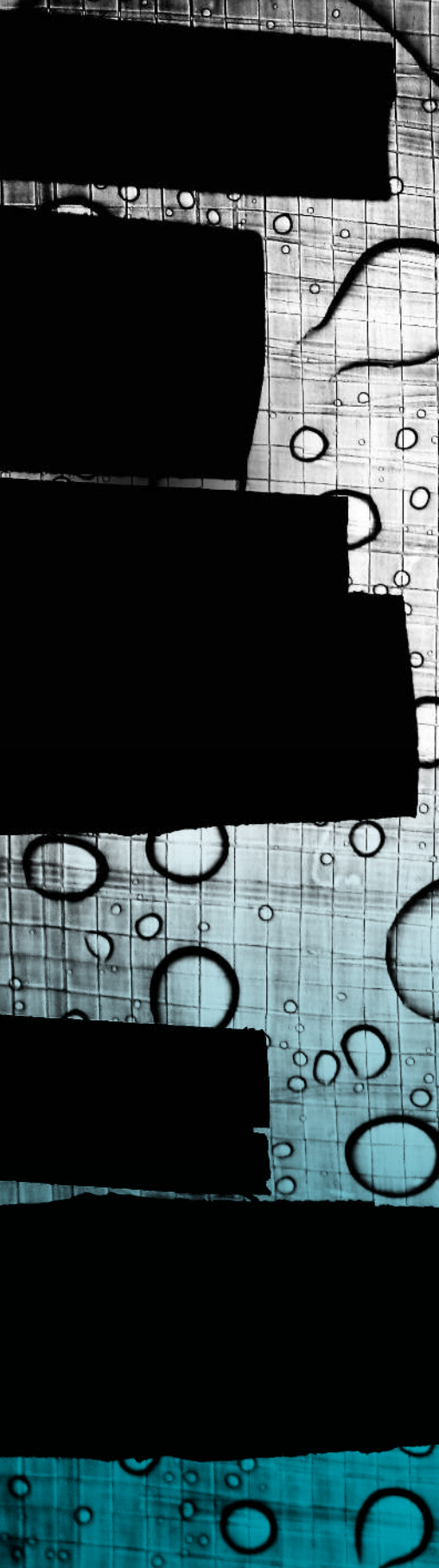
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# NETWORKING for LEGITIMACY

A study of entrepreneurial  
networking and  
new venture legitimation  
in Dutch healthcare

A.M.C.Eveline Stam



How do entrepreneurs with innovative ideas network and engage with their venture's stakeholders to mobilize legitimacy? Legitimacy – social acceptance – is an organizational resource above all important for innovative ventures. A positive stakeholder evaluation of the innovation ensures venture support and the necessary resources which allow the venture to grow. Developing new venture legitimacy is a complex entrepreneurial task, particularly in institutionalized and regulated markets of social goods such as healthcare and education.

In this dissertation, Eveline Stam explores how Dutch healthcare entrepreneurs network with, and negotiate social acceptance from, different stakeholder groups. The four empirical studies in this dissertation provide insight into the motivations of healthcare entrepreneurs in networking with venture partners and, at times, to actors at the field level. This dissertation forwards our understanding of how healthcare entrepreneurs convince stakeholders of, and justify, the value potentials of healthcare innovations. It also develops novel and specific configurations of entrepreneurial networking practices and considers entrepreneurs' networking intentions and practices in an institutionalized setting. As a final point, Eveline argues in favor of a social practice approach in entrepreneurial networking for this will advance our theorizing on, and understandings of, why, how and where, entrepreneurs network.