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SORAH SEONG

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SUMMARY

Sorah Seong is an organizational theorist who studies how new ideas, collective forms, and strategic directions emerge, with a particular focus on distributed/decentralized processes. Her work spans online crowds, markets in formation, and creative fields. She combines scholarship published in leading journals with hands-on experience as a founder. She is also the author of two bestsellers, *NFT Revolution* (2021) and *Beyond AI: The Human Strategy* (2025), and has delivered more than 100 talks and corporate learning programs worldwide.

ACADEMIC POSITIONS

INSEAD, Fontainebleau, France; Singapore 2026-present
Visiting Scholar
Department of Organizational Behavior

University of Washington, Foster School of Business, Seattle, WA 2018-2021
Assistant Professor
Department of Management and Organization (M&O)

- M&O PhD Admissions Committee, 2020, 2021
- Undergraduate Scholarship Review Committee, 2020, 2021
- Faculty Judge & Advisor for various student startup competitions, 2019-2021
- M&O Faculty Search Committee, 2019

AREAS OF INTEREST

- **Research:** Crowds, Emergence, Categories & Identities, Creativity, Strategy Process
- **Teaching:** Entrepreneurship, Strategic Management, Web3 & AI

RECENT PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Author & Public Speaker 2021-*present*
- *Beyond AI: The Human Strategy* (2025), an award-winner, endorsed by CEOs and major media.
- *NFT Revolution* (2021), national bestseller (+100K copies sold), translated into multiple languages.
- Designed and delivered executive-education video courses on AI-era leadership and human judgment.
- Delivered 100+ talks across corporations, universities, startups, and industry conferences globally.

SQRT, New York, NY; Seoul, South Korea 2022-2024
Co-founder & CEO
- Led a team of quant traders and developers to build a fintech platform offering retail investors access to institutional-grade crypto trading strategies: "Hedge fund experience, robo-advisor simplicity."
- Launched and managed a family office business as part of SQRT's B2B operations.
- Oversaw product development, operations, community growth including a newsletter, and fundraising.

fashionxDAO, Ethereum blockchain 2022-*present*
Founding Member & Advisor
- Co-founded and led a Web3-native fashion collective exploring decentralized creative production.
- Led physical garment production, launch events, and the design of tokenomics and governance.

Madrona Venture Labs (MVL), Seattle, WA 2022
Entrepreneur in Residence (EiR)

- Scouted as a Web3 lead, developed a venture concept focused on DAO discovery and engagement.
- Led weekly meetings with MVL leadership and tech leads on market research, concept/product development, team recruitment and fundraising plans.
- Pitched the idea at MVL Demo Day ("Launchable"), leading to WR3P, the predecessor to SQRT.

EDUCATION

INSEAD, Fontainebleau, France & Singapore 2012-2018
PhD in Management, specializing in Organizational Theory and Entrepreneurship

- *Dissertation*: A Theory of Crowds for Market Emergence and Entrepreneurial Dynamics: Semantic Rhythms, Collective Memory, and Identities
- *Committee*: Philip Anderson (chair), Jason Davis, Frédéric Godart, Gabriel Szulanski

London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), London, UK 2010-2011
MSc in Theory and History of International Relations (joint degree)

Harvard College, Cambridge, MA 2005-2009
AB in Sociology with a secondary field in Visual and Environmental Studies

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

Godart, F., **Seong, S.**, & Phillips, D. (2020). The Sociology of Creativity: Elements, Structures, and Audiences, *Annual Review of Sociology*, 46: 489-510 (view).

Seong, S. & Godart, F. (2018). Influencing the Influencers: Diversification, Semantic Strategies, and Creativity Evaluations. *Academy of Management Journal.* 61(3): 966-993 (view).

Seong, S. (2017). A Theory of Crowds in Time and Space: Explaining the Cognitive Foundations of a New Market. *Research in the Sociology of Organizations*, 50, 223-252 (view).

Seong, S., Kim, Y., & Szulanski, G. (2015). Leadership, Innovation, and Strategic Change: A Conversation with Michael Tushman. *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 24(4), 370-381 (view).

SELECTED RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

Askin, N., **Seong, S.**, & Szulanski, G. How Strategists Theorize: A Process Model of Disciplined Imagination. Ready to submit. *Strategy Science.*

Seong, S. & Szulanski, G. Where Do Strategies Go? Rethinking the Fate of Strategic Directions. Work in progress. Target: *Academy of Management Review.*

Seong, S. The Social Architecture of Creativity: AI and the Sources of Surprise. Work in progress. Target: *Academy of Management Review.*

Seong, S. Meaning Before Markets: The Co-evolution of Labels and Actors. Working paper. Target: *Organization Science.*

BOOKS

Seong, S. (2025) *Beyond AI: The Human Strategy.* The Square (view) (Google Books).

Seong, S., Hoefer, R., & McLaughlin, S. (2021) *NFT Revolution.* Gilbut (view) (Google Books).

BOOK CHAPTERS

Godart, F. & **Seong, S**. (2014). Is Sustainable Luxury Fashion Possible? In M. A. Gardetti & A. L. Torres (Eds.), *Sustainable Luxury: Managing Social and Environmental Performance in Iconic Brands*: 12-27. Sheffield Greenleaf Publishing (view).

SELECTED CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION

Academy of Management (AOM) Annual Conference, Chicago (USA), August 2024
- *Presenter. "*Complex Dynamics of Creative Industries in Advancing Organizational Theories." Symposium sponsored by OMT & TIM.

Academy of Management (AOM) Annual Conference, Boston (USA), August 2019
- *Presenter. "*The Evolutionary Story of Labels in a New Market Space: Through the Lens of Crowds."
- *Presenter. "*All that Rhythm of Identity Propagation: At the Nexus of Sensemaking Arenas."
- *Chair. "Category Dynamics: Emergence, Expansion, Adaption, Hybridization."*

Academy of Management (AOM) Annual Conference, Atlanta (USA), August 2017
- *Organizer & Presenter*. "Uncovering Crowds as Interstitial Spaces: Crowds that Influence and that Ought to be Influenced." *Showcase* Symposium sponsored by OMT & TIM.
- *Organizer.* "The Sound of Leadership in Shared Dynamics: An Evening with the GRAMMY-nominated A Far Cry." Professional Development Workshop (PDW) with a chamber orchestra, sponsored by OMT, OB, & ODC. (website)
- *Organizer.* OMT Café on "Shared leadership with the GRAMMY-nominated A Far Cry."

Strategic Management Society (SMS) Conference, Berlin (Germany), September 2016
- *Finalist*. *Best Conference Paper Award*. "Crowds' Hidden Meaning Structure in Market Emergence."
- *Presenter.* Strategy Research Foundation (SRF) Dissertation Scholar Final Presentation.

Academy of Management (AOM) Annual Conference, Anaheim (USA), August 2016
- *Organizer & Presenter*. "Novelty Ain't No Virgin Birth: Uncovering Novelty Emergence through Music, Time, and Technology." Symposium sponsored by OMT, TIM, & ENT.
- *Organizer.* OMT Café on "Crowd, Time, and Entrepreneurship."
- *Chair.* "Emergence of Categories & Networks."
- *Participant*. OMT Doctoral Consortium.

Strategic Management Society (SMS) Conference, Denver (USA), October 2015
- *Presenter*. "Bringing Process Back to Strategic Variation: Individuals' Navigation through Disciplined Imagination."
- *Participant.* Strategy Research Foundation (SRF) Dissertation Scholars Workshop.

Academy of Management (AOM) Annual Conference, Vancouver (Canada), August 2015
- *Organizer & Presenter*. "The Beginning of a New Beginning: Connecting with a Collective Mind in Form Emergence." PDW sponsored by OMT, TIM, ENT, MOC. (website)
- *Co-organizer.* OMT Café on "Collective Meaning-work in Form Emergence."
- *Organizer & Presenter*. "Breathing Life into Technology: Socio-cognitive Paths towards Opening the Black Box." Symposium sponsored by OMT, TIM, & MOC.
- *Presenter*. "Semantic Constellations: The Impact of Subsidiary Naming on Parent Firms' Creativity."

Strategic Management Society (SMS) Annual Conference, Madrid (Spain), September 2014
- *Co-chair.* The Foundational Thinkers Interview Series with Michael Tushman (HBS). Sponsored by Knowledge and Innovation (K&I) Interest Group. (watch)

AWARDS & HONORS

- *Selected Title,* Digital Insight Outstanding Content, Digital Society, Ministry of Science and ICT, 2026
- *Selected Title,* Sejong Books, Social Sciences, KPIPA, Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, 2026
- *Selected,* Top 50 Undergraduate Business Professor, Poets & Quants, 2020 (interview)
- *Nominee,* University of Washington Distinguished Teaching Award, 2020
- *Recipient,* Outstanding Author Contribution, Emerald Literati Awards, 2018
- *Recipient,* Rudolf & Valeria Maag Scholarship in Entrepreneurship (20K Euros), 2017-2018
- *Showcase Symposium*, TIM Division, Academy of Management Annual Meeting, Atlanta, 2017
- *Finalist for Best Conference Paper*, Strategic Management Society Annual Conference, Berlin, 2016
- *Recipient,* Strategy Research Foundation (SRF) Dissertation Scholarship (10K USD), 2015-2016
- *Recipient,* Doctoral Fellowship (full tuition and stipend), INSEAD, 2012-2017
- *Member,* The National Scholars Honor Society, USA, 2008
- *Certified,* Master class in violin performance, St. Petersburg State Conservatory, 2007
- *Recipient,* Full-ride Scholarship, Kwanjeong Educational Foundation (200K USD), 2005-2009
- *Recipient,* President's Education Award, US Department of Education, 2000

TEACHING & CASES

Foster School of Business, University of Washington
Instructor

- ENTRE 370: Introduction to Entrepreneurship (40+ undergraduate students per section)
  - Winter 2019 (**4.8**/5.0)
  - Spring 2019 (**4.8**/5.0, **4.6**/5.0)
  - Fall 2019 (**4.7**/5.0, **4.4**/5.0)

- MGMT 430: Strategic Management Capstone (50+ undergraduate students per section)
  - Winter 2020 (**4.7**/5.0, **4.9**/5.0)
  - Winter 2021 (**4.9**/5.0, **4.9**/5.0)
  - Spring 2021 (**4.9**/5.0, **4.8**/5.0)

- MGMT 499: Exploring SaaS Go to Market Strategy (Independent Study)
  - Spring 2021

- ENTRE 600: Independent Research (PhD Supervision)
  - Spring 2020

INSEAD

Teaching Assistant & Coach
- *Teaching Assistant*, MBA Program, New Business Ventures, Spring 2018
- *Coach*, Action Learning Projects (ALPs), INSEAD Executive Education, UNICEF Leadership Development Program, June-Nov 2013

Cases

- Anderson, P. & **Seong, S.** Biotopia. INSEAD Case 6309, June 2017 (view).

EARLIER EXPERIENCE

Biotopia (acquired by Huons Global in 2016) — Seoul, South Korea & Guangzhou, China
Marketing Manager — 2011-2012

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) — Seoul, South Korea

Protection Unit Intern 2010

Prime Minister's Office (PMO) Seoul, South Korea
Administrative Intern 2009

African Leadership Cape Town, South Africa
Field Coordinator (gap year) 2004-2005

OTHER INFORMATION

Languages: Korean (native), English (fluent), French (intermediate), Chinese and Japanese (basic)
Interests: Faith, off-the-beaten-path travel, exploring new cities, making art, fitness, local food cultures