



Cluj-Napoca  
March 31, 2022

**Ceremony of awarding  
the title of**

***Doctor Honoris Causa***

**To His Excellency**

**Professor Marko Sarstedt**

**Institute of Marketing, Ludwig-Maximilians-University Munich**

**Laudatio**

Dear Professor Marko Sarstedt,  
Professor Daniel David, Rector of the Babeș-Bolyai University,  
Professor Florin Streteanu, President of the Babeș-Bolyai University Senate,  
Dear Guests,

It is a great honor for me to present this Laudatio, and to introduce you the academic achievements of Professor Marko Sarstedt.

Professor Sarstedt is currently the Chair of the Institute of Marketing at Ludwig-Maximilians-University Munich, a top 50 university worldwide, according to international rankings.

He is one of the world's most influential researchers. Over the last decade, he has made significant contributions to the field of structural equation modeling, which has become a quasi-standard tool for analyzing complex inter-relationships between observed and latent variables – as prevalent in behavioral research.

In particular, his research has advanced and popularized partial least squares, a composite-based approach to structural equation modeling, which has gained vast prominence, in the social sciences, as well as in many other fields of scientific inquiry. Specifically, his research has set new standards in model evaluation, which enabled the study of phenomena that had previously eluded empirical investigation.

Thus, he and his co-authors developed the first (and to date only) approach for measurement invariance assessment in composite models (the MICOM procedure), which is a fundamental requirement for group comparisons – as prevalent in cross-cultural research, for instance. Because of this approach, researchers can now draw upon much more complex models that improve our understanding of cross-cultural phenomena.

Professor Sarstedt's research also disclosed fundamental issues in standard approaches to model evaluation. Seven years ago, in a paper published in the highly reputable *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, he and his co-authors proposed a new criterion for discriminant validity assessment, which is a crucial aspect of any structural equation modeling analysis. Their heterotrait-monotrait metric (HTMT) has had a lasting impact on the field and has become standard in discriminant validity assessment in the social sciences and beyond. The article has won the *Emerald Citations of Excellence* award, has been published in the *Essential Science Indicators Ranking*, and is nowadays considered a milestone paper in contemporary methodological research.

In addition, Professor Sarstedt made various contributions to the classification literature, by proposing novel means for identifying and treating unobserved heterogeneity. For instance, in his work on latent class analysis, he has generalized finite mixture models, iterative reweighted regressions, and genetic algorithms to a structural equation modeling framework. Corresponding papers have been published in top-tier journals in fields as diverse as operations research, statistics, marketing, and general business, underlining the interdisciplinarity of his research.

Professor Sarstedt's research has also played a crucial role in disseminating partial least squares structural equation modeling as a research method. He co-authored two highly-cited textbooks on the method, which have been translated into eight languages, including Chinese, Spanish, Arabic, and Persian, and has won the best textbook award of the German Association for Business Research.

Professor Sarstedt received numerous awards for his work, including five *Emerald Citations of Excellence* awards and three *Emerald Literati Outstanding Paper* awards. He is also the two-time recipient of the *William R. Darden Award* of the *Academy of Marketing Science*.

His strong international impact brought Professor Sarstedt the status of *Highly Cited Researcher* in 2018, in *Economics and Business*, according to Clarivate's *Web of Science* scientometric assessments. This is a title shared by less than 100 scholars in the whole world, and he kept it on a yearly basis since then. Currently, his published papers count for over 110,000 citations according to *Google Scholar*, among which more than 33,000 citations in Clarivate's *Web of Science*.

In addition to his scientific merits and his international prestige, Professor Sarstedt has made many significant contributions to the development of Babeş-Bolyai University's academic community and reputation, especially for the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration.

At the beginning of 2021, Professor Sarstedt was appointed Adjunct Research Professor in our university. Since then, he managed to publish 17 scientific papers in highly ranked *Web of Science*

journals, especially in the field of *Business & Economics*, all bearing the Babeş-Bolyai University affiliation. Several of these papers involved collaborations with members of our university, who thus not only had the chance to work with an internationally renown scientist, but also had the opportunity of being closely mentored and guided on academic writing at high standards. As a consequence, the yearly scientific output of our university in *Business & Economics*, in reputable journals, has doubled in a single year. Therefore, it can be stated that Professor Sarstedt has made a strong contribution to increasing both the quantity and the quality of our university's scientific publications in this field.

Moreover, during the last five years, even before becoming Adjunct Research Professor in our university, Professor Sarstedt has delivered many workshops, lectures and presentations for our academic community, especially for the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration. Consequently, he contributed significantly to improving our staff and our PhD students' abilities to conduct valuable research, and write relevant academic papers.

On top of all that, despite his constantly intense and overloaded schedule, Professor Sarstedt has always responded favorably to any request coming from members of our academic community, offering assistance, support, and guidance in their research endeavors.

To conclude, the professional activity and career of Professor Sarstedt are under the auspices of excellence, and he is a true friend of Babeş-Bolyai University.

We thank Professor Marko Sarstedt for the honor of accepting our distinction of Doctor Honoris Causa!

Assoc. Prof. Ovidiu I. Moisescu  
Vice-Dean of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration  
Babeş-Bolyai University