

Motivational letter

When I started my academic journey, my ambition was to tell stories through design and communication — to connect people with ideas and move them to action. Over time, this ambition found its purpose in a field that really needs better communication and better systems: *healthcare*.

This shift began when I joined in 2018 a healthcare technology startup focused on assistive devices. I took on the role of International Business Developer, where I worked to introduce our solutions to new markets and manage the business side of our app. To strengthen my skills, I took business development courses and participated in international startup bootcamps. I was surprised how much innovation was often hindered by system complexity. Instead of being discouraged, I became more determined to improve the system from within.

The turning point came when I joined Technology Park Ljubljana in 2021. Within a few months, I took over the Digital Innovation Hub Healthwise, a initiative to accelerate digital transformation in healthcare. Over the past four years, I have worked closely with start-ups and SMEs to develop and scale digital health solutions, while also fostering collaboration with public institutions such as the National Institute of Public Health and the Slovenian Ministry of Health. I have helped build bridges — between technology and care, between the private and public sectors, and between innovation and implementation.

In parallel, I deepened my understanding of healthcare transformation through EU projects such as *Horizon Europe DIHsP4_Medicine*, where I got to know the healthcare systems of Spain, Romania and France. I analysed the approaching shift towards P4 medicine — predictive, preventive, personalised and participatory — and how technology is being integrated into treatment pathways. My work the Technology Park Ljubljana is ranging from stakeholder workshops to organising international events focused on sharing best practises and real-world implementation challenges. These experiences have created a need to not only apply knowledge, but to formalise and extend it through an academic framework.

It is also worth noting that I first enrolled in university in 2008 and officially graduated in August 2023 while working full-time. My thesis was on the communication challenges in digital health innovation hubs, a topic that arose directly from my practical work. Although my academic timeline was non-traditional, my career path was focused, continuous and task oriented.

In Slovenia, we are facing a clear gap: We desperately need experts who can drive digital transformation in healthcare, but we lack formal educational pathways to prepare them. This is exactly why I am applying for the ManagiDiTH programme. Its interdisciplinary structure of combining healthcare, technology and strategic management, matches both my experience and my ambition.

With a solid foundation in innovation strategy, stakeholder engagement and project execution, I am ready to take the next step: becoming a more informed, capable leader who can help healthcare systems not only adapt to digital transformation but actively shape it. I am convinced that ManagiDiTH will provide me with the academic tools and international perspective I need to make this contribution. Not only in Slovenia, but across Europe.

Thank you for considering my application.

Sincerely,

Rebeka Žerovnik