



Special Session Proposal

Entrepreneurial Ecosystems and Regional Development: Dynamics, Evolution, and Implications

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Abstract

There is a general agreement in the literature on entrepreneurship that entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial activities do not emerge in isolation but need, to be successful, a conducive environment in which they can innovate and develop their businesses. The need to understand entrepreneurship “in broader geographical, temporal and social contexts” (Alvedalen and Boschma 2017) has fostered, in the last decades, the emergence of the Entrepreneurial Ecosystem (EE) concept as a supportive environment for the ecosystem members to engage in entrepreneurial and innovative activities. An EE is defined as “a set of interdependent actors and factors that are governed in such a way that they enable productive entrepreneurship within a particular territory” (Leendertse, Schrijvers, and Stam 2021) and its contribution to regional development has been widely discussed (Stam 2015; D. Audretsch et al. 2021; D. B. Audretsch and Belitski 2021).

Despite the growing consensus on the definition of EEs, many questions remain unanswered. This session seeks to address key challenges and gaps in EE research, emphasizing the need for more empirical studies to understand the dynamics, evolution and implications of EEs for local and regional development. The session invites contributions from various disciplines such as geography, entrepreneurship, economics, innovation studies, and sustainability science to engage in a transdisciplinary dialogue on EEs and provide a comprehensive understanding of this phenomenon. The expected innovative contributions could be theoretical and/or empirical, case studies longitudinal analysis, comparative or policy analysis, but should all reflect on the connecting between EEs and their importance for regional development policies.

Topics of Interest (indicative):

- Investigate the nature, evolution, and connections within entrepreneurial ecosystems;

- Understand the dynamics, configurations and importance of EEs in resource-constrained environments, such as rural, peripheral or cross-border regions;
- Explore EE governance mechanisms, models and strategies;
- Examine the interplay between micro-level activities and systemic outcomes in EEs;
- Explore the role of entrepreneurial networks and actors in shaping and facilitating EEs;
- Assess the impact of support services and regional policies on EE development;
- Explore interdependencies between different EEs with external actors and ecosystems;
- Innovate methodologies, emphasizing longitudinal studies and technology-driven approaches;
- Discuss implications of EE-focused strategies in improving regional resilience and socio-economic development.

References

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