



## Special Session Proposal

### Historical Roots of Regional Entrepreneurship and Innovation

Michael Fritsch, Friedrich Schiller University Jena, Germany ([m.fritsch@uni-jena.de](mailto:m.fritsch@uni-jena.de))

Maria Greve, Friedrich Schiller University Jena, Germany and University of Groningen, The Netherlands ([Maria.greve@uni-jena.de](mailto:Maria.greve@uni-jena.de))

Korneliusz Pylak, Lublin University of Technology, Poland ([k.pylak@pollub.pl](mailto:k.pylak@pollub.pl))

Michael Wyrwich, University of Groningen, The Netherlands and Friedrich Schiller University Jena, Germany ([m.wyrwich@rug.nl](mailto:m.wyrwich@rug.nl))

#### Abstract

Extensive research has confirmed that regional entrepreneurship, knowledge and innovation can have rather deep historical roots. Such historical roots include old industrial specializations, knowledge production and dissemination, regional traditions and cultures, political regimes, as well as a region's 'first nature' conditions (e.g., access to transport routes, quality of the soil, natural resources, terrain ruggedness etc.). Such historical roots can lead to both the flourishing of entrepreneurship and innovation in certain areas as well as persistent low levels of low-productive entrepreneurship. Understanding such historical roots is highly important for any policy that aims at improving regional entrepreneurship and innovation.

We invite papers that analyse the role of both short-term and long-term historical factors affecting entrepreneurship and innovation. The main research questions to be addressed are:

- What are the historical factors that determine a region's level of entrepreneurship and innovation today?
- What is the role of natural conditions and location fundamentals (a region's 'first nature') for entrepreneurship and innovation?
- What are the channels behind the regional persistence of entrepreneurship and innovation? Under which conditions can a long-standing development trajectory be disrupted?

- How pronounced is the effect of different types of historical roots? To what extent do various historical factors affect current conditions for entrepreneurship and innovation?
- To what extent do historical shocks and institutional shifts affect the level of entrepreneurship and innovation? What is the long-term impact of past political regimes?
- What is the role of policy in the presence of historical roots? What are appropriate policy strategies?
- What is the role of cultural norms and beliefs that are transmitted across generations in shaping regional entrepreneurship and innovation patterns? How can deeply rooted regional cultures and mentalities that work as impediments for regional entrepreneurship and innovation be overcome?
- What is the role of knowledge in shaping regional patterns of entrepreneurship and innovation? How does literacy, general and technical knowledge foster the persistence of entrepreneurship and innovation?