INTERNATIONAL SMALL BUSINESS JOURNAL
CALL FOR PAPERS

SPECIAL ISSUE

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Background:

The role of universities is receiving increased attention by academics and policy makers as a key determinant in economic development and social welfare. Certain universities have gained attention through designing and developing entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystems. Through generating new and sustainable models to create societal, technological and economic value they have realised innovative outcomes across the three missions of teaching via human capital; research via knowledge capital; and technology transfer via entrepreneurship capital. However, this phenomena remains relatively unexplored and requires the adoption of different theoretical/methodological approaches, in several contexts, and using different levels of analysis. In particular, clearer analytical frameworks considering time and place are required to better understand the co-evolution of key stakeholders in this domain. According to the entrepreneurship literature, entrepreneurship ecosystems involve a set of individual, organizational, industry and environmental elements such as leadership, dynamic capabilities, culture, capital markets, networks, and open-minded customers that combine in complex ways. The entrepreneurial ecosystem is an interconnected set of entrepreneurial actors, and organisations that are part of any entrepreneurial process that determines the entrepreneurial environment of their localities or territories. Studies of innovation ecosystems however, focus on the complex relationships of cooperation, communication, and feedback among distinct organisations. The ecosystem supporting a university is composed of educational programmes, infrastructures, regulations, culture as well as relationships with distinct organisations such as government, investors, industry and other socio-economic agents. It therefore, exhibits characteristics of both entrepreneurship and innovation ecosystems to support the university community in the identification, development and commercialization of innovative and entrepreneurial initiatives. The analysis of this inter-connexion is relevant because both types of ecosystems regulate the nature and the quality of entrepreneurial activity by shaping rewards linked to opportunity identification and generation and the pursuit of new organisational forms and strategies. The emergence of university entrepreneurial ecosystems is relevant given the most recent worldwide economic downturn and socio-economic events. Universities are also facing challenges such as higher rates of unemployment, the reduction of public budgets, reduction in the demand of higher education studies, to name but a few. Under this new socio-economic landscape, entrepreneurial and innovation university ecosystems try to connect teaching/research activities with real practices/challenges in their organisations; and where their students and researchers not only captures new knowledge but also participate in the strengthening of local socio-economic development.

This call for papers expects not just single cases but also multilevel, longitudinal and comparative analyses that add value to the ongoing academic debate surrounding academic entrepreneurship, economic, societal and technological contributions of universities, and individual/organizational/institutional factors affecting entrepreneurial universities, conceptual clarification of entrepreneurial and innovative ecosystems. This includes the nature and effectiveness of higher entrepreneurship education in preparing students to become successful (intra)entrepreneurs, new/adequate research methods in entrepreneurship, higher education graduate employability and
regional collaboration between firms in a Penta Helix context; firms, academy, the public sector, labour organisations and civil society actors. In sum, to understand entrepreneurial and innovation higher education ecosystems it is necessary to explore conceptually and empirically themes such as (but not limited to):

(a) Which are the main concepts, elements, typologies of entrepreneurial and innovation higher education ecosystems?
(b) Which are the main organisational capabilities and resources required during emergence, transformation process and challenges faced by entrepreneurial and innovation higher education ecosystems?
(c) What are the main informal and formal institutions that affect the creation and development of the entrepreneurial and innovation higher education ecosystems?
(d) How do dynamic capabilities affect the development of entrepreneurial and innovation higher education ecosystems?
(e) Which aspects need to be considered for an appropriate design of entrepreneurial and innovation higher education ecosystems in diverse contexts (advanced/developing/emerging economies), socio-economic scenarios (stable/turbulent/uncertainty) and higher educational systems (open/closed/regulated)?
(f) What are the open innovation and entrepreneurship practices observed in entrepreneurial and innovation higher education ecosystems? Do these practices contribute to a co-evolution process with other agents of their environments?
(g) How are the life-cycles of entrepreneurial and innovation higher education ecosystem and of its elements?
(h) Which are the most adequate metrics and evaluation methods for evidencing the impacts of entrepreneurial and innovation higher education ecosystem on university community and university stakeholders?
(i) Which are the most adequate metrics and evaluation methods for evidencing the societal, technologic and economic impacts of entrepreneurial and innovation higher education ecosystem on in their localities, regions, countries?
(j) How are learning and knowledge exchanges processes based on success and failure experiences of entrepreneurial and innovation higher education ecosystems?
(k) Which successful/failure experiences of policy formulation have been associated to the improvement of entrepreneurial and innovation higher education ecosystems or their elements?

In addressing these issues, we seek novel conceptual/theoretical (adopting different perspectives) and empirical (using different methodological approaches) contributions with relevant implications for university, policy makers, and stakeholders across the globe (cities, regions or country level).

The paper submission deadline is 30 March 2018 and the journal submission site will be open for submissions from 19 February 2018. The Special Issue is scheduled to be published in November 2019. Papers must be original and comply with ISBJ submission guidelines. Please refer http://isb.sagepub.com/ for submission guidelines and a link to the on-line submission system. In the online system please ensure you submit your paper within Manuscript Type: Special Issue: Entrepreneurial and Innovative HEEE.

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