Track: Entrepreneurial, Innovative and Sustainable Ecosystems

Track Chairs:
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Description of the track
The concept of entrepreneurial ecosystems (de Brito and Leitão, 2020; Pita et al., 2021) has been attracting considerable attention in the fields of entrepreneurship studies, regional studies and economic geography as well as in policy consulting, seeking to foster firms’ births as a driver of regional development (Alvedalen and Boschma, 2017). However, until now, there has been a lack of knowledge in terms of the best practices and drivers of regional dynamics and change associated with this type of complex development platform.

Despite its growing relevance for regional policy (Start-up Commons, 2017), the concept so far has been applied almost exclusively in (successful) cases and empirical findings have not been used to advance the ecosystem concept theoretically. Not surprisingly, it has been criticized as being ‘underdeveloped’ (Stam and Spigel, 2016) and ‘undertheorized’ (Spigel, 2017).

The holistic construct of an (E)ntrepreneurial, (I)nnovative and (S)ustainable ecosystem presented by Leitão et al. (2018) refers to the collective and transversal nature of entrepreneurship, innovation and sustainability. New firms emerge and grow not only because there are entrepreneurs that created and developed them. New ventures emerge also because they are located in an ecosystem made up of private and public stakeholders, which nurture and sustain them, supporting the inventive and innovative action of entrepreneurs.

Despite the importance of the institutional and networks approaches explored in the literature, much remains unknown regarding the role played by the referred different types of enterprises in determining innovative and economic performance. Another gap found in the literature is concerning entrepreneurial and open innovative ecosystems. There is an increasing literature suggesting reasons behind ecosystems emergence, but it fails to examine in detail the exact mechanisms behind it, namely, the role played by endogenous production factors (for example, human capital, social or relational capital, organizational capital and knowledge), using an organizational economics approach. This gap may be addressed by linking, for example, coopetition, innovative behaviour, clusters or industrial districts. If agglomeration improves the quality of the match between government, firms, higher education institutions, and citizens, then clusters will ensure enduring productivity and sustainable competitive advantages.
Key topics and research questions of the track

- Determinants of entrepreneurial activity and innovation capacity at the regional level
- Drivers of innovation, entrepreneurship and change at the regional level
- Eco-innovation ecosystems
- Entrepreneurial, innovative and sustainable ecosystems (EIS)
- Higher education institutions and regional knowledge spillovers
- Industrial Districts, innovation and productivity
- Innovative milieu, co-creation and entrepreneurship
- Institutions and cities’ performance
- Intellectual capital, regional development and growth
- New public policies for creative, innovative and sustainable spatial units
- Open innovation and sustainable ecosystems
- Open Innovation ecosystems and regional development
- Smart cities and open data
- Smart specialization strategies and learning regions
- Spatial concentration and environmental innovation
- Transparency and entrepreneurial activity in cities
- Urban entrepreneurship versus rural entrepreneurship

References:


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