

## **Entrepreneurial Learning: Diversity of Education Practices and Complexity of Learning Processes**

*Issue Editors: Alain Fayolle, Luke Pittaway, Diamanto Politis, Olivier Toutain*

### Overview

Research on entrepreneurial learning is becoming more relevant for policy makers, such as the OECD and the EU, as they continue to recommend that it becomes a key aspect of education and training across educational systems. The EU, for example, in its “Europe 2020” strategy argues that “...more workplace and entrepreneurial learning experiences should be encouraged” (Council of European Union, 2011). Entrepreneurial learning research has advanced over the last decade since Minniti and Bygrave (2001) declared that, “*a theory of entrepreneurship needs a theory of learning*”, there have been a number of special issues dedicated to the subject including one in *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice* (Harrison and Leitch, 2005) and one associated with entrepreneurship education published by this journal (Leitch, C, Hazlett, S. A. and Pittaway, L., 2012). The subject has advanced from simply arguing that entrepreneurs learn through experience to exploring substantive theories and concepts as they relate to different forms of learning and different entrepreneurial contexts including failure (Cope, 2011). A wide variety of concepts have grown out of this blossoming, including some key ideas, such as: situated learning; transformational learning; experiential learning; critical learning events; dynamic process learning; and, organizational learning, to name but a few. This domain of research can, however, be criticized on a number of accounts and it is the purpose of this special issue to invite papers that address these weaknesses (Byrne, Fayolle and Toutain, 2014). Initially, most research within the context of entrepreneurial learning tends to overtly focus on the individual entrepreneur and researchers have generally been criticized for failing to include the social processes and networks that surround the individual when they learn. The special

issue, therefore, seeks papers that explore “situated learning” and that aim to expand their unit of analysis to the team or others involved in entrepreneurship, for example, papers that explore the social dynamics involved and/or explore social processes would be particularly welcome. In addition those papers that use an “organizational learning” lens to consider the topic, to explore how learning permeates the firm, across employees and other stakeholders which use the firm as the unit of analysis would also be considered as relevant to the focus of this special issue. Conceptually, research on entrepreneurial learning has advanced substantially over the last decade, however, fewer quality empirical studies have been conducted and so this special issue also welcomes any well considered and well carried out empirical study in the subject of entrepreneurial learning. Entrepreneurial learning studies have also begun to identify the different learning dynamics associated with certain contexts (e.g. failure) and this special issue would like to expand on this work by inviting papers that explore the different learning contexts within which learning takes place. Finally, while new knowledge has been created in the domain of entrepreneurial learning its implications for policy and practice in entrepreneurship education have not been articulated effectively. The focus of this special issue then is to also welcome papers that link research in entrepreneurial learning to wider social and economic policies, particularly as they relate to developments in entrepreneurship education. Here we are interested in papers that either link knowledge from entrepreneurial learning to new developments in educational practice or link understanding to implications for the development of policy interventions, with a particular focus on increasing the impact of learning.

## Summary of Call

To summarize the editors of the special issue welcome papers in the following areas:

- Entrepreneurial learning theories that address learning as a social process
- Entrepreneurial learning studies that consider “situated learning”
- Studies that use an “organizational learning” approach to consider the subject
- Research that focuses on the spillover between individual entrepreneurial learning and developments for the venture itself and/or subsequent impacts on employee learning
- Quality studies of an empirical nature that explore any aspect of entrepreneurial learning
- Papers that consider new or unique contexts within which entrepreneurial learning occurs

- Studies that consider the relationship between entrepreneurial learning and the implications such knowledge has for the design and development of entrepreneurship education
- Papers that focus on the interplay between knowledge on entrepreneurial learning and its implications for social and economic policy
- Studies that consider “impact” and focus on how more effective knowledge in entrepreneurial learning can raise the impact of entrepreneurship education policies. The assessment issue of entrepreneurial learning within entrepreneurship education practices can also be considered

The editors intend to bring with this Special Issue a significant value to entrepreneurship education researchers, policy-makers and practitioners. Full papers should be submitted by Email Word attachment to Alain Fayolle (fayolle@em-lyon.com) or one of the other Guest Editors of the special issue. First page must contain the title, author(s) and contact information for the corresponding author. For additional guidelines, please see ‘Instructions for Authors’ from a recent issue of Entrepreneurship and Regional Development or visit:

<http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/authors/tepnauth.asp>.

Papers suitable for publication in the Special Issue will be double-blind reviewed following the ERD’s review process guidelines.

## Timetable

The Special Issue is scheduled to be published in 2016 or 2017. The following timetable/deadline dates are given for your information:

1. Submission of the full papers – by 20 December 2014.
2. First Feedback from reviewers - by 30 May 2015.
3. Submission of the revised papers – by 30 November 2015.
4. Expected delivery date to E&RD - by 30 June 2016.

## Contact information

Please feel free to contact one of the Guest Editors if you have any queries about the Special Issue.

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