Australian Business Start-up Snapshot - Small, Savvy & Self-funded

Research conducted by the Australian Centre for Entrepreneurship Research (ACE) suggests most Australian start-ups are motivated by opportunity rather than need.

“This is a positive sign indicating entrepreneurs seek and seize opportunities rather than set up businesses because of job loss or lack of other alternatives,” said ACE director, Professor Per Davidsson.

ACE, based at QUT, conducted comprehensive surveys of 1,400 start-ups over a four year period from 2007 to 2011. The study, called The Comprehensive Australian Study of Entrepreneurial Emergence (CAUSEE), is the most thorough study of emerging new ventures ever conducted in Australia.

Professor Davidsson said that despite being driven by opportunity, most new businesses started off small and stayed that way with owners preferring to build ‘small and manageable’ firms rather than chase maximum growth. Similarly, the majority of new firms are not particularly innovative.

ACERE Conference the place to be

If you want to meet great minds in entrepreneurial thinking, then the ACERE conference is definitely the place to be. For me, the conference was a real shot in the arm. It got me out of my workplace and engaged with people from around the world doing really interesting research and bringing challenging and thought-provoking ideas. The range of papers gave me the chance to get a bit better acquainted with aspects of entrepreneurship and innovation that lie outside my field, and gave me a couple of research ideas to develop over the coming year.

I enjoyed the social program and the chance to talk to very experienced, as well as very new researchers. It was instructive to learn how life is for other entrepreneurship academics, and good to get some more ideas about research approaches and methods, as well as a couple of contacts for future collaborative research. The plenary sessions were a real bonus; the keynote speaker, Saras Sarasvathy, helped me to learn something about the intersubjective and interpersonal in entrepreneurship and certainly gave me something to think about; especially as the question of how entrepreneurs arrive at financing arrangements is an area I hadn’t thought much about.

Bootcamp Preparation for the Research Frontier

The 8th ACE research paper development conference, held December 18-20 at Tangalooma Resort on Moreton Island, was deemed by all participants to be a great success. Affectionately known as ‘Bootcamp’ this event puts young (and some not-so-young) researchers through rigorous training by their colleagues and several highly-experienced journal editors and reviewers. I was one of a half dozen non-QUT researchers graciously allowed to participate – this may seem particularly gracious since I now work at Griffith across the river from QUT. But as Per Davidsson and I have previously agreed, we may compete for students but in research we can collaborate very effectively and a “rising tide lifts all the boats”.

Indeed that might have been the unofficial theme of the Bootcamp this year, as in previous years. Each person submitting a paper for review undertook to provide journal quality reviews for three other submitted papers. Thus each paper received three very thoughtful and constructive written reviews on their own paper, plus a round-table...
...and The Winners are

The ACERE main conference program was recently held in the newly established $230 million Science and Engineering Centre in the heart of our CBD QUT Gardens Point campus. 5-8 February 2013.

ACERE participants also had the pleasure of enjoying the stunning views of Brisbane River, Kangaroo Point cliffs and the City Botanic Gardens at the ACERE Awards Dinner held at Room Three-Sixty. A very fitting venue to announce the winners of the 2013 ACERE awards.

Congratulations to our winners!

Sylvie Chetty & Tamara Gulkina, Rene Bakker, Martin Bliemel, Dorothea Werhahn & Malte Brettel.

and many thanks go to the 2013 award sponsors: SEAANZ, University of Adelaide, IE-Scholars and QUT.

From left to right: Dean Shepherd, Saras Sarasvathy, Sylvie Chetty, Rene Bakker, Martin Bliemel, Dorothea Werhan & Per Davidsson

Family Business Succession: When Death takes a Hand

The series of ACE research vignettes is aimed at sharing current and interesting research findings from our team of international Entrepreneurship researchers. In this vignette, Dr. Mervyn Morris considers the impact on family business operations due to the sudden and unexpected death of a key family member.

Family business dominates the economic activity of the majority of countries. Often family businesses are conceived of in terms of generations, from start-ups to families able to trace their beginnings back for centuries. One issue which is common across time and space is the question of succession: that is who will succeed the current family members occupying managerial roles?

Learning Journeys Connect to Research

The inaugural Academy of Management Africa Conference was held from the 7 to 10th January 2013, at the Gordon Institute of Business Science, a campus of the University of Pretoria, in Johannesburg. This was the first time that the Academy of Management had been held in Africa. The 2013 conference was focused around four themes.

- **Track 1: Navigating Institutions: Business, Government, and Civil Society**
  Title: Building a Nation: Cross-Sector Innovation and Constraints

- **Track 2: Emerging Market Firms and MNCs: Characteristics and Global Aspirations**
  Title: From Natural to Created Assets: Emerging Multinational Companies in South Africa

- **Track 3: The Base of the Pyramid: Emerging Market Consumers, Workers, and Managers**
  Title: New Markets New Mindsets: Formal and Informal Business Channels at the Base of the Pyramid

- **Track 4: Cultural Diversity and Transformational Societies**
  Title: A Country that No Longer Exists: Leading Institutions through the Wounds of History

Congratulations to Henri Burgers

ACE is increasing its influence on the premier journal on entrepreneurship, Journal of Business Venturing. ACE Adjunct Professor Dean Shepherd is the journal’s Editor-in-Chief, while ACE Director Per Davidsson is one of the Field Editors (in Management). Based on his excellent performance as ad hoc reviewer, Senior Lecturer Henri Burgers has now been appointed to the journal's Editorial Board, thus joining ACE Deputy Director Paul Steffens, who is already a member of that board.

Click here to see and hear Professor Dean Shepherd talk about his vision and philosophy for the Journal of Business Venturing.
Contact us for more information about ACE or if you would like to contribute to this newsletter.

Keep up to date with ACE by visiting our blog.