Exploring the "Dark Side" of Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship is often understood to be inherently 'good'. Terms often associated with entrepreneurship comprise the gamut of favourable connotations from "innovation" and "change" to "growth" and "economic development". However, if we understand entrepreneurship as being about the discovery and exploitation of opportunities, there really is not necessarily any moral good in entrepreneurship per se.

The present research project tried to empirically trace three instances of "dark" entrepreneurship, that is to say, entrepreneurship that is both illegal and covert, for which such data is historically available. Assuming that in order for people to consider "dark entrepreneurship" such efforts should be resilient against attempts to disrupt the venture, our focus is on what makes "dark networks" (one example of dark entrepreneurship) resilient.

The new venture mortality myth

Studies show that in the world’s advanced economies, new businesses do not suffer a high failure rate. Probably the most comprehensive cross-national set of new business survival rates (or more correctly, one year persistence rates) has been collected by the OECD Entrepreneurship Indicators Programme. For example, in 2005, over 80% of enterprises that entered an OECD country’s official records in one year were still recorded as persisting to the next year. Five-year persistence rates are just over 50%, on average. Is this a high or a low failure rate? Let’s compare this to job tenure.

Studies show that the median life of a typical new enterprise in an annual cohort, at around five years, is longer than the median tenure of a new job in Canada or the UK, and around the same as the median spell in self-employment in the US....

Experiments in the MBA Classroom: the Case of Time Frames in Project Teams

"Everybody knows it’s temporary. We all know the deadline, and then we shut down everything here. The whole thing is built up to be broken down. You become one team, certainly, but through it all, in the back of your mind, you ask: for how long will it stay?" - Project engineer on major medical innovation project, interviewed on what characterizes being part of a creative project team.

New venture projects tend to be founded by entrepreneurs who work in teams. At the stage of venture creation, such teams tend to closely resemble creative projects in which entrepreneurial opportunities need to be grasped in short, focused periods of time. While there is agreement that this “temporal” aspect of project teams is important, there is surprisingly little research on what time frames “do” to project teams.

ACE graduate now Dean of Faculty

It is our pleasure to announce that the first ACE PhD graduate, DM Semasinghe, has been voted Dean of the Faculty of Commerce & Management studies of the University of Kelaniya in Sri Lanka. The Dean is selected through the votes of permanent faculty members. Semasinghe assumed the role 2 July which will run for three years. We congratulate Semasinghe on this great achievement and wish him well in his endeavours to improve opportunities for his community through the development of research and teaching.

Ever found yourself reading about some interesting research, but finding it tough going?

We currently looking at better ways to communicate research findings to practitioners. ACE researcher Lauren Isaak is conducting a study designed to discover how research-based communications could be made more accessible to practitioners. Focusing on the communication of entrepreneurship research, the study will seek insights from entrepreneurs on length, ‘jargon’, multimedia and source credibility, and investigate how these elements of presentation spur and deter interest in content.
Can microcredit effectively solve the issues micro-entrepreneurs living in poor conditions face

The theme of the fourth edition of the 14th volume of the FSR Forum is Microfinance. In this edition the article by ACE Researchers, Marcello Tonelli and Carol Dalglish is one of three that addresses this delicate issue in terms that are easy to understand by practitioners. The piece questions whether Microcredit can effectively solve the issues micro-entrepreneurs living in poor conditions face. Important to note is that this article only criticizes specific aspects of Microcredit instead of Microfinance as a whole. Read more

QIS presents – Story of a Start-Up

Ever thought about turning an idea into a business, come and hear the story of someone who’s been there before. This open event hosted by The QUT Innovation Space (QIS) will be presented by Jo Ucukalo from Handle My Complaint. Resolving complaints might seem like a hard way to make a dollar, but Handle My Complaint is building a business out of disgruntled customers. Come listen to how this innovative new business was created: the idea, the start-up and the lessons learnt along the way. Read more details about this event.

Academic aura of Oxford inspires discussion and interaction

ACE Director Per Davidsson was one of the invitees to the “2012 Summer Residence Week for Entrepreneurship Scholars” held in Oxford, UK, on July 8–14. Green Templeton College hosted the event, while the delegates had their accommodation at Harris Manchester College. The residence week is a “different” type of academic gathering, where a group of some 25 accomplished scholars with backgrounds in business and economics work individually or in spontaneous/self-organised collaboration for most of the days, while the late afternoon hours are used for seminars organised “on the spot”. Thus, the meeting can become pretty much what each participant makes it: a writing retreat, a networking arena, and a forum for dissemination and feedback. The very academic environment … Read more

Entrepreneurs and Small Business – Leading From The Edge

The International Council for Small Business (ICSB) World Conference is an annual gathering with the vision of advancing entrepreneurship worldwide. This year the conference took place in Wellington, NZ on the 10-13th of June and was hosted by New Zealand’s national university Massey University in collaboration with the Small Enterprise Association of Australia and New Zealand (SEAANZ).

This year’s theme “Leading From The Edge” inspired discussions about how entrepreneurs and small businesses operate in different types of challenging and fast-changing environments … Read more

Findings from the research will be used to improve ACE's communication strategy. The Centre will be looking for volunteers to participate in the study over the next few months. Comments welcome.

ACERE – call for abstracts

The 2013 conference will be held February 6–8 at Australian Centre for Entrepreneurship Research home turf at QUT in Brisbane, one of the 7 most liveable cities in the World.

The call for abstracts opened on 4 July and will close on 19 August. Please visit the ACERE conference site for further information.

ACE aims to be a highly developmental professional experience for all participants. The conference features regular paper presentation sessions as well as a paper development workshop; a doctoral consortium; social events, and keynote addresses by international top scholars. Confirmed key note speaker for this year’s conference is Saras Sarasvathy. The 2013 conference program will again feature a Policy Forum facilitated by the SEEANZ, and possibly other adjacent events of interest to entrepreneurship scholars and practitioners.

Making all of this happen requires sponsors. At this point we are happy to announce the continued sponsorship of ie-scholars and SEEANZ. Read more about sponsorship opportunities.

Schumpeter opens up new opportunities for entrepreneurship scholars

The biannual Schumpeter conference, held in Brisbane from July 2-5, opened up new opportunities for entrepreneurship scholars for collaboration with the broader evolutionary economics community. The conference brought together more than 200 delegates for a couple of days of lively discussion and debate at the University of Queensland. The Australian Centre of Entrepreneurship was a proud sponsor of this conference.

One of the key topics discussed at the conference was the future development of the scholarly field of evolutionary economics. Thereby, evolutionary economics seems to move into the direction of entrepreneurship. To cite one of the fields’ key contributors, evolutionary economics mainly “focuses on the processes that transform the economy from within and on their consequences for firms and industries, production, trade, employment and growth” (Witt, U. 2008). Thereby the field has emphasized and popularized the importance of innovation in the scientific community as well as among policy makers.

An often stated complaint at the conference was the lack of
environments and deal with the inherent high degree of uncertainty. In her keynote speech, Professor Saras Sarasvathy presented fascinating examples of entrepreneurs who defied the challenges and uncertainties in their immediate environment and turned them into pioneering business opportunities; leading from the edge. Read more

QUT at BCERC!

Again this year ACE was well represented at BCERC, short for the Babson College Entrepreneurship Research Conference. Papers were presented by ACE Researchers: Christophe Garonne, Judy Matthews, Julienne Senyard, Michael Stuetzer and Roxanne Zolin.

BCERC is recognised as the leading conference for Entrepreneurship research and this year 242 papers were presented by 335 entrepreneurial researchers from 30 countries. More about BCERC

Can experiential learning lead to the making of an entrepreneurial mindset?

Is entrepreneurship a discipline that can be taught and learnt? The thousands of entrepreneurship courses available around the world would seem to support this line of thinking, but research findings in both developed and developing countries have been inconsistent in estimating the effectiveness of education and training on entrepreneurial attitudes, activity, and aspirations.

It seems in fact that improvements in either tacit or explicit knowledge carry weak consequences for entrepreneurial success, despite the recognition that knowledge in itself increases the cognitive abilities of individuals, leading to more productive potential activity. Under what conditions this potential can be funneled into successful entrepreneurial activities is a different question. Read more.