

Digitalization and Entrepreneurial Ecosystems

Summary

Entrepreneurial ecosystems have garnered increasing interest from scholars and policymakers globally in recent decades. Previous studies have elucidated how interconnected actors and factors foster conducive dynamics for productive entrepreneurship within specific geographic regions. However, contemporary digital technologies facilitate such interactions beyond the geographical boundaries of ecosystems. Despite this, the literature has surprisingly given little attention to the role of digitalization in the evolution of entrepreneurial ecosystems. Against this backdrop, this research project aims to explore how interactions and networks among actors and organizations unfold in the digital realm and how these digital interactions intersect with physical ones. Furthermore, this research project seeks to examine how the evolutionary dynamics of entrepreneurial ecosystems are catalyzed through digitization.

Research field:	Business
Supervisor:	Aki Harima
Availability:	This position is available.
Offered by:	School of Business and Governance Department of Business Administration
Application deadline:	Applications are accepted between January 01, 2024 00:00 and January 22, 2024 23:59 (Europe/Zurich)

Description

The research

The scholarly discourse surrounding entrepreneurial ecosystems has intensified since the mid-2010s (Wurth et al., 2023), emerging as a prominent domain in contemporary entrepreneurship research. Entrepreneurial ecosystems are defined as 'a set of interdependent actors and factors coordinated in such a way that they enable productive entrepreneurship within a particular territory' (Stam & Spigel, 2016). The evolution of these ecosystems is conceptualized as a trajectory involving the development, multiplication, diversification, and recycling of resources. Nascent entrepreneurial ecosystems typically lack resources, necessitating resource enrichment for advancement.

Previous studies have illustrated how entrepreneurial ecosystems traditionally sought external resources, such as attracting foreign entrepreneurs and investors. However, in the digital era, these ecosystems can tap into resources embedded in other regions within the digital sphere. For example, Estonia has successfully integrated foreign entrepreneurs by issuing E-Residency, allowing them to establish and operate businesses remotely without physical presence. Despite the evident impact of digitalization, there remains a gap in understanding its role in the evolution of entrepreneurial ecosystems.

Responsibilities and (foreseen) tasks:

- The candidate's main task will be to prepare a doctoral thesis in the domain of entrepreneurial ecosystems (with a specific focus on digitalization) under the supervision of Professor Aki Harima.
- The candidate is also expected to engage in small-scale teaching and supervision as well as active participation in the department's activities.
- The candidate is also expected to support the acquisition and implementation of third-party funded research projects.
- The candidate can also contribute to the organization of research and practitioner workshops where project findings are disseminated.

Applicants should fulfil the following requirements:

- A master's degree in social sciences (preferably in business administration, information systems, economic geography, or sociology)
- A clear interest in the topic of the position
- Excellent command of English
- Strong and demonstrable writing and analytical skills



- Capacity to work both as an independent researcher and as part of an international team
- Capacity and willingness to provide assistance in organizational tasks relevant to the project

The following experience is beneficial:

- Working knowledge of qualitative methods (e.g., case studies)
- Working knowledge of qualitative data analysis software (e.g., NVIVO, MAXQDA)
- Command of Estonian

The candidate should submit a research plan for the topic, including the overall research and data collection strategy. The candidate can expand on the listed research question and tasks, and propose additional theoretical lenses to be used.

We offer:

- 4-year PhD position (employed as an Early-Stage Researcher at the Department of Business Administration) in a strong team of researchers with international publication records and experience in leading and participating in pan-European research consortia.
- The chance to do high-level research in a dynamic academic environment.
- Opportunities for conference visits, research stays and networking with globally leading universities and research centers in the various sub-fields of management.
- All PhD positions are guaranteed a gross income of at least 1828 EUR and Estonian national health insurance.

About the department

Tallinn University of Technology (TalTech) is an international scientific community with approximately 9,000 students and 2,000 employees, one of the largest universities in Estonia that is the leading EU country in digitalization. The strengths of the university are wide multidisciplinary study/research interests, modern research and study environment as well as strong collaboration with international educational and research institutions. TalTech is aiming to be an organization leading the way to a sustainable digital future.

TalTech has a green and one of the most compact university campuses in Europe that includes the Tehnopol Tallinn Science Park. Low hierarchy, academic freedom and a balanced work and family life are valued at TalTech. The university provides individual development and training opportunities, material and non-material tokens of acknowledgement, sporting opportunities at TalTech Sports Club and all-staff activities.

TalTech as an employer brings together representatives from a wide range of disciplines - engineers and economists, business and biotechnology, and data scientists - with a common mission to develop Estonian higher education and research. Keywords that characterize TalTech today are rapid development, interdisciplinarity, and internationalization. The university has an international working environment and the working languages are English and Estonian.

The research carried out at the Department of Business Administration in the School of Business and Governance in TalTech deals with various aspects of business – entrepreneurship, sustainability, knowledge and technology transfer, operations and strategic management, digitalization, marketing, supply chain management, accounting and performance management. The School has over 200 employees.

The department is highly internationalized. Its staff have been involved in a multitude of international research projects with the EU (INTERREG, COST, Horizon Europe etc).

Additional information

For further information, please contact Aki Harima aki.harima@taltech.ee and visit <https://taltech.ee/en/department-business-administration> and <https://taltech.ee/en/phd-admission>



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