

Preface

Dear Reader

As President of the European Council for Small Business (ECSB), I am delighted to introduce the 11th volume in the 'Frontiers in European Entrepreneurship Research' series. This latest volume contains chapters developed from among the 113 papers presented at the 28th Research in Entrepreneurship and Small Business (RENT) conference held in Luxembourg in 2014. The RENT conference, which is jointly organized by ECSB and the European Institute for Advanced Studies in Management (EIASM), is the most important pan-European conference for entrepreneurship scholars and experts. We are very proud of how ECSB and EIASM have been able to develop this event into one of the most influential entrepreneurship conferences worldwide. The RENT conference provides a wonderful opportunity for researchers to come together, share ideas and make new friends. Whilst the ECSB also runs the 3E Conference (the ECSB Entrepreneurship Education Conference) and co-brands numerous other activities all year round, the life of our association still culminates in our annual meeting at the RENT conference, which is also the ECSB signature event running successfully for almost 30 years. The ECSB is a non-profit organization that strives to contribute to developing an understanding of entrepreneurship and consequently to improve the competitiveness of European small and medium-sized enterprises. With around 400 full members and a growing network in excess of 2000 friends from 38 European countries, ECSB remains the largest European association of researchers, educators and practitioners in entrepreneurship. It is this strong membership base that provides the backbone of the ECSB and helps drive forward the frontiers of research in this significant field of human endeavour.

The Board of ECSB works hard at making the RENT conference more attractive to its members. The conference is supplemented by several pre-conference activities including a doctoral and a post-doctoral workshop, the former assisting doctoral students to improve their research, the latter providing post-docs with an opportunity to strengthen their publications and dissemination activities. In 2015, we launched a new

initiative in the form of Professional Development Workshops, designed to share expertise and foster the broader intellectual skills of members: one on peer-reviewing and another on a wonder-lab in entrepreneurship. We also continue to offer the policy forum themes around topical issues and linking up with the local organizers of the conference. In addition we offer special interest groups (SIGs) for our members and a mentoring programme to assist in career development, which links up seasoned scholars with junior members who can benefit from the experience and advice of their peers.

The RENT Frontiers series is an important means of acknowledging the scientific achievements of our community and of leaving a tangible legacy for our current and future members. The Frontiers series offers a selected overview of the latest and cutting-edge developments in entrepreneurship and small business research in Europe. The chapters presented in this book were selected from the best papers presented at the conference upon nomination from the Scientific Committee and the session chairs. The chosen papers then go through a review process of a minimum of two stages until they have achieved the high-quality standard required to be included in the final publication. I would like to thank those authors and reviewers who have contributed to this volume.

The aim of the series is to disseminate the latest research insights to the benefit of a large community of stakeholders that extends well beyond the academic network. The Frontiers series has become a key resource for all those interested in understanding entrepreneurship and how this knowledge can be exploited to create a more entrepreneurial and sustainable Europe. I encourage you to visit our website for the most up-to-date developments and initiatives from the ECSB, www.ecsb.org. In the meantime, I do hope that you find this latest volume stimulating and useful.

*Robert Blackburn
ECSB President
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