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**NEWS**

**Faster project, work in progress**



The FASTER project is supported by the Leonardo da Vinci Programme of the European Commission. Its goal is to promote the mainstreaming in Europe of good practices for entrepreneurship education.

The project is aimed at transferring the ISTUD Entrepreneurship Programme (IEP), a training course to support high-growth oriented entrepreneurs. The course, designed to teach entrepreneurship to those committed in exploiting their knowledge through the creation of a knowledge intensive company, has been developed and successfully run in Italy by the business school ISTUD Foundation and will be modified and transferred to other European Business schools, Universities, Innovation Intermediaries in Poland, Hungary, Cyprus, and the Czech Republic, which are committed in adapting the IEP model to their own entrepreneurial environment.

In doing this, the FASTER project will foster the cooperation among key actors involved in entrepreneurship promotion such as organizations providing learning opportunities, incubators, Technology Transfer Offices and early stage investors. The

cooperation among the above mentioned actors is crucial for the success and effectiveness of the training programme, because it will give the opportunity to the would-be entrepreneur to build a network able to support him in the starting phase.

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**Entrepreneurship Editorials**

In this issue, some interesting articles/papers about High growth oriented Entrepreneurship

**Entrepreneurship Education and Training in a Small Business Context: Insights from the Competence-Based Approach**

- Thomas Lans- Wageningen University and Research Centre (WUR) - Education and Competence Studies
- Daniel Kaufmann - The Brookings Institution
- Willem Hulsink - Erasmus University Rotterdam (EUR) - Rotterdam School of Management (RSM)
- Herman Baert - Catholic University of Leuven (KUL) Martin Mulder - Wageningen University and Research Centre (WUR) - Education and Competence Studies

**Abstract:**

The concept of competence, as it is brought into play in current research, is a potentially powerful construct for entrepreneurship education research and practice. Although the concept has been the subject of strong debate in educational research in general, critical analysis of how it has been used, applied and experienced in entrepreneurship education practice is scarce. This article contributes specifically to the discussion of entrepreneurial competence by theoretically unfolding and discussing the concept. Subsequently, the implications of applying a competence-based approach in entrepreneurship education are illustrated and discussed based on analysis of two cases that were aimed at identifying, diagnosing and eventually developing entrepreneurial competence in small businesses in the Netherlands and Flanders (Belgium). The cases show that the added value of focussing on competence in entrepreneurship education lies in making the (potential) small business owner aware of the importance of certain entrepreneurial competencies and in providing direction for competence development. In this process it is fundamental that competence is treated as an item for discussion and interpretation, rather than as a fixed template of boxes to be ticked. Furthermore the cases highlight that a competence-based approach does not determine the type of educational and instructional strategies to be used. Its consequential power in that respect is limited.

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**Entrepreneurship Summit Executive Summary**  
International Economic Development Council

**Abstract:**

Entrepreneurship support programs are designed to help generate innovation and stimulate U.S. economic growth by providing resources to potential and active entrepreneurs: education, training, and even funding. However, there currently is a dearth of information about the nature and effectiveness of

these programs.

On April 1, 2008, the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation and the International Economic Development Council (IEDC) convened a meeting at the Kauffman Foundation to discuss how to improve knowledge about these programs' effectiveness and impacts. The meeting brought together forty experts, including heads of entrepreneurship programs and economic development professionals, to share their experiences and ideas for supporting potential high-growth firms. This document summarizes the insights and conclusions from this meeting.

The participants concentrated on four questions:

- What are the core components of an effective entrepreneurship support program?
- What is the essential infrastructure of an entrepreneurial eco-system?
- What are new avenues for research?
- What steps should be taken next to facilitate high-growth entrepreneurs?

Participants determined that effective entrepreneurship programs should structure their services to address entrepreneurs' core needs: providing relevant market knowledge, access to talent and capital, and participating in networks. Effective support programs build bridges between entrepreneurs and their peers, community organizations (such as schools and universities), arts and cultural entities, hospitals, businesses, and local governments. These bridge-building efforts ideally should be part of a broader regional vision, which public policies can promote.

Research on the value of these entrepreneurial support programs would be useful, especially to determine their impacts on local and regional economic development. The participants agreed it also would be beneficial to identify ways in which far-flung support programs might better connect with one another.

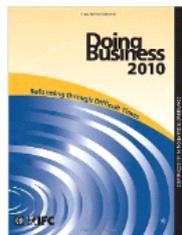
Participants further agreed that policymakers and other stakeholders need greater awareness about the importance of entrepreneurship to economic growth, and - to the extent that the research demonstrates it - the importance of entrepreneurial support efforts to facilitate entrepreneurial growth.

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## LEARNING CORNER

In this issue, some interesting books, dealing with subjects strictly related to activities and scope of Faster Project.

### Doing Business 2010: Reforming through Difficult Times



**Authors:** World Bank  
**Year:** 2009  
**Publisher:** Palgrave MacMillan

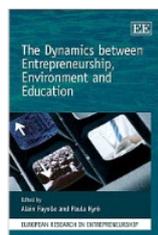
"AFRICA: 'Doing Business' reformers may lead recovery. The faster recovery rates likely to be experienced by reformist states can be expected to provide added impetus to the business environment reform process in the years ahead." -- Oxford Analytics, September 10, 2009

"Encouragingly, reform seems to be contagious. Countries try to emulate leaders in their regions... The willingness of governments to keep reforming in such tough times strengthens the prospects for recovery." --The Economist, September 10, 2009

"One of the merits of its [Doing Business] data is that for any given regulatory obstacle in a country, it is easy to see which neighbouring country is doing better, and whether there are any relatively simple changes that would help." -- The Financial Times, September 12, 2009

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### The Dynamics Between Entrepreneurship, Environment and Education (European Research in Entrepreneurship)



**Authors:** by Alain Fayolle and Paula Kyro  
**Year:** 2008  
**Publisher:** Edward Elgar Publishing

This book demonstrates that the dynamics between entrepreneurship, environment and education are underpinned by a set of qualitative and quantitative research data that clearly show the contextual dimension of the entrepreneurship phenomenon. The key paradigms and schools of thoughts concerning European entrepreneurship are addressed via a diverse range of topics, including: entrepreneurial learning, corporate entrepreneurship, technological entrepreneurship, university entrepreneurship, growth of young firms and institutional support.

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## FASTER Partners

The FASTER project is based on transferring knowledge from the well-developed innovation and entrepreneurship support institutions in Italy to the business support institutions in the countries which joined the EU in 2004. Therefore all the partners organizations are key players at regional/national level for entrepreneurship promotion and start up creation, having strong linkages with policymakers and innovation intermediaries.

The partners of the project are:



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Education and Culture DG  
Lifelong Learning Programme  
Leonardo da Vinci

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