



Editorial—Understanding before celebrating: Entrepreneurship beyond imitation, certainty, and comfort

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In an era marked by permanent disruption, accelerated technological change, and growing uncertainty, entrepreneurship research faces a decisive challenge: whether to merely replicate dominant narratives or to interrogate them critically, exposing their limits, paradoxes, and unintended consequences.

This issue of the *Journal of Entrepreneurial Researchers* deliberately chooses the second path.

The contributions in this issue move beyond celebratory or deficit-based narratives, offering critical and empirically grounded analyses of entrepreneurship as a complex, context-dependent, and systemically embedded phenomenon.

Entrepreneurship in Low-Density Territories: From “Exceptions” to Theory

A further reason this stance matters is that much of entrepreneurship and innovation scholarship has been forged in high-density environments, with abundant venture capital, large proximate markets, and thick institutional networks. Yet an increasing share of entrepreneurial reality unfolds elsewhere: in small economies, remote islands, peripheral regions, and low-density ecosystems where constraints are structural rather than temporary.

These territories are too often treated as marginal cases, where the task is merely to “adapt” models imported from hegemonic centres. The journal’s mission is different: to treat low-density contexts not as a deficit, but as an analytical frontier, one that can generate concepts, evidence, and policy insights with broader relevance. In such settings, isolation, resource constraints, brain drain pressures, and market thinness do not simply reduce opportunity; they reshape the very mechanisms through which entrepreneurial resilience, innovation pathways, and sustainable value creation emerge (Collins & Murtagh, 2025).

From Myth to Evidence: Questioning Entrepreneurial Orthodoxies

We open this issue with *Beyond Silicon Valley: Lessons from accelerator programs in small innovation ecosystems*, a study that directly challenges one of the most entrenched assumptions in contemporary entrepreneurship policy: that accelerators are universally beneficial engines of venture success.

Drawing on administrative data from 2019–2023, combined with propensity-score matching and qualitative interviews, the authors reveal a nuanced and uncomfortable reality. While accelerator participation may increase employment growth, it simultaneously correlates with higher failure risk. These counterintuitive findings resist simplistic celebration and instead invite a more mature policy debate, one that recognises that support mechanisms may amplify both opportunity and vulnerability. Methodologically, the use of propensity-score methods aligns with established practice for reducing confounding in observational studies (Austin, 2011).

This contribution exemplifies what this journal seeks to promote: empirically grounded research that does not shy away from ambiguity, and that treats entrepreneurship not as a moral good per se, but as a phenomenon to be carefully examined.

Reframing Creation, Innovation, and Destruction

If the first article destabilises dominant policy narratives, the second, *The dialectics of creative destruction and uncreative construction*, challenges theoretical complacency.



Through the articulation of the concept of uncreative construction, the authors question the romanticisation of innovation through perpetual disruption. Inspired by biomimicry, the article advances a conceptual framework in which sustainability, regeneration, and restraint are not obstacles to innovation, but essential conditions for its long-term viability.

In doing so, the paper aligns with a broader intellectual concern that runs through this issue: the need to move beyond binary thinking, success versus failure, innovation versus stagnation, and to explore the dialectical processes through which entrepreneurial systems evolve.

Responsible Innovation as Practice, Not Rhetoric

This concern is further developed in *Integrating social and responsible innovation for sustainable entrepreneurship*, a meta-synthesis of contemporary case studies. Through a transparent and systematic review process, the authors distil actionable insights that bridge theory and practice.

Rather than treating responsibility as a symbolic add-on, the article demonstrates how social and responsible innovation can be operationalised across contexts. Its contribution lies not only in synthesis, but in offering guiding propositions capable of informing both scholarship and policy design.

Together with *Operationalising the quintuple helix in S3*, which translates complex innovation frameworks into practical instruments for regional development and tourism policy, these articles reinforce a core position of the journal: entrepreneurship research must speak simultaneously to scholars, policymakers, and practitioners. Conceptually, the quintuple helix positions innovation as a socio-ecological system in which the natural environment is not external to innovation, but a driver and constraint within it (Carayannis et al., 2012).

Context, Crisis, and Constrained Choices

The remaining contributions ground these broader reflections in concrete contexts.

The study on circular economy and sustainable entrepreneurship in healthcare illustrates how entrepreneurial action unfolds under material constraints, regulatory pressures, and ethical imperatives, reminding us that innovation is often less about heroic breakthroughs than about careful optimisation, recombination, and systemic awareness.

In addition, the article on crowdfunding for women entrepreneurship highlights persistent structural asymmetries, showing that access to finance remains deeply entangled with social signals, gender norms, and evaluative biases.

The issue also includes an exploratory empirical study on the adoption of emerging information technologies in the financial sector, examining how artificial intelligence and blockchain are reshaping organisational practices and workforce perceptions within highly regulated environments.

The case study of marketing strategies in the restaurant sector during a global crisis further reinforces a key lesson: in moments of extreme uncertainty, entrepreneurial survival depends less on imitation of best practices and more on adaptive judgment, contextual sensitivity, and the capacity to avoid avoidable failure.

A Journal-Positioning Statement

Taken together, the articles in this issue articulate a coherent editorial stance.

The *Journal of Entrepreneurial Researchers* is not interested in entrepreneurship as spectacle, nor in innovation as slogan. Instead, it seeks contributions that:

- confront dominant assumptions with evidence,
- embrace uncertainty rather than obscure it,
- recognise failure as an analytical category, not a stigma,
- and situate entrepreneurial action within broader social, institutional, and ecological dynamics.



In a world increasingly tempted by simplification, speed, and superficial metrics, this issue argues, implicitly but firmly, that depth, rigor, and critical reflection remain indispensable.

Understanding must come before celebration. Only then can entrepreneurship genuinely contribute to sustainable and meaningful futures.

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Ethical Statement

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