



## CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

**1st WORKSHOP "INNOVATION & TRADITION"**

**"Innovation in knowhow intensive activities,  
what are the best practices?"**

<http://www.bem.edu/workshop-innovation-and-tradition>

Organised by:

SME & Innovation Research group – Bordeaux Management School  
Creativity and Innovation Research group- IRG – University Paris Est  
CEREN, Burgundy School of Business

Supported by:

The Academy of Entrepreneurship and Innovation (AEI)

**21st September 2012 – 9.30am to 5.30pm**

BEM, 680 cours de la Libération - 33405 Talence - FRANCE

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The "SME and Innovation Research Group" at BEM consists of around 15 permanent faculty members and focuses on four main research topics: SME and innovation ecosystems; norms quality management and SMEs; entrepreneurship and intrapreneurship; crisis management in SMEs.

The IRG Group, University of Eastern Paris, has around 70 academics specialised in management. One of their specialisations is creativity and innovation. This research team focuses on the organisation of creative activities in the firms, including more transversal issues like HRM and project management, marketing and innovation.

The Ceren (Center in Business Research, Burgundy School of Business), has 40 permanent faculty members who study the decision-making process, its context, actors and drivers. One of the research teams concentrates more specifically on "Innovation, Clustering and Entrepreneurship" (ICE).

## TOPIC OF THE WORKSHOP

### Innovation in know-how intensive activities: what are the best practices?

In a knowledge economy, the traditional innovation indicators are usually R&D investments and the number of patents. This is generally the case in France, in Europe and in the OECD countries, mainly because they enable international comparisons. They are however quite limited, first because not every innovation is patented, but also because of the sector-related differences and because there are patents that never become an innovation.

Innovation in traditional activities is thus poorly measured through these indicators (Foray, 2010): innovation by artists, craftspeople, producers of local goods, *terroir* and tradition industries are underestimated by this measurement. In such activities knowledge and knowhow rely on non-formalized practices and implicit knowledge, which are difficult to transmit and which define "knowhow intensive activities".

In these sectors the stakes are slightly different. On the one hand there is the issue of what could be called 'manual intelligence', which makes it possible to keep, develop and transfer local productions but also to adapt to an evolving environment. On the other hand, it is difficult to assess their huge innovation potential, as innovations in these areas are less technological in nature and usually more incremental. They often rely on marketing, organizational or environmental innovation<sup>1</sup>, which have been less studied than technological innovation (Fonrouge, 2008; von Tunzelmann & Acha, 2006). Such innovations could encompass for example the creation of producers associations (like PDO (protected

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<sup>1</sup> these types of innovation have been added in the last version of the Community Innovation Survey (CIS8).

designation of origin), PGI (protected geographical indication) or TSG (traditional speciality guaranteed)) based on local, national or European initiatives, or quality labels.

Geographers, sociologists, and economists have studied these sort of evolutions and have focused on the embeddedness in a territory: cooperation in more or less localised networks, construction of rules and norms protecting a group of firms and building entry barriers (Longhi et Quéré, 1993; Torre, 2002; Fourcade, 2008). Business historians have shown how the value of this specific knowhow is enhanced by the development of business museums, communication on local archives, and other ways of opening firms towards customers and partners.

Management research seeks to understand the management of these firms and study their governance, their strategies of value creation, development, protection and transmission (Marchesnay, 2001; Polge, 2003). Academics also try to understand how such firms bring their innovations to the market (Carpenter & Petzold, 2010). The knowhow – which is thereby built in a long term perspective – is thus valued thanks to both innovation and tradition.

The concept of heritage is thus at the very heart of such activities and we aim to organise the different topics of the workshop following their maturity stage, value mode and the potential integration of the different actors of the value chain in these value making processes.

### **Topic #1: innovations valuing knowhow and the maturity stage of the firm.**

#### Creation and development of knowhow intensive activities:

How to start a new venture based on traditional knowledge? How to attract, develop and value such knowledge? What can be the role of registered names, labels, norms and collective appellations in such processes? How to keep an individual identity in collective networks? How to build tradition-based legitimacy when you are a new venture?

#### Keeping and growing knowhow intensive activities:

What is the place of traditional activities in an economy looking for sustainability? How can medium-sized or even bigger firms build alliances or associations? Is there such thing as 'critical size' in these areas? Do firms lose their identity or their singularity when they build such alliances?

#### Transmitting, taking over or stopping knowhow intensive activities:

What are the assessment modes when such firms are transmitted? How do collective institutions take part in this process? Which role do appellations play? Are there any specific competences fostering the transmission of specialised knowhow?

### **Topic #2: innovative practices aiming at valuing knowhow, a question of the value type expected**

Is it a question of valuing the brand, the creative individuals, the craftspeople or the artists?  
How can you value a brand attached to a person?

Is it better to separate the person from the business and the competences that are related to it?  
How is it possible to evaluate tacit knowledge when a firm is transmitted or taken over?

Do labels and appellations – collective in nature – make firms lose their identity or singularity? How do craftspeople manage to embed new knowledge into objects by adapting tools and methods to their own activity?

How to transform traditional craftwork-knowhow into economic drivers and into economic growth? Is mass diffusion and adaptation appropriate? Under which condition?

Which role can new technologies play in the formalization, capitalization and crystallization of specialized knowledge?

### **Topic #3: innovative practices aiming at valuing knowhow, a question of the actor targeted**

Unlike tangible assets, specialised knowledge domains gain value when they are used. Is their evaluation the same for all the actors involved in the value chain?

Should you value your knowhow the same way when you target your distributor, your supplier, the prescriber of your product or service, your funding suppliers or your final customer?

Are innovative systems, structures and practices the same all along the value chain?

How to adapt those practices to the target? Are the dangers and limits due to the communication of information the same for every actor? Can imitation and counterfeit help develop knowhow? Maintain knowhow? Or mainly lose knowhow?

### **References**

Carpenter, M. et Petzold, S. (2010), « La face cachée des labels – IGP et grande distribution, une analyse réseau du pruneau d'Agen », *Gérer et Comprendre*, n°101, septembre, p. 26-37

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Marchesnay, M., (2001), « Les PME de terroir : entre « geo » et « clio » stratégies », *Entreprises et histoire*, 28 (2001/2), p. 51-63

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## SCHEDULE

- Paper Submission Deadline: 11 March 2012
- Authors Acceptance Notification: early June 2012
- Final Paper Submission Deadline: 20 July 2012
- Communication of the workshop schedule: latest 5 September 2012

## AUTHORS GUIDELINES

Submissions should be sent to:

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At least one of the authors should attend the conference and present the communication. All accepted papers will be published in the proceedings of the workshop. The best papers will be published in the special issue of a peer reviewed journal. This project has been submitted to the RIPME for a publication in 2014.

Please refer to the Conference Paper Style Guide below before submitting your paper

- The page limit for papers is ten to fifteen (10-15 pages, 4,000 to 8,000 words) A4 pages, with 2.5cm (1" margins), 1.5 spaced text, 12-point Times New Roman font. Note, page limits include references/bibliography, Tables and Figures, and the cover page with author details. Footnotes should not exceed 2,000 words and should be placed at the foot of the page.

- Cover page includes: title of the paper, authors names and affiliations and an abstract of around 10 lines (max 300 words) in French and English language.
- Pages, tables and figures should be numbered.
- References along the text will indicate the name of the author and the publication date between brackets.
- The list of references will be placed at the end of the text in alphabetical order. They will indicate last name, initial of surname, publication date, title (*italic* for a book, roman between French quotations marks for a paper), the pages, city and publisher for a book, journal name in *italic*, volume, issue and pages for a paper.

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And the research group SME & Innovation of BEM.