CHAPTER 10

SCHOLARLY PRACTICE AND MEANINGFUL RESEARCH: UTILISING VOICE BY ENABLING ACTION … IF IT WAS ONLY THAT SIMPLE!

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ABSTRACT

The growing importance of 'lived practices' in entrepreneurship-related studies has sought to pose several questions and challenges for researchers/scholars in the field (Ruona & Gilley, 2009; Short, Keefer, & Stone, 2009). The issue of how current entrepreneurship research practices can become more applied in nature provides the basis for articulating more clearly what we mean by research impact and why it has become a central concern in the research field (Beyer & Trice, 1982; Huggins et al., 2008; Rynes, 2007; Starkey & Tempest, 2005). This debate has drawn specific attention to the need for applied research in entrepreneurial scholarship, which is more reflective of lived practice. The need to reach a balance between practitioners and academics' expectations in terms of delivering research which is focussed towards achieving academic rigour and application to practice, which is both meaningful and relatable, is significant for both communities (Ram, Edwards, Jones, Kiselinchev, & Muchenje, 2014). This chapter seeks to assist and inspire both existing and future researchers in the field to make more informed choices and offer tangible evidence of good practice, serving as a guide to researchers wishing to develop engaged research.

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The authors hope that the nature of this chapter would seek to clarify the importance of engaged research in supporting how we understand and respond to the needs of entrepreneurial practice as a means of building trust and confidence in research reported. A key characteristic of the issue will be the different 'framing' of questions that can enhance practical knowledge.

Keywords: Actionable knowledge; impact; Mode 2 knowledge production; collaboration; engagement

AQ2

INTRODUCTION

There is no tomorrow, only today…

The economic crisis of 2008 and its subsequent impact on economic growth have forced numerous European and UK government policies to address and recognise the need for increasing innovative economic productivity (De Prato, Nepelski, & Piroli, 2015; Pesole & Nepelski, 2016). A country's knowledge-based economy requires and demands highly educated and skilled entrepreneurial practitioners, in order to develop socially inclusive enterprising cultures as a means of providing local, regional and national economies with employment opportunities. University Business Schools are viewed as the gateway for building the necessary entrepreneurial skills sets to innovate entrepreneurial practice in the emerging knowledge-based economy. In the UK and EU, entrepreneurial research and training has been the focus of numerous government-funded policies and initiatives. Entrepreneurship/small business management research is now an established area of scholarly activity and is a recognised part of the higher education landscape. It has taken a considerable amount of time for the field to be accepted and to have its importance and value acknowledged. Various commentators have debated numerous reasons why it is taken so long to become established as an academic area of scholarly interest ranging from political, cultural, ideological and educational drivers to name but some. Universities are playing an increasingly important role in regional economic development, and development agencies are taking an active role in building bridges between business and universities across the regions and nations (Lambert Review, 2003, p. 13). Successive UK governments since the mid-1980s have argued that universities should be making a greater contribution to raising the global competitiveness of the UK economy (Cox & Taylor, 2006, p. 117). Transferring the knowledge and skills between universities and business and the wider community increases the economic and social returns from this investment (Lambert Review, 2003, p.39). Driven by the Labour government agenda universities have been encouraged and funded to develop knowledge-exchange activities. Knowledge exchange is seen as a way to boost world class excellence and strengthen the work of universities in supporting the regional economies (Lambert Review, 2003). Education institutions are regarded as having an important role in raising the productivity of

local businesses and are incentivised to increase knowledge transfer (Williams, McIver, Moore, & Bryan, 2008, p. 31). This has consequently added a new dimension to the way in which universities are funded (Bartkus & Holland, 2010; Cox & Taylor, 2006). Funding such as the Higher Education Reach Out to Business and the Community was followed by the Higher Education Innovation Fund aimed at strengthening links between higher education (HE) and business through knowledge exchange. However, the Lambert Review (2003) recognises that there is no single model for a university to undertake knowledge transfer/ exchange activities, stating that: AQ3

> some take in knowledge transfer and technology transfer activities, while others keep the two activities separate and have established specialised companies to manage technology transfer. The appropriate approach will vary depending on the needs of local business, the mission of the university, and the focus of the local economy. (p. 50)

The HEI sector in the UK has a core role to play in terms of developing the required skills and knowledge base for the enhancement of industrial innovation and enterprise. The effectiveness of current knowledge transfer practices between HEIs business schools and industry practitioners have been the subject of many empirical investigations (Agrawal, 2001; Barge & Shockley-Zalabak, 2008; Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2002). Studies have consistently evidenced that the impact of the knowledge delivered through scholarly endeavour has had limited application or value to the entrepreneurship/small business management practitioner. The above debate is not new by any means, the relevance of theoretical knowledge and its relationship to practice has been widely discussed with many commenters and special issue journal publications, for example, *Organization Studies* (2009 and 2010), the *Journal of Management Studies* (2009) and the *British Journal of Management* (2011), both academics and practitioners noting a 'relevance-gap' between a practitioner and research-based knowledge and practice. The university sector both in the UK and Europe is being looked upon by both regional and national governments to provide the knowledge and skill sets required to enhance and stimulate entrepreneurial behaviour and growth. In some quarters, the HEI sector could be viewed as the gatekeepers of knowledge societies (Beech, MacIntosh, Sims, & Antonacopoulou, 2012; Empson, 2013; European Union Commission, 2014; European Union Council, 2007; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004; Kelly, McLellan, & McNicoll, 2009). University Business Schools in particular have sought to embrace policies of collaboration with the private sector, focussing on methods of knowledge transfer partnerships as a means of distilling academic research (knowledge) in the real world (Kieser & Leiner, 2009; Li, 2011), this can be evidence in the HEI sector wide propagation of government-invested policies towards the establishment of collaborative knowledge transfer partnerships and the increased pressure to utilise research findings into government policy agendas. UK government and EU policies are calling on business schools to develop and enhance entrepreneurial growth and skill sets, in order to meet these challenges. Education and training programmes must be more proactive in providing innovative educational practices which helps and facilitates life experiences and experiential learning (BERR, 2008). AQ4

The research landscape is becoming more dynamic, the realisation that research funding is becoming more competitive requiring HEI to demonstrate research impact as a measurable unit of performance. The national concordat for public engagement Research Councils UK (2015) suggests that engaged research holds value to the principles of inducing co-operative, co-constructed and cross-fertilising expert/public synergies. In this sense, the role of HEIs in building collaborative partnerships is now viewed as a critical means through which potential research impact is both influenced and made explicit. Here, HEI engagement is not simply a nebulous exercise in building collaborative partnerships but has now a far more significant instrumental value, regarding how knowledge and skills are developed through research practice from which research impact claims may emerge. Through such partnerships HEIs can play a significant role in the re-development, re-skilling and regeneration of entrepreneurial and enterprise-related activities through the co-creation of emergent, but equally beneficial, research agendas (Bansal, Bertels, Ewart, MacConnachie, & O'Brien, 2012; Cox & Taylor, 2006). HEIs today operate a multifaceted set of roles, performing numerous activities within national and regional economies, from research, education, consultancy, knowledge exchange activities, knowledge providers and producers; both nationally and internationally there has been a positioning of AQ5 HEIs as holding the ability to provide a resource of enterprise creating and sustainment supported through national and international collaborative research networks and training. Through the utilisation of these resources HEIs are being asked to play a pivotal role in revitalising and regenerating declining regional economies, through stimulating entrepreneurial development. However, the HEI/entrepreneurship interface is difficult to navigate and sustain, it is fraught at times between institutional research directions, issues surrounding engagement and at times a lack of understanding about what entrepreneurs need and want. For many HEIs, the management of how they engage with entrepreneurial businesses is certainly not fluid and plagued by difficulties and in some cases failure. There is an extensive literature to suggest that small firms contribute significantly to the economy as important creators of jobs and wealth (Nesta, 2009, 2014). A flourishing small business sector is central to economic growth in the UK and AQ6 universities are seen as key facilitators to achieving this vision (Athey et al., 2007; Benneworth & Charles, 2007).

WHY ENTREPRENEURSHIP?

The field of entrepreneurship is growing rapidly but the fundamental question of what it means to be an entrepreneur, what they do and how they engage in practice is becoming more obscured and fragmented, resulting in different conceptual perspectives (Higgins, Trehan, & McGowan, 2015; Watson, 2013). Gartner (2001) suggests that each discipline in the field has its own way of viewing what entrepreneurship is, but equally it is difficult to fully appreciate the phenomenon of the entrepreneur by simply looking at its effect, we need to

understand what it means to 'be' (Hjorth, 2007). The beauty, simplicity and yet complexity of what it means to be an entrepreneur cannot be decontextualised into constituent parts, it must be appreciated as an emergent dynamic whole. This is not to say that the knowledge we have gained about entrepreneurship is redundant rather what is being suggested is that we use this knowledge as an opportunity to seek alternative ways of engaging with entrepreneurs (Diochon & Anderson, 2011; Korsgaard & Anderson, 2011). To a degree the contents of this concluding chapter could be viewed as offering some interesting points of discussion but to others it may sound obvious. Entrepreneurship is not simply a thing that we look upon but rather a social enactment, a living experience embodied in social action, shaped and mediated by context, a means of becoming, co-constructed in connection with others, as a practical measure of 'how it is and what they do' (Anderson & Starnawska, 2008; Jack, Moult, Anderson, & Drakopoulou Dodd, 2010).

The challenge of linking practice to theory has consumed debate for many years in academic communications, the questioning of what makes good research and how we generate knowledge to inform practice is always a point of conversation. The entrepreneur continually faces complex situations, as they engage in their everyday practice, dealing with new situations, seeking ways to overcome these issues. In this sense the development of how we view and make sense of social action can be to assume that entrepreneurial action is emergent in nature. Such emergent behaviour is not unbounded, it is situated in a social context which have outcomes that are determined and mediated by social, historical and cultural elements. This is consistent with the perspective of Steyaert (2007) and Johannisson (2011) who view the practice of 'entrepreneuring' with that of everyday life. It is often recognised that entrepreneurial practice is a crafted form of art which requires an appreciative and sensitive engagement with a range of socio-cultural phenomena in the entrepreneurial setting (Blackburn & Kovalainen, 2009; Hjorth, Jones, & Gartner, 2008). Before any kind of thought towards how we engage with entrepreneurs we can begin clarification in terms of what is going to be treated as real in the social world and how we might evaluate and make sense that that knowledge becomes critical. AQ7 Our continued focus and appreciation of engaged action represents so many possibilities for new and existing debate. Our continued encouragement to ask a question which seeks to challenge and push boundaries, in terms of how we ask these questions is an important core value of our practice. The challenge of how we link practice to theory has consumed debate for many years in the academic community, in terms of what is good research and how we generate knowledge and inform practice. There is a need to move beyond simple what, how and why questions to question which provoke reflexivity in our appreciation and understanding in order to reveal deeper searching questions, such as where, when and who as a method of unlearning and advancing the research field. At the most basic level, these issues involve considering thoughtfully the relevance and application of existing knowledge and scholarly writing, by offering new insight and future debate.

WHY ENGAGEMENT MATTERS!

The contribution which University Business Schools can make in terms of developing impact includes many tangible elements such as new knowledge, skilled graduates, collaborative networks, development of knowledge transfer practices with local economies/industry. These can be viewed as examples of potential University Business School research activities which could be credited with, for example, having 'economic and social impact through improved profitability of business and welfare of consumers, the creation of new market and employment opportunities, and ultimately an improved quality of life' (EPSRC, 2007, p. 3). Appreciating the value of engagement is of profound importance to HEI Business Schools. In the last REF 2014 a new category to measure research esteem was introduced, that of research impact, implemented principally by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (2011), as a partial determinant of research excellence specifically the applied value attributed to both the social and economic impact of research undertaken (Watermeyer, 2014). This has drawn specific attention to the need for more applied research through the promotion of, what Van de Ven (2007) termed 'engaged scholarship'. The issues of how current entrepreneurship research practices can become more applied in nature provides the basis for articulating more clearly what we mean by research impact. Impact can be viewed as a means of transferring and demonstrating scholarly knowledge in the lived experiences of practitioners, as a means of informing purposeful action. The growing importance of 'lived experiences' in entrepreneurial-related studies have sought to pose several questions and challenges for researchers/scholars in the field, requiring the research community as a whole to seek out new methods of engaging and addressing the role of lived experiences through the formulation of more applied research methods.

How, where and when new knowledge contributes to business innovation and development is of critical importance, thus how best to direct research agendas which contribute to the lived practice of practitioners becomes a challenge for educational institutions. The economic crisis of 2008 and its subsequent impact on economic growth has forced numerous government policies to address and recognise the need for increasing innovative economic productivity, a knowledge-based economy requires and demands highly educated and skilled entrepreneurial leaders, to develop socially inclusive enterprising cultures as a means of providing local, regional and national economies with employment opportunities. Scholarly research endeavours in the field of entrepreneurship/small firm have a critical role in the development of new understanding and knowledge which needs to support and add value to how practitioners grow their business ventures. However, not all knowledge created through academic research satisfies the needs of practitioners and as a result often fails to deliver impactful applied research. The academic/practitioner divide is frequently attributed to factors such as motivational issues, personal agendas and cultural awareness between the two communities. The construction of research which is focussed towards the development of actionable knowledge is viewed as a purposeful way to fuse the expectations, contributions and outputs of the academic and practitioner.

Critical discussion is required around the nature and role of impact at a time when University Business Schools are planning their research strategies. Researchers are encouraged to become more critically engaged with real-life practice in terms of research findings and outputs (Pettigrew, 2001; Watson, Hollister, Stroud, & Babcock, 2011), becoming more accountable scholars, where transparency and application to practice is so critical (Watermeyer, 2011). The need for HEIs to better understand and make sense of impact development and advance its application to practice is of significance. For example, the 'mode 2' (Gibbons et al., 1994; Tranfield & Starkey, 1998), debate has given focus towards particular modes of analyses, such as practice-based research, evidenced-based management, collaborative inquiry, action research and researcher reflexivity in qualitative-based research as a means of engaging with the lived experience (Bartunek, 2007; Cunliffe, 2011; Eden & Huxham, 2006; Nicolini, 2009; Rousseau, 2012; Van de Ven, 2007). This debate has further sought to illustrate the need to re-assess current research practices through the promotion of, what Van de Ven (2007) called 'engaged scholarship'. The increasing emphasis on academics evidencing, in meaningful and purposeful way (measurable), the value and contribution of their work to public and private domains, requires the development of a new set of values for academic work where engagement is now considered to be the singular method of impact articulation and the means by which applied knowledge is mobilised. This raises some fundamental questions:

1. How relevant is current research practice as a means of developing actionable and meaningful knowledge to the practitioner?
2. How do practitioners currently view research findings in terms of value and applicability?
3. What factors underpin the design and dissemination process of research findings to the practitioner community in purposeful and understandable ways?

These questions present many challenges to HEIs and researchers alike, ranging from deeply rooted values, beliefs and theoretical positions regarding the nature and purpose of entrepreneurship/SME as applied fields of research and to the challenges of determining what measure of impact such research can have on the practitioners themselves, the organisations and wider society. The image of engaged scholarship promotes the need for the entrepreneurship/small firm scholarly and practitioner community to co-create knowledge which can seek to advance entrepreneurial practice (Sandmann, 2008).

SEEKING INSIGHT TO ENGAGEMENT

The growing divide between how academia and the practitioner communities relate to one another in meaningful and purposeful ways, requires urgent attention to enhance the quality of research knowledge through the use and adoption of effective research designs and methods that result in effective and applied knowledge to lived experience. According to Starkey and Tempest (2005), the

current gap between the academic values held by scholars and the modes of research considered to be of relevance to practitioners are compounded by the challenge faced by the scholarly community to deliver research agendas which are solely focussed towards academic rigour, which offers little application or any factual relevance to entrepreneurship/small firm practice. This is in direct contradiction to the pressures being placed upon HEI by business communities for their services and expertise as a supporting infrastructure to innovation and enterprise (Santini, Marinelli, Boden, Cavicchi, & Haegeman, 2016). The importance of impact and how we begin to recognise and address methods which enable the use of applied research ideologies presents the entrepreneurship/small firm research field with a platform for enhancing its ability to engage meaningfully with the practitioner community by illustrating ways in which rigour and relevance co-exist.

Over the past number of decades, the recognition that scholarly research was only partially related to real-world practice, has now become even more apparent, scholars (Bartkus & Holland, 2010; Empson, 2013; McKelvey, 2006; Sandmann, 2008; Van de Ven & Johnson, 2006) and the wider entrepreneurship/small firms community have all echoed the growing disparity between academic research and its application to practice. Some of the developed theories and research methodologies have also come under question regarding the ability to influence and/or inform practice, how derived findings are presented in a way which could influence organisational practice and more importantly government policy (Bansal et al., 2012; Barge & Shockley-Zalabak, 2008). Many have argued that the content of academic research is too heavily loaded with theoretical justifications and method-driven approaches which are simply too remote for practitioners to understand yet alone apply to practice. While in the scholarly community we are concerned with detailed focus and specification, the opposite is the case of the practitioner community (Li, 2011; Starkey & Madan, 2001). The image of engaged scholarship promotes the need for the entrepreneurship/small firm scholarly and practitioner community to co-create knowledge which can seek to advance entrepreneurial practice while continuing to drive the orientation of the co-production of knowledge creation. The relevance of engagement and integration in academic research emphasises the significance of the relational aspects of knowing and practice, in terms of the research users so that both communities can contribute as co-researchers in shaping and developing the entrepreneurial research field and can more creatively engage in research outcomes and the dissemination of research findings in a manner which is both meaningful and relatable to practice. It is these practices of critical entrepreneurial scholarship which can significantly add relevance and rigour towards, what can be viewed as impactful research.

The predominate view from the practitioner community is that academic research is of little value when attempting to deal with making sense of the day-to-day complexities of practicing as an entrepreneur or owner/manager (Romme et al., 2015). This 'gap' between the use of methods and techniques which are deemed to be appropriate in the academic world, but have little impact on the practitioner world, has resulted in an impasse. Equally, the world of academia

is different from the world of the practitioner each having their own different demands and expectations but this does not mean they must be mutually exclusive. The issue at hand is how these two communities, which should be supportive of one another, can in practice become co-creative towards developing sustained and more impactful practice (Martin, 2010). How these views become reconciled requires each community to re-assess their current methods of seeking to engage with one another; such a reflexive approach to understanding and appreciating human practice can offer the capacity to demonstrate how theoretical insights can impact the way we resolve and deal with complex issues (Antonacopoulou, 2010; O'Hare, Coaffee, & Hawkesworth, 2010). Interaction between the two communities is viewed as a two-way relational process, the position being that HEIs are encouraged to develop applied research agendas, through collaborative interaction and engagement while the practitioner community are sought to play a demand-lead role, as a means of supporting and collaborating in research practice. The underlying assumption being that both stakeholder groups engage in collaborative partnership with a view to co-creating engaged and applied research agendas, as a means of developing skills, growth and business innovation.

The central principles for attempting to stimulate such collaborative activity were primarily to raise awareness regarding the importance of HEIs as both contributors and gatekeepers to repositories of knowledge and skills, which could be exchanged and developed through engaged dialogue. Resolving this current gap between theory and practice is in the self-interest of both researchers and practitioners alike as a means of co-constructing 'actionable knowledge' (Schön, 1995, p. 34), through shared ideas (Pearce, Pearson, & Camerson, 2008; Romme et al., 2015). The practice of engaged scholarship can be positioned as the ability of a researcher(s) and practitioners to co-construct a research agenda which brings together, in a purposeful manner, academic knowledge and praxis which have direct influence and impact upon communities, society and human practice in a positive manner (O'Hare et al., 2010). The ability of such an agenda to encompass and blend academic know-how with the lived practice of an entrepreneur holds huge possibilities for how we research, train and educate the field. Van de Van (2012, p. 80) defines engaged scholarship in a more stylish manner:

> collaborative form of inquiry in which academics and practitioners leverage their different perspectives and competencies to co-produce knowledge about a complex problem or phenomenon that exists under conditions of uncertainty found in the world.

Such a definition draws attention towards the co-constructed nature of knowledge which has relevance, by creating space for interaction between the academic and practitioner, creating the opportunity for knowledge and understanding to be co-created and enacted into practice. This space facilitates the ability to question one another and gain mutual understanding by directly bringing together methods of inquiry and practice.

Such engaged learning provides a means through which academics and practitioners can contribute their own expertise for generating research which is beneficial to the greater good and societal well-being. For example, to ensure a research agenda is relevant to practice and/or policy, practitioners and researchers must

work in collaboration with one another at all stages in the research process. Based on this assumption it is obvious that the opportunity offered by engaging different voices (stakeholders) in the research process facilitates a conversational space to develop, helping to reconcile different perspectives from academics, and practitioner and policy makers in the context of entrepreneurship/small firm research. However, while this seems sensible on paper the reality of this is different, for this to become real greater engagement between these diverse groups must the acted upon through more collaborative initiatives, equally supported through the research impact agenda, from co-participation in the knowledge creation process to dissemination and application to practice, in industry or the way in which we educate entrepreneurship graduates. It is of critical importance that the scholarly community and practitioners take a genuine interest in providing and establishing applied methods which propagate practical solutions by working with one another (Thatcher, Alao, Brown, & Choudhary, 2016). The development of such connections can provide both communities with the know-how to reduce the tensions between theory and practice, through our ability as scholars to become aware of what is around us, to appreciate and be mindful of the needs of our communities and beyond can help us build such relationship, through dialogical engagement, where collaborations between entrepreneurship scholars/communities and practitioner have the ability to create learning communities (Leitch, 2007). Van de Ven and Jing (2012, p. 127) suggest that interacting in such a learning process can 'jointly produce knowledge that can both advance the scientific enterprise and enlighten an indigenous community.

CONCLUSION

The importance of developing scholarship and voice which seek to foster innovative and accessible scholarly writing is of crucial importance to any research field. The ability of any scholarly publication to foster and develop material which engages with practical experience and engaged action must be a key priority in the advancement of future educational/management practice and scholarship. The ability of a writer to create a voice which provides one with the ability and confidence to question existing ideas and practices is central to the generation of new knowledge. One of the most important contributing factors for the advancement of scholarly knowledge and field is the questions we ask and in particular the manner in which we pose such questions (Higgins, 2017). Our capacity to ask meaningful and insightful questions is critically more important than finding a right answer. In this sense, the creation of academic/practice-oriented material which offers to the reader the opportunity to give voice and to build upon our capabilities to become more informed and knowledgeable is one of the most impactful attributes any scholarly publication can offer, to both contributor and readers. As such, the importance of academic journals to engage with and appeal to different communities as a means of encouraging writers and readers to ask explorative questions as a fundamental challenge but one which is of increased importance. If as a scholarly community, we are serious about delivering and

help craft the delivery of impact to our practice we must be always mindful in our intentions not to be afraid to question our own assumptions and in doing so reframe and extend the manner in which we seek meaning in the questions we ask and how we ask those questions.

There is a need to move beyond simple what, how and why questions to question which provoke reflexivity in our appreciation and understanding in order to reveal deeper searching questions, such as where, when and who as a method of unlearning and advancing the research field. At the most basic level, these questions involve considering thoughtfully the relevance and application of existing knowledge and scholarly writing, by offering new insight and future debate. The material contained in this issue exemplify for me scholarship which demonstrates a commitment to the exploration of the research field which is accessible to readers in terms of their applied focus through capturing the experiences of learners/readers as they enact in practice. The power of any journal publication/material is to help us expand our ways of seeing how, through action, practice evolves and emerges. The material captures and demonstrates not only an articulated understanding of learning in action but also the means to which practices are oriented (Aguinis et al., 2014). Connecting these issues offers the possibility of drawing connections towards research material which reveals the relational orientations towards enacted learning, learning through action. Such a practice opens up the possibility to introduce different perspectives to how we view and practice in the subject area of action learning.

The material contained in this book exemplifies for us scholarship which demonstrates a commitment to the exploration of the research field which is accessible to readers in terms of their applied focus through capturing the experiences of learners/readers as they enact in practice. The power of any scholarly publication/material is to help us expand our ways of seeing how, through action, practice evolves and emerges. In this context the role of our own attentiveness, what it means to be reflexively aware, in our practice, as custodians of knowledge, becomes extremely important. How we see our roles as researchers, writers and editors, influences how we enact our relationships with our audiences and wider communities in a meaningful way. Thoughtful inquiry requires the questioning of the relationship between ourselves, our community and the theories/ concepts we work with. As we learn through action, the need to become reflexively aware in terms of how we construct our knowing becomes so critical. The unique ability of writers to be actively aware of the social world and their/our knowledge of the world represented through the language and relational discursive practices which binds us together offers such opportunities for inquiry. Through the influence of the field, we have come to understand the social world by creating meaning through enacted and interactions in practice. Our ability to explore and pose questions to these often overlooked or taken-for-granted relationships and the manner in which we seek to make sense of our social world is such a strength of this journal and its related community. For entrepreneurial scholarship to be engaging, rigour and relevance must be addressed so that the questions posed are central to advancing scholarship which captures the interests and concerns of different users.

The aim of this publication has been to develop discussion around this significant issue and promote questions in advancing the theory and practice of engaged scholarship. We build on current debates by focussing on studies that illuminate how engaged scholarship is both theorised and implemented. We have sought to create a publication which speaks into a space for constructive debate while simultaneously recognising and adhering to the past and the rich tradition upon which the academic and business worlds rest, and to consider the future for new inspiration to develop and further this area. First, the book series seeks to make entrepreneurship research, practice-sensitive and research-informed. In this way, we hope it will appeal to a wide audience of researchers within academic research organisations as well as practitioner in the field. It will carefully juxtapose rigour with relevance, thus enhancing the impact factor of each contribution. Second, the book series provides a focus for ongoing and emerging debates within the field. We have focussed, *are* focussing on critically *engaging with practices*. The editors have sought to encourage the contribution of reflexive articles, both conceptual and empirical, which illustrate the messy, heterogeneous, challenging and problematic nature of entrepreneurial research.

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Author Queries

AQ1:   Please note that the following refs. are cited only in the abstract: "Ruona & Gilley (2009); Short, Keefer, & Stone, (2009); Beyer & Trice (1982); Ram et al. (2014), Rynes (2007); Huggins et al. (2008)". Please cite them in text also.

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AQ3:   Please check whether the expansion of the acronym "(HE)" is correct in the text and amend if necessary.

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AQ8:   Please provide page range for chapter title in refs. "Eden & Huxham (2006)" and "Rousseau (2012)".

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