

Second EECOLE Roundtable

Entrepreneurial ecosystems as a new policy area

Munk School of Global Affairs & Public Policy
1 Devonshire Place, Toronto, Ontario, Canada
30 November and 1 December 2023

The second EECOLE Roundtable will showcase the progress achieved by the platform over the past year while also reflecting on future priorities and endeavours. The Roundtable will place a strong emphasis on the role of entrepreneurial ecosystems and explore policy actions that harness the potential of entrepreneurial higher education institutions to foster talent, collaborations, and knowledge sharing within communities, including SMEs and entrepreneurs navigating the challenges of digital and green transitions.¹

Entrepreneurial ecosystems are comprised of interconnected actors and institutions, often co-located in the same geographic area, but with linkages extending to other localities and networks. The strength of entrepreneurial ecosystems lies in these connections, which are just as critical as the individual actors themselves. These connections largely determine the ecosystem's overall performance and the success of its various components.

Narratives and metrics of economic success have evolved to encompass social and environmental dimensions. By adopting an entrepreneurial ecosystem perspective, we move beyond celebrating individual success stories of Schumpeterian heroes and start acknowledging the social, cultural, scientific, and economic forces that underpin success. Entrepreneurial ecosystems provide a fresh policy framework, complete with rules, metrics, and incentives, to foster resilient, sustainable, and scalable businesses and individuals.

The entrepreneurial ecosystem approach avoids sector-specific or industry-specific focus and refrains from picking “winners” based on industrial sectors. Instead, it seeks to develop local assets and untapped resources. Within these ecosystems, individuals with an entrepreneurial mindset can be found in various roles, including those within organizations they neither own nor manage, including the public sector.

Higher education institutions (HEIs) play a pivotal role in entrepreneurial ecosystems. They contribute talent, opportunities for collaboration, and knowledge sharing that benefit entrepreneurs within the

¹ EECOLE received the specific mandate to help SMEs and entrepreneurs contribute to the green and digital transition, from OECD Ministries, who met in Paris during the 2023 OECD SME & Entrepreneurship Ministerial Meeting 2023 <https://www.oecd.org/cfe/smes/oecd-sme-and-entrepreneurship-ministerial-meeting-2023-key-resources.htm>



same ecosystem. HEIs can also help structure entrepreneurial ecosystems by establishing entities like incubators and accelerators, and by connecting with science parks and other innovation intermediaries. Entrepreneurial HEIs offer cutting-edge research, training, and incubation and acceleration services for businesses of all sizes and maturity, thereby enhancing their competitiveness. For example, they can assist SMEs and entrepreneurs in starting and scaling up their business, allowing them to thrive in the context of the ongoing green and digital transformations that are reshaping labour markets and supply chains.

Nonetheless, public policies often struggle to adapt to the dynamics of entrepreneurial ecosystems. Frequently, these policies operate within sectoral silos and fail to eliminate trade-offs or generate the complementarities and synergies required to promote promising ventures and fully unlock the potential of entrepreneurship.

In collaboration with the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, and Statistic Canada, and in partnership with the Economic Research Institute of ASEAN and East Asia, ERIA, the Second EECOLE Roundtable will offer insights into how higher education institutions and their stakeholders can actively promote entrepreneurial ecosystems, showcasing available evidence, knowledge, and international best practices. Our discussions will place particular emphasis on SMEs and entrepreneurs, who stand to gain the most from thriving entrepreneurial ecosystems.

The Roundtable will be hosted at the Munk School of Global Affairs, University of Toronto and feature a field visit to MaRS, the innovation district in Toronto.

November 30th

1 Devonshire Place, Toronto

08:45 – 09:00	Arrival and registrations
09:00 – 09:30	<p><u>Opening and salutations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will Gibbons, Director, Data Science, Research and Development, Horizontal Program Reviews, Expenditure Management Sector, Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, Government of Canada • Lucia Cusmano, Acting Head, SMEs and Entrepreneurship Division, OECD Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Cities and Regions • Shiri Breznitz, Director of Research, MUNK School at University of Toronto • Giulia Ajmone Marsan, ERIA’s Director of Strategy and Partnership and Chair of the EECOLE’s steering group
09:30 – 10:45	<p><u>A year with EECOLE: Highlights of activities and impact</u></p> <p><i>In this session a group of EECOLE partners will report on the activities in which they have been involved – reviews and policy dialogues – sharing their thoughts</i></p>

	<p><i>about results and impact. A question-and-answer session will give all participants the opportunity to interact.</i></p> <p>Lead speakers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rob Greenwood, Deputy Minister of Rural and Regional Development and Engagement, and Chief Economic Development Officer, Newfoundland, Canada • Antoine Rayroux, Innovation Analyst, Ministry of Economy, Innovation and Energy, Quebec, Canada • Adam Leech, Director, National Civic Impact Accelerator, Civic University Network, United Kingdom <p>Lead discussants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alison Cathles, Senior Specialist, IADB • Marjorick Foisy, Director General, CENTECH, Québec, Canada • Lelio Iapadre, Professor of Economics, University of L'Aquila and Network of Italian Universities for Sustainability, Italy <p>Moderator: Raffaele Trapasso, OECD</p> <p><i>Roundtable discussion</i></p>
10:45 – 11:00	Coffee break
11:00 – 12:45	<p><u>Developing the future agenda of EECOLE</u></p> <p><i>This session starts with a presentation of outcomes of the recent OECD Ministerial meeting on entrepreneurship and SMEs, in which Ministers and Heads of Delegations from over 30 countries recognised the value of the EECOLE platform and asked to strengthen the connection with the SMEs and entrepreneurship policy agendas. A group of EECOLE partners will discuss how to reflect these priorities in knowledge products and processes.</i></p> <p>Keynote speaker</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Martin Godel, Head of Division, Small and Medium Size Enterprise Policy, State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (Seco) and Chair of the OECD Committee on SMEs and Entrepreneurship <p>Lead discussants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Courtney Brown, Vice President of Strategic Impact and Planning, Lumina Foundation, United States • Raul Lima, Deputy Rector for Innovation and Professor, University of Sao Paulo, Brazil • Yukako Ideahara, Corporate Planning Manager, All Nippon Airways Chief of Staff to the Vice Chairman of ANA Holdings INC.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peter Creticos, President and Executive Director, Institute for Work and the Economy • Joel Blit, Professor of Economics, University of Waterloo • Mahamadou Biga-Diambeidou, Professor, Louvain Research Institute in Management and Organizations, UCLouvain • Giovanni Zizzerini, Secretary General, INSME - The International Network for SMEs <p>Moderator: Giulia Ajmone Marsan, ERIA</p> <p><i>Roundtable discussion</i></p>
12:45 – 13:00	<u>Wrap up</u>
13:00 – 14:30	Lunch
15:00 – 16:00	<p><u>Group visits to MaRS – North America’s largest urban innovation hub</u> <i>Participants will visit MaRS Discovery District, which is considered one of the most successful innovation districts in the world.</i></p> <p>Groups will be led by Maria Sobron Bernal, Giorgia Ponti, and Raffaele Trapasso, OECD</p>
16:15 – 17:30	Cocktail (Venue TBC)

December 1st

1 Devonshire Place, Toronto

09:00 – 09:15	<p><u>Introduction – toward effective policy action for strengthening entrepreneurial ecosystems and skills</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OECD Secretariat
09:15 – 10:15	<p><u>Thematic session: entrepreneurial ecosystems and the role of innovation intermediaries</u></p> <p><i>This thematic session will be divided into two sub-sessions. The first one will give visibility to the research activities on innovation intermediaries and innovation territorial systems in Canada, and the second will include an international perspective.</i></p> <p><i>First session – Canadian experiences</i></p> <p><i>Speakers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manasi Joshi, Economic Advisor at Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Canada

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shawkat Ferdousi, Senior Policy Advisor, Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade, Province of Ontario • Chris Lau, Director, Business Intelligence & Transaction Analytics, Invest Ontario <p><i>Lead Discussants</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charles Wessner, Adjunct professor, Georgetown University, United States • Carol Stewart, President, North American Division, International Association of Science and Areas of Innovation (IASP) <p>Moderator: Will Gibbons, TBS Canada</p> <p>Q&A (15')</p>
10:15 – 10:30	Coffee break
10:30 – 11:30	<p><i>Second session – International experiences</i></p> <p><i>Speakers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fernando Gómez-Baquero, Director of the Runway Startup Postdoc and the Spinout Programs, Cornell Tech, United States • Jon Cooper, Head of Analysis for R&I, Workforce, Institutions and Places, DSIT, United Kingdom <p><i>Lead Discussants</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Krista Jones, Chief Delivery Officer, MaRS • Heather Hall, Associate Director, Graduate Studies (Professional Programs), School of Environment, Enterprise and Development (SEED) Waterloo University, Canada • Representatives from Ministry of Colleges and Universities of Ontario, Canada <p>Moderator: Giorgia Ponti, OECD</p> <p>Q&A (15')</p>
11:30 – 13:00	<p><u>Implementing EECOLE to promote entrepreneurial mindsets, entrepreneurial ecosystems, and inclusive and greener communities</u></p> <p><i>This conclusive session discusses the way forward of EECOLE to improve the capacity of the platform to generate value for partners, evidence and data about good practices.</i></p>

	<p><i>Lead speakers:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Luc Sirois, Chief Innovator Officer, Ministry of Economy and Innovation, Quebec, Canada • Frank Melis, CEO, Smart.Bio, the Netherlands • Edna Primrose, CEO, Differenza, United States • Juan Carlos Navarro, Innovation Expert, United States <p><i>Discussants:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alex Usher, President, Higher Education Strategy Associates • Sujai Shivakumar, Senior Fellow, Center for Strategic and International Studies, and Director, Renewing American Innovation (RAI) • Alexis Rivett, Learning Experience Strategist, Junior Achievement Worldwide <p>Moderator: Maria Sobron Bernal, OECD</p> <p><i>Roundtable discussion</i></p>
13:00 – 13:15	<p>Conclusions and next steps for EECOLE Raffaele Trapasso, OECD</p>

