



L'Aquila, Italy  
27-29 June



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## **Knowledge-intensive Entrepreneurial Firms and Ecosystems**

### **ABSTRACT**

Amongst the many definitions of ecosystems, this paper defines key attributes of the concept of knowledge-intensive innovative ecosystems. The concept of a knowledge-intensive innovative ecosystem focuses our attention upon how specialized knowledge is directly related to innovation and entrepreneurship. We will explore the boundaries of collaboration between university and industry, but in a situation where there are both private returns and public returns. Only some actors will later translate and combine knowledge into innovations and value. Previous literature on knowledge-intensive innovative firms has shown that they, and their respective specialized knowledge, can be found not only in academic spin-offs and high-tech sectors, but also across manufacturing and creative industries, and in products as well as service sectors. Extensive literature on national, regional, sectoral and technological innovation systems have defined the actors. Rather than examining the actors per se, we take a different approach, shift the analysis from these firms per se, to the ecosystem and specifically to university-industry interactions. This paper explores how the conceptual model of an evolutionary governance regime at the interface of science and technology with knowledge-intensive entrepreneurship helps us understand the attributes of such an ecosystem. This model explicitly involves evolutionary processes for innovation and entrepreneurship, in that we focus upon 1) processes of variety and selection as well as 2) the particular characteristics of knowledge as well as organizational routines and capabilities 3) for developing, diffusing and using scientific and technological knowledge relevant for innovation.

#### Short Bio:

**Professor Maureen McKelvey's** research addresses innovation and entrepreneurship. An underlying theoretical proposition from an evolutionary and Schumpeterian paradigm is that innovation and entrepreneurship are closely related to processes of creating, accessing, and diffusing knowledge and opportunities.

From the Swedish Research Council, she has been awarded a Distinguished Professorship. She is also Professor of Industrial Management at the Institute of Innovation and Entrepreneurship, School of Business Economics and Law at the University of Gothenburg, Sweden. Professor McKelvey has held high level positions in expert groups and written reports, for Swedish organizations as well as for the OECD and EU. See more at [www.handels.gu.se/iie](http://www.handels.gu.se/iie)  
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