

Leuphana Transformational Entrepreneurship Days

Creating societal impact through entrepreneurship research, education and practice

Facing the grand challenges of the 21st century, society needs to change quickly to secure our future. While this requires collective and political action, actors such as entrepreneurs can also play a key role in addressing these grand challenges. With the rise of environmental, social and sustainable entrepreneurship, it becomes clear that many entrepreneurs nowadays aim to make a positive impact on society. As researchers, educators and supporters of practice, we strive to help them to achieve exactly this: a societal impact which contributes to solving the grand challenges of our time. If creating societal impact is part of our aspiration for entrepreneurship, while also fostering innovative ideas, we are basically talking about an impact-driven version of entrepreneurship, as “Transformational entrepreneurship is to promote enterprise and entrepreneurship through a systemic approach, bringing about transformation in socio-economic development.” (Maas & Jones, 2019, p. 4).

Impact can take on a variety of shapes and forms – sometimes even describing seemingly exclusive phenomena. In our case, we strive to analyse, showcase and discuss examples of positive impact leading to socially and ecologically sustainable transformation of society. This kind of positive impact, envisioned by stakeholders in the area of sustainable entrepreneurship, seeks to reduce or at least balance the negative impact (Téran-Yépez et al., 2020) exerted on environment and society by many forms of profit-oriented ventures. In our understanding, “[...] impact entrepreneurship too seeks to ameliorate socioenvironmental problems, but its raison d’être is to resolve grand challenges, so it emphasizes impact over new-venture creation, deemphasizing the commercial-noncommercial divide.” (Markmann, 2019, p. 372).

However, creating positive impact is a challenging endeavour. Impact is difficult to fully understand, to examine in-depth and to measure (Gupta et al., 2020) – and even harder to create. Nevertheless, entrepreneurial efforts are often fuelled by this ‘paradox’: “entrepreneurs lack the knowledge, skills, authority, and resources necessary to resolve grand challenges – in fact, these deficiencies, plus the absence of enforcing governance despite the scale of the challenges, should suppress their motivation to engage – and yet these challenges entice collective action from diverse actors” (Markmann, 2019, p. 372). With the Leuphana Transformational Entrepreneurship Days, we aim to shed light on this paradox and support entrepreneurs and facilitators by creating knowledge via research, by introducing these concepts into educational formats, and by promoting academia-practitioner collaborations. Thus, through empowering researchers and students as well as societal stakeholders we aim to foster impact, supporting an actual transformation of society in a three-day event:

21.-23.9.2021 – each day 9.00-12.30, CEST/MESZ

With this online event, hosted by the Leuphana University of Lüneburg (Germany) and co-branded by the European Council for Small Business and Entrepreneurship (ECSB), we support the transformation of society through entrepreneurship. These dates present the kick-off to establishing the Entrepreneurship Days as an annual event – bringing together the diversity of entrepreneurship researchers and facilitators from all over Europe in a virtual environment. We can currently offer this event free of charge, hence there are no fees for facilitators or participants¹.

This is a three-day event with a different topic headlining each (half) day. Participants can then choose between several parallelly running workshops each treating the subject from a different angle. According to each day's headlining topic, workshop facilitators offer impulses for fostering societal impact of *entrepreneurship research* (day 1), *entrepreneurship education* (day 2), and *entrepreneurship practice/transfer* (day 3), working together with the participants, on further creating impact. Hence, this is not a typical conference format with paper presentations and keynotes, but an interactive event that, hopefully, supports our participants in actively making a difference with their work. A framework program, encouraging thematic exchange and networking among participants, complements the workshop program. This event wants to be a starting point for further discussing the role of impact-orientation in entrepreneurship research, education and practice. To this end, we will create a working paper based on these discussions – and hope to build a research community in entrepreneurship, which shares a passion for the transformation of society.

Call for Impact Development Workshops

To foster transformational entrepreneurship creating positive societal impact, we call for Impact Development Workshops (IDWs). IDWs are workshops to collaboratively work together and share ideas about creating impact. IDWs need to have a strong orientation on impact and a good understanding of the target group. Participants in these workshops should not be passive recipients, but should take an active part in order to ensure an insightful learning process. Accordingly, these workshops are not supposed to be presentations of papers. Of course, the IDWs provide chances for building a network and community of impact-driven entrepreneurship scholars.

The IDWs have a set timeframe of 2 hours and will be scheduled in the morning of each event day. Participation in IDWs is free, as is the event itself, but registration for participants is required. The workshop facilitators choose the exact format, but IDWs will typically have between 15 and 30 participants to ensure an interactive format. IDWs should be mainly offered by entrepreneurship scholars, but we welcome and encourage the collaboration with practitioners, science managers, or people working in cooperation and transfer of research.

Possible Topics and Questions

The guiding overall question for all submissions should be: How can entrepreneurship research, education and practice contribute to a transformation of society and solving grand challenges? For this event, we have created three tracks (one track for each day of the event) to bring researchers with similar interests together. All submissions for these tracks should be profoundly research-based and have a strong practical orientation on how we want to transform entrepreneurship research, education and practice. Below, we have listed several possible topics and questions of interests for each track.

- Research (Day 1, 21.9.2021)
 - How can methodologies such as action research, co-creative methods or design science contribute to more societal impact?
 - How can we best understand and also measure impact? What different alternatives exist?
 - How can we best consider and understand the contexts of our research to increase impact?

- Education (Day 2, 22.9.2021)
 - How can we support people to include social, sustainable and transformational aspects of entrepreneurship in educational formats?
 - How can we support responsible innovation and transformational processes through entrepreneurship education?
 - How can we integrate external stakeholders into educational formats so both sides will benefit from the exchange?
- Practice and Transfer (Day 3, 23.9.2021)
 - How can we shape long-lasting and trustful academic-practitioner-relationships to create impact?
 - How can we design interesting and engaging formats/events addressing academic-practitioner-relationship or impact orientation in general?
 - How can entrepreneurship contribute to societal transformation on the level of policy-makers and practitioners?

Additionally, there are two topics that we consider important in all of these tracks and welcome submissions which deal with these topics as well. First, *gender and diversity* aspects in entrepreneurship play a key role for a fair transformational process. Hence, they can and should be part of all considerations regarding transformational entrepreneurship in general and during this event in particular. Second, with the rise of *digitalization* in and of entrepreneurship, ethical aspects of so far unknown range have come into play. Exploring digital entrepreneurship and its transformative power, particularly while considering the *ethical dimensions* of this issue, is also welcome in this event. In general, we are open for interdisciplinary approaches and all entrepreneurship related topics with an impact-orientation focus are welcome.

Submission process and requirements

After the submission, the Scientific Committee will screen proposals and select those which a) fit well with the thematic orientation// topics and orientation of this event and b) show a promising commitment to an interactive workshop experience in an engaging workshop style. The deadline for submission is: **3.8.2021**. Please send all submissions via email to entrepreneurshipdays@leuphana.de – you will receive a brief confirmation of your submission. Within two weeks after the submission date, we will let you know whether your workshop proposal has been selected. If your proposal has been selected, we will get in contact, clarify the details with you and can also consult on further adjustments if requested. No further submission of a revised proposal or something similar is necessary. If you have any questions beforehand, please feel free to get into contact with us via email (entrepreneurshipdays@leuphana.de).

To make submissions comparable, as a basis for a fair selection process, we ask you to keep to the following structure for your proposals:

- *Overview and topicality*: What is the theoretical basis of your proposal and your positioning within entrepreneurship research and this event? How do you address transformation and/or impact?
- *Workshop style*: Is there a specific method or process you rely on? How do you want to engage participants? Do you want to include cooperation partners in your workshop?

- *Learning objectives:* What are the participants supposed to learn from your workshop? What are the key messages that you want participants to get from and experience in your workshop?
- *Target groups and conference tracks:* Which target groups do you want to address with your workshop? In which conference track do you position your workshop?
- *Process and procedure:* How is the workshop (roughly) structured? Do the participants go through different phases in the workshop? What are the main steps? (Note: we do not want a full agenda here, just a brief sketch on what you imagine)

For your convenience, you can find a Word- and PDF-Template with a proposed word limit for your proposal on our Website. All proposals should be between about 1500 words (+/- 10%) in length. Please make sure that you clearly state the facilitator(s) who will be conducting the workshop and the main facilitator who acts as a contact person for the organisers. Additionally, please provide a short abstract (about 100 words) with the main idea of your workshop. This abstract will also be used for the promotion of your workshop. If accepted, all workshop facilitators are invited to share their workshop proposals as open access publications (with DOI) via the publication server of the Leuphana University of Lüneburg. This is free of charge and optional, but presents a good way for distributing ideas and inviting others to work further on shared topics and interests.

Awards and benefits

The best workshop facilitator wins a one-year-membership at the ECSB and is also invited to offer their IDW as a Professional Development Workshop (PDW) as an online workshop preliminary to the RENT XXXV.

You can find the submission templates and more information on our website.

References

- Gupta, P., Chauhan, S., Paul, J., & Jaiswal, M. P. (2020). Social entrepreneurship research: A review and future research agenda. *Journal of Business Research*, 113, 209-229.
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- Markman, G., Gianiodis, P. Espina, M. (2019). E Pluribus Unum: Impact Entrepreneurship Solution to Grand Challenges. *Academy of Management Perspectives*. Vol. 33. No. 4. 371-382.
- Terán-Yépez, E., Marín-Carrillo, G. M., del Pilar Casado-Belmonte, M., & de las Mercedes Capobianco-Uriarte, M. (2020). Sustainable entrepreneurship: Review of its evolution and new trends. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 252, 119742.

Organizers & Scientific Committee

Please direct your questions and requests mainly to
entrepreneurshipdays@leuphana.de
to ensure that we can best support you in a timely manner.

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