
Entreprendre & Innover

*Speaking of entrepreneurship **and** innovation*

Special Issue 2028/1 (77)

WHEN THE MAGIC HAPPENS: ENTREPRENEURSHIP, TERRITORY, IMPACT

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Introduction to the special issue

Why do some territories become especially fertile spaces for entrepreneurship, innovation and social transformation, while others struggle to generate such dynamics? Beyond economic resources, support mechanisms and public policies, recent research suggests that entrepreneurial success is embedded in territorial configurations in which a plurality of actors, resources, institutions and collective projects interact. When these elements come into resonance, a singular dynamic seems to emerge: entrepreneurial initiatives move beyond their immediate economic purpose and produce sustainable transformations in territories and their communities. It is this dynamic that we deliberately — and metaphorically — refer to as "***when the magic happens.***"

This "magic" (for example, the Arve Valley's historical expertise in bar turning, the Grenoble ecosystem and its capacity to nurture startups, or the network of entrepreneurs in Grasse) is neither the product of chance nor of a romanticized vision of entrepreneurship. It refers to the ability of ecosystems made up of entrepreneurs, SMEs, local authorities, support structures,

associations, citizens, investors and educational institutions to give rise to unprecedented forms of cooperation, innovation and value creation. It invites us to shift our gaze, away from the entrepreneur considered in isolation and toward the collective processes that enable a territory to reveal its resources, build shared projects and support contemporary transitions.

For a long time, entrepreneurship research focused primarily on the individual characteristics of entrepreneurs, business opportunities, or firm performance. While these studies have largely contributed to structuring the field, they have sometimes relegated the contextual and territorial dimensions of entrepreneurial action to the background. More recently, entrepreneurial ecosystem approaches have provided a better understanding of the influence of local interactions on entrepreneurship development (Leyronas & Loup, 2023; Theodoraki et al., 2025). However, they often remain centered on the determinants of economic growth, paying more limited attention to issues of sustainability, inclusion, resilience, or collective value creation.

In parallel, the notion of *territorial entrepreneurship* is attracting growing interest in both academic work and public policy (Favre-Bonté et al., 2021; Chabaud et al., 2024). Although it does not yet constitute a stabilized theoretical framework, it offers a particularly fruitful perspective for analyzing the reciprocal relationships between entrepreneurial initiatives and territorial dynamics (Albertini et al., 2024). Territorial entrepreneurship leads us to consider the territory no longer as a mere location context, but as a resource, a collective project, and a space for building solutions to economic, social and environmental challenges (Richez-Battesti et al., 2023).

This perspective also invites us to rethink the notion of *impact*. While the economic effects of entrepreneurship remain essential, they are no longer sufficient to account for the transformations it can produce (Lameta et al., 2026). How do entrepreneurial initiatives contribute to strengthening social cohesion, preserving or enhancing local resources, accelerating ecological transitions, fostering social innovation, or increasing territorial resilience? How can these different forms of territorial value creation be understood and measured? Which actors participate in their emergence, and according to what governance arrangements?

Through this special issue, we wish to open a space for dialogue between the different scientific communities examining the links between entrepreneurship, territories and impact. Contributions may draw on a variety of approaches — territorial entrepreneurship, impact entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial ecosystems, corporate territorial responsibility (Filippi, 2024), social and solidarity economy, social innovation, territorial development, or commons-based approaches — in order to better understand the mechanisms through which entrepreneurial initiatives contribute to the lasting transformation of territories.

Running through this special issue is one central question: *under what conditions does the "magic" happen?* In other words, what mechanisms, actor configurations, resources and modes of governance enable entrepreneurship to produce a lasting impact on territories? In answering this question, this special issue aims not only to contribute to the conceptualization of territorial entrepreneurship, but also to shed light on its implications for entrepreneurs, support organizations and public decision-makers confronted with the major challenges of territorial transitions. The guest editors particularly encourage contributions that combine theoretical reflection with managerial or public policy implications, in line with the editorial line of *Entreprendre & Innover*.

Types of contributions expected

The issue is organized around four sections:

- **Research articles:** scientific papers (30,000 characters maximum — including spaces, references and appendices)
- **Dialogue with the field:** papers based on field experience (30,000 characters maximum — including spaces, references and appendices)
- **Innovative practice:** papers presenting an innovative pedagogical or professional experiment (12,000 characters maximum — including spaces, references and appendices)
- **Inspirations:** papers (12,000 characters maximum — including spaces, references and appendices) drawing on culture in the broad sense (literature, performing arts, visual arts, etc.) to shed light, from other perspectives, on the theme of the issue.

Interdisciplinary approaches are particularly welcome.

Indicative timeline

Key dates to remember:

- Submission of intentions (2 to 3 pages): **November 30, 2026**
- Feedback to authors: **January 10, 2027**
- Submission of manuscripts (Version 1): **March 31, 2027**
- Feedback to authors: **June 15, 2027**
- Submission of revised manuscripts (Version 2): **September 1, 2027**
- Feedback to authors: **September 30, 2027**
- Editing and publication: **June 2028**

Expressions of intent should be sent to the following addresses: jean-pierre.boissin@univ-cotedazur.fr ; lameta_n@univ-corse.fr

Manuscripts must be submitted via the journal's Manuscript Manager platform: <https://eeti.manuscriptmanager.net>

Editorial line

The journal *Entreprendre & Innover* is a high-level popularization journal in the field of entrepreneurship and innovation, published by De Boeck Université. Its ambition is to make original articles — scientifically sound or innovative in the ideas they express — accessible to a readership of managers, entrepreneurs, business creation network professionals, and company executives. The journal is open to ALL disciplines and ALL perspectives interested in entrepreneurship and innovation.

Since this journal is primarily aimed at practitioners, we remain attentive to ensuring that contributions show a concern for practical applications, entrepreneurial implications and/or policy recommendations. With this in mind, contributions must:

- **Include a section that explicitly addresses these concerns:** at the end of the article, the reader must always be able to say: "So what? How does this article help me act, or think better about my future actions?"
- **Adopt language that is more concrete and operational than is customary in academic journals:** theory should not be absent, but it should be popularized — that is, translated into simple terms. Abstract concepts must be explained and/or illustrated with practical examples.
- **Not pile up scientific references:** the goal is to select a few key authors useful for understanding the argument, not to demonstrate the exhaustiveness of the academic literature on the subject. Scientific references must be cited exclusively in footnotes.

Detailed author guidelines are available on the journal's website under the "How to contribute" section. **It is imperative to follow them when sending your submission.**

Please submit your contribution via the journal's submission platform:

<https://eeti.manuscriptmanager.net>

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