



DIME International Workshop

Reconsidering the Regional Knowledge Economy: Theoretical, Empirical and Policy Insights from Diverse Research Approaches

Centre for Knowledge, Innovation, Technology and Enterprise (KITE),
Newcastle University, City Wall, City Gate, St James Boulevard, Newcastle, UK
4th - 5th September 2008

It is generally acknowledged that regional economic success in Europe is dependent on an orientation towards a knowledge-based economy, typified either by high value added, creative and science-based industry, or a focus on advanced business services. For those regions lacking such advantages the emphasis of policy has been placed on developing new clusters of knowledge-based industries through a variety of measures including networking activities, university-based initiatives and support for new start-ups. A key problem though has been the absence of a clear understanding of what would constitute progress towards a knowledge-based economy, never mind what should be the most appropriate policies.

One particular problem is the lack of consensus between quantitative and qualitative researchers on how to assess the state of the knowledge base and on the nature of the policy objectives. Quantitative researchers have measures for particular investments in knowledge creating activity, principally in the form of R&D, as well as labour market indicators and some crude measures of outputs. Qualitative researchers however point out that such data is usually constrained by classificatory problems and fails to capture new kinds of activities and is also difficult to assess by cluster. Qualitative research examines the processes behind innovation and learning, but finds it difficult to quantify knowledge. In addition to this quantitative/qualitative dichotomy there is a tendency for research to focus on either macro or micro economic issues.

Through the inclusion of varieties of approaches to exploring the regional knowledge economy this seminar will offer opportunities to draw comparisons between the findings of various research strategies. In so doing, the seminar will stimulate a dialogue within which new developments may be initiated to bridge the various research communities and thereby offer new insights into the role of knowledge in regional economic development and subsequent policy implications.

Confirmed speakers include: Allen Scott, UCLA, USA, Bjorn Asheim, Lund University, Sweden, Jeremy Howells, University of Manchester, UK, Marleen Huysman, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, The Netherlands.



Call For Papers:

Papers adopting qualitative, quantitative and macro or micro economic approaches to understanding aspects of the regional knowledge economy are welcome. As are those providing conceptual developments and critical appraisals of various dimensions of the regional knowledge economy. Topics of interest include but are not limited to:

- Comparing and contrasting views on the nature of the regional knowledge economy.
- Identifying and examining the mechanisms and processes through which knowledge contributes to regional economic development.
- The knowledge dynamics of local, national and international organisations and institutions and their contribution to the regional knowledge base.
- Assessing efforts to link local and global knowledge communities.
- Quantitative and qualitative methods to map and track the knowledge economy.
- Identifying and enacting effective policies to sustain and expand the regional knowledge economy.
- Evaluating existing policy efforts to promote the regional knowledge economy, including: cluster and networking activities, innovation systems development; university-based initiatives; the generation and retention of knowledge workers; support for new start-ups and so on.

Submissions:

Please send extended abstracts (max. 1,000 words) and contact details to Joanne.Roberts@ncl.ac.uk and specify whether you are eligible for funding by DIME.

Deadlines:

Abstract submission: **March 31st 2008**

Paper acceptance: **April 30th 2008**

Submission of full paper: **August 18th 2008**

Travel, accommodation and conference cost:

Travel and accommodation costs of the participants will be covered according to standard DIME arrangements for one author per paper from DIME-partners and for invited speakers.

Other participants, in addition to arrange their own travel and accommodation, will be subject to conference fees as follows:

Standard rate: £ 140

Student rate: £ 40

The conference fee provides access to all conference presentations at the venue and all refreshments served at the venue as well as the conference dinner on 4th September 2008

There will also be between 5-10 fully funded (including travel and accommodation) places available for PhD students.

Organisers:

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