

Kingston
Business
School

Small Business Research Centre Report 2011





“2011 has been a challenging year for entrepreneurship and small businesses. The changing economic climate has provided opportunities for researchers in the field. I am pleased to be able to share with you the highlights of our activities from the year.”

Professor Robert Blackburn

Report 2011

2011 has been a busy year in the SBRC. Six externally funded projects were started in 2011 and others also continued. Over 30 research outputs of various types were published by our nine research staff. These publications included seven peer-reviewed journal articles, eight book chapters, one book, 11 conference papers, and three research reports.

International links

2011 saw a high level of international activity by SBRC staff, in terms of collaborative research, co-authorship of publications and conference participation. All SBRC researchers were involved in at least one major international conference in 2011 (including RENT, ICSB and ISBE). As in previous years, the SBRC has hosted a number of international researchers during the past year. This year, we were also delighted to host Peter Carey (Deakin University, Australia), Ewald Kibler (Turku University, Finland) and Pia Nielsen (University of Southern Denmark). In addition, three projects were either sourced internationally, or involved foreign partners. We have continued to work closely with our European partners, the ENSR, and were responsible for the UK section of the EU's *Annual SME Report for DG Enterprise and Industry*. Staff have also been involved in doctoral examinations overseas, including Sweden and Ireland.

Research projects

New research projects undertaken during 2011 included the following:

- **Restructuring in SMEs**

This project has been commissioned by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (EUROFOUND), a European Union body. The aim of the study is to develop our understanding of the drivers, methods and consequences of restructuring in SMEs across Europe. The study will involve partners from 23 European states. The project involves Dr John Kitching, Professor David Smallbone and Eva Kasperova.

- **The year ahead: a view from Britain's small businesses 2011**

This repeat project, funded by Barclays Bank and undertaken by Professor Robert Blackburn and Dr Thomas Wainwright, contributes to an examination of how SMEs sector are performing during the recovery and the challenges they are experiencing. The study utilised a large scale survey across Britain (n=1000) and analysed the results by business size, region and sector. The research suggests that business confidence is decreasing within SMEs as a result of the slow economic recovery, but overall business confidence and growth expectations remain relatively high as firms are identifying new opportunities.

- **On the road to recovery: a longitudinal analysis of small firm survival and growth strategies in post-recessionary conditions**

This ongoing study, co-funded by the ISBE's Research and Knowledge Exchange Fund and Workspace Ltd, is concerned with the challenges and opportunities facing small firms as the economy moves out of recession, and the strategies used by owners and managers in response. The study builds on results of previous research undertaken by the SBRC on the responses of small firms to economic downturn. One of the key unanswered questions emerging from the previous study concerns the implications of the different forms of adaptation undertaken by firms for their medium- and longer-term performance prospects and the extent to which the strategies previously adopted to survive the recession affect the scope for management action once the economy begins to pick up.

- **The development of a measure of the innovative characteristics of young people**

This project builds upon an earlier NESTA project by developing and testing an instrument for measuring the innovative characteristics of young people and establishing norms by age of student (ages 14–19 years). The information may be used for self-development purposes. A revised online questionnaire has been developed, draft self-reports and guidance notes have been developed and work with the company will commence in the near future.

- **The value of small company abbreviated accounts**

This study, funded by the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland, investigates the perceived value of small company abbreviated accounts to preparers and users. Using interview and survey data from small company preparers and from a wide variety of account users, the study explores directors' motivations for filing abbreviated accounts and user motivations in the context of other sources of information they could use instead. The study also examines the role played by accountants in the preparation and use of small company accounts.

- **Review of SME and entrepreneurship issues and policies in Mexico at the national level**

The review is being undertaken for the OECD with three main elements: an assessment of the performance of the SME sector and the framework conditions for entrepreneurship; an assessment of SME and entrepreneurship programmes; and an assessment of the evaluation system. The project involves David Smallbone working as part of a team of three (with David Storey and Lois Stevenson).

Copies of the reports from previous projects may be downloaded from <http://eprints.kingston.ac.uk> or found on the SBRC webpage.





Jon Kitching



Rosemary Athayde



Eva Kasperova

People news

External activities and appointments

Robert Blackburn was awarded The Queen's Award for Enterprise Promotion in recognition of his outstanding achievements in promoting enterprise through research and scholarship in entrepreneurship and small business. He received his award from Her Majesty The Queen in July 2011 at Buckingham Palace and was supported by Professor Kenneth O'Neill.



Robert completed his role as chair of an evaluation panel for the Academy of Finland's LIKE2 programme which allocated 3.5m Euro on research on business know-how. Robert performed numerous external roles for the business and management research

community, including doctorate examinations at Umeå University (Sweden), Brunel, Dublin City, Westminster and Strathclyde Universities, and presentation to a workshop on Meet the Editors in Paris, co-ordinated by *Académie de l'Entrepreneuriat*. He was appointed visiting professor to the Universiti Teknologi MARA Malaysia and was a keynote speaker at the eighth SMEs in a Global Economy Conference, Khon Kaen University in Thailand. He presented and advised doctoral students at the Research in Entrepreneurship conference (Bodø, Norway) and was elected to the Executive Committee of the European Council for Small Business and Entrepreneurship (ECSB). Robert also continues to influence practitioner stakeholders to affect impact, such as through his membership of the ACCA's Global Forum discussion, work with Barclays Bank plc and a presentation to BIS on the findings of business strategies in the recession.

David Smallbone attended the ICSB World Conference in Stockholm in June, which brought an end to David's term of office as ICSB president. Leading a global organisation with 11 country-based or regional affiliates and members in over 70 countries is a major task, reinforcing the SBRC's growing international presence. David continues in his role as associate editor of the *Journal for Small Business Management*. For the second year running David was a member of the national judging panel for the British Chamber of Commerce Business of the Year Award. David also made a number of keynote presentations in 2011, including: the EFMD entrepreneurship conference at Tallinn, Estonia (*Does entrepreneurship matter? A researchers perspective*); an international conference held at George Washington University in Washington DC in October (*Public policy and entrepreneurship: with reference to the new member states of the European Union*); an international conference on research in entrepreneurship and economic development, Banja Luka, Bosnia-Herzegovina, October; an international conference held in Riga, Latvia in December (*Facilitating entrepreneurship in the new member states of the EU: some policy challenges*), and an international conference held at the Indian institute of Management, Bangalore in December (*Institutions and entrepreneurship – perspectives from the new Europe*).

Elizabeth Chell was a Keynote speaker at the SNLIW conference in Waterford on 7–8 December 2011 where she gave an address entitled 'Skilled engagement in the entrepreneurial process: human and social capital.' The conference was organised by CEDRE, Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT). Elizabeth also became a member of the CMI Academic Advisory Committee. She is also a member of the Social Enterprise Network of the Royal Society of Arts (RSA) of which she is a fellow.

John Kitching presented a paper entitled 'Small company abbreviated accounts: A regulatory burden or a vital disclosure?' at the Brunel Accounting Symposium, 17 June 2011. He also presented this paper to an invited audience of practitioners, policy makers and academics at the ICAS discussion event in London on 12 October 2011. On 1 November, John presented findings from the study of the value of small company abbreviated accounts at the ICAS discussion 'SME reporting and assurance: regulatory burden or vital requirement?' in Edinburgh. He has continued to review research proposals for the ESRC and reviewed papers for seven different journals on small business themes.

Rosemary Athayde successfully defended her doctoral thesis in September 2011. She subsequently received her PhD from Kingston University in January 2012. Rosemary also recently completed a pilot study of young people's attitudes to enterprise in Ethiopia. Data was collected from young people participating in enterprise programmes at higher educational institutions in Haramaya and Bahir Dar, run by Alchemy World Projects during 2010 and 2011. Findings showed high levels of desire for mentoring and training in opportunity recognition, problem solving and leadership. Funding is being sought to carry out a larger scale study with partners at HEI in Ethiopia.

Rosemary's current projects include a study commissioned by Young Enterprise (England and Wales) (YE) on life and career experiences of YE alumni to mark the 50th anniversary of Young Enterprise in 2012. Rosemary is also involved in a collaborative three-year study of entrepreneurial attitudes in Scandinavian countries funded by the Norwegian government and led by Christina Butler in the UK. Rosemary continues to teach on a range of undergraduate and postgraduate entrepreneurship and research methods programmes.

John Kitching, David Smallbone, Mirela Xheneti and Eva Kasperova



won the award for best paper in 'Business sustainability, development and growth' track for their paper entitled 'Adapting to a fragile recovery: SME responses to recession and post-recession performance' at the 2011 Institute for Small Business and Entrepreneurship (ISBE) conference.

Thomas Wainwright, Ewald Kibler, Robert Blackburn and Teemu



Kautonen were awarded the best paper award in the 'Business creation, resource acquisition an business closure' track for the paper entitled 'Who are you calling old?: revisiting notions of age and ability amongst older entrepreneurs' at the 2011 Institute for Small Business and Entrepreneurship (ISBE) conference.

Eva Kasperova was awarded the 'Best Doctoral Student Award' by the European Council for Small Business and Entrepreneurship (ECSB) for her paper entitled 'Entrepreneurial identity, disability and embodiment' at the 25th Annual RENT Conference in Norway, 16–18 November. As part of the award, Eva won a place on USASBE's doctoral consortium which she attended in New Orleans, USA in January 2012.



Pia Schou Nielsen



David Smallbone



Tom Wainwright

Staff leaving the SBRC

We bid farewell to **Dr Mirela Xheneti** who left the SBRC in August 2011 to take up a lectureship in entrepreneurship at Sussex University in Brighton. We wish her every success with her continued academic career and will continue to keep in touch.

Postgraduate research

Congratulations to **Rosemary Athayde** who completed her PhD on entrepreneurship education in September 2011, entitled 'Measuring enterprise potential in young people: developing a robust evaluation tool'. Rosemary is now working jointly with the Department of Strategy Marketing and Entrepreneurship, lecturing on small firms and entrepreneurship.

Research students

We have a very active doctorate group with students studying a range of significant topics in the field:

Suthinee Mongkol

Suthinee is a first year PhD student. Her PhD is on 'The role of networks in the internationalisation of SMEs in Thailand: a case study of food-ingredient enterprises'. Suthinee's research will focus on the role of networks in SME internationalisation in Thailand. The study will emphasise the SME use of networks when internationalising and the effect of Thailand's network structural characteristics on SME internationalisation on food-ingredient SMEs.

Chi Maher (DBA student)

Chi's research aims to develop our knowledge and understanding of managerial careers in the not-for-profit (NFP) voluntary sector by examining the career orientations and preferred career path of managers working in the sector.

Eva Kasperova

Eva's PhD examines entrepreneurial identity, disability and embodiment, exploring how business owners with impairments negotiate and construct their identity. The aim is to understand the role of the body in entrepreneurship and the formation of identity.

Vik Gill



Vik's research aims to develop our knowledge and understanding of social enterprises and social entrepreneurship by examining how technologies provide competitive advantages in social ventures, and whether the adoption of technology differs between commercial and social enterprises.

Pia Schou Nielsen

Pia Schou Nielsen from the University of Southern Denmark, is studying in the Small Business Research Centre to work on her PhD for six months. Her research focuses on the implementation processes and structures of entrepreneurship policy. Pia has just entered into the second year of her studies and during her stay she is being supervised by Professor David Smallbone.

Staff

Robert Blackburn, director of SBRC and professor of Small Business Studies
David Smallbone, associate director of SBRC and professor of Small Business and Entrepreneurship
Elizabeth Chell, professor of Entrepreneurial Behaviour
Dr John Kitching, reader
Dr Rosemary Athayde, senior researcher
Dr Thomas Wainwright, researcher
Vik Gill, ESRC/SAMS Management and Business Development fellow
Eva Kasperova, research assistant
Valerie Thorne, research administrator and editorial assistant for *International Small Business Journal*

Associate members

Robin Jarvis BA, FCCA
David Stokes PhD

Visiting professors and fellows

Professor Friederike Welter PhD
Ewald Kibler



Jari Kuusisto MSc, PhD
Sue Lawton MA(HRM), MA(Soc Ent), MCIPD
Professor Anne Kovalainen PhD
Richard Parkes
David Purdy

Publications 2011

Journal articles

- Chell, Elizabeth and Athayde, Rosemary** (2011) Planning for uncertainty: soft skills, hard skills and innovation. *Reflective Practice*, 12(5), pp. 615–628
- Kautonen, Teemu; Tornikoski, Erno T; and **Kibler, Ewald** (2011) Entrepreneurial intentions in the third age: the impact of perceived age norms. *Small Business Economics*, 37(2), pp. 219–234
- Jayawarna, Dilani; Rouse, Julia; and **Kitching, John** (2011) Entrepreneur motivations and life course. *International Small Business Journal*
- Xheneti, Mirela and Kitching, John** (2011) From discourse to implementation: enterprise policy development in post-communist Albania. *Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy*, 29(6), pp. 1018–1036
- Kitching, John; Kasperova, Eva; Blackburn, Robert;** and Collis, Jill (2011) Small wonder. *CA Magazine*, 115(1259), pp. 55–56. ISSN (print) 1352-9021
- Welter, Friederike and Smallbone, David** (2011) Institutional perspectives on entrepreneurial behavior in challenging environments. *Journal of Small Business Management*, 49(1), pp. 107–125
- French, Shaun; Leyshon, Andrew; and **Wainwright, Thomas** (2011) Financializing space, spacing financialization. *Progress in Human Geography*, 35(6), pp. 798–819
- Wainwright, Thomas** (2011) Elite knowledges: framing risk and the geographies of credit. *Environment and Planning A*, 43(3), pp. 650–665
- Wainwright, Thomas** (2011) Tax doesn't have to be taxing: London's 'onshore' finance industry and the fiscal spaces of a global crisis. *Environment and Planning A*, 43(6), pp. 1287–1304

Books

- Welter, Friederike and Smallbone, David**, eds. (2011) *Handbook of research on entrepreneurship policies in Central and Eastern Europe*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited. 272p.

Book chapters

- Xheneti, Mirela and Blackburn, Robert** (2011) Small business and entrepreneurship (SBE): an analysis of publications and implications for the development of the field. In: Lee, Bill and Cassell, Catherine, (eds.) *Challenges and controversies in management research*. Abingdon, UK: Routledge. pp. 367–388 (Routledge Advances in Management and Business Studies, no. 45)
- Smallbone, David**, Roman, Zoltan and **Blackburn, Robert** (2011) SMEs and social dialogue in the new Europe: the case of Hungary. In: Welter, Friederike and Smallbone, David, (eds.) *Handbook of research on entrepreneurship policies in Central and Eastern Europe*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited. pp. 65–82
- Todorov, Kiril, Kolarov, Kostadin and **Smallbone, David** (2011) Promoting cross-border entrepreneurship in Bulgaria: a case for policy treatment? In: Welter, Friederike and Smallbone, David, (eds.) *Handbook of research on entrepreneurship policies in Central and Eastern Europe*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited. pp. 45–64
- Smallbone, David and Welter, Friederike** (2011) Conclusions and outlook. In: Welter, Friederike and Smallbone, David, (eds.) *Handbook of research on entrepreneurship policies in Central and Eastern Europe*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited. pp. 233–240
- Welter, Friederike and Smallbone, David** (2011) Entrepreneurship policies in the wider Europe: a thematic perspective. In: Welter, Friederike and Smallbone, David, (eds.) *Handbook of research on entrepreneurship policies in Central and Eastern Europe*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited. pp. 1–18
- Hofer, Andrea-Rosalinde and **Welter, Friederike** (2011) The local dimension of entrepreneurship policy: the example of East Germany. In: Welter, Friederike and Smallbone, David, (eds.) *Handbook of research on entrepreneurship policies in Central and Eastern Europe*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited. pp. 19–44
- Sauka, Arnis and **Welter, Friederike** (2011) Mentalities and mindsets: the difficulties of entrepreneurship policies in the Latvian context. In: Welter, Friederike and Smallbone, David, (eds.) *Handbook of research on entrepreneurship policies in Central and Eastern Europe*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited. pp. 83–101

Research monographs and reports

- Blackburn, Robert and Wainwright, Thomas (2011) The year ahead: a view from Britain's small businesses. (Project Report Barclays Bank), London, U.K (Unpublished)
- Jackson, Mike; Gardner, Zoe; and Wainwright, Thomas (2011) Location awareness and ubiquitous cities: a report to the U-City Research Institute, Yonsei University, S.Korea. (Project Report) Nottingham, UK: University of Nottingham. 70 p.
- Kitching, John, Kasperova, Eva, Blackburn, Robert and Collis, Jill (2011) Small company abbreviated accounts: a regulatory burden or a vital disclosure? (Project Report) Edinburgh, U.K. : Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland. 68 p.

Conference papers

- Blackburn, Robert** (2011) Rising to the Global Challenge: Entrepreneurship and SME Development in Asia. Keynote address to the *8th Annual SMEs in a Global Economy Conference*, Khon Kaen University, Nong Khai Campus, Nong Khai, 9–11 November, Thailand
- Blackburn, Robert** (2011) How to get your first paper published. Plenary presentation to *ECSSB Doctoral Seminar* University of Norland and Norlandsforskning, 16 November, Bodø, Norway
- Kibler, Ewald; Wainwright, Tom;** Kautonen, Teemu; and **Blackburn, Robert** (2011) (Work) Life after work: understanding barriers to older entrepreneurship in London. In: *56th Annual ICSB World Conference*; 15–18 June 2011, Stockholm, Sweden
- Kitching, John; Kasperova, Eva;** and Collis, Jill (2011) Deregulation or disclosure? Financial reporting regulation and small company performance. In: *34th Institute for Small Business and Entrepreneurship (ISBE) Annual Conference: Sustainable futures: enterprising landscapes and communities*; 9–10 Nov 2011, Sheffield, UK
- Kitching, John; Kasperova, Eva; and Collis, Jill** (2011) Deregulation or disclosure? UK financial reporting regulation and small company performance. In: *RENT XXV: Research in Entrepreneurship and Small Business: 25th Anniversary Conference*; 16–18 Nov 2011, Bodø, Norway
- Kitching, John; Smallbone, David; Xheneti, Mirela; and Kasperova, Eva** (2011) Adapting to a fragile recovery: SME responses to recession and post-recession performance. In: *34th Institute for Small Business and Entrepreneurship (ISBE) Annual Conference: Sustainable futures: enterprising landscapes and communities*; 9–10 Nov 2011, Sheffield, UK
- Kitching, John; Smallbone, David; Xheneti, Mirela; and Kasperova, Eva** (2011) On the road to recovery? SME responses to recession and post-recession performance. In: *RENT XXV: Research in Entrepreneurship and Small Business: 25th Anniversary Conference*; 16–18 Nov 2011, Bodø, Norway
- Wainwright, Thomas; Kibler, Ewald; Blackburn, Robert;** and Kautonen, Teemu (2011) Exploring social barriers to older self-employment. In: *RENT XXV: Research in Entrepreneurship and Small Business: 25th Anniversary Conference*; 16–18 Nov 2011, Bodø, Norway
- Wainwright, Thomas; Kibler, Ewald; Blackburn, Robert;** and Kautonen, Teemu (2011) Who are you calling old?: revisiting notions of age and ability amongst older entrepreneurs. In: *34th Institute for Small Business and Entrepreneurship (ISBE) Annual Conference: Sustainable futures: enterprising landscapes and communities*; 9–10 Nov 2011, Sheffield, UK. ISBN 9781900862233
- Battisti, Marina; Deakins, David; **Smallbone, David;** and Perry, Martin (2011) Small-business owner's capability to manage regulation and its relationship with compliance. In: *56th Annual ICSB World Conference*; 15–18 Jun 2011, Stockholm, Sweden
- Smallbone, David; Welter, Friederike;** and Juangzhong, Xiu (2011) From Mao to market: entrepreneurs as institutional change agents in China. In: *56th Annual ICSB World Conference*; 15–18 Jun 2011, Stockholm, Sweden

Further information

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