Science parks: Enclaves for entrepreneurship

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Abstract (300 word limit)

Science parks are organizations planned to support regional development through the artificial creation of an agglomeration of businesses conducive to effective firm development and innovation. They support their tenants´ business and technology-transfer activities through a stock of physical resources, a set of formal links and a portfolio of services (Meseguer-Martinez et al., 2020), with special attention to entrepreneurship. These entities find theoretical groundings on the Triple Helix model of innovation, as they put together university industry and government (Etzkowitz and Leydersdorff, 2000). They have attracted growing interest during the last seven decades. After the first experiences in the decade of the 1950s, SPs are present in the five continents. The International Association of Science Parks reports having 350 registered members spread across 76 countries, hosting more than 115000 firms (IASP, 2021), while other associations such as AURP and ASPA report having 90 and 282 registered members respectively (ASPA, 2019; AURP, 2019).

For public authorities, science parks (SPs) have become key actors within their Regional Innovation Systems and important policy tools that can play a relevant role in their economic landscapes (Gkypali et al., 2016). When appropriately planned and developed, these policy initiatives are a paradigm of technology transfer (Huang et al., 2013). For technology-based entrepreneurs, science parks have become beacons of entrepreneurship. They pursue entrepreneurial growth (Mian et al., 2016) through the promotion and hosting of business incubators, which offer a wide range of services to their incubatees (Bellavista and Sanz, 2009), reducing the so-called liability of newness (Schwartz, 2009). In a recent international survey, ca.86% of the surveyed science parks declared having incubation services. From the academic standpoint, science parks attract increasing attention from researchers from areas such as urban planning, industrial policy, engineering, finance, human resources, and many other fields from Social Sciences. The number of contributions increases despite its theoretical framework being in its infancy and the controversial results of extant research (Meseguer-Martinez et al., 2020).

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Biography (150 word limit)

Angel Meseguer-Martinez is professor of business studies at the University of Castilla-La Mancha (Spain). He has more than 12 years of previous professional experience in entrepreneurship, technology transfer and finance, in particular, in the field of science parks. His doctoral thesis was devoted to science parks and focused on the effects of the clustering effects on firm´s innovation. His subsequent research has focused on science parks, innovation and social networks. He has participated in congresses and conferences, such as the 1st UNWTO World Conference on Smart Destinations, the 17th International Conference on Social Sciences or the 3rd International Conference on Clusters and Industrial Districts. He has published his research in journals as the Journal on Intellectual Capital, Electronics Markets or Telematics and Informatics.

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