



**UNIVERSITÀ  
DEGLI STUDI  
DI BERGAMO**

Dipartimento  
di Ingegneria Gestionale,  
dell'Informazione e della Produzione

## **Networking Seminars Series**

### A.Y. 2025-2026 2<sup>nd</sup> Term

June, 3<sup>rd</sup> 2026, 1:00-2:00 pm (CEST)  
Room C302, Via Pasubio 7/B, Dalmine (BG)

#### **Presenter:**

**Giuliano Sansone**

University College Dublin (UCD)

**TITLE** – One size doesn't fit all: how incubator typologies interact with local contexts to foster entrepreneurship and innovation

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#### **ABSTRACT**

This paper investigates the longitudinal impact of incubators on local entrepreneurship and innovation across Italian provinces, focusing on how these effects vary by incubator typology and territorial context. Drawing on the Knowledge Spillover Theory of Entrepreneurship (KSTE), we conceptualize incubators as intermediaries that convert individual and local knowledge into entrepreneurial and innovative outcomes. Our findings show that a stronger presence of incubators is associated with higher levels of local entrepreneurship and innovation; however, these effects are not uniform. Private incubators consistently generate significant and persistent positive effects, whereas public incubators have no discernible impact. Furthermore, incubators produce meaningful local effects on entrepreneurship and innovation mostly in socioeconomically advantaged provinces, whereas effects are weaker (often close to zero) in disadvantaged provinces. Finally, we find that the positive impact of incubators in more advantaged provinces is mostly driven by privately owned incubators. These results refine the KSTE by showing that incubators do not function as generic knowledge spillover channels, but as institutionally and territorially embedded conversion devices, whose effectiveness depends on institutional design and territorial contexts. Our results also provide policy insights for the development of place-sensitive incubation strategies aligned with local capabilities and broader regional development objectives.

**METHOD** – Regression analyses based on a dataset of incubators in Italy spanning 2014–2019, merged with province-level indicators from several Italian datasets such as ISTAT and MISE, resulting in a six-year panel dataset for 104 Italian provinces (NUTS3 level).

**JOURNEY OF THE PAPER** – First time presenting the paper

**DISCUSSANT** – Davide Hahn, University of Bergamo

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