

# SPRU Wednesday seminars

**Date** 9<sup>th</sup> July

**Speaker** José Manuel Leceta, Director of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology

**Title** What makes the EIT unique?

## Abstract

Europe's economic history includes plenty of knowledge and innovation-related successes. Today, the continent has a number of world-class Universities, inventive research centers, large companies and a vibrant SME fabric. However, notwithstanding long standing support to collaborative R&D by European Union institutions and member states, recent evidence and research demonstrates that few young leading innovators created in the last 25 years have European roots, a tenth of those originated in the US. On the other hand, taking aside defence, European citizens already invests publicly per capita more than the US. Consequently, not only the level of support but also the established top-down design of established innovation policy support mechanisms needs consideration.

The 'European Institute of Innovation' (EIT) is a new and interesting policy experiment aimed at getting the EU back on track for entrepreneurial innovation. Created in 2008, the EIT crystalizes Europe's political will to approach innovation radically different with an increased focus on people. EIT operates through so-called 'Knowledge and Innovation Communities' (KICs) which integrate excellent partners from the knowledge triangle of Higher Education, Research and Business, encompassing bottom-up 'co-creation' strategies in shaping novel innovation models.

In this talk, José Manuel Leceta will explain why and how EIT-KIC 'living partnerships' represent a disruptive innovation policy

compared to any other offering at EU level. In addition, three unique features of the EIT will be described, namely, 1. KICs's role as forerunners of communities-driven innovation schemes for grand challenges, 2. the unique governance and management approach to EIT-KIC partnerships and 3. KIC's co-location centers as melting pots of knowledge, skills and entrepreneurial attitudes.