

# Joint Business and Management/SPRU Seminar

**Date:** Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> October

**Speaker:** Joaquin Alegre (University of Valencia)

**Title:** Entrepreneurial orientation, innovative capabilities and export performance

**Abstract** Export strategy has become an increasingly important issue for SMEs in recent years as a result of the wide phenomenon of globalisation and economic recession in some regions such as Southern Europe. In this paper, we propose export performance as a key performance indicator for SMEs and we look at the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation (EO) and export performance, making a contribution to the EO-performance literature.

Furthermore, we argue that, between the EO managerial attitude and export performance, there are a number of organisational processes playing a mediating role. Previous research has found that innovation is an important outcome of entrepreneurship. In extant literature, we also find support for suggesting a positive effect of innovation on export performance. These are the reasons why we focus on innovation capabilities as a main mediating variable.

Finally, we review the concept of innovation capabilities and suggest, in the context of manufacturing firms, three innovation capabilities: (1) Technological capabilities, (2) Marketing capabilities, and (3) Design capabilities.

We test our hypotheses using data on two surveys (2004 and 2012) in the Italian and Spanish ceramic tiles industry. Italian and Spanish ceramic tile producers are world leaders in terms of technology, design and exports. Most of them are SMEs and they tend to be geographically concentrated in industrial districts: Sassuolo in Northern Italy and Castellón in Eastern Spain.

Results suggest relevant contributions to entrepreneurship, innovation and internationalisation fields. Findings have important implications for firms' decision-makers as well as policy-makers.