



University of Sussex

Business & Management

Seminar series

Date: Wednesday 2 April

Speaker: Prof Giambattista Dagnino (University of Catania)

Title: Keep Fit to Fit: An Analysis of the Microfoundations of Strategic Alliance Evolution Capabilities

Abstract: This paper aims to contribute to the understanding of the role of purposeful managerial action for the fruitful evolution of alliances. An empirical study was conducted in three cases of alliances between multinational companies and emergent market firms in the relatively traditional mechatronic industry. These alliances initially present the typical structural characteristics that should be conducive to learning races; however, they have nonetheless evolved and thrived over multiyear periods. The evolution in time of each alliance is mapped through an in-depth qualitative longitudinal field study that focuses on: 1) the development and recombination processes of resources and capabilities at the firm and dyad levels; and 2) the dynamic capabilities that undergird such processes. The results of this study lead to the enucleation of a particular type of dynamic capability that we define as alliance evolution capabilities. This term refers to the skills and processes that managers purposefully develop to channel alliances to evolve by defining initially, extending or modifying their scope in order to sense and seize new value-creation opportunities.