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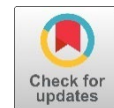
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Editorial

Reflections on entrepreneurial ecosystems, citizen collectives and basic income

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Abstract

Objective: To propose entrepreneurial ecosystems could evolve into citizen collectives that, besides creating a favorable environment for entrepreneurial activities, would also be capable of providing a basic income for every citizen in its context. **Methodology/design:** The text is an essay based on extant literature about entrepreneurial ecosystems, universal basic income, and citizen collectives. **Main results:** I argue that entrepreneurial ecosystems may be seen as citizen collectives. As such, based on the leadership of a region's entrepreneurial community, they can foster society's sustainable development. I propose that basic income initiatives should be included as an expected output of a sustainable entrepreneurial ecosystems. **Theoretical/Methodological contributions:** I propose that this view of entrepreneurial ecosystem is relevant for a better understanding of the dynamics of sustainable entrepreneurial ecosystems and their creation of value for society. **Relevance/originality:** This is a gap in the literature, since no previous papers have approached entrepreneurial ecosystems under this theoretical lens. Entrepreneurial ecosystems, in the form modern citizen collectives, can be an alternative to and complement government and market actions. **Social/management contributions:** Entrepreneurial ecosystems, as collective of entrepreneurs, would enhance the survival of enterprises and, at the same time, help build a more inclusive society. From the expected positive benefits of basic income initiative could emerge better prepared potential entrepreneurs focused on innovative entrepreneurship, and an increase in the number of traditional small-firms and self-employed people whose entrepreneurial initiatives would emerge from a safer financial situation that allows riskier behavior.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial ecosystem. Citizen collectives. Universal basic income. Entrepreneurship system.

Resumo

Objetivo do estudo: Propor que ecossistemas empresariais poderiam evoluir para coletivos de cidadãos que, além de criar um ambiente favorável para atividades empreendedoras, também seriam capazes de fornecer uma renda básica para cada cidadão em seu contexto. **Metodologia/abordagem:** O texto é um ensaio baseado na literatura existente sobre ecossistemas empresariais, renda básica universal e coletivos de cidadãos. **Principais resultados:** Argumento que os ecossistemas empreendedores podem ser vistos como coletivos de cidadãos. Assim, a partir da liderança da comunidade empreendedora de uma região, eles podem fomentar o desenvolvimento sustentável da sociedade. Proponho que as iniciativas de renda básica sejam incluídas como produto esperado de um ecossistema empreendedor sustentável. **Contribuições teóricas/metodológicas:** Proponho que essa visão de ecossistema empreendedor seja relevante para uma melhor compreensão da dinâmica dos ecossistemas empreendedores sustentáveis e sua criação de valor para a sociedade. **Relevância/originalidade:** Esta é uma lacuna na literatura, uma vez que nenhum artigo anterior abordou os ecossistemas empreendedores sob essa lente teórica. Ecossistemas empreendedores, na forma de coletivos de cidadãos, podem ser uma alternativa para complementar as ações governamentais e de mercado, assumindo a forma de guildas contemporâneas agnósticas setoriais. **Contribuições sociais/para a gestão:** Ecossistemas empreendedores, como coletivos de empreendedores, melhorariam a sobrevivência das empresas e, ao mesmo tempo, ajudariam a construir uma sociedade mais inclusiva. Dos benefícios positivos esperados da iniciativa de renda básica podem surgir potenciais empreendedores mais bem preparados e focados no empreendedorismo inovador, e um aumento no número de pequenas empresas tradicionais e trabalhadores autônomos cujas iniciativas empreendedoras emergiriam de uma situação financeira mais segura que permite comportamento mais arriscado.

Palavras-chave: Ecossistema empreendedor. Coletivos de cidadãos. Renda básica universal. Sistema empreendedor.

INTRODUCTION

In 2013, Professor Tine de Moor started her inaugural lecture as Professor of Institutional Collective Actions in Historical Perspective at Utrecht University with these words:

We live in exciting times even for historians: the current economic and social crisis beckons many to ask for similarities with precious historical events. However, the current crisis differs from the previous one in our increasing inability – despite the wealth that we amassed over the centuries – to deal with that wealth in a responsible way to ensure that everyone may benefit not just today but also tomorrow (De Moor, 2013, p. 5).

In line with this worrying diagnosis, further on in her lecture, Professor de Moor argued that, despite the availability of technological solutions to the complex and global problems that we face nowadays,

the reality is that between technology and solution another step is needed, namely, building solid, resilient institutions to create values which regulate the behaviour of individuals in a way that solve the problems of today and makes the future brighter (De Moor, 2013, p. 5).

On the other hand, she also highlighted that our contemporary society is witnessing a growing emergence of what she described as “institutions for collective action” or “citizen collectives”. These are initiated in a bottom-up process by groups of interested citizens in specific fields of human action such as energy, financing, food, healthcare, crime prevention, education, and many others that deal with pressing human and planetary economic, social, and environmental concerns aiming for long-term solutions marked by cooperation and self-regulation among human fellows. The human history has witnessed many forms of institution for collective action, such as the craft guilds in the Middle Ages (De Moor, 2013).

For De Moor (2013), citizen collectives come in many forms and shapes, with differing levels of self-imposed rules for members’ acceptance and expected behaviours as well as diverse mechanisms for interaction with governments and markets, and self-organizing structures and strategies. As precisely put by Prof. De Moor, this diversity is “a reflection of the many differences in local problems and possible solutions that arise, in addition to the solutions offered by state and markets” (De Moor, 2013, p. 8).

In recent years, another research topic – entrepreneurial ecosystems - has emerged quite strongly since 2015, although some earlier publications have already used the term (Cohen, 2006; Isenberg, 2010; Malecki, 2011). Boyd Cohen (2006) was one of the first authors to refer to this concept with his pioneering article in *Business Strategy and the Environment*. Boyd Cohen’s discussion centered on how a community can become a “sustainable valley”, where innovative and sustainable technologies emerge through new ventures. Four years later, Daniel Isenberg (2010) published another seminal article in *Harvard Business Review*. In this article, Daniel Isenberg suggested that a broader approach could help governments achieve economic growth if public efforts and policies focused on greater involvement of the private sector, modification of cultural

norms, and removal of regulatory barriers, among other issues related to fostering entrepreneurship.

In this invited editorial for this issue of *Iberoamerican Journal of Entrepreneurship and Small Business – IBJESB* (*Revista de Empreendedorismo e Gestão de Pequenas Empresas, REGEPE*), I develop an argument proposing that entrepreneurial ecosystems could evolve into citizen collectives that, besides creating a favorable environment for entrepreneurial activities to flourish in each territory, would also be capable of providing a basic income for every citizen in its context. This is a gap in the literature, since no previous papers, to the best of my knowledge, have approached entrepreneurial ecosystems under this theoretical lens. I propose that this view of entrepreneurial ecosystem is relevant for a better understanding of the dynamics of sustainable entrepreneurial ecosystems and their creation of value for society.

ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEMS

An entrepreneurial ecosystem is defined as an “evolving ecosystem consisting of key entrepreneurs and companies that govern, integrate, and perform all necessary functions for the development of entrepreneurship in a territory” (Stam & Van De Ven, 2021, p. 812) or “a complex regional agglomeration of entrepreneurial activities that provides two relevant classes of services: enhanced entrepreneurial activity that benefits its broader economic and social environment; and various forms of formal and informal support that generally increase the likelihood of successful entrepreneurial activity” (Kuckertz, 2019, p. 3). Both definitions include the elements and expected outcomes of an entrepreneurial ecosystem and are convergent to a plethora of other definitions in the extant literature (Nicotra et al., 2018; Spigel et al., 2020).

According to Stam (2015), the approach to entrepreneurial ecosystems brings a new economic vision of people, networks, and institutions seeking to understand how a given region, whether a locality, city, state, or country, becomes a favorable environment for the emergence of new entrepreneurs that will produce beneficial effects in terms of social and economic development.

In the extant entrepreneurial ecosystems literature, many efforts have been directed to operationalizing the concept of entrepreneurial ecosystem, identifying, and describing its components, pointing out its relevance to guide the formulation and implementation of entrepreneurial public policies and debating the appropriate geographic level for its application (Roundy, Brockman, & Bradshaw, 2018; Audretsch, & Belitski, 2017; Stam, & Van De Ven, 2021). There are also contributions that focus on ways to diagnose or measure an entrepreneurial ecosystem (Leendertse et al., 2021; Rovere et al., 2021; Perugini, 2022). Another prominent theme in recent literature is centered on the evolutionary dynamics of entrepreneurial ecosystems and their contribution to sustainable development in the regions in which they develop (Mack, & Mayer, 2016; Audretsch et al., 2021; Theodoraki et al., 2022).

The growth in the interest of researchers and policymakers with entrepreneurial ecosystems is associated with the belief in the benefits that cooperation at multiple levels of action can bring to a region (Freire-Gibb, & Gregson, 2019; Wei,

2022). Thus, a concerted action that involves different actors from governments, private initiative, and educational and research institutions, can lead a region to develop in a more balanced and sustainable way, generating jobs, income, and wealth for its population (Isenberg, 2011).

Although the idea of entrepreneurial ecosystems can be considered equivalent to the notions of local productive arrangements or innovation ecosystems, there are arguments that advocate the distinction between these fields of study and business and government action (Valkokari, 2015; Autio, & Thomas, 2022). The main distinction between the three concepts is associated with the object of study of each one. While local productive arrangements, in general, refer to clusters of companies in a productive sector in which other support and infrastructure organizations are present, the perspective of entrepreneurial ecosystems is, in general, multi-sector and focuses on the conditions that allow people to create new ventures (O'Connor et al., 2018). On the other hand, studies of innovation ecosystems also consider contextual and institutional aspects of certain regions, with emphasis on the effects they have on the innovative efforts of organizations. From the perspective of entrepreneurial ecosystems, the focus is on how environmental factors stimulate or restrict entrepreneurial action that may or may not result from innovations.

In summary, entrepreneurial ecosystems differ from other systemic approaches in the field of entrepreneurship because, first, their central focus is on entrepreneurial activities, especially those with the greatest impact on regional development. Second, it seeks to explain how geographically delimited environments can become spaces in which the necessary conditions exist for ambitious entrepreneurship to emerge and develop. Finally, these explanations are based on the interactions between structural conditions, local culture, and geographic environments. These interactions between entrepreneurs and other local actors emphasize cooperation to strengthen the entrepreneurial ecosystem and improve the population's quality of life (Ács et al., 2017).

In Brazil, there is also a growing literature on entrepreneurial ecosystems (Alves et al., 2019; Siffert, & Guimarães, 2020; Stefenom, & Thom, 2020) and IBJESB has published relevant contributions to this research theme in other issues (García et al., 2018; Rovere et al., 2021). In this issue, Dionísio et al., 2022), albeit adopting the term "national entrepreneurship system", discuss the validity of the Global Entrepreneurship Index for assessing national entrepreneurial ecosystems.

ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEMS AS CITIZEN COLLECTIVES

At first sight, one can imagine that citizen collectives and entrepreneurial ecosystems may have no connections. However, upon a closer look one can find links between the two human endeavors. From its inception, the literature on entrepreneurial ecosystems have called for entrepreneurs to play a leading role in the development and governance of entrepreneurial ecosystems (Feld, 2012; Isenberg, 2010; Stam, 2015).

On the other hand, initial definitions stressed that the expected output from entrepreneurial ecosystems is productive entrepreneurship that generates value for society. Productive

entrepreneurship is related to innovation-based products and services, especially technology and/or deep science based (Nicotra et al., 2018). This may lead to the conclusion that entrepreneurial ecosystems are interested in creating economic value only.

However, there have been proposals arguing that entrepreneurial ecosystems, ultimately, are meant to be instruments for achieving sustainable development through collective efforts, knowledge sharing and networking among all kinds of entrepreneurs (Volkman et al., 2021). This has been associated with the increasing attention with sustainable entrepreneurship that balances environmental, societal, and economic actions and outputs (Bertello et al., 2022; Bischoff, & Volkman, 2018).

Furthermore, although some descriptions of entrepreneurial ecosystems may lead to a static vision of the phenomenon, as complex systems (Roundy, Bradshaw, & Brockman, 2018), entrepreneurial ecosystems do change along the time. Thus, a central tenet for understanding entrepreneurial ecosystems functioning is to focus on their dynamics (Korber et al., 2022).

Spigel (2017) brought up the idea of looking at entrepreneurial ecosystems as networks of relationships. For him, networks of relationships influence entrepreneurial ecosystems' competitiveness. Two relevant dimensions for understanding the dynamics of entrepreneurial ecosystems were suggested by Spigel (2017): practices and processes.

Practices are the activities that all actors in an entrepreneurial ecosystem perform when interacting. There are two main types of practices: networking practices and learning practices. The first are related to the formation of ties or connections between the actors of an entrepreneurial ecosystem. They can relate to three motivators: with whom to relate; why relate to others; and how to maintain these relationships over time. Spigel (2020) suggests four networking practices: network expansion with the search for new actors to be included in it; deepening the network to better understand the skills, motivations, and resources of the members; leveraging the network to access advice, support, and other available resources; and maintaining and strengthening connections and relationships.

On the other hand, learning practices stem from the need for entrepreneurs to acquire and develop knowledge, one of the central resources in entrepreneurial action and which can be accessed in the entrepreneurial ecosystem in diverse ways. The knowledge needed to be an entrepreneur is different in each stage of a startup life cycle – ideation, birth, development, and repositioning – and can be obtained in different practices as well. Learning can come from readings and participation in training to develop entrepreneurial skills. Another way comes from experiential learning practices, acting and reflecting on hits and misses. A third way is to observe the practices of other entrepreneurs within the entrepreneurial ecosystem (Spigel, 2017; 2020).

It can be concluded from Spigel's description, that both networking and learning practices are essential for collective action in an entrepreneurial ecosystem. Viewing entrepreneurs as the main actors of entrepreneurial ecosystem implies that their emergence and development is rooted on cooperation and

collaboration among those that decide to accomplish entrepreneurial activities. From these practices, exchanges of knowledge, beliefs, habits, shared values, and a common sense of purpose may evolve. The same happens for citizen collectives, i. e., they are institutional forms that operate and depend upon their members cooperation and collaboration practices guided by a shared sense of identity and common goal.

On the other hand, processes in an entrepreneurial ecosystem are the broader social and economic activities that result in the creation, reproduction, and transformation of the entrepreneurial ecosystem (Spigel, 2017). Processes take place at a broader level of the entrepreneurial ecosystem and bring consequences that are reflected in structural conditions such as culture, formal and informal networks, and power coalitions (Spigel, 2020). The processes presented by Spigel (2020) are evolutionary in character. This means that entrepreneurial ecosystems are influenced by past events in the way they evolve from an emerging stage to a consolidated one. Central to this evolution are the articulation processes guided by governance mechanisms that strengthen ties between the actors of the entrepreneurial ecosystem (Colombelli et al., 2019). These articulation processes are carried out by public or private actors who act as leaders, stimulating, guiding, and convincing other actors, through narratives, about the relevance and potential benefits that an entrepreneurial ecosystem has and the role it represents for economy and region (Roundy, 2016).

Again, entrepreneurial ecosystems' processes are highly dependent on the interactions among entrepreneurs and other stakeholders and may induce collective actions for mutual benefits. Spigel's (2017; 2020) description of the evolutionary nature of these processes imply the potential existence of intended articulation and governance of individuals entrepreneurial endeavors leading to a sense of belonging and identification with a local entrepreneurial community that can generate social, environmental, and economic values, quite similar from what is expected of institutions for collective actions (De Moor, 2013). As in citizen collectives, the leadership role is also relevant in entrepreneurial ecosystem. For, it is in the leadership processes that rules, institutions, norms, and culture prevailing in an ecosystem are strengthened, reevaluated, and eventually transformed (Harper-Anderson, 2018).

Another similarity between entrepreneurial ecosystems and citizen collectives arises from the existence of a dual logics' symbiosis. In this sense, Roundy (2017) highlights the presence of two logics that guide the actions in the relational processes present in entrepreneurial ecosystems. The first is a market logic in which values related to innovation, new markets, business models and technologies, creation and exploitation of opportunities and risk-tolerant behavior are contained. The other logic, communitarian, is represented by the predominance of a collectivist orientation of broadly mutualist benefits and high trust among the participants. This logic arises from the awareness of the community's needs and its quest for prosperity. Similarly, De Moor (2013) pointed out that citizen collectives, being embedded in economic contexts, develop strategies to deal with the market, adopting its logic when market-based interactions are needed and, at the same time preserving the communitarian logic for membership-oriented actions.

Another instance for understanding how a sense of community develops in a local entrepreneurial ecosystem comes from their narratives. Roundy (2016) introduced the idea of entrepreneurial ecosystems as narratives. Narratives can be about success stories, or provide historical accounts, or, yet be future-oriented. For Roundy (2016), the purposes of the narratives are multiple, being able to serve, for example, as transmitters of the local culture, helping in the construction of a collective and shared meaning. Narratives are also useful in building the identity of participants in an entrepreneurial ecosystem. Finally, narratives can be used as a means of communication, drawing attention to relevant issues of the entrepreneurial ecosystem for the community, and pointing to a desired and probable future.

Narratives are also a relevant characteristic of citizen collectives. It is through them that members' identification with the community is strengthened, and cultural values and purposes are disseminated. Also, narratives can be used for guiding the actions of a future-oriented desired status for the citizen collective and society.

Finally, Korber et al., (2022) have investigated how entrepreneurs can show agency and help to change their entrepreneurial ecosystem. Based on a qualitative investigation of the behavioral strategies of a maturing entrepreneurial ecosystem, their results revealed three strategies applied by entrepreneurs while dealing with specific conditions of the entrepreneurial ecosystem. Korber et al., (2022) challenged the deterministic views of a passive role by entrepreneurs in adapting to contextual forces, giving evidence that they can also be agents of the entrepreneurial ecosystem change, contributing to its sustainable growth and maturity. This is precisely one of the aims that citizen collectives try to achieve, i.e., how to change institutional forces that may be prejudicial to people's multiple interests into a more inclusive society.

In summary, the fast-growing literature on entrepreneurial ecosystems indicates that, as a coordinated and collaborative effort of many actors, entrepreneurs, enterprises, and society can benefit from the existence of a fully functional entrepreneurial ecosystem. For instance, an entrepreneurial ecosystem benefits entrepreneurs by providing the necessary resources for the creation and launch of their ventures, such as finance, supporting infrastructure, favorable regulatory regime, demand, support network, and skilled and accessible workforce. For potential entrepreneurs, the perception of a normative environment, which reveals the high status and importance of entrepreneurship, provides a career path to be pursued with high probability of success.

An entrepreneurial ecosystem benefits existing companies by providing the resources necessary for these organizations to grow. These resources involve the existence of alternative sources of financing, skilled labor, tax incentives and subsidies, support for access to international markets and support infrastructure for the development and introduction of innovations. But, besides accessing resources, companies benefit from network connections with other companies, both competitors and suppliers, other entrepreneurs, support service providers, universities and research centers and governments, allegedly increasing their chances of success.

Finally, for the society, an entrepreneurial ecosystem can guarantee a sustainable development trajectory by favoring the birth and growth of innovative, ambitious companies with a high economic and social impact. In other words, a thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem may be an instrument of industrial, scientific, economic, and socio-environmental policy, towards the construction of a fairer society with fewer disparities and inequalities. In this sense, in the next section I comment upon the potential interactions among basic income and entrepreneurship.

ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEMS AND BASIC INCOME: A POSSIBLE CONNECTION

Unequal wealth distribution is a contemporary problem of many nations, regions, or localities. This has led to the emergence of movements towards the implementation of basic income schemes in some countries: Kenya, Finland, Namibia, India, Canada, and the United State (Bidadanure, 2019). As defined by the Basic Income Earth Network - BIEN:

A Basic income is a periodic cash payment unconditionally delivered to all on an individual basis, without means test or work requirement.

That is, basic income has the following five characteristics:

1. Periodic: it is paid at regular intervals (for example every month), not as a one-off grant.
2. Cash payment: it is paid in an appropriate medium of exchange, allowing those who receive it to decide what they spend it on. It is not, therefore, paid either in kind (such as food or services) or in vouchers dedicated to a specific use.
3. Individual: it is paid on an individual basis – and not, for instance, to households.
4. Universal: it is paid to all, without means test.
5. Unconditional: it is paid without a requirement to work or to demonstrate willingness-to-work. (BIEN, 2016, p. 1)

For Van Parijs (1992), basic income is not a new concept. Earlier proposals appeared more than a century ago from Bertrand Russell and Dennis Millner ideas at the end of the First World War. It has come into more prolific debate and scrutiny in the 1980s in many Western European countries (Van Parijs, 1992). In a more recent paper, the roots of a universal basic income are dated back to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries from when “it was first formulated, for example, by Thomas Paine in 1796, or by Joseph Charlier and John Stuart Mill in 1848” (Van Parijs, 2013, p. 176).

However, there are only a few papers that have addressed the idea of a basic income in relation to entrepreneurship (D’Mello, 2019; Feinberg, & Kuehn, 2020; Qian, Miao, & Humphrey, 2021). Although in its initial stages, there seems to be a convergence towards seeing potential positives benefits to entrepreneurship arising from basic income propositions. For instance, arguing about necessary labor policy reforms, for the European Union context, Elert et al., (2019, p. 82) stated:

... once a basic level for a decent living is provided collectively, other features of the system - unemployment benefits disability and sickness insurance, childcare, educational allowances, and pension schemes - go from being peoples’ only source of income and support to being add-ons that can arguably be left (more) to private or collective initiatives and self-insurance [...] This may be

helpful both for R&D workers wishing to start innovative high-tech ventures and for the growing army of everyday entrepreneurs that are important in an entrepreneurial society.

The benefits of basic income implementation, at an entrepreneurial ecosystem level can be viewed when this argument by Van Puijs (2013, p. 178) is considered: “a universal basic income makes it easier for young people to access unpaid or hardly paid internships or apprenticeships. It makes it easier for low-paid workers to reduce their working time or to interrupt their career in order to acquire further training”. A similar argument was put forward by Casassas (2016). Considering basic income a form of a protection for those who decide to opt out of the labor market, Casassas (2016) cites the possibility of setting up a business as one of the situations that can be better faced, since basic income would be a material protection for the lack of enough income at the initial stages of the entrepreneurial process, as well as, for its inherent failure risks. In other words, basic income is an essential part of an economic democracy, because “you need to be materially protected when you legitimately decide to (temporarily or permanently) stop your relationship with labour markets” (Casassas, 2016, p. 9).

In this sense, guaranteeing a basic income for everyone that lives in the geographical area of an entrepreneurial ecosystem may contribute to a flourishing human capital. Human capital has been consistently considered as one of the most relevant components of entrepreneurial ecosystems, either as a source of new ventures or as providing highly skilled employees capable of intrapreneurial initiatives (Isenberg, 2010; Kantis et al. 2014; Stam, 2015; Spigel, 2017). Similarly, Hüffmeier and Zacher (2021, p. 551) stated that basic income “offers a financial buffer and, thus, potentially enables creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship among those with fewer economic resources”.

In this issue of IBJESB, there are also contributions that highlight the relevance of human capital for entrepreneurial activities. Pagotto et al., (2022), analyzed the impact of human, social, and financial capital on the variation of innovation capability of nascent ventures. Their results stressed the significant impact of entrepreneurs’ level of education and personal finances. On the other hand, Rocha et al., (2022), highlighted the relevance of university support for entrepreneurial endeavors in times of adversity. In entrepreneurial ecosystems, institutions of higher education have a prominent role in developing human capital and knowledge.

D’Mello (2019) disputes the common narrative that being an entrepreneur is a career option for anyone willing to do so. For him, there are inequalities that prevent some people being able to choose the entrepreneurial life path. Thus, another point linking universal basic income (UBI) to entrepreneurial action comes from this line of reasoning suggesting that:

UBI may offer more individuals with entrepreneurial intentions new privileges to take on action on their ideas by increasing their ranges of affordable loss [...] there is a strong possibility that other individuals, less privileged in our current society, may also possess and discover similar qualities that could allow them, too, to thrive during the process of pursuing opportunities (even if some ventures resulted in failures) (D’Mello, 2019, p. 309).

Feinberg and Kuehn (2020) explored possible positive effects of basic income on local entrepreneurial activities. They have studied the Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend program, one of the earliest “quasi basic” income programs aimed at providing a basic income for every resident at Alaska since 1982. Although the program does not fulfill all the requisites in BIEN’s definition of a basic income, Feinberg and Kuehn (2020) argued that the yearly payment to every Alaskan resident was equivalent to more than 40% of the worth of the United States federal poverty threshold, i.e., a reasonable amount for securing basic consumption levels. Their results showed that the payments were initially correlated to increase in new small-firm formation and self-employed option.

Overall, initial studies and theoretical reflections indicate that the implementation of a basic income scheme may be beneficial to and increase entrepreneurial activities in a region. In my view, there is an increased chance of this happening with the possibility of entrepreneurial ecosystems turning into citizen collectives. This would mean that entrepreneurs, already considered the center of entrepreneurial ecosystems, would also become the leaders and source of the necessary guidance for the development of the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

CONCLUSIONS

The emergence and development of entrepreneurial ecosystems is a constitutive element of many empirical studies and theoretical propositions in the field of entrepreneurship research. This phenomenon is presented as the result of coordinated cooperative efforts based on the central and leading role of entrepreneurial actors in a region.

From the actual leadership of entrepreneurs and the relational nature of entrepreneurial ecosystems, one can expect that this contemporary phenomenon might evolve towards a new form of institutional collective action aiming at localized geographical sustainable development. The search for a community sustainable development can be the future-oriented narrative that will guide actions of entrepreneurial ecosystems’ leaders and other stakeholders. From that, entrepreneurial action will deal with societal, environmental, and social concerns embedded in exploring opportunities and solving problems aiming at fairer wealth distribution in the region.

A truly sustainable entrepreneurial ecosystem, which is expected to create social, environmental, and economic wealth, should have among its entrepreneurial outputs a concern for providing a basic income for everyone in its region of influence. This could be done, for instance, in the form of a basic income fund. This fund would originate from economic contributions of every entrepreneurial initiative that benefitted from entrepreneurial ecosystems’ resource endowments and institutions.

Thus, entrepreneurial ecosystems as a new institution of collective action can be an alternative to and complement government and market actions, assuming the form of sector agnostic contemporary guilds, i.e., modern citizen collectives. In other words, entrepreneurial ecosystems as collective of entrepreneurs from different sectors would enhance the survival of enterprises and, at the same time, help build a more inclusive society. From the expected positive benefits of basic income

initiatives could emerge better prepared potential entrepreneurs focused on innovation-led entrepreneurship, and an increase in the number of traditional small-firms and self-employed people whose entrepreneurial initiatives would emerge from a safer financial situation that allows riskier behavior.

Finally, I expect that my thoughts and argument presented in this paper may inspire further theoretical reflections about the nature, dynamics, and sustainability of entrepreneurial ecosystems. For instance, what are the influences of basic income schemes on the emergence and development of entrepreneurial ecosystems? Also, the role of basic income as a safe net for entrepreneurial riskier behavior could be an interesting theme for research. It may also inspire empirical studies that could explore, for instance, whether the presence of basic income initiatives have connections to the emergence of sustainable entrepreneurship and consolidation of sustainable entrepreneurial ecosystems. Another potential line of enquiry is to explore how basic income recipients have been able to invest in acquiring human and social capital before engaging in entrepreneurial activities. Overall, there is a clear research gap on a theme that might bring new light on the evolving entrepreneurial ecosystem literature.

Endeavors in this line of enquiry and reflection may help us to alleviate the major concern of Professor Tine De Moor expressed in the beginning of this editorial. That is, entrepreneurial ecosystems, as citizen collectives with basic income assurance, can move us towards a society that improves our ability to deal with the wealth created in “*a responsible way to ensure that everyone may benefit not just today but also tomorrow*”.

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