SCRIPPS.EDU: TRIPLE HELIX POWER DEAL IN THE SUNSHINE STATE (INTERACTIVE PAPER)

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Recommended Citation
Available at: http://digitalknowledge.babson.edu/fer/vol27/iss22/10

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INTERACTIVE PAPER SESSION

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Principal Topic

Much controversy surrounds the issue of creating innovative and entrepreneurial regions. Can governments via economic development agencies “import” Silicon Valley – or South San Francisco, Cambridge, or San Diego for that matter? The Porterian ideal of creating a cluster for biotechnology has been embraced by many regions including Florida. Etzkowitz discusses the rise of the entrepreneurial university, and the role of the triple helix of government-university-industry interactions in fostering innovation and the creation of new ventures. Biotech innovation has been examined by others such as Cooke, who call for the re-examination of cluster theory.

Massive taxpayer dollars are being spent on a dream in the State of Florida. Governmental communications related the hope of Scripps to entrepreneurial legends such as Henry Flagler’s Railroad and Walt Disney’s Parks. Promises include the creation of (high paying) jobs, overall improvement of education, further diversity of the economic base, and most relevant to this paper, creation and growth of new ventures and thus an enhanced culture of innovation and entrepreneurship in Florida. This study will explore TSRI’s expansion into Florida, and especially how and why this power deal happened.

Method

Participant observation, semi-structured qualitative interviews, and studying archived information were the primary research methods used by the researcher. Data was collected over a period of three years and included interviews with players from the different spheres. The triple helix model of innovation was used as a framework for understanding the nature and effects of the social interactions that led to this phenomenon.

Results and Implications

This pioneering study will provide insight for further exploration into the role of government, research institutions, and industry in changing the culture and systems of innovation in a region in order to create entrepreneurial ecology. In particular, it discusses the opportunities, as well as the obstacles that faced this entrepreneurial institution in both the political and social spheres. In addition, this story Scripps and its expansion will challenge the common idea of how an educational institution looks and acts. Finally, this work will lend insight into new regions of opportunity on multiple levels for entrepreneurs and venture investors alike, while presenting new questions for entrepreneurship researchers to explore.

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