

Invitation/Call for papers:

**7th CEnSE Urban and Regional Economics Workshop,
October 25-27, 2023, on:**

Social Interactions in Regions

In his classic work, *The Wealth of Nations*, Adam Smith identified human capital as the “acquired and useful abilities of all the inhabitants or members of the society” as essentially a “fourth factor of production” operating alongside land, labor, and capital. Jacobs later argued that the clustering of talented and skilled people in cities is the fundamental driving force of innovation and economic development, more important even than the efficiency gains associated with the deepening division of labor within firms.

There is a considerable body of literature extending across the social sciences relating to the role of social interaction in determining individual behavior, but also the performance of firms and regions. This literature suggests that individual decision-making across a wide range of activities is significantly influenced by the behavior of those with whom they have frequent contact. As a result, the composition of the groups with whom individuals work and live play an important role in determining individual outcomes and life chances. At the same time, social interactions give rise to information spillovers and learning effects influencing firm and regional performance.

The extent and role of social interactions are likely to differ across geographical scales, for example, the pure likelihood to meet and interact with others increases with increasing density. Further, individuals residing in cities and rural areas may be subject to differential provision of economic, social, and public goods which can, in turn, affect individuals’ labor productivity. Such a differentiated provision directly and indirectly affects the current and future well-being of the residents.

In times of continuous transformation due to technological change, industrial restructuring, migration, policy initiatives and/or by exogenous shocks such as war, natural disasters, and pandemics, regions remain the arenas for social interaction. The region is thus a vital sphere to research, understand, and when possible also transform.

To the 7th CEnSE workshop, we invite researchers to submit papers that investigate aspects of social interaction in regional development – both in traditional and novel ways. We aim to bring together researchers who work on these issues to discuss papers and exchange ideas. We welcome submissions related (but not limited) to the following topics:

- The role of social interactions (of different kinds) for economic activities and economic outcomes.
- New ways of working, social interactions, and long-term societal effects.
- The role of social interactions for entrepreneurship and innovation
- Alternative ways of capturing social interactions in regional science.
- The lack of social interactions during COVID-19 and its effects for regional and urban development.
- The role of AI and other new technologies
- The role of education and social interactions for firm and/or regional performance
- Resilience of regions and cities (after crises and exogenous shocks).
- The role of social interactions within and/or across regions
- Social interactions on different regional scales (such as cities, neighborhoods etc).
- The role of peer effects, social and ethnic enclaves
- Social interactions in different regional settings (urban vs. rural)
- Voting behavior and social interaction in different regional settings

You are welcome to suggest additional topics that you think would be suitable for this workshop. We welcome both theoretical and empirical contributions.

HOW? The workshop is organized by the research centre CEnSE (Centre for Entrepreneurship and Spatial Economics) at Jönköping International Business School, Sweden. The workshop will have three keynote speakers and individual paper sessions. The organizers of the workshop aim to arrange an outlet in the form of a special issue in an international journal. All papers will be assigned a discussant and all presenters/participants are expected to serve as discussants. We aim to encourage constructive discussions in an interactive setting and therefore there will be no parallel sessions. Consequently, the number of participants will be limited.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER I – *Erik Stam*

is Full Professor of Strategy, Organization & Entrepreneurship, Board Member of Strategic Research Theme Institutions for Open Societies, and Faculty Director of the Center for Entrepreneurship at Utrecht University; Visiting Professor at IMT School for Advanced Studies Lucca (Italy) and Extraordinary Professor at Stellenbosch University (South Africa). He was Dean of the Utrecht University School of Economics, and held positions at Erasmus University Rotterdam, the University of Cambridge, the University of Oxford, the Max Planck Institute of Economics (Jena, Germany), and the Netherlands Scientific Council for Government Policy (WRR). He is editor of the journals *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice* and *Small Business Economics*.

He is a leading scholar of entrepreneurial ecosystems, engaged in the science and practice of entrepreneurship-led development, both locally and globally. He has (co-)authored more than hundred books, book chapters, and articles on this and related topics. Next to his scientific work he is often consulted by governments, at the local, regional, national, and international level (European Commission, OECD, G20, World Bank), and by start-ups, investors and corporates on innovation and entrepreneurship.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER II – *P. Jason Rentfrow* hopped around the United States, from Louisiana to Texas to New York to Massachusetts, and is currently in England, where he is Professor of Personality and Individual Differences in the Department of Psychology at the University of Cambridge. His research concerns person-environment interactions and focuses on the ways in which personality is expressed in everything from people's preferences for music to the places in which they live. His work has been published in prestigious journals, including *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, *Nature*, *PLOS ONE*, *Economic Geography*, *Psychological Methods*, *Journal of Economic Geography*, and *Psychological Science*.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER III – *Charlie Karlsson* is Professor Emeritus of Economics at Jönköping International Business School and of Industrial Economics at Blekinge Institute of Technology, Karlskrona. 2009-2013 he was the President of European Regional Science Association (ERSA).

My Experiences of the COVID-19 Pandemic

In my presentation I will share my personal and my family's experience of living in Sweden in the middle of a pandemic. Interestingly, due to my wife's severe health problems, the pandemic for half a year became a non-issue. As a background for my presentation, I will give information about the diffusion of the corona virus during the first three waves. I will also talk about the particular Swedish

strategy to deal with the pandemic – a strategy that was criticized heavily by politicians and media in other countries. To understand the Swedish strategy, it is important to understand the peculiarities of the organization of public governance and administration in Sweden.

VENUE? The conference, dinner, and accommodation will be at Hällsnäs Hotel and Conference (<https://www.hallsnas.se/>), which is located in a scenic rural setting conveniently close to Landvetter Airport, Gothenburg. Landvetter is Sweden's second-largest airport with easy access to many international connections (<https://www.swedavia.se/landvetter>).

COST? The workshop attendance is free of charge, and accommodation and meals will be covered by the organizers (for the days 25th to 27 of October). Travel costs, however, will have to be covered by the participants.

ABOUT CEnSE: CEnSE is a multi-disciplinary research institute that conducts applied research relating to issues of entrepreneurship and business renewal, regional development and growth, and the interrelation between urban and rural areas. A substantial part of CEnSE's research addresses policy-relevant problems, for example how accessibility affects regional growth and the way entrepreneurial and innovative processes in business and society are dependent on knowledge and creativity. The project portfolio of CEnSE contains both research of general applicability and projects that are directed towards specific stakeholders. Visit <https://ju.se/center/cense> for more information about CEnSE.

You are encouraged to distribute this call to other interested researchers.

Hope to see you in the fall!

Organizers:

Charlotta Mellander, charlotta.mellander@ju.se, Director of CEnSE.
Deborah Strumsky, deborah.strumsky@ju.se, Co-Director of CEnSE
Maja Johansson, maja.johansson@ju.se Administrator of CEnSE.

Deadlines and information:

Abstract submission deadline: June 19, 2023.
Notification of acceptance: July 5, 2023.
(Draft) Paper submission deadline: October 20, 2022.

Please submit contributions to: cense@ju.se