

# Journal of Business Venturing

Call for Papers for a *Special Issue* on

## “Entrepreneurship & Wellbeing”

[www.e-wellbeing.org](http://www.e-wellbeing.org)

### Guest Editors

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### Overview

The guest editors invite papers for consideration for publication in the *Journal of Business Venturing* for a special issue on the topic “Entrepreneurship & Wellbeing.”

Entrepreneurship is a unique and challenging human endeavor. As a process of self-organizing, entrepreneurship is closely associated with wellbeing (Shir, 2015). Despite this realization, we still know very little about the relationship between entrepreneurship and wellbeing (Uy, Foo & Song, 2013). Most attempts to examine and conceptualize the link between entrepreneurship and wellbeing have been offered by economists. But indicators such as GDP, or household income, fall short of capturing many aspects of the good, flourishing life. Wellbeing is a multidimensional concept that covers a variety of human experiences and conditions (e.g., life satisfaction, positive affect, vitality, meaning, purpose, self-esteem, optimism, and positive engagement). These prominent themes in psychological research on wellbeing that have yet to make their way into entrepreneurship research (e.g., Diener, 1984; Ryff, 1989; Deci and Ryan, 2000; Keyes, 2002)

Wellbeing is not only an important individual phenomenon, it is also an important indication of socio-economic progress and constitutes an important social resource. Starting with the seminal work of the Commission on the Measurement of Economic and Social Progress in 2009, a variety of initiatives around the world have been launched that aim to provide a more complete picture of socio-economic progress. The OECD, for example, is now tracking “how life is going” in eleven distinct quality of life categories using both objective and subjective indicators of wellbeing.

Consequently, understanding which factors of the entrepreneurial process drive wellbeing may offer new and valuable insights, not only for researchers analyzing and working with entrepreneurship, but also for policy makers and for those analyzing and working with employees in large and established organizations, as well as for families and individuals who wish to get the most out of their lives. As Shepherd (2015) suggests, one of the most promising avenues for future entrepreneurship research will be where “the head engages the heart.”

The goal of this special issue is to encourage new interdisciplinary research between these two emerging fields. What can entrepreneurship researchers learn from wellbeing scholars and what can wellbeing scholars learn from the entrepreneurship literature?

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Research topics suitable for the special issue include but are not limited to:

- a. **Wellbeing dimensions.** Wellbeing is a multi-dimensional concept that captures both objective and subjective aspects of the human experience. How does entrepreneurship contribute to each of the various dimensions of wellbeing (i.e., to cognitive, affective, and psycho-physiologic experiences of wellbeing)? And in turn, what role does the different dimensions of wellbeing play in entrepreneurship?
- b. **Connecting between-level to within-level variation.** Do different entrepreneurs and different situational conditions lead to different wellbeing experiences along the entrepreneurial process? What are the underlying mechanism that can explain this relationship and how do they function?
- c. **Entrepreneurial wellbeing.** Previous research on wellbeing in the workplace has not identified experiences of wellbeing in entrepreneurship as distinguished from more general measures of wellbeing in work and life (cf., Diener et al., 1985; Warr et al., 1979). Can context-specific measures of wellbeing such as entrepreneurial satisfaction, meaning, purpose, thriving, and/or positive engagement be incorporated into the entrepreneurship research agenda.
- d. **The upside of our dark side.** What is the role of negative emotions and lower wellbeing for entrepreneurship? Does the darker side of human wellbeing have an upside? For example, how important is it to feel dissatisfied, afraid, anxious, and doubtful in entrepreneurship? Or is it crucial to experience the right balance of positive and negative wellbeing experiences for the best outcomes?
- e. **Is it independence or is it freedom?** What sort of freedoms are more important for wellbeing and what role entrepreneurs play in creating such freedoms, opportunities? Research in psychology, for instance, points out that too much negative freedom (independence) can lead to decision paralysis and lower level of psychological wellbeing. Is there an optimal amount of opportunity and choice for individual/entrepreneurial wellbeing?
- f. **Judgmental and evaluative aspects.** A large body of research in social psychology and economics suggests that human behavior is driven to a great extent by relative considerations (e.g., Michalos, 1986). What are the standards involved in the judgments that entrepreneurs make in evaluating their wellbeing? Who do entrepreneurs compare themselves to and what is the effect of social comparison on entrepreneurial wellbeing?
- g. **Longitudinal and causality concerns.** In light of recent evidence that wellbeing is more than just a mere outcome but rather an important psychological resource (Lyubomirsky et al., 2005), it appears sensible to question whether the relationship between entrepreneurship and wellbeing is spurious or otherwise suffers from selection bias. Longitudinal and systematic investigation into the dynamics of entrepreneurship and wellbeing remains desperately needed.
- h. **Entrepreneurial utility vs wellbeing.** Under what conditions are entrepreneurs' preferences linked with their experienced wellbeing? Given that wellbeing is a valuable end in entrepreneurship, does the effects of entrepreneurship on wellbeing result from conscious processes of decision making and utility maximization, or any other socio-psychological processes? How could we use data on entrepreneurs' wellbeing to reveal inconsistent preferences?
- i. **Other topics.** In addition to the questions listed above, we welcome papers that investigate other topics that fit the theme of the special issue.

For more information about the scope and reach of this project, as well as further research topics, please visit: [e-wellbeing.org](http://www.e-wellbeing.org)

### Submission Guidelines

Manuscripts will be expected to provide new theoretical and/or empirical studies that will connect the emerging field of wellbeing to the frontiers of entrepreneurship research. We encourage studies to respond to the following four core questions: (i) how entrepreneurship affects wellbeing; (ii) how wellbeing evolves along the process of new business creation; (iii) who benefits the most from entrepreneurship in terms of wellbeing; and (iv) how does wellbeing influence entrepreneurial behavior, venture outcomes, and the venture team and people who are important to the venture and the entrepreneur. For more information on the sample research questions and the project, please visit [e-wellbeing.org](http://e-wellbeing.org)

The deadline for submissions to the special issue is **August 31, 2017**.

Please submit papers online at <https://www.evise.com/profile/-/JBV/login>

Submission guidelines for the Journal of Business Venturing at:

<https://www.elsevier.com/journals/journal-of-business-venturing/0883-9026/guide-for-authors>

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