

Preface

An Academy of Management Professional Development Workshop in August 2009 provided an overview of eight longitudinal panel studies of business creation. At an informal meeting of the various presenters, it was suggested that one way to facilitate comparisons of the various projects and assist other researchers not familiar with the exciting challenges of collecting and analyzing panel data was to provide a collective progress report. Each national team agreed to provide an overview of their project and its status as of the end of 2009. This book is the product of that meeting and the subsequent efforts of the various national teams. Ironically, this volume will go to press just before the 2010 Academy of Management meetings, where the workshop of 2009 will be replicated with status reports from nine national projects.

The editors very much appreciate the effort and time the national teams gave to make this book possible.

The development, funding, and implementation of longitudinal studies of business creation is relatively recent, the first projects were implemented in the early 1990s. This volume represents a status report on 11 projects in nine countries. These projects form one of the more coherent and substantial research programs related to business creation and entrepreneurship.

A substantial amount of new and unexpected information has been developed by this research program. The complexities of the business creation process and the long time required to reach fruition suggest there are major untapped opportunities for analysis and theoretical development. Our hope is that this book will encourage others to implement projects or invest in the analysis of the existing data sets to advance the understanding of this important topic.

The chapters in this book demonstrate the complications of tracking the business creation process and the substantial scientific benefits of documenting one of the most critical features of market economies – new business creation.

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<http://www.springer.com/978-1-4419-7535-5>

New Business Creation

An International Overview

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2011, XX, 349 p., Hardcover

ISBN: 978-1-4419-7535-5