A ‘TOWN HALL’ WORKSHOP
TO DISCUSS FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR THE
INDIVIDUAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP DIVISION

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ACADEMIC ABSTRACT

The future direction of the Individual Entrepreneurship Division will be discussed at a ‘town hall’ style meeting conducted by the current Vice President, Vice President-elect, and Program Chair. Topics will include: the current mission statement, a proposed new mission statement, new directions for teaching and research, and the division’s current status as the temporary home to social entrepreneurship at USASBE.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The proposed purpose of this ‘town hall’ workshop is to involve USASBE members interested in research and teaching at the individual level of entrepreneurship. The future direction of the Individual Entrepreneurship Division will be discussed at a ‘town hall’ style meeting conducted by the current Vice President, Vice President-elect, and Program Chair. Topics will include: the current mission statement, a proposed new mission statement, new directions for teaching and research, and the division’s current status as the temporary home to social entrepreneurship at USASBE. The “So What?” question will be asked in terms of the purpose and future contribution of studying and teaching about individual entrepreneurship.

Major workshop topics will include:
- Discussion and current evaluation of the division domain and mission statements
- Proposed reframe of the domain, description, and mission of the division
- Importance of teaching, service outreach, and research for division members
- Division current status as USASBE home for social entrepreneurship
- Discussion of new division paper awards
- The USASBE Discussion Forum developed by the Division
- How to energize and actively engage more Individual Entrepreneurship Division members in the working of division activities

Discussion and Evaluation of Division Current Domain and Mission Statements

Current Domain Statement
The mission of the individual entrepreneurship division is to encourage understanding, research, and teaching about the independent entrepreneur and the entrepreneurial firm. The focus of this division is the journey of the founding entrepreneur or entrepreneurial team from activities leading to new venture initiation through the establishment of a sustainable business entity. Central interests include:

Life Cycle of the Entrepreneurial Experience
New venture triggering events
Entrepreneurial characteristics and behaviors
Process of new venture initiation
Financing new and growing ventures
Emerging organization (functions and structures)
Sequential entrepreneurs
Nascent entrepreneurs
Learning in Entrepreneurial Ventures / Individual and Organizational Learning

- Leadership development includes:
- Culture formation
- Creativity and innovation
- Learning from key outsiders (stakeholders, investors, customers, service providers, and advisors)
- High performance/high growth firms
- Failure experiences of entrepreneurs

Proposed Reframe of the Domain, Description, and Mission of the Division

A written proposal is being developed by division officers to rethink the domain and mission of the Individual Entrepreneurship Division to focus more on the three major activities of teaching, service, and research. Furthermore, new topics may be added to the division description, for example cognitive psychology and self-efficacy.

Importance of Teaching, Service Outreach, and Research for Division Members

Discussion among officers and members on relative importance and priorities will be scheduled at this point in the workshop. While USASBE has traditionally focused more on teaching and service, what exactly is the role for research will be discussed?

Division Current Status as USASBE Home for Social Entrepreneurship

Since January 2003 the Individual Entrepreneurship Division has served as the official home for USASBE members involved and engaged in social entrepreneurship teaching, service outreach, and research activities. Now that social entrepreneurship has its own conference track this year, what will this change mean for the Division? For example, where do members submit their social entrepreneurship papers and workshops in the future? How strongly should social entrepreneurship activities be included in the Division’s new domain and mission statements?

Discussion of New Division Paper Awards

The Vice President has obtained $1,000 for Division Research Awards. For 2008 the officers will focus on the individual level of analysis (as fits with the Division) including both conceptual and empirical papers. Business and social entrepreneurship topics will be included for consideration of awards.

The USASBE Discussion Forum Developed by the Division

The Discussion Forum was designed and developed by officers of the Division with funding from the Coleman Foundation in 2005. Currently only a few members of the division utilize the Forum. The Vice President has posted multiple reports on the Forum and the workshop will include discussion of how to better use the Forum to further member communication.
How to Energize and Actively Engage More Individual Entrepreneurship Division Members in the Working of Division Activities

This will be an open discussion about the future of the Division and specifically how officers and members want to sustain and grow the Individual Entrepreneurship Division. Recent decisions by the USASBE Board suggest that members interested in Individual Entrepreneurship will have to create a new interest group organization within USASBE. We will all have additional information by the time of the January 2008 conference to more specifically address future initiatives and organizational forms.