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William B. Gartner, professor of Entrepreneurship and the Art of Innovation, finds that CBS has a level of depth and breadth in its entrepreneurship scholarship that no other university has.

Photo: Magnus Aronsson, www.esbri.se

Pioneering and diverse entrepreneurship research at CBS

A rigorous, pioneering and diverse level of entrepreneurship scholarship and a plethora of possibilities for collaboration are some of the reasons why American world-leading Entrepreneurship scholar William B. Gartner – Bill Gartner – decided to join Copenhagen Business School (CBS). Along with his broad and extensive experience within entrepreneurship research and education, he sees his enthusiasm to collaborate and explore the phenomenon of entrepreneurship as one of his main contributions to entrepreneurship at CBS.

By Irene Houstrup

▲ **PORTRAIT** In Fall 2013, American world-leading scholar in entrepreneurship Bill Gartner joined Copenhagen Business School as a professor of Entrepreneurship and the Art of Innovation at the Department of Management, Politics and Philosophy. He holds a joint appointment with California Lutheran University.

He has for the last 25 years been highly influential in entrepreneurship research and education. Bill Gartner is the 2005 winner of the Swedish Entrepreneurship Foundation International Award for outstanding contributions to entrepreneurship research, and his research has been widely published internationally.

Finds entrepreneurship scholarship at CBS pioneering and diverse

One of the reasons Bill Gartner decided to move to Copenhagen is that he finds, that CBS has a level of depth and breadth in its entrepreneurship scholarship that no other university has.

'I think CBS faculty are willing to ask interesting questions and not be afraid to go in the direction that those questions take them. It's a fun place to be because the level of scholarship is rigorous, pioneering and diverse,' he says. He emphasizes that CBS offers rich opportunities to collaborate with other entrepreneurship scholars and adds that his primary goal in coming to CBS was to work with other scholars interested in entrepreneurship.

Broadly interested in all aspects of entrepreneurship

Bill Gartner is broadly interested in entrepreneurship, and has ‘dabbled in various methods, disciplines and perspectives that might have some relevance and usefulness for studying entrepreneurial processes,’ as he puts it. He does quantitative studies with large longitudinal data sets as well as survey research, fieldwork, case studies, and ethnography. His writing falls into a number of different genres: academic journal articles, practitioner pieces, editorials, book chapters, books, narratives, short stories, manifestos and poems.

‘As the phenomenon of entrepreneurship is diverse, I like my research methods, theories and practices to be as diverse as well,’ he explains and adds:

‘As I see it, my main contribution to entrepreneurship at CBS is my enthusiasm for exploring all aspects of the phenomenon.’

At present, Bill Gartner is collaborating with other scholars on a range of topics including a theory of entrepreneurial behavior, the financial characteristics of emerging firms, reasons for quitting venture startup efforts, opportunity design, a history of the idea of opportunity, the relationship between opportunities and resources “in-hand”, the language of failure, G. L. S. Shackle’s ideas about the possible, the poetics of exchange and the aesthetics of organizing.

Creating possible tomorrows

In Bill Gartner’s assessment, CBS is often on the edge of organizational thinking, and he believes that entrepreneurship research and education can – and do – contribute to creating growth and innovation in society:

‘What I think is not easily graspable in studying and engaging in the world of entrepreneurship is imagination – what might be. I think most of our traditional analytical tools and decision processes involve “what is” which is helpful, but knowing and understanding “what is” doesn’t take us through the doorway to the future,’ Bill Gartner says.

Bill Gartner suggests that the study and practice of entrepreneurship has some relationship to creating possible tomorrows.

‘One of the reasons I’m interested in entrepreneurial narrative is because of the ways that entrepreneurs go about envisioning the future through their actions and words. Many entrepreneurs are linguistic innovators; they play out Wittgenstein’s dictum: To imagine a language is to imagine a form of life,’ he says.

enter Entrepreneurship Research and Education Magazine

enter Entrepreneurship Research and Education Magazine is a new online magazine from the Entrepreneurship Platform at CBS. enter aims to offer quick and accessible insight into entrepreneurship research and knowledge at CBS and to bring the research and educational landscape at CBS into a more intense dialogue with business and society.

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CBS ENTREPRENEURSHIP PLATFORM

Copenhagen Business School (CBS) established the Entrepreneurship Platform in spring 2013. The platform integrates and coordinates entrepreneurship research, education and outreach activities at CBS and is a single point of entry for entrepreneurship at the Copenhagen Business School.

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