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Dr. Shailendra Vyakarnam is presently the Director of the Centre for Entrepreneurial Learning at the Judge Business School, University of Cambridge. He was formerly in industry, but after his PhD on the social relevance of management education he joined the faculty of Cranfield School of Management and later as Professor of Enterprise at Nottingham Business School he formed and headed up the Centre for Growing Businesses. He has many publications in small business policy, entrepreneurship and ethics. He holds Visiting Professorships at University of Reading and at Nottingham Business School. He is on editorial and Advisory boards and is also a founder director of Transitions a consulting business and two new start-ups - www.ttristart.co.uk and www.thinkindia.co.uk. His other affiliations are as Senior Member of Darwin College and Fellow of the RSA.

March 13th, 10:30 am
Max Planck Institute of Economics
Entrepreneurship, Growth and Public Policy Group
Seminar Room V03

Entrepreneurial Clusters:
The Importance of Entrepreneurs' Contribution to Regional Growth

Earlier studies of clusters have been carried out at the level of companies and industry as units of analysis. In our research we explore the Cambridge High technology cluster with individuals as the unit of analysis as they help to shed light on entrepreneurial processes, particularly on how their prior work experience together has shaped many of the start-ups and spin outs from the University of Cambridge, local consulting organizations and other companies.

Findings indicate that there are mini-clusters in the Cambridge area, both in technology and in biotechnology, suggesting that the limited number of entrepreneurs in the cluster means that we have to look at cluster formation in different ways. It would appear that the Pareto principle is alive and well.

The research - which will remain work in progress for a few years to come is based on a number of methodologies, using a mix of public data, interviews, websites to triangulate the information. We argue that to truly understand clusters and their development we must look at the role and function of entrepreneurs, whether they are economic, civic, social or as employees of larger organisations. This fine grained insight, based on longitudinal perspectives is more likely to help develop theory in entrepreneurship and assist with policy formation.