



Department of
Business, Economics
& Public Administration

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Student Union 414

Build It and They Will Come? Understanding the Emergence of an Entrepreneurial Ecosystem for Semiconductors in WNY

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The New York Smart I-Corridor hosts five semiconductor fabrication plants and around 100 supply chain firms, forming a critical nucleus for the region's semiconductor sector. Within this context, the Supply Chain Activation Network (SCAN), led by the University at Buffalo School of Management, has identified up to 4,000 local businesses with potential to enter this industry. Despite the sector's promise for transforming Upstate New York's economic future, the current network remains fragmented—hindering knowledge exchange and strategic coordination in an inherently complex supply chain.

This study addresses a key question: How do regional narratives and place-specific dynamics influence how industrial entrepreneurs identify and pursue opportunities in emerging sectors? Further, it asks how such narratives might be strategically leveraged to build a cohesive, sector-specific entrepreneurial ecosystem.

In this session, Kathleen will present a case analysis and methodological approach grounded in the entrepreneurial ecosystems (EEs) framework, contributing to ongoing debates about the boundaries, formation, and dynamics of EEs.

Biography:

M. Kathleen Burke, PhD (Stockholm School of Economics), is an entrepreneurship and economic geography scholar whose research examines how place shapes the evolution of entrepreneurial ecosystems. She recently completed a postdoctoral research appointment at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Jameel World Education Lab, where she developed knowledge exchange programs with university leaders engaged in AI-driven educational transformation. At UB, Kathleen collaborates with the Center for Supply Chain Analytics to study the multisector and multiregional dynamics of building an entrepreneurial ecosystem for semiconductors. Her research has appeared in the *Journal of Technology Transfer*, *Entrepreneurship and Regional Development*, and the *Handbook of Sociology of Innovation and Entrepreneurship*. She has also taught and conducted research in Sweden, Italy, and the UK on topics including natural resource-based (mining, water, forestry) and social entrepreneurship.

