### ERC Research Projects

**Business Clusters in the UK (May to August 2013, BIS, £23k)**

This project was undertaken by Mike Anyadike-Danes with support from Professor Mark Hart. It provided an overview of industrial clusters in the UK and their spatial distribution. A report was submitted to BIS in August 2013.

The background to the project is that the DTI published a report in 2001 that identified and mapped UK industrial clusters that existed at the time, and this project aimed to update and extend this analysis to gain a fuller understanding of our current industrial clusters. The project aimed to identify existing clusters by industry, region and sub-region, to examine the detailed geography of our existing clusters and to highlight the relative industrial strengths of particular areas. The project used data from the Business Structures Database and is closely related to other work being conducted as part of Research Theme 6 on business demographics.

By updating and extending the quantitative elements of the 2001 DTI study the study aimed to provide an assessment of sectoral/spatial strengths from a national and international perspective based on employment and firm numbers (official and commercial datasets). This updated the 2001 report and conducted analysis at lower sub-national levels e.g. LEP, City Region, Local Authority.

**Management & Leadership Skills/Practices in SMEs (August 2013 to June 2014, BIS)**

This project is being led by Prof James Hayton with support from Prof Andy Lockett and Prof Deniz Ucbasaran. The aims of the project are to expand knowledge of the nature and extent of deficiencies in leadership and management skills amongst UK SMEs with the ultimate objective being to develop a systematic approach for measuring leadership and management skills in SMEs and if possible, explore and develop a composite measure of management and leadership skills that can be used in further analysis.

**Discouragement (Extended project, October to March 2014, BIS/ESRC £25k)**

This additional resource enabled the proposed project to be broadened to include a wider commentary on issues of discouragement and the inclusion in the study of a series of qualitative case studies of discouraged borrowers.

A number of other additional projects are currently being developed or considered. These include:

* A project exploring the factors which influence the returns to angel investment with the UK British Angels Association and with the support of Barclays, Deloitte and the Centre for Entrepreneurs.
* A project to provide an interim evaluation of Growth Accelerator linking GA data to the Business Structures Database to enable past and future growth trajectories to be tracked.