Supsindex

ACADEMIC LANDSCAPE EDITION

The Hidden Signal

How academia is quietly studying what the startup ecosystem ignores

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DATA SOURCES
Scopus Academic Landscape

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Supsindex Communication Unit

Report Overview

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ABSTRACT

A Room With a Few Lamps Lit

After the first Pulse Report, one question remained. If the public startup ecosystem is not seriously discussing founder readiness, execution gaps, founder mismatch, or decision effectiveness, has academia at least begun to study them under different names?

The answer is not a clean yes or no. Society has not yet absorbed the problem — but academia has partially recognized it. Beneath the noise of public discourse, the scholarly literature holds scattered, serious signals about how founders actually think, decide, learn, and fit.

Academia has lit **a few small lamps** in a room the public ecosystem still treats as dark. Supsindex is not inventing founder science — **it is translating it.**

DIAGNOSTIC BASELINE: THE ACADEMIC SIGNAL RATIO

Measured in Scopus, the specialized founder-science signal is a minority of the literature. It is small. It is scattered. But — unlike the public conversation — it is not silent.

1.13%

SPECIALIZED SIGNAL VS. OVERCROWDED VOCABULARY

What the Literature Shows

THE SIGNAL

3,321

Scopus mentions across specialized founder-science constructs.

THE NOISE

293,176

Mentions across the overcrowded, attention-heavy startup terms.

THE RATIO

1.13%

The specialized signal as a share of the crowded vocabulary. Broader constructs raise it to 3.39%.

THE SUPSINDEX MANDATE

The science exists, but it is fragmented and speaks a language founders do not use. Supsindex is the translation layer — turning underused academic insight into a diagnostic system founders, investors, and ecosystems can actually use.

The problem is not imaginary. It is unspoken.

What the Pulse Report Is

1.1 Introduction

The Supsindex Pulse Report is a recurring quarterly diagnostic that measures the *language* of the entrepreneurship ecosystem — what it rewards, repeats, ignores, and slowly begins to correct. It tracks two kinds of language.

Attention-heavy language

Terms that attract visibility, status, and storytelling — but do not diagnose founder capability.

Problem-solving language

Terms that describe the mechanics of readiness, execution, decision-making, and founder-venture fit.

Supsindex deliberately champions the second. Attention-heavy language sells a feeling — momentum, status, the look of success — yet it cannot tell a founder whether they are actually ready. Problem-solving language can: **readiness, execution, decision quality, and founder-venture fit** are the mechanics that decide whether a venture survives. So we weigh the two against each other — because the ratio reveals not just how loud the ecosystem is, but whether it is maturing.

WHAT THE FIRST PULSE REPORT REVEALED

The Q1 baseline studied public discourse across Google, X, Instagram, YouTube, and Medium. Its core metric — the **Pulse Score**, the ratio of structural reality to performative success — came to **0.00000025**: for roughly every **1 : 3.9M** posts celebrating #Hustle, one discussed #FounderReadiness.

#HUSTLE	#UNICORN	#STARTUPFUNDING	#FOUNDERSOFTPOWER
31.4M	**1.9M**	**218,000**	**≈0**
Instagram posts	Instagram posts	Instagram posts	global public mentions

> That imbalance raised the question behind this edition: if the ecosystem itself is not discussing the right problems, has the academic community already studied them under different names?

The Scholarly Signal

1.2 The Academic Signal-to-Noise Ratio

Using specialized academic equivalents, the core scholarly signal totals **3,321** Scopus mentions, against **293,176** mentions in overcrowded startup terms — a specialized signal ratio of roughly **1.13%**. Include the broader emerging constructs and the signal rises to **9,940** mentions, or **3.39%**. Still a minority of the literature — but, importantly, not zero.

DIAGNOSTIC METRIC

Academic Signal Ratio

Specialized founder-science signal vs. overcrowded vocabulary

1.13%

3.39% incl. broader constructs

THE SIGNAL (SPECIALIZED)

3,321 mentions across constructs like Entrepreneurial Social Capital, Learning Orientation, and Decision-Making Effectiveness.

THE NOISE (OVERCROWDED)

293,176 mentions across broad, attention-heavy terms — Networking, Disruption, Entrepreneurial Leadership.

Strategic Implication: the founder-science field is not empty; it is *scattered*. The scientific pieces exist. What is missing is a practical architecture that connects them into a founder-facing system.

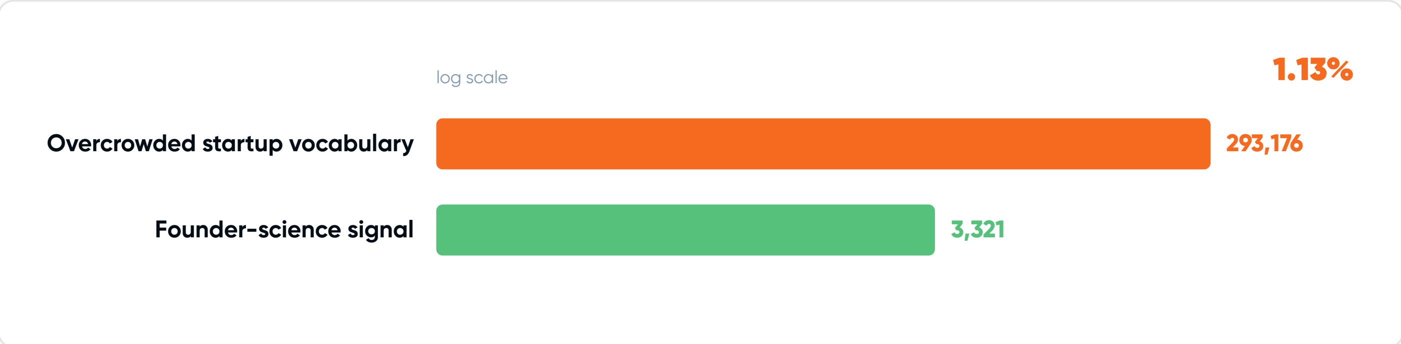

FIG 1 **Signal vs. Noise in the Literature**

The specialized founder-science signal (3,321 Scopus mentions) against the overcrowded startup vocabulary (293,176). The scholarly signal is a minority — roughly 1.13% — but it is not zero.

*Reading the chart: the bars use a **logarithmic** scale — each gridline marks a 10× jump, not a fixed step. On a normal scale the founder-science signal would be an almost invisible sliver beside a bar nearly 90× longer; the log scale keeps both legible in a single view.*

Why We Turned to Academia

2.0 From Platforms to Publications

New models of growth often begin in research, then move into executive education, venture frameworks, accelerators, policy, and finally public culture. Public and academic language, though, are rarely identical: founders talk about a "reality check"; researchers talk about *venture feasibility assessment*. Investors talk about "founder quality"; researchers talk about *entrepreneurial competency*, *cognitive bias*, or *founder imprinting*.

A FOUR-SITUATION FRAMEWORK

We framed the question as four possibilities — and asked which the evidence supports.

1	The problem reached society, and academia paid attention.	**Not the dominant situation.**
2	The problem reached society, but academia did not.	**Not supported by the data.**
3	The problem has not reached society, but academia paid mild attention.	**Best fit.**
4	The problem reached neither society nor academia.	**Too pessimistic.**

The evidence points to **situation three**: the wider ecosystem has not yet paid enough attention to founder-readiness problems, but academia has mildly and meaningfully begun to examine them. The attention is not strong enough to say the field has *solved* the problem — but it is strong enough to show Supsindex is not alone in seeing it.

Methodology & Translation

3.0 Why Scopus, and How Language Was Mapped

3.1 WHY SCOPUS, NOT GOOGLE SCHOLAR

This edition uses **Scopus** as the reference base. Google Scholar is excellent for discovery, but its index mixes duplicates, preprints, repository uploads, and non-peer-reviewed material that can inflate apparent attention. Scopus offers stronger indexing and cleaner metadata. This was a quality-control decision — the report prioritizes validity and comparability over inflated volume.

3.2 TRANSLATING PUBLIC LANGUAGE INTO ACADEMIC LANGUAGE

Public and scholarly vocabularies differ, so each Supsindex concept was mapped to one or more academic equivalents. The compatibility scores below are **interpretive semantic-correspondence estimates** — not database counts, and not exact synonyms.

SUPSINDEX CONCEPT	ACADEMIC EQUIVALENT	COMPAT.
VCDecisionMaking	Venture Capital Decision-Making	95%
StartupReadiness	Venture / Investment Readiness	90%
ExecutionGaps	Strategy-Execution Gap	90%
ThoughtLeadership	Entrepreneurial Thought Leadership	90%
FounderDecisionEffectivenessIndex	Ent. Decision-Making Effectiveness	90%
FounderEffect	Founder Imprinting / Influence	85%
FounderBlindspots	Entrepreneurial Cognitive Bias	85%
DataDrivenFounders	Evidence-Based Entrepreneurship	85%
FounderContinuousGrowthIndex	Entrepreneurial Learning Orientation	85%
VentureEfficiency	Venture / Operational Efficiency	80%
EcosystemMastery	Ent. Ecosystem Embeddedness	80%
EcosystemEnvironmentalAwarenessIndex	Ecosystem Awareness Capability	80%
FounderMismatch	Founder-Venture Fit Misalignment	75%
StartupRealityCheck	Venture Feasibility Assessment	75%
FounderSoftPower	Ent. Social / Relational Capital	75%
LeadershipSimulator	Leadership Assessment Simulation	70%
FounderFitCheck	Founder-Venture Compatibility Assessment	70%
FounderAssessment	Entrepreneurial Competency Assessment	65%
FounderSimulator	Entrepreneurial Simulation Assessment	60%
FounderReadiness	Ent. Readiness / Self-Efficacy	55%

Compatibility = conceptual closeness, not lexical equivalence. All frequencies are indicators of scientific attention, not exhaustive counts.

The Academic Landscape

4.1 The Signal (Part I)

Exact Supsindex phrases remain rare — terms like *FounderBlindspots* and *FounderSimulator* sit near zero, as expected for language Supsindex is still introducing. But translated into scholarly equivalents, the picture changes: several constructs show genuine, if modest, attention.

ENT. SOCIAL CAPITAL
2,088
Strongest bridge to founder influence and relational capability.

LEARNING ORIENTATION
563
Bridge to continuous founder growth and adaptation.

DECISION EFFECTIVENESS
99
Direct match to founder judgment quality under uncertainty.

The key is not raw volume but whether a construct can *explain* founder behavior, risk, fit, and decision quality. Social Capital, Learning Orientation, Evidence-Based Entrepreneurship, Founder-Venture Fit, and Decision-Making Effectiveness matter more than broader terms because they can be **operationalized**.

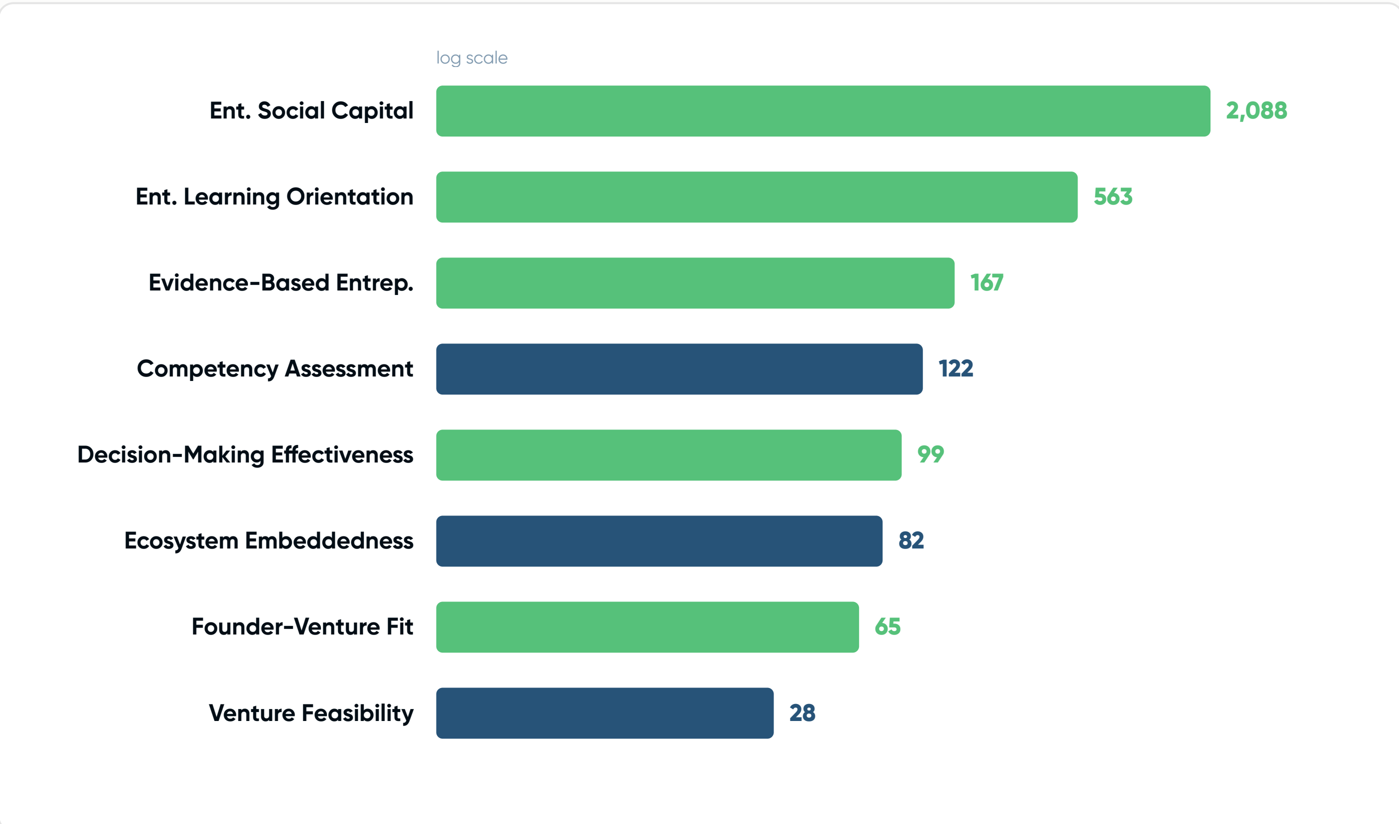

FIG 2 **The Constructs That Carry the Signal**
Translated into scholarly language, the founder-science concepts are present — led by Entrepreneurial Social Capital (2,088) and Learning Orientation (563). Small next to the noise, but operationalizable.

The Crowded Zones

4.2 The Noise (Part II)

Academia has its own crowded zones. These terms are not irrelevant, but their size makes them weak differentiators — too broad, too finance-centered, or too diluted to serve as precise founder-readiness diagnostics.

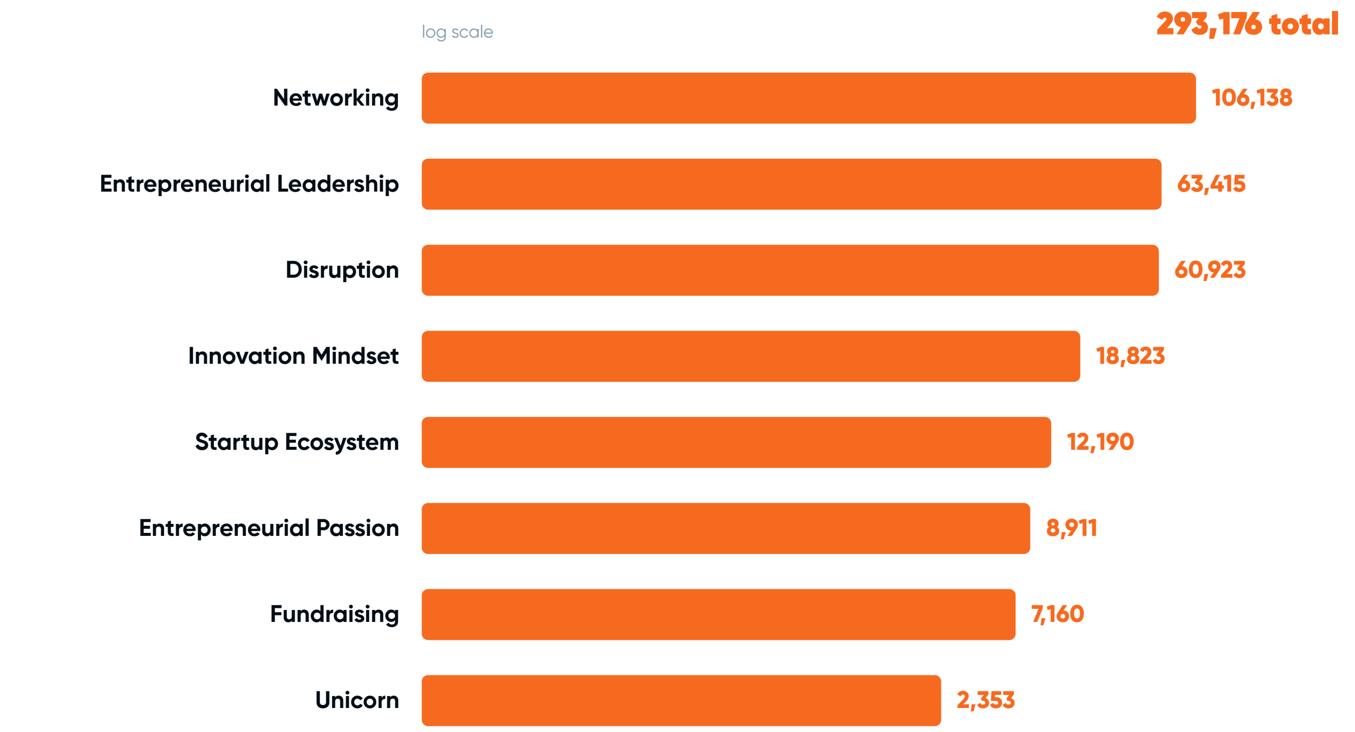

FIG 3 **The Crowded Zones**
Even serious literature clusters around broad, attractive themes. Networking alone (106,138) dwarfs every founder-diagnostic construct combined.

THE SAME PULL, IN SOFTER FORM

Even serious literature drifts toward broad, attractive themes. **Networking** appears 106,138 times and **Entrepreneurial Leadership** 63,415 — while **Founder-Venture Fit** appears 65 times and **Venture Feasibility Assessment** just 28. The story is not that academia is superficial; it is that precise founder-readiness concepts remain comparatively underdeveloped.

What the Data Is Saying

4.3 The Translation Gap

The first report showed the public ecosystem is loud on visibility and quiet on diagnostics. This edition shows academia is not equally silent — it is **whispering**, in language too technical to travel into founder communities.

THE RESEARCHER SAYS

"Entrepreneurial cognitive bias."

Rigorous, established, and rarely spoken outside the literature.

THE FOUNDER SAYS

"I keep making the same mistake."

The same phenomenon — described without the vocabulary to diagnose it.

THE STRONGEST BRIDGE IS BEHAVIOR, NOT MYTHOLOGY

- Ent. Social Capital → FounderSoftPower
- Evidence-Based Entrepreneurship → DataDrivenFounders
- Cognitive Bias → FounderBlindspots
- Learning Orientation → Continuous Growth
- Founder Imprinting → FounderEffect
- Competency Assessment → FounderAssessment

WHY THE EASY WORDS WIN

Attention-heavy terms win because they are simple, headline-ready, and postable without vulnerability. The deeper terms are harder: blind spots require self-examination, execution gaps admit that strategy is not enough, decision effectiveness means measuring judgment. The more useful words are less glamorous precisely **because they expose risk** — which is exactly why they matter.

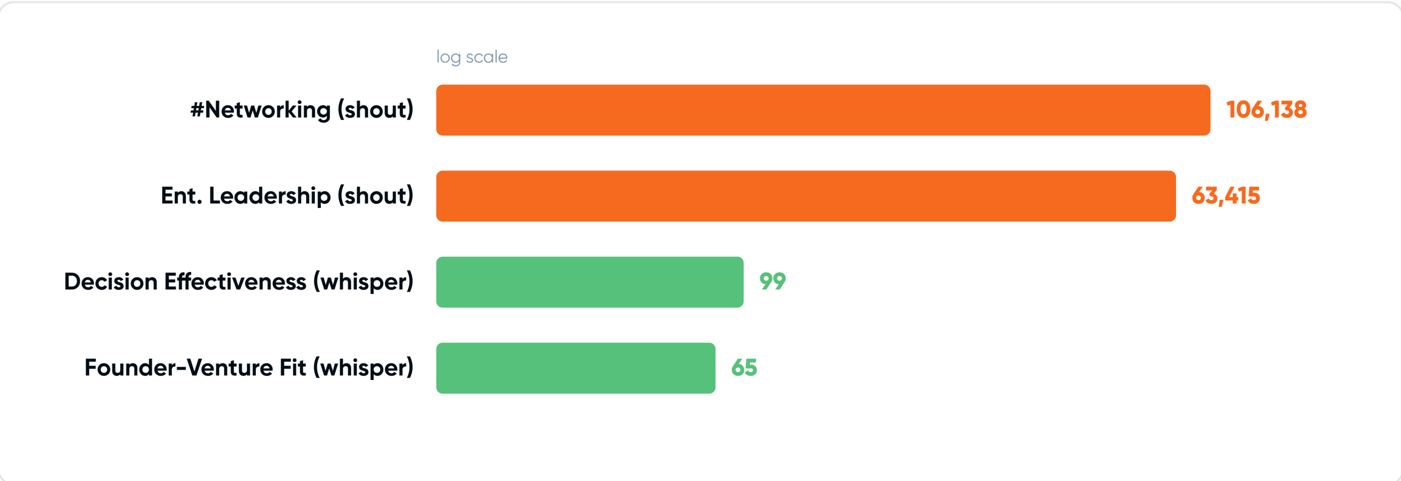

FIG 4 **The Whisper and the Shout**

The same imbalance as the public ecosystem, in softer form: the loudest broad themes outrun the precise founder-readiness constructs by three orders of magnitude.

Contributors Worth Recognizing

5.0 The Foundations Already Exist

Academia has not ignored founder psychology, capability, decision logic, and ecosystem fit — it has developed them in specialized pockets. We recognize these scholars **not as endorsers** of Supsindex, but because their work demonstrates that the scientific foundations for founder assessment already exist.

Boris Nikolaev

Associate Professor & Tracy Family Faculty Fellow, Colorado State University

Work: Shir, Nikolaev & Wincent (2019), "Entrepreneurship and well-being," Journal of Business Venturing.

Focus: Well-being, institutions, entrepreneurial cognition.

Why it matters: Founder assessment must also understand the psychological conditions under which founders sustain or lose performance.

Martin Obschonka

Professor of Entrepreneurship, Amsterdam Business School, University of Amsterdam

Work: Obschonka & Stuetzer (2017), "The Entrepreneurial Personality System (EPS)," Small Business Economics.

Focus: Entrepreneurial personality, psychology of innovators, AI/data in research.

Why it matters: Treats entrepreneurship as behavioral, not only financial — founder-level personality can be studied systematically.

Michael Stuetzer

Professor of Economics & Quantitative Methods, DHBW Mannheim

Work: Obschonka & Stuetzer (2017) EPS; regional-entrepreneurship stream (2013–2015).

Focus: Economic psychology, regional entrepreneurship, quantitative methods.

Why it matters: Connects individual founder characteristics to regional and ecosystem-level outcomes.

Scott Shane

A. Malachi Mixon III Professor of Entrepreneurial Studies, Case Western Reserve

Work: Shane & Venkataraman (2000), "The Promise of Entrepreneurship as a Field of Research," AMR; "The Illusions of Entrepreneurship."

Focus: Opportunities, startup success/failure, founder traits, venture finance.

Why it matters: The founder cannot be assessed separately from the opportunity, the venture, and the context.

Contributors Worth Recognizing

5.1 The Foundations Already Exist (cont.)

Saras Sarasvathy

Paul M. Hammaker Professor Emerita, UVA Darden; IIM Bangalore

Work: Sarasvathy (2001), "Causation and Effectuation," Academy of Management Review.

Focus: Effectuation, expertise, decision-making under uncertainty.

Why it matters: The strongest bridge to the decision-effectiveness thesis — how experts act under uncertainty is what simulation-based assessment should capture.

Noam Wasserman

Head of School, Ramaz; former Dean, Yeshiva Sy Syms; formerly HBS & USC

Work: Wasserman (2012), "The Founder's Dilemmas," Princeton; Hellmann & Wasserman (2017), "The First Deal," Management Science.

Focus: Co-founder dynamics, equity, control, early team structure.

Why it matters: Directly relevant to founder mismatch and fit — consequential failures begin in early people decisions.

Daniel Isenberg

Professor of Entrepreneurship Practice, Babson; Babson Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Project

Work: Isenberg (2010), "How to Start an Entrepreneurial Revolution," Harvard Business Review.

Focus: Entrepreneurial ecosystems, founder-environment fit, ecosystem policy.

Why it matters: Founder readiness does not exist in a vacuum — it is shaped by markets, capital, talent, and policy.

> *Across psychology, management science, venture capital, and ecosystem research, the pieces of founder science already exist. What is missing is not the research — it is the architecture that connects it into a founder-facing system.*

Strategic Implications

5.4 What the Landscape Means

01

Not an unsupported idea

Supsindex concepts have academic neighbors. The company is not inventing labels — it is organizing existing attention into a usable framework.

02

Room to own the language

Exact Supsindex terms sit near zero. That is an opportunity to define the practical vocabulary of founder assessment before the market crowds.

03

Position as a translator

The credible claim is not that academia missed everything — it is that the ecosystem has not turned scholarship into everyday decision tools yet.

04

Measure conversion, not attention

The first report measured public baseline; this one measures scholarly baseline. Future reports track whether the ecosystem uses the terms to decide better.

Final Verdict

The current reality is **situation three**: the ecosystem has not absorbed the problem, but academia has begun to examine it. The research is there; the market language has not caught up. The concepts exist; the founders and investors who need them most are not yet using them. **Supsindex exists to change that.**

The Data Grant Program

6.0 From Observation to Pipeline

The next evolution of entrepreneurship will not be driven by louder narratives — it will be driven by better evidence. The **Supsindex Data Grant Program** creates an official pipeline between operational entrepreneurship and academic research: anonymized White Label founder-behavior datasets, in CSV or JSON, made available to vetted researchers, PhD candidates, and institutions.

THREE LAYERS OF FOUNDER DATA

FPA
Knowledge & Hard-Skill
Knowledge gaps, technical literacy, financial acumen, and industry-specific expertise.

GEB
Mindset & Bias
Cognitive biases, risk perception, resilience, overconfidence, sunk-cost behavior, and pressure responses.

EEA
Ecosystem & Team Dynamics
Ecosystem fit, team cohesion, reactions to simulated market shocks, and founder-environment interaction.

A GOVERNED, TWO-WAY CHANNEL

This is not open data. It is a competitive, ethically governed collaboration: published work must cite Supsindex, follow IRB or equivalent ethics, respect privacy, and use the data only for academic purposes. Supsindex provides the behavioral fuel; researchers provide rigor and peer review; findings flow back into scoring logic, assessment models, and ecosystem education.

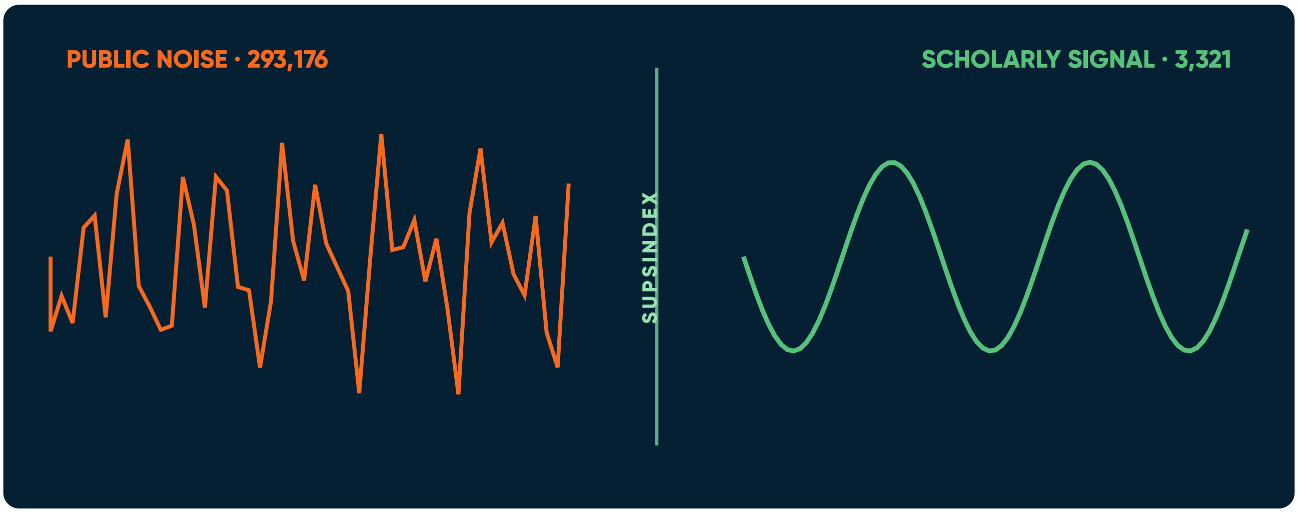

FIG 5 **From Public Noise to Scholarly Signal**
The Pulse Report's throughline: the chaos of public startup discourse resolves, in the literature, into a small but coherent founder-science signal that Supsindex is built to operationalize.

The first report showed the great distraction. This edition shows the hidden scholarly signal. The Data Grant Program turns that signal into a formal bridge between universities and founders.

The Scholarly Pulse, Over Time

Academic Signal — Baseline

BASELINE This Academic Landscape Edition establishes the scholarly baseline. Future editions will track whether the founder-science signal grows against the crowded startup vocabulary — measuring conversion, not just attention.

TRACKED METRIC	BASELINE
Specialized founder-science signal (Scopus)	3,321
Overcrowded startup vocabulary (Scopus)	293,176
Academic signal ratio	1.13%
Entrepreneurial Social Capital	2,088
Decision-Making Effectiveness	99
Founder-Venture Fit	65

Green ▲/▼ marks movement toward a healthier ecosystem (more signal, less noise); orange marks movement away from it. Methodology held constant across quarters so the series stays comparable.

Next Steps

Join the Science of Readiness

Apply to the Data Grant Program

Researchers, PhD candidates, and institutions can apply for access to anonymized White Label founder-behavior datasets — and help move validated academic terminology back into founder-facing practice.

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Capabilities Catalogue

Explore the assessment framework behind the FPA, GEB, and EEA models — the psychometric methodology designed to quantify founder "soft power" as objective data.

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