



Special Session Proposal

Social and business innovations for local and regional development

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Abstract

What matters in innovation for development: institutions or agency? Scholars have highlighted the importance of the right balance of formal and informal institutions in local development, the role of an enabling institutional context that is based on the distribution of authority and true subsidiarity as well as the transformative agency of place leadership in setting institutional arrangements for social and business innovation. An institutional framework designed in a multi-scalar way can empower local communities with the capacities they need to engage in policy design and implementation, and to facilitate collective agency to build coalitions across governance scales and at the local level.

We welcome paper proposals aimed at addressing the broad issue of innovation and local and regional development at the global peripheries and semi-peripheries. More specifically, besides the growing regional and cross-country developmental gaps within the EU, most notably between the core members and the Eastern and Southern periphery, similar processes of increasing social and territorial inequality are present globally, both within and between advanced and backward economies. These growing developmental gaps highlight the significance of local and regional social and business innovations for development and set the context for a burgeoning academic and policy debate.

In the frame of this special session we encourage to discuss innovation from various angles, including – but not limited to – the following themes: conceptual papers, case studies and other empirical analyses on social and business innovations and social enterprises; local coalitions of stakeholders and their initiatives to tackle pressing local

challenges; the local - central nexus in devising and implementing development strategies; the diffusion processes of social innovation; measurement of social innovation; the relevance of various types of policy tools to promote social and business innovations for local and regional development, such as methods for strategy setting, ex ante evaluation, monitoring, and assessment of socio-economic impacts; and the pros and cons of participatory and expert-based strategy setting projects. Extended abstracts should be between 600-800 words.