Special Session Proposal

Territorial intermediation: the role of digital platforms in the (re)structuring of business ecosystems

Organizer 1
Name: AUBRY
First name: Mathilde
Title: Associate Professor of Economics
University: EM Normandie
Laboratory: Metis Lab
City: Caen
Country: France
E-mail: maubry@em-normandie.fr

Organizer 2
Name: NADOU
First name: Fabien
Title: Associate Professor of Territorial Development and Regional Economics
University: EM Normandie
Laboratory: Metis Lab
City: Caen
Country: France
E-mail: fnadou@em-normandie.fr

Abstract

Spectacular development of digital platforms and of their activities (Ebay, Paypal, Uber, Airbnb, Tinder, Amazon, LinkedIn, etc.) are changing the key concepts and notions of regional science (effects of agglomerations, territorial anchorage, production systems, proximity), economics (market, externalities, pricing policy, competitive dynamics) and management (company strategies, organisational principles and models, etc.). Thus, this session aims to question and host works that cross these different disciplines in order to better understand the role of digital platforms in the structuring of new business ecosystems, in the broad sense (Moore, 1993; Stam, 2015), but also new territories. We wish to reflect on how economic actors and those of the territories see their perimeters of action evolve according to the
reconfigurations imposed by these new economic and productive models. New intermediations are being created around digital platforms and, in return, others are becoming necessary (Pecqueur and Nadou, 2018) to accompany these profound changes in global-local relations. In a non-exhaustive way, this session proposes to welcome papers that can answer questions in one of the following areas:

1. Digital platforms enable direct interactions between at least two types of economic agents (Hagiu and Wright, 2015). From this perspective, they act as intermediaries (Eisenmann, Parker and Van Alstyne, 2006), providing a common meeting place for entities that "need each other" (Evans & Schmalensee, 2008, p. 667). They contribute to the reflection on the notion of intermediation developed in other disciplines, such as regional science (Lacour, 1996; Nadou 2013, Tremblay et al., 2012; Talandier, 2016, Joyal and Nadou, 2018) or in innovation management (Howells, 2006; Daziel., 2010; Chabault and Martineau, 2014) and raise new questions:
   - How can digital platforms foster intermediation (between actors, services, ...)?
   - Can they constitute new territorial operators?
   - What is the role of these new virtual intermediaries in the territories (Shearmur and Doloreux, 2018)?
   - How do these platforms lead us to rethink the concept of intermediation beyond the notion of territory?

2. A digital platform is defined as : "a new business model that uses technology to connect people, organizations and resources into an interactive ecosystem in which amazing amounts of value can be created and exchanged" (Parker, Van Alstyn and Choudary, 2016). Viewing platforms as ecosystems (Li et al. 2012; Iansiti and Levien, 2004; Gower and Cusumano, 2002) that bring together independent agents whose interactions influence the behaviour and performance of the overall system raises new questions:
   - What are the challenges of these platforms and their functionalities to enable the emergence of business ecosystems and their animation ?
   - How do actors coordinate in business ecosystems via digital platforms? What is the role of platform managers in orchestrating ecosystems (Helfat & Raubitschek, 2018) ?
   - How do digital platforms support or question the literature on ecosystems ?

As these topics are relatively new, we are open to both theoretical and empirical work (case studies on specific platforms, work on ecosystems, etc.). Similarly, we are convinced that multidisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity are necessary.
Références indicatives


Pecqueur B., Nadou F., (eds), Dynamiques territoriales et mutations économiques. Transition, intermédiation, innovation, 2018, L'Harmattan, Paris,

Shearmur R., and Doloreux D., 2018, KIBS as both innovators and knowledge intermediaries in the innovation process: Intermediation as a contingent rôle, Papers in Regional Science, 1-19.
