13th International Social Innovation Research Conference

"Enabling the change! Social innovation and enterprises for a better future"
ALTIS-Graduate School Business & Society, E4Impact Foundation
Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore (Milan)
September 8-10th, 2021

Conference stream: Call for Papers & Panels

Theoretical and methodological futures for social innovation and social entrepreneurship

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Description:

The field of social innovation and social entrepreneurship research is characterized by a pluralistic disciplinary orientation and a genuine openness toward different theoretical, paradigmatic and methodical assumptions and approaches. Historically, the methods employed by scholars have been predominately qualitative (especially in research on social entrepreneurship; cf. Sassmannshausen and Volkmann 2018),and range from conceptually inspired macro-studies of social innovation ecosystems (Wijk et al 2018) to embedded (micro-oriented) ethnographies of social enterprises (Mauksch et al 2017). Contemporary work on social innovation carries the seeds of Tarde's much discussed sociological view of society as an increasingly networked economy whose interconnectedness led to the proliferation of new production techniques or innovations (Tarde, 1899). While Tarde provided the inspiration for studying the role and interplay of innovation and imitation in social innovations (Schwarz, Howaldt and Kopp 2015), and for better understanding technological innovations as driving forces of social transformation, the concepts of social innovation and social entrepreneurship only entered mainstream sociological theory in the 1980s, which was made possible not least by Gershuny's (1983) influential treatise on how innovation might shape society in the future. The turn of the millennium has experienced an additional, even bigger wave of technology and innovation studies sought to understand how technological innovations diffuse as a consequence of the transformation of social relations. Indicative in this regard is Moulaert's work (Moulaert et al 2005; 2007) which viewed social innovation as a set of radical practices leading to greater social inclusion and social justice via the changing of existing social (and particularly power) relations. This direct alignment of social innovation with positive social change is characteristic of much of contemporary research pursued by management and entrepreneurship scholars. Although having arrived rather late to the study of social innovation and social entrepreneurship, management and entrepreneurship scholars were quick in putting social innovation and social entrepreneurship at the center of their research agendas. Today we see encouraging signs of dialogue and cross-fertilization taking place between these different disciplines and approaches. The result is not so much

a conceptual and methodological convergence between different philosophies and school of thought, but a healthy hybridization that paves the way for exciting interdisciplinary conversations.

This stream likes to harness the pluralistic nature and boundary-spanning spirit of ISIRC by seeking contributions that experiment with, combine and expand existing disciplinary traditions. How can different disciplines continue to learn from each other, and what are the potential dangers of such interdisciplinary collaborations? How can theories from one discipline be applied across different paradigms? Is it sensible to conceive of social innovation as a paradigm of its own, or rather is it better conceptualised as an area of study best approached from already existing disciplinary perspectives? How can we develop 'gold standard' methodological approaches, such as Randomised Control Trials, to the study of social innovation, and to what extent does this risk creating overly formulaic boiler-plates? Alternatively, does the study of social innovation better lend itself to 'new' methods and methodologies better suited to our understandings of the social world?

References

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Guidelines for submission

To contribute to the conference, it is possible to submit both paper abstracts or proposals for panel sessions. Following details about the submission:

A. Paper abstracts

Must be maximum 400 words, excluding references (Font: Times New Roman 12-pt, double spaced, 2.5 cm margin all around).

They should articulate: (1) the research objectives or questions being addressed; (2) the conceptual or theoretical perspectives informing the work; (3) where appropriate, the methodology utilised; and (4) the contribution of the paper to knowledge in light of the conference themes.

A maximum of two abstracts may be submitted per presenter (joint papers to be presented by co-authors will also be considered).

To enable anonymity, the authors' names should not appear. Instead, a cover page giving the title of the paper and full identifying information of the author(s) (name, address, telephone and e-mail address) should be included as a separate Word or PDF document.

On abstract submission please ensure you advise the conference stream.

B. Panel session proposals

Must be maximum 400 words, excluding references.

They should include: (1) the panel purpose and its relationship to the nominated conference stream; (2) details of (minimum) three and (maximum) four papers and paper presenters to be included in the panel; and the expected contribution to the panel.

On panel submission please ensure you advise the conference stream.

Process and deadlines

All paper abstracts and panel proposals must be submitted by email to: www.isirc2021milano.com

Abstract and panel proposals submission due: 28th February 2021

Notification of decision on submissions: 31st March 2021

Optional full paper submission for consideration in best paper awards: 15th July 2021

Enquiries about conference administration and technical issues related to online submission should be directed to the conference administration team at isirc2021@unicatt.it

Guidelines for full paper submissions:

Papers must be written in English and should be sent in Microsoft Word or PDF format.

Papers should be between 5,000 and 8,000 words in length including tables, figures and references.

Tables and figures should be incorporated into the paper. Each table and figure should be given a title.

Please include an abstract and four to six key words.

To enable anonymity, the authors' names should not appear. Instead, a cover page giving the title of the paper and full identifying information of the author(s) (name, address, telephone and e-mail address) should be included as a separate Word or PDF document.

Harvard is the preferred referencing style.