

## Association for Information Systems AIS Electronic Library (AISeL)

---

All Sprouts Content

Sprouts

---

12-17-2012

# Being Accountable in Distributed Innovation Work

Magnus Bergquist

*University of Gothenburg*, [magnus.bergquist@gu.se](mailto:magnus.bergquist@gu.se)

Jan Ljungberg

*University of Gothenburg*, [ljungbej@ituniv.se](mailto:ljungbej@ituniv.se)

Bertil Rolandsson

*University of Gothenburg*, [bertil.rolandsson@gu.se](mailto:bertil.rolandsson@gu.se)

Follow this and additional works at: [http://aisel.aisnet.org/sprouts\\_all](http://aisel.aisnet.org/sprouts_all)

---

### Recommended Citation

Bergquist, Magnus; Ljungberg, Jan; and Rolandsson, Bertil, "Being Accountable in Distributed Innovation Work" (2012). *All Sprouts Content*. 501.

[http://aisel.aisnet.org/sprouts\\_all/501](http://aisel.aisnet.org/sprouts_all/501)

This material is brought to you by the Sprouts at AIS Electronic Library (AISeL). It has been accepted for inclusion in All Sprouts Content by an authorized administrator of AIS Electronic Library (AISeL). For more information, please contact [elibrary@aisnet.org](mailto:elibrary@aisnet.org).

## BEING ACCOUNTABLE IN DISTRIBUTED INNOVATION WORK

Magnus Bergquist  
University of Gothenburg, Sweden

Jan Ljungberg  
University of Gothenburg, Sweden

Bertil Rolandsson  
University of Gothenburg, Sweden

### Abstract

As a result of various driving forces, R&D and innovation processes are increasingly opened up for external influences and resources. This has led to a changing nature of innovation work to become more distributed, networked and fragmented. In companies, a consequence of this is that hierarchically defined directives are transformed to lateral agreements. For the employee, a consequence of this is that they are increasingly expected to justify the value of distributed innovation practices in relation to both their firm and external contributors of innovation, and by doing so they involve themselves in a process where accountability is horizontally redistributed. In order to analyze this process, we use a case of open source software development, where developers from eleven firms, using open source in their professional practice, are interviewed. We show how distributed innovation processes leave the professional developer with the responsibility to select and assure that external resources becomes advantageous to their work, and how they use different types of justification to account for the value of this appropriation. We identify how accountability is formed by multiple logics, potentially leading to tensions between different logic of worth.

**Keywords:** distributed innovation, open source, logic of justification, accountability

**Permanent URL:** <http://sprouts.aisnet.org/12-14>

**Copyright:** [Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/)

**Reference:** Bergquist, M., Ljungberg, J., Rolandsson, B. (2012). "BEING ACCOUNTABLE IN DISTRIBUTED INNOVATION WORK," Proceedings > Proceedings of JAIS Theory Development Workshop . *Sprouts: Working Papers on Information Systems*, 12(14). <http://sprouts.aisnet.org/12-14>

*Editors:*

Michel Avital, University of Amsterdam  
Kevin Crowston, Syracuse University

*Advisory Board:*

Kalle Lyytinen, Case Western Reserve University  
Roger Clarke, Australian National University  
Sue Conger, University of Dallas  
Marco De Marco, Università Cattolica di Milano  
Guy Fitzgerald, Brunel University  
Rudy Hirschheim, Louisiana State University  
Blake Ives, University of Houston  
Sirkka Jarvenpaa, University of Texas at Austin  
John King, University of Michigan  
Rik Maes, University of Amsterdam  
Dan Robey, Georgia State University  
Frantz Rowe, University of Nantes  
Detmar Straub, Georgia State University  
Richard T. Watson, University of Georgia  
Ron Weber, Monash University  
Kwok Kee Wei, City University of Hong Kong

*Sponsors:*

Association for Information Systems (AIS)  
AIM  
itAIS  
Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia  
American University, USA  
Case Western Reserve University, USA  
City University of Hong Kong, China  
Copenhagen Business School, Denmark  
Hanken School of Economics, Finland  
Helsinki School of Economics, Finland  
Indiana University, USA  
Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium  
Lancaster University, UK  
Leeds Metropolitan University, UK  
National University of Ireland Galway, Ireland  
New York University, USA  
Pennsylvania State University, USA  
Pepperdine University, USA  
Syracuse University, USA  
University of Amsterdam, Netherlands  
University of Dallas, USA  
University of Georgia, USA  
University of Groningen, Netherlands  
University of Limerick, Ireland  
University of Oslo, Norway  
University of San Francisco, USA  
University of Washington, USA  
Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand  
Viktoria Institute, Sweden

*Editorial Board:*

Margunn Aanestad, University of Oslo  
Steven Alter, University of San Francisco  
Egon Berghout, University of Groningen  
Bo-Christer Bjork, Hanken School of Economics  
Tony Bryant, Leeds Metropolitan University  
Erran Carmel, American University  
Kieran Conboy, National U. of Ireland Galway  
Jan Damsgaard, Copenhagen Business School  
Robert Davison, City University of Hong Kong  
Guido Dedene, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven  
Alan Dennis, Indiana University  
Brian Fitzgerald, University of Limerick  
Ole Hanseth, University of Oslo  
Ola Henfridsson, Viktoria Institute  
Sid Huff, Victoria University of Wellington  
Ard Huizing, University of Amsterdam  
Lucas Introna, Lancaster University  
Panos Ipeirotis, New York University  
Robert Mason, University of Washington  
John Mooney, Pepperdine University  
Steve Sawyer, Pennsylvania State University  
Virpi Tuunainen, Helsinki School of Economics  
Francesco Virili, Università degli Studi di Cassino

*Managing Editor:*

Bas Smit, University of Amsterdam

*Office:*

Sprouts  
University of Amsterdam  
Roetersstraat 11, Room E 2.74  
1018 WB Amsterdam, Netherlands  
Email: admin@sprouts.aisnet.org