

Introduction to the Minitrack “The Sharing Economy”

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Sharing is ingrained in the fabric of society and efficient access to goods and services constitutes a major force driving much of the economic activity today. With greater connectivity brought about by the proliferation of internetworking technologies, it has become much easier for individuals to circumvent spatial and temporal barriers during interactions, thereby giving rise to a novel Sharing Economy that is structured around the disintermediation of conventional channels of commerce in the exchange of both tangible and intangible resources. The sharing economy has gained notable attention within mainstream media as a new economic paradigm that leverages peer-to-peer technological platforms to facilitate exchange of resources among individuals who are joined via fluid relational networks. Almost overnight, numerous peer-to-peer platforms—in the likes of crowd-working (e.g., Airbnb, Uber, Amazon Mechanical Turk, E-Lance, Fiverr), co-innovation (e.g., Mindmixer, Social Innovator), crowd-funding (e.g., Kickstarter, Indiegogo), crowd-searching (e.g., Crowdifynd, CrowdSearching), and crowd-voting (e.g., California Report Card, Threadless) — have sprung up to facilitate both individuals and/or organizations to pool resources in resolving problems.

While there are many practitioners who have prophesized the sharing economy as a game-changer for how organizations and society function, there are also a number of detractors who questioned the uncertain and potentially disruptive future that is brought about by such peer-to-peer exchanges. Critics have painted a dismal picture of the sharing economy as a means for individuals and/or firms to dodge proper regulations and live beyond their means, which in turn contributes to doomsday scenarios of massive job displacements and spending habits detrimental to society. In light of the opportunities and challenges posed by the sharing economy, there is a clear urgency for a systematic and thorough scrutiny of how value creation and appropriation can take place within such economic environments while minimizing its negative impact to society.

This minitrack embraces both retrospective and progressive views of how the sharing economy has evolved and would transform with technological advances. The goal of this minitrack is to enhance publications on the following topics:

- Collaborative consumption and production in sharing economy
- Crowdfunding and communal investment
- Crowdsourcing and open innovation
- Crowd platform strategies
- Data privacy and security in sharing economy
- Design and innovation of crowd platforms
- Digital business models of sharing economy
- Digital labor markets and workforce management in sharing economy
- Disruptive innovation in sharing economy
- Market mechanics of sharing economy
- Policy formulation for sharing economy
- Reputation and trust in sharing economy
- Social network in sharing economy
- Socio-economic and political challenges of sharing economy
- Value appropriation in sharing economy

The first session of the minitrack starts with the paper “On Rapport Uncertainty in the Sharing Economy - Extending the Categories of Uncertainty”, which develops and tests a model that examines how rapport uncertainty, in addition to technical and environmental uncertainties, influences individuals’ intention to share a ride. In the next paper, titled “Emotional Labor in the Sharing Economy”, the authors use survey data to show how different facets of the feedback mechanisms employed by sharing economy services influence consumers’ emotional labor as well as how platforms and their policies matter in encouraging emotional labor. In the third paper, titled “Understanding the Intention to Use Commercial Bike-sharing Systems: An Integration of TAM and TPB”, the authors integrate the technology acceptance model (TAM) and the theory of planned behavior (TPB) to develop a holistic model to explain the intention to use commercial bike-sharing systems and conduct a survey to test the model.

The first paper of the second session, titled “Battle of Sharing Economy: The Contingent Effects of Ride-Sharing on Taxi Industry”, analyzes the impact of ride-sharing services on taxi industry using comprehensive data on Uber and taxi transactions. In the next paper, titled "An Empirical Analysis of the Impacts of the Sharing Economy Platforms on the U.S. Labor Market”, the authors examine the impacts of the sharing economy platforms on the labor market by combining a data set of Uber entry time and several microdata sets. In the third paper, titled “The Impact of Dynamic Two-Sided Platform Pricing on Fairness Perception in the Sharing Economy”, the authors use a laboratory experiment to investigate how characteristics of dynamic pricing influence fairness perception and intention to share of consumers.