

HICSS2019 – Mini Track on Digital Social Innovation

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Digital Social Innovation (DSI) has emerged in recent years as a growing phenomenon, due to the development or application of digital solutions based on emerging technologies, such as big and open data, low-cost open hardware, crowdsourcing, artificial intelligence, blockchain and Internet of Things (IoT) among others. By empowering citizens and engaging them in civic action, they provide new ways of building social movements, delivering public services and creating social impact in fields as diverse as education and training, governance and democracy, energy and environment, transport and housing, healthcare, and social services.

To define future research directions and identify policy implications, it is important that the relationship between social innovation and other types of innovations is investigated using a multi-disciplinary approach.

In this Mini Track, four papers will be discussed, each examining different Digital Social Innovation perspectives, from various regions of the world, though with a predominance from Europe where the topic of Social Innovation has gained a high momentum in the recent years and is now at the center of the policy framework for the future of the European Union.

The first paper, titled *How ICTs shape the relationship between the State and the citizens: Exploring new paradigms between civic engagement and social innovation* sets the stage, providing a theoretical reflection and conceptual framework on the nature and dimensions of Digital Social Innovation and its relationship with civic engagement. The purpose is to advance a typology for better understanding of whether such a phenomenon might contribute to a paradigmatic shift in the relationship between governments or between administrations and citizens. This framework is based on a review of recent literature on social innovation and ICTs, studying the relationships mentioned above based on case studies drawn from recent research on mapping ICT-Enabled Social Innovation in the European Union.

The second paper, titled *Is government welfare able to change? Analysing the efforts to co-create a better social welfare system by taking advantage of collaborative economy*, discusses the needs of welfare sectors across the world to balance economic pressures due to demographic changes against peoples' rising expectations to receive services that are transparent, fast and customized to citizens' habits and needs. This also means that governments are pressed to look for new ways of delivering public services, and thus the paper examines two peer-to-peer platforms that are engaged in delivering public services in the welfare sector in Estonia. These platforms seem to hold substantial potential to change the current system of public service delivery even though local governments have not yet directed resources dedicated to service delivery onto these platforms.

The third paper, titled *Developing Open Innovation: Exploring social innovation design in Hong Kong* examines the increasing utilization of ICTs by governments and nonprofit organizations to facilitate social innovation. In doing so, the paper explores cases in which the open innovation model - which allows idea exchanges between organizations and the public - has been adopted, investigating the motivational factors, participation, and design of open innovation for social purposes in the context of Hong Kong. Building upon existing literature and results from an *ad hoc* survey, the paper examines how monetary rewards, task meaningfulness, social interaction, and reputation influence the effort and quality of open innovation contributions. The findings are of interest for policy makers and practitioners involved in designing effective open innovation that facilitates social innovation in the greater China region.

The fourth paper, *From public value to social value of digital government: Co-creation and social innovation in European Union initiatives*, brings us back to Europe again, discussing the development of key features in European Union policy and service redesign based on social innovative practices where co-

creation and the related phenomenon of digital social innovation have a high potential impact. In particular, the paper outlines the main drivers and barriers identified for setting up open and collaborative governance systems, while taking stock of the analysis of policy experiences and practices funded by the European Commission. The paper concludes by outlining recommendations for future research, as well as implications and possible directions for policy.

The Mini Track thus addresses a wide range of research topics that are important for the area of Digital Social Innovation and should be further elaborated in the future. These include:

- Theoretical reflections on the nature and dimensions of social innovation and contributions of the debate on its relationships with other types of innovation, mainly technological, business model, organizational, and open innovation; as well as the debate on the role of social innovation at the intersection between private and public sector innovation;
- Innovative practices to implement social innovation and related methodological approaches to assess impacts of social innovation policies and programs, including measuring social and public value generation;
- The role of Digital Social Innovation and the use of emerging technologies to improve design of policies and services, or as an answer to current and future societal challenges;
- The potential of innovative financial instruments, including social impact investing,

to strengthen the resilience of social innovation ecosystems in the longer term;

- Specific applications of social innovation on major challenges such as healthcare and active and healthy aging, and to services targeted at disadvantaged groups, including innovation in designing and implementing new social services to face new or unmet needs;
- Specific technological solutions to introduce innovative user-oriented approaches or new practices in existing processes, resulting in new forms and mechanisms of delivery, with a specific focus on co-design, co-production, and co-provision of services;
- Case studies and analyses of social innovation practices where ICTs play a crucial role in promoting social investment, developing effective solutions to modernize welfare systems;
- Theoretical discussions and examples of applications of “social credit systems” for developing community reputation mechanisms and their effects on citizen behavior; and
- The role of social innovation as catalyst to facilitate the operationalization of open innovation ecosystems, facilitating the experimentation, development, and emergence of new products, services and structures that may have a beneficial effect on growth and well-being.