



SIG 01 - B4S - Business for Society

With our theme **Exploring the Future of Management: Facts, Fashion and Fado**, we invite you to participate in the debate about how to explore the future of management. We look forward to receiving your submissions.

T01_05 - Innovation for Society: the management of socio-ethical issues in responsible innovation

Proponents:

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Short description:

Despite aiming to address grand challenges, innovation may lead to unintended negative consequences if socio-ethical issues are not fully integrated. The Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) framework provides several indications on how to manage innovation in a socially responsible manner; however, its applicability to competitive environments is questionable. This special track will bring together researchers investigating the motivations, capabilities, and mechanisms of integration of RRI in industry and how it supports the management of socio-ethical issues in commercial innovation processes. We aim to strengthen the theoretical conceptualisation of RRI and to create a common understanding implementation in industry.

Long description:

Innovation has been signalled as a potential solution or alleviator to the grand challenges of our time, as outlined in the SDGs, such as climate change, ageing societies or income inequality. However, innovation may also have unintended negative consequences, which calls for a close assessment of the socio-ethical factors that may be interplaying. The Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) framework aims to tackle grand challenges to achieve ethically acceptable, socially desirable and sustainable innovation outcomes through innovation based on transparency, democracy and mutual responsiveness principles (Von Schomberg, 2013). This framework was originally developed for (basic) research at universities or publicly-funded bodies.

Businesses, however, also face socio-ethical challenges in their innovation. Many potentially risky or prone to societal resistance innovations are carried out in the private sector, for instance, the development of genetically-modified seeds. However, the application of the RRI framework in competitive environments brings in new challenges, such as information



asymmetries and power imbalances among the stakeholders (Blok & Lemmens, 2015). Therefore, it is increasingly relevant to explore how businesses can embrace RRI and factor in socio-ethical issues in the innovation process, by exploring capabilities, motivations, and mechanisms that enable or inhibit this integration (Garst et al., 2017).

Our aim with this special track is to bring together the emerging community addressing socio-ethical issues in commercial innovation to develop a common understanding. Several special issues have been published collecting the findings of this research community (Scholten & Blok, 2015). We plan to have traditional paper presentations with ample room for discussion, paired with a final summary session in which we will synthesise the input of the track participants and discuss possible future lines of research with the participants.

Blok, V., & Lemmens, P. (2015). The Emerging Concept of Responsible Innovation. Three Reasons Why It Is Questionable and Calls for a Radical Transformation of the Concept of Innovation. In B.-J. Koops, I. Oosterlaken, H. Romijn, T. Swierstra, & J. van den Hoven (Eds.), *Responsible Innovation 2* (pp. 19–35). Springer International Publishing.

Garst, J., Blok, V., Jansen, L., & Omta, O. S. W. F. (2017). Responsibility versus Profit: The Motives of Food Firms for Healthy Product Innovation. *Sustainability*, 9(12), 2286.

Scholten, V., & Blok, V. (2015). Foreword: responsible innovation in the private sector. *Journal of Chain and Network Science*, 15(2), 101–105.

Von Schomberg, R. (2013). A vision of responsible research and innovation. In *Responsible Innovation*. London: John Wiley.

Keywords:

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Corporate social responsibility
Innovation management

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Journal of Business Ethics
Sustainability
Journal of Responsible Innovation

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