

CALL FOR PAPERS

TRACK 6: Social innovation hubs and living labs

Quality of life and social innovation are seen as glues for future urban development. In times of insecurity and crisis, traditional modes of urban development based on economic growth need to be overcome by new, socially sensitive ways of progress in space. When market-dominated and state-regulated capital accumulation strategies - fragmented and instable - start to fail, the search for new incremental ways to nurture locally based, idiosyncratic and endogenous economies increases. In this respect, social innovation, solidary and social economy are considered key concepts to rethink the way cities work.

At the same time, a strong focus on the new importance of quality of life seems to ensure unique selling propositions for cities competing for attention, and thus for core resources: people, ideas and capital. Top-down strategies often remain vague when addressing how and why civil society actors shall be involved in these approaches. Beyond such notions strongly related to the rise of neoliberal policies, quality of life might serve as a key political concern when democratic political goals such as neighbourhood cohesion are at stake.

This track is thought to bring together critical thinkers that are concerned with a redefinition of public goods and a sense for the notion of public innovation, as well as scholars related to the inquiry of urban cultures and public spaces understood as socially innovative spheres. Papers based on the patchwork of diverse urban lifestyles, investigating potentials of civil society involvement, its social, political, economic and cultural heterogeneity and difference within urban development processes are welcome.

The track focusses on the following questions:

- What are the prerequisites of liveable cities and socially innovative nodes and quarters?
- Which social innovation hubs and living labs are developed, discussed, integrated and put into practice by civil society actors and collectives that seek to overcome the notion of growth-oriented urban development?
- Which new business scenarios merge that allow for socially inclusive ways of urban development and the integration of civil society's needs into a "human economy"?
- What types of innovation do foster democratic usability allowing for social, political and economic emancipation of civil society actors?
- Which context-specific local innovations in cities trigger the search for global social innovation?
- What are the benefits of socially innovative ways and quality of live-based approaches for the wider urban society?
- How are the outcomes of successful social innovation redistributed and shared among the wider (urban) society?
- How do innovators and politicians conceive "the social" spatially?

Track coordinators:

Sabine Knierbein, Vienna University of Technology, sabine.knierbein@tuwien.ac.at
Johannes Suitner, Vienna University of Technology, Johannes.suitner@tuwien.ac.at