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Challenge Social Innovation

Potentials for Business, Social Entrepreneurship, Welfare and Civil Society

In recent years, social innovation has experienced a steep career. Numerous national governments and large organisations like the OECD, the European Commission and UNESCO have adopted the term. Social innovation basically means that people adopt new social practices in order to meet social needs in a different or more effective way. Prominent examples of the past are the Red Cross and the social welfare state or, at present, the internet 2.0 transforming our communication and cooperation schemes, requiring new management concepts, even empowering social revolutions. The traditional concept of innovation as successful new technological products needs fundamental rethinking in a society marked by knowledge and services, leading to a new and enriched paradigm of innovation. There is multiple evidence that social innovation will become of growing importance not only concerning social integration, equal opportunities and dealing with the greenhouse effects but also with regard to preserving and expanding the innovative capacity of companies and societies. While political authorities stress the social facets of social innovation, this book also encompasses its societal and systemic dimensions, collecting the scientific expertise of renowned experts and scholars from all over the world. Based on the contributions of the first world-wide science convention on social innovation from September 2011 in Vienna, the book provides an overview of scientific approaches to this still relatively new field.



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