“Innovation in Non-Profit Sectors”

Guest Editors:

Marina Ranga, European Commission’s Joint Research Centre in Seville, Spain
Cristina Fernandes, University of Beira Interior & NECE – Research Center in Business Sciences: cristina.isabel.fernandes@ubi.pt
Luis Farinha, Polytechnic Institute of Castelo Branco & NECE – Research Center in Business Sciences at UBI: luis.farinha@ipcb.pt

Background

Competition is increasingly intense in today's world and strong innovation capabilities are generally considered to help companies find solutions to various internal challenges, attract domestic and international talent, develop new skills and competences, and stay ahead of their competitors in a global economic uncertainty (Hooley, Piercy & Nicoulaud, 2008; WinDrum & García-Goñi, 2008). The need to reach and maintain higher competitiveness levels, provide better services and satisfy ever more demanding customers, is also present in the non-profit sector. Many common objectives can be identified in both the profit- and the non-profit sectors, such as enhancing innovation capabilities, efficiency, quality and degree of customer satisfaction (Bloch & Bugge, 2013; Omachonu & Einspruch, 2010). Also, corporate social responsibility has become more and more embedded in both profit- and non-profit companies, which nowadays design strategies and mechanisms to identify themselves as socially responsible (Berné-Manero et al., 2016).
However, in spite of many studies undertaken to date, an evaluation of innovativeness in the non-profit sector still has many underexplored facets (Snow, 2007). This leads to a need for more research to advance our understanding of innovation in non-profit sector (Bloch & Bugge, 2013). For example, how can a stronger innovative profile lead to a stronger market position and stronger competitive advantage? The use of market orientation in the non-profit context has captured researchers’ attention in the last years for its importance in perceiving an organization’s strategic behaviour toward the designated market organizations (Hsieh et al., 2008).

Although one can identify many common aspects underlying innovation in the two sectors, broadly related to products, processes, organizational cultures and incentives, market presence, etc. there are also many differences between them (Ettlie & Rosenthal, 2011; Kay & Goldspink, 2013). For instance, the incentive structures to innovation, the benefits that innovation can bring to the organization, or the risk profile that each type of organization is willing to take (Kay & Goldspink 2013), to mention just a few.

In non-profit sector, it seems nowadays complex to implement marketing tools, to efficiently address current and new customers, segmented within a market thirsty for new approaches to innovation. In this sense, cooperation between non-profit organizations with an academic sphere at the regional level can be a valid option (Göttlichová & Soukalová, 2015).

The objective of this special issue (SI) is to shed light on recent developments, methodological contributions, and challenges which characterize different approaches to innovation in non-profit sectors. To achieve this aim, the SI invites conceptual and empirical papers, presenting cutting-edge research on innovation in non-profit sectors. In particular, papers dealing with the following (but not limited to) research questions are encouraged:

- How can social innovation contribute to social wellbeing?
- What are the key challenges of the non-profit sector in the context of innovation?
• Which are the new paradigms of entrepreneurial behaviour in the context of non-profit innovation sectors?
• Which are the innovation and marketing paths of social enterprise?

Submissions Instructions:
Deadline submission: 30 of September 2018

Submission Guidelines
With this Special Issue, the guest editors intend to bring significant new value to social entrepreneurs, innovation researchers, policy-makers and marketing practitioners. Full papers should be submitted via the online submission system: International Review on Public and Nonprofit Marketing

References


