

CALL FOR PAPERS

Special issue: The sharing economy as a path to government innovation

Guest editors:

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The concept of “sharing economy” is often used interchangeably with the notions of “collaborative consumption” (Hamari, Sjöklint, & Ukkonen, 2016), “collaborative economy” (Bauwens, Mendoza, & Iacomella, 2012; Botsman & Rogers, 2010), “crowd-based capitalism” (Sundararajan, 2016), “peer economy” (Bradley, 2014), “gig economy” (Friedman, 2014; Mulcahy, 2016), “peer-to-peer economy” (Koopman, Mitchell, & Thierer, 2014) and “platform economy” (Parker, Van Alstyne, & Choudary, 2016), to name a few. It has become an umbrella term becoming increasingly relevant to both the daily lives of private individuals and to the direction and operation of social and political systems, thereby covering a large number of peer sharing behaviours across several sectors, such as accommodation (Airbnb, Couchsurfing), delivery and home services (Instacart), and transportation (Lyft, Uber).

One of the key elements in the multiple definitions of the sharing economy concept is the sense of belonging to community which is implied in the sharing behaviours of involved actors. This community spirit is reflected in the definition of Hamari et al. (2016: n.p.), defining the sharing economy as a “*peer to peer activity of obtaining, giving, or sharing the access to goods and services, coordinated through community-based online services*”. The operation of sharing transactions via collaborative platforms, such as online connecting platforms which are owned and controlled by the consumers themselves, is the main driver behind the sense of community surrounding the concept of the sharing economy. Consequently, sharing with no true sense of community and collaboration among the actors, even when sharing is not at all accompanied by economic transactions, or sharing via for-profit intermediaries, as in the case of Uber, do not count as examples of genuine sharing economy (Belk, 2014).

The opportunities within the sharing economy are enormous and are not just for big businesses. For many, and in particular young people and women, the sharing economy allows them to save money by accessing goods and services rather than buying them, or only paying for them when they need them. The democratization of access to resources, accompanied by the development and implementation of more sustainable economic and environmental models is the main outcome expected by the engagement of people in peer sharing behaviours. A study of Woskko (2014) showed that people are not just saving money, they have also reported having a positive or very positive experience with shared models of consumption. For women within the UK, the sharing economy seems to have a real impact on how British women work. It allows them to work more flexibly when they have a family, and to have a lifeline back to work. It also seems that around a third of women in the UK founded or co-founded a sharing economy business. In these given examples, the new economy can have its implications on the organisation of work and life, and in particular in exploring flexible working patterns, long working hours and homeworking and in sharing caring responsibilities among partners or others (Perrons, 2003).

The sharing economy, however, is not only creating opportunities, it is also presenting different governance challenges. One of them is the creation of inequality in the 'renting' economy. Although the sharing economy claims to de-emphasize ownership, it is mostly those who have the assets that will accumulate money from it. If government agencies would partner here with sharing economy platforms, it could only further deepen economic issues and class divisions (Ganapati & Reddick, 2018). Another challenge is the governance of the new working force that are operating as independent contractors, and typically do not get the work security of full-time workers. This might lead to unfair competition in the market, such as the recent protests of taxi drivers against ride-sharing platforms such as Uber.

Against this backdrop and cited examples of mostly commercial business, this call for papers is particularly interested in empirical research such as case studies focusing on **exploring the outcomes and challenges of government innovation related to the sharing economy**. Nowadays, we witness that governments are not fully embracing the opportunities offered by the sharing economy, although it could make their operations more efficient and lead towards a better usage of their public resources. Local authorities could explore the sharing of IT systems, the sharing of heavy equipment or local spaces, or support ride-sharing as part of public transport. Apart from renting models, government departments could also embrace the time banking system as a way to give their staff the opportunity to volunteer with local charities and services, or as a way to broaden access to certain services, such as childcare. Empirical studies could particularly focus on the usage of or collaboration with online platforms to facilitate collaborative consumption and delivery of public goods or services, and how the creation of these tool creates a tension between the public and private sector.

Given the multitude of sharing activities that could fall under the concept of sharing economy, this call for papers welcomes any contribution in the following classification: rental economy, peer-to-peer economy, on-demand economy, time banking, open source software and social lending/crowdfunding (Pais & Provasi, 2015); with a particular interest in case studies that demonstrate the value of innovation management frameworks, models and plans of government bodies or alternatives to public services.

We encourage interdisciplinary contributions that would cross the boundaries between the fields of cultural and media studies, urban studies, science and technology studies, platform studies, management and innovation studies, policy studies, economics.

We look forward to papers that broadly deal with following topics, but are certainly not limited to the following:

- The methodological and empirical challenges associated with the critical study of the Sharing Economy in the context of government innovation
- Public service delivery in the sharing age (e.g., informal childcare service)
- Opportunities, challenges, impacts of the sharing economy on governance and public sector
- The role of the public sector in the sharing economy (vis-à-vis the private sector)
- The willingness of government bodies to adopt sharing economy solutions
- Microentrepreneurs or peer-to-peer communities providing an alternative to public services, or access to public resources
- Citizen perception studies or impact assessment studies of (better) sharing public services as a new economy
- Case studies illustrating either successful or unsuccessful government innovation in sharing economy (lessons learned)

Planning

750-words abstracts should be emailed to Shenja.vanderGraaf@imec.be by **January 24, 2020**.

Abstracts will be reviewed by the Tim Review Editorial Board and the special issue editors.
Any queries can be addressed to the (guest) editors.

Authors of selected abstracts will be notified by **February 7, 2020** and invited to submit full manuscripts by **March 31, 2020**.

These manuscripts are subject to full blind peer review according to TIM Review's policies. The issue will be published in **May 2020**. Please check the author guidelines for full submission via this [link](#).

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Important dates:

- January 24th: Submission of abstracts
- February 7th: Invitation for full submission
- March 31st: Full submission deadline
- May 2020: Special issue publication

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