

SCHEDA DI PROGRAMMA 3

Title of the Research Program (ENG):

Social innovation as a driver of smart city initiatives.

Description (MAX 5000 CHARACTERS EXCLUDING SPACES):

The vulnerability of cities has increased dramatically due to the increase in the population that inhabits large urban centers, especially in those areas of the globe most exposed to extreme climatic phenomena. Recent estimates report a trend that by 2050 will lead over 68% of the world population to settle in urban areas (UN, 2018). This highlights a wide range of challenges that cities will have to face such as food security, energy consumption, the adequacy of the health and social system, physical and technological infrastructures and many other issues related to the provision of public services (De Jong et al., 2015; Martin et al., 2018).

Far from being a mere 'frame', cities, as vital ecosystems, are the architects of the transformations taking place through the social actors (citizens, businesses, public institutions, non-profit organizations, etc.) who live and operate in them, and play a decisive role in achieving the ambitious goals set by the 2030 Agenda on sustainable development, the disaster risk reduction objectives and the fight against climate change.

With respect to these challenges, technology and the use of data play a fundamental role in supporting the decision-making process of local governments regarding the challenges they face (climate change, economic and social inequalities, natural disasters, pandemics, etc.). In fact, in the era of digital transformation, the importance of data and the value of its effective use has emerged in an increasingly important way both in the process of developing policies and in the provision of services and, last but not least, also to for performance measurement purposes (Vermiglio et al., 2021).

The drive for innovation and the 'digital transformation' of local public institutions and, more generally, of cities, has supported the launch of investment programs aimed at creating "smart" cities - the so-called "Smart city", whose distinctive feature is the use of "web-based" solutions, the use of sensors, digitization and the use of apps and "virtual" environments for dialogue, collaboration and negotiation between the public administration, economic operators and users of services with a view to satisfying the needs of the latter.

In recent years, even at the academic level, there has been an intense debate that has favored the development of numerous research paths on smart cities [Angelidou, 2014; Anthopoulos, 2015]; in accounting studies, the topic of smart cities has so far had a marginal importance when compared with other research fields and only some authors [Argento et al., 2020, Alsaid, L. A., & Mutiganda, J. C. 2020; Grossi et al., 2020] approached the topic from a public management perspective [Brorström et al., 2018; Herscovici, 2018]. At the same time, numerous studies have emphasized how the development of smart cities depends on the socio-technical structures and systems that animate cities and on the relationships that favor the creation of the so-called "Smart urban governance" [Meijer & Bolivar, 2016; Meijer, 2018; Šiugždinienė et al, 2019; Nesti, 2020]. For the success of smart cities, the involvement of citizens, the use of technologies and the adoption of collaborative models that can stimulate the entrepreneurial and urban ecosystem of reference become essential [Misuraca et.al., 2012; Castelnovo et al., 2015; Scholl, H. J., & Al Awadhi, S., 2016; Benevolo & Dameri, 2016; Viale Pereira et al., 2018; Webster & Leleux, 2018; Appio et al., 2019; Mora et al., 2019; Schiavone et al., 2020].

The objective of the research program is to highlight the evolution of the concept and models of smart cities spread internationally, paying particular attention to the links that exist between the spread of smart cities and social innovation at an urban level.

For this purpose, the program includes the development of the following research paths: i) review of the literature on smart city and social innovation issues in the context of management and accounting studies; ii) comparative analysis at an international level to understand the dissemination of models and good practices that combine the smart approach with social innovation; iii) big data analysis and the use of web-based techniques and solutions for the creation and display of dashboards, metrics and performance measurement systems at urban level.

Students will develop solid foundations within the cycle of activities of lectures and seminars provided in the doctoral program of the University of Messina (e.g., Statistics, Introduction to STATA and Engaging in Research, life cycle sustainability, urban metabolism, Models for financial data).

In addition, skills on the topics covered by the research program can be further developed during the experience abroad and the internship at the company / research center.

PERIOD IN BUSINESS - RESEARCH CENTERS - PA:

The research program will be carried out in collaboration with the following subject:

Company name: Institute for Finance and Local Economy (IFEL, Research Body) - Foundation established by the National Association of Italian Municipalities (ANCI).

Registered office: Rome, P.za di San Lorenzo in Lucina, 26

Legal representative: Alessandro Canelli

References for the Research Program: Dr. Andrea Ferri - Dr. Fabrizio Fazioli

PERIOD ABROAD:

The research program provides for a period abroad of no. min 6 max 18 at the following institution: Skema Business School, Paris

