Building innovation ecosystems in cities or regions: people, knowledge, capital, and the local commons

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Research questions

• What are the economic, technological and societal factors driving the creation of innovative and competitive digital ecosystems in Canada?

• To what extent can policy measures succeed in transforming cities or regions into sustainable generators/magnets of human talent, capital investments and knowledge assets?
Major findings

• Innovation dynamics in cities and/or regions rely on the interactions between formal and informal actors or entities.

• These interactions contribute to the creation of (local) commons from which the ecosystem derives its strength, and which include:
  • People: availability of and access to talented workforce
  • Capital: availability of and access to financial and material backing
  • Knowledge: availability of and access to intellectual power
Meaning of findings

• Building an ecosystem means building the commons:
  
  • On scale: the more actors and linkages in an ecosystem, the greater the (expected) externalities
  • On scope: the more diversified the actors and linkages of an ecosystem, the broader the (expected) externalities

→ Innovation ecosystems rely as much on the accumulation of new and existing resources or assets as they do on the combination of these resources or assets
Key policy implications

• In addition to the traditional support to both formal and informal actors (essentially aimed at fixing failures), policies should also aim at enlivening the commons:

  • By organizing places and/or spaces, where the formal and informal actors or entities can meet and interact
    → E.g. Fab labs, living labs, open labs, maker spaces, hacker spaces, etc.

  • By supporting projects and/or events, which simultaneously involve formal and informal actors or entities
    → E.g. Contests, tournaments, showcases, workshops, festivals, trade-shows, etc.
Toward a new policy framework

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<th>PEOPLE</th>
<th>KNOWLEDGE</th>
<th>CAPITAL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Recruitment/selection</td>
<td>• Creation/capture</td>
<td>• Investment planning</td>
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<td>• Training/development</td>
<td>• Sharing/enrichment</td>
<td>• Debt/equity financing</td>
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LEGAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

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Thank you!

Questions and/or comments?