

# **Studies on Entrepreneurship, Structural Change and Industrial Dynamics**

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Editors

# Collaborative Innovation Networks

Building Adaptive and Resilient Organizations

 Springer

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# Preface

In today's unpredictable world, demonstrating resilience and responding to external shocks is becoming a key imperative. At the individual and organizational level, collaboration and collective actions provide an important advantage to bounce back from adverse situations. Most of the organizations rely on sophisticated collections of strategies, tools, and processes to manage risks and reduce the impact of external threats. Yet, any strategic dashboard or individual effort might be inadequate if changes are as unpredictable as the ones we are witnessing with climate change, social change, and global terrorism.

Highly networked individuals, teams, and communities sustain positive relationships with others and use their social capital to master turbulence. Collaborative Innovation Networks (COINs)—as self-organizing emergent social systems—are primary building blocks of innovation for coping with external change. As small cyberteams of intrinsically motivated individuals, COIN members get together to innovate in domains they are passionate about and to respond to unexpected events and opportunities. Developing and supporting networks has been recognized in literature as a key process to minimize excessive risks and reduce the stress on the system.

The interdisciplinary nature of the book offers a unique opportunity to frame the discussion around resilience using a multiplicity of perspectives, including social innovation, anthropology, leadership, change management, and big data applications. The book and its nineteen chapters describe how COINs enable resilience in four sections: Entrepreneurship, Healthcare, Society and Culture, and Open Dialogue and Creativity.

The Entrepreneurship section covers topics such as the impact of U.S. venture capital on start-up success and the importance for Chinese entrepreneurs to connect with foreign and domestic venture capitalists.

The Healthcare section discusses how COINs of team of patients, family members, doctors, and researchers support patients with chronic diseases and how infant mortality can be reduced by forming groups of mothers, social workers, doctors, and policy makers who work together.

The Society and Culture section includes contributions on the role of COINs in promoting food sharing networks, protecting bird species in New Zealand, analyzing the evolution of world cultures through epic stories and finding the “Truth of Tribes” through social media.

Last, the Open Dialogue and Creativity section explores the impact of peer learning on creativity and the role of story writing to improve daily conversations and generation of new ideas. Combined these sections provide the reader with specific, concrete examples of COINs in action around the world and the real impact they are having today.

Resilience is particularly important in healthcare. For example, COINs of patients, family members, doctors, and researchers are formed to develop together new, innovative ways of dealing with chronic diseases and improving patient and caregiver quality of life. Another area in healthcare where COINs build resilience is reducing infant mortality by forming COINs of mothers, social workers, doctors, and policy makers to provide mothers with the support necessary to give their newborns a better future than they had themselves. In internal healthcare processes, COINs act as an enabler for process change, representing a novel approach to human resource management by nurturing free exchange of ideas and a rotating leadership style.

A second area for resilience is in industry, where COINs can strengthen adaptability and transformability to leverage uncertainty as a competitive advantage. Inside large corporations, COINs can form spontaneously and with minimal management intervention to creatively react to new risks and external threats. COINs might appear in well-established firms as a bottom-up response to find new applications for emerging technologies, thus flexibly adapting to change and anticipating competitors’ next moves. COINs will also be tremendously useful to start-ups, offering new self-organizing and entrepreneurial forms of leadership, where all stakeholders, including founders, early employees, customers, suppliers, and business partners, collaborate to develop new and innovative products, services, and business models for an ever-changing environment.

Resilience through COINs is also necessary in social innovation and sustainable entrepreneurship. COINs can help align practice with policy and provide leadership in seeking funding from diverse sources. In urban areas such as for example Detroit and other postindustrial cities, social innovation through COINs has turned crisis into opportunity as cities become a source of inspiration and solutions for other challenged American cities looking for innovative new models of urban governance.

Creating COINs of students will build resilience in an educational setting, where self-organizing student teams might collaborate over long distance to solve complex problems. Students might also engage in rotating leadership behavior inside the classroom, thus increasing resilience against bullying and for better learning. Similarly, COINs of faculty and researchers promote resilience and reshape the higher

education environment by reimagining the future of collaborations across departments and institutions.

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# Acknowledgments

This volume combines selected contributions presented at the 7th International Conference on Collaborative Innovation Networks held in Detroit from September 14 to 17, 2017. Scholars and practitioners discussed how to build resilient systems through collaborative innovation networks across a variety of disciplines, including health, business, social innovation, entrepreneurship, and education. We would like to thank the sponsors of the conference who helped bring together international scholars, researchers, and practitioners to discuss how to improve resilience in large and small organizations, communities, and territories. These include the Global Data Insight & Analytics Group at Ford Motor Company, Wayne State University, the MIT Center for Collective Intelligence, Illinois Institute of Technology/Stuart School of Business, Aalto University in Finland, and The Pontifical Catholic University de Chile.

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