

Summer School 2021 “Social Innovations in Social Work”
In co-operation with Metropolia University of Applied Sciences, Helsinki
June 7th – June 11th, 2021 (online)



“More social innovation” (photo: Andreas Schauder)

Social Innovations in Social Work

Today, a number of pressing issues concern social work, either directly or indirectly: changing societies and communities; economic, ecological and social challenges; the consequences of globalization and digitization; the diversity of society and individual concepts of life. Social work is increasingly involved in developing and realizing innovative processes the dealing with phenomena of modern life. Under the aspect of «Social Innovation» a growing number of social work experts, researchers, agencies, organizations and clients are exploring and seeking contemporary and sustainable solutions and methods of humane, modern, successful and participatory social work.

In future, dealing with social problems may become even more challenging, because many long-established sources of financial support will no longer be available. In addition, all global challenges will create unpredictable challenges for communities and society. Social isolation is a well-known risk factor for loneliness and morbidity. Social innovations aim to help people better their lives, improve their well-being and sense of belonging, as well as support inclusion and participation. Social innovations can also enhance community-building and networking between people or prevent marginalization. They can also offer solutions that build stronger social networks. Social innovations are new solutions (products, services, models, markets, processes, etc.) that simultaneously meet a social need, lead to new or improved capabilities and relationships and make better use of assets and resources. The increasing unpredictability of today's world challenges (and will continue to challenge) social workers to engage in lifelong learning in order to develop themselves and their professional competencies. In order to solve the intricate problems of today's world, social work professionals need to develop their interdisciplinary skills, knowledge, attitudes and emotional skills. Amid these challenges, interdisciplinary orientation, networking and co-creation prove to be beneficial for creating social innovations on both the national and international level.

Keynotes open for partner universities

Monday, June 7th, 2021 (noon – 1 p.m.)

Theoretical and practical considerations on social innovation

Juha Koivisto, DSocSci, Research Manager, Finnish Institute of Health and Welfare

Juha Koivisto's keynote lecture consists of a theoretical and a practical part. The first part tackles theoretical conceptualization of social innovation and innovation activity. The lecture studies a performative definition of social according to which 'social', that is, social relations, social structures, and societies are continuous and precarious effects that are performed and re-performed by human and nonhuman actors. This definition has implications on how we define social innovation and what innovation activity is like; what kinds of elements social innovations are constituted by, how they might be developed, and how they might be scaled up and translated into different contexts. The second part of the lecture presents Innovillage (www.innokyla.fi) which is a national innovation environment for developing and scaling up models and solutions in health and social care in Finland. The key task of Innovillage is to enhance and enable co-creation of models and solutions. It provides online tools applicable at the various stages of innovation activity and a forum for scaling up models and solutions.

Its services are all based on three common principles – openness, collaboration, and learning from each other. In conclusion, the lecture defines key challenges of developing social innovation.

Tuesday, June 8th, 2021 (8 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.)

Social innovation and exemplary approaches to the development of novel social work interventions

Prof. Dr. Daniel Gredig

University of Applied Sciences and Art Northwestern Switzerland, School of Social Work

In social science, 'social innovation' takes on various meanings. In this talk, I set out the meaning of this term in sociology and contrast it with the understanding that has emerged in social work, where 'social innovation' has been used to refer to innovations in social work practice. This raises the question how new social work interventions can be developed. I remind on the promise of action research to be transformative and generate new courses of action in practice. Then, I turn to intervention research, a conception developed in the USA, and to research-based intervention development, a model developed in Switzerland. I illustrate the latter with an example of the development of an HIV prevention offer targeting heterosexual men in Switzerland.

Friday, June 11th, 2021 (8 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.)

Innovative Commons as pathway to more social innovation?

Prof. Dr. Tina Haisch

University of Applied Sciences and Art Northwestern Switzerland, School of Business

The concept of the innovative commons is the result of the INNO-Futures project, funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF). The researchers from the Universities of

Neuchâtel and Bern (Tina Haisch was a post-doctoral researcher at the University of Bern) held numerous discussions and organized workshops with the various actors in innovation as well as Swiss and international expert groups. On this basis, the research team developed a new Swiss innovation policy with a strong focus on social innovation: the policy of the innovative commons. Based on this policy, the Co-Next Lab project in Muttenz, Canton Basel-Landschaft, will be presented as an example.

Registration:

If you like to share keynotes please write an email to Mrs. Claudia Meyer-Börnecke, International Office HSA FHNW (claudia.meyerboernecke@fhnw.ch) and you'll receive a connecting zoom-link.

There are a few students places available. If you like to participate in the whole Summer School program please contact Mrs. Claudia Meyer-Börnecke, International Office HSA FHNW (claudia.meyerboernecke@fhnw.ch) and you'll receive the registration form. (Deadline for application: May 31st, 2021).