

PEOPLE, PLACE, VALUES: LIVING LAB AS SOCIAL INNOVATION PROCESSES FOR TOURISM COMMUNITIES

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Abstract

Tourism is well known to transform space and place, especially through commodification of space and culture. Destination in peripheral areas are facing major transformation. Three main challenges can be identified: workforce and demographic challenges, technological challenges and climate change adaptation challenges. Neoliberal discourses and policies will suggest technological innovation, good governance and competitive destination management to face those challenges. Based on our action researches, we take exception from those discourses, suggesting that a living lab as a social innovation process offer the potential of different responses to those challenges than the business as usual neoliberal discourses especially in refocusing the innovation agenda on people, place and use values instead of profit and exchange values. Indeed, our researches reintroduce fundamental issues of tourism as a base on encounter and sharing of space, in place, through people. The exchange value and profit not being at the core of the innovation process.

Keywords: Living Lab; Social Innovation; Climate change; Technology; People-Place-Values.

PESSOAS, LUGAR, VALORES: LABORATÓRIO VIVO COMO PROCESSO DE INOVAÇÃO SOCIAL PARA AS COMUNIDADES TURÍSTICAS

Resumo

O turismo é bem conhecido por transformar o espaço e o lugar, especialmente através da mercantilização do espaço e da cultura. Os destinos nas áreas periféricas estão enfrentando grandes transformações. Três desafios principais podem ser identificados: os desafios demográficos e laborais, os desafios tecnológicos e os desafios de adaptação às alterações climáticas. Os discursos e políticas neoliberais irão sugerir inovação tecnológica, boa governança e gestão competitiva dos destinos para enfrentar esses desafios. Com base em nossos estudos do tipo pesquisa-ação, abrimos exceções a esses discursos, sugerindo que um laboratório vivo como um processo de inovação social oferece o potencial de respostas diferentes a esses desafios do que os discursos neoliberais de gestão, especialmente na reorientação da agenda de inovação para as pessoas, colocando e usando valores em vez de lucro e valores de troca. De fato, as nossas pesquisas reintroduzem questões fundamentais do turismo como base de encontro e partilha do espaço, no lugar, através das pessoas. O valor de troca e o lucro não estão no centro do processo de inovação.

Palavras-chave: Laboratório Vivo; Inovação Social; Mudanças Climáticas; Tecnologia; Pessoas-Lugar-Valores.

GENTE, LUGAR, VALORES: LABORATORIO VIVO COMO PROCESOS DE INNOVACIÓN SOCIAL PARA LAS COMUNIDADES TURÍSTICAS

Resumen

Es bien sabido que el turismo transforma el espacio y el lugar, especialmente a través de la mercantilización del espacio y la cultura. Los destinos de las zonas periféricas se enfrentan a una gran transformación. Se pueden identificar tres desafíos principales: los desafíos laborales y demográficos, los desafíos tecnológicos y los desafíos de adaptación al cambio climático. Los discursos y las políticas neoliberales sugerirán la innovación tecnológica, la buena gobernanza y la gestión competitiva de los destinos para hacer frente a esos desafíos. Sobre la base de nuestras investigaciones de acción, hacemos una excepción a esos discursos, sugiriendo que un laboratorio viviente como proceso de innovación social ofrece el potencial de respuestas diferentes a esos desafíos que los discursos neoliberales de "business as usual", especialmente en lo que respecta a la reorientación de la agenda de innovación hacia las personas, el lugar y el uso de valores en lugar de los valores de beneficio e intercambio. De hecho, nuestras investigaciones reintroducen cuestiones fundamentales del turismo como base para el encuentro y el intercambio de espacio, en el lugar, a través de las personas. El valor de intercambio y el beneficio no están en el centro del proceso de innovación.

Palabras clave: Laboratorio Vivo; Innovación Social; Cambio climático; Tecnología; Gente-Lugar-Valores.



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1 INTRODUCTION

The rise of neo-liberal order in a globalizing socio-economic project has created a major restructuring of economy and society (Harvey, 2007; Brown, 2015; Mosedale, 2016). New forms of capitalism have expanded and (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2000) emerged, fuelled by deregulation, new technologies and restructuring of space and time (Harvey, 1997; 2007). As Klein and Pecqueur (2017) state:

This new world space is characterized by the predominance of financial capital over productive capital and by the submission of public authorities to the global economic powers. The brutality of this transition into the new world, called the globalized economy, manifested most distinctly with the crisis of 2008. (p. 3)

In the face of such crises and restructuring, local stakeholders explore and experiment with new forms of action and development (Klein & Pecqueur, 2017). The living lab (LL) is an example of this type of action (Guimont & Lapointe, 2016; Lafontaine & Gallant, 2017) when they are designed as a social and collective process of pooling people, resources, knowledge and ideas (Franz, 2015; Guimont & Lapointe, 2016)

Within neoliberal restructuring, it is well known that tourism transforms space and place, especially through the commodification of space and culture (Harvey, 1997; Meethan, 2001; Overton, 2010; Lapointe et al. 2018; Damian, 2018). In the particular case of destinations in peripheral areas, this restructuring is not just economic and technological but also physical, as demonstrated by the transformation of the coastline by climate change (Lapointe et al. 2015b).

Neoliberal discourses and policies suggest technological innovation, good governance and competitive destination management to face those challenges. Based on our research activities, we take exception to those discourses, and counter that a living lab as a social innovation process offers the potential for alternative responses to those challenges. The solutions we suggest differ from the business as usual neoliberal discourses, particularly by refocusing the innovation agenda on people, place and use values instead of competition, profit and exchange values.

Weisbrot, Baker and Rosnick (2006: 241) examined data on economic growth and various social indicators by comparing the neoliberal years (1980-2005) with the prior two decades (1960-1980) and have noted that “contrary to popular belief, the past 25 years

have seen sharply slower rates of economic growth and reduced progress on social indicators for the vast majority of low and middle-income countries.” Indeed, it seems that

“under neoliberalism, economic growth rates have declined, unemployment and underemployment have become widespread, inequalities within and between countries have become sharper, the living and working conditions of the majority have deteriorated almost everywhere, and the periphery has suffered greatly from economic instability. In other words, neoliberalism is a global system of minority power, plunder of nations and despoilment of the environment” (Saad-Filho & Johnston, p.5)

This calls for models of socio-economic structuring, that eschew the profit-driven, exchange-obsessed and overwhelming competitive focus on the entrepreneur of the self posited by neoliberal discourses (Brown, 2015; Boltanski & Chiapello, 2000) and integration of the consumers as value creator (Thrift, 2008). In this restructuring the individual in its collective agencies, referred to as “people” in this paper, is not a rational maximizing actor, but a moral, ethical and geographical being searching for meaning (Genard, 2015).

From this starting point, we can position the living lab within alternative economics as a space of experimentation/becoming that prioritizes action research with people in place (Healy, 2009). Furthermore, Healy (2009) emphasizes the need for academics to work: “(...) creatively with individuals, communities, and regions to produce and disseminate economic innovation” (p.11).

Through the LL process, we embark on such a journey with the idea of innovation in tourism centred on people and place as an experienced space endowed with values (Tuan, 1999). Our conceptualization of values diverges from exchange values (Marx, 1867 [1993]) and acknowledges a diverse expression of values as a sense of what the world is and how people want to be in the world (Harvey, 1997).

The paper aim to illustrate how living lab can go beyond technological innovation to become a social innovation process that mobilized other forms of values. First, we will situate our research with regard to the neoliberal project and the role of people, place and values in this project. We will then present the LL as a socio-territorial mode of action and as a research method to introduce how people, place and values are expressed in the living lab process. Finally, we will open up the discussion on the LL as a locus of alternative economy.

2 THE LIVING LAB AS A MODEL OF SOCIO-TERRITORIAL ACTION

A Living Lab (LL), also called Open Innovation Lab (Rochman & al., 2017) or a Collective Innovation Lab (Janin & Pecqueur, 2017) is, according to Schuurman (2015), a platform of choices for integrating goals and methodologies of open innovation and user-centred innovation. Open innovation (Chesbrough, 2006) implies opening the boundaries of the organization and collaboration between stakeholders to innovate more effectively.

User innovation (Von Hippel, in Schuurman et al., 2015) focuses on the predominant role of the user in the innovation process. It is an innovative method that promotes interactions between research, design, manufacturing and use (Janin & Pecqueur, 2017).

An LL is built on an open innovation ecosystem bringing together public and private stakeholders, knowledge institutions (academia) and users. The ecosystem of open innovation created must maximize the diversity of stakeholders and multiply and combine projects (Guimont & al., 2017).

It is a mode of structuring interactions to facilitate co-creation in real-life contexts by providing a safe space of innovation that allows users, along with other stakeholders, to exert a real influence on innovation projects, from the conception to deployment (Bergvall-Kåreborn & Ståhlbröst 2009; Westerlund & Leminen, 2011).

Some LL involve users as private discreet economic agent, where market agility is the main goal to the open innovation processes and stimulate growth and development for individual economic performance. Those LL are broadly within a Chesbrough (2006) open innovation paradigm based on the firm and its performance.

On the other hand, LL can be collective social innovation processes that focuses on territorial or thematic issues, technological innovation (Larios et al. 2016), and increasingly, on social innovation (Franz, 2015, Dezuanni et al., 2017, Lopez C., 2014). Indeed, as Lopez C. (2014) state it, it is a process that engage stakeholders beyond economic imperative to includes social and environmental dimension of local development while negotiating with larger scales.

The two LL here are framed through collective actions and collective resources. The LL device that are address in this paper are based on the assumptions that place and its tourism assets like landscape, seasons, local know-how and ambiance, are first non-market common.

The aim of those two LL, right from the design phase, is to have local stakeholders work for the emergence of those commons through collective

dialogue. The dimensions of dialogue, co-creation and participation inherent to the territory and to social innovation are consistent with the opening of the innovation process at the heart of the LL approach, an approach considered by many to be part of the new processes of socio-territorial innovation (Guimont & Lapointe 2016, Rochman & al., 2017).

Social innovation is a multidimensional concept that has been defined by several disciplinary fields. It provides a new way to meet needs that vary according to the societies or the communities involved. It introduces changes in social relations and governance to meet these needs and to improve the participation of excluded groups in decision-making, and increases access to resources (Hillier et al., 2004).

Social innovation is also characterized by the fact that it involves and is sustained by the users and the organizations responsible for its implementation (Fontan, 1998); this is consistent with the principles of open innovation at the base of the LL.

3 NARRATIVES OF TWO LIVING LABS

In this action research the LL is the main organizing principle and fieldwork can be considered as its laboratory whereas users and other stakeholders are considered as co-researchers and co-designers. This methodology is ideally suited for conducting joint research, experimentation, evaluation and validation activities in an open innovation context (Guzman & al., 2008).

Moreover, the tourism context lends itself well as a laboratory to an iterative approach of action research because the cycle between the high season and the low season allows for a cycle of activity reflection (Thulemark & Hauge, 2014).

In the last 3 years, two research actions in tourism using the LL device were initiated and conducted by a team of facilitator-researchers from LLio Cégep de Rivière-du-Loup and the Department of Urban and Tourism Studies (DEUT), UQAM.

The first, the co-creation of a technology-enhanced experience through an LL process, was intended, as the name implies, to explore the integration of technology in the enrichment of tourism experiences, both as an attraction and for a destination as a whole. The destination in question is the region of Rivière-du-Loup, Quebec, Canada. This project concluded with co-creation involving tourists and local stakeholders using a mobile application for the destination.

Beyond the achievement of this initial objective of the LL project, the process allowed for the prototyping and deployment of two other technological devices in the regional museum, the implementation of a

collaborative approach for the consolidation of a cluster and a documented increase in open and collaborative innovation practices among some of the participants (Lapointe & al. 2015a; Guimont & Lapointe, 2016).

The second project—Coastal tourism, climate change adaptation and social innovation: living lab as socio-territorial model of action—aims to prototype innovative solutions for adaptation to climate change in a coastal tourist area. This project, also taking place in the Rivière-du-Loup region (but stakeholders from neighbouring regions are also welcome to take part), is currently underway. The descriptions and preliminary conclusions presented in this text relate to the first year of this two-year project.

The two LL projects involve private stakeholders (destination management organizations (DMO) stakeholders, managers and employees of tourism company's members of the DMO), public stakeholders (municipal stakeholders in rural development, or in culture) and stakeholders in research and teaching institutions (researchers/facilitators, computer teachers and students) in an open innovation ecosystem.

In both cases, users are involved: tourism stakeholders, tourists and residents. What differentiates the two LL ecosystems is the presence of private technological developers in the first and the addition of stakeholders from advocacy groups and environmental consultation in the second. They were first invited on the base that they were willing to work collectively.

Second, because they are interacting with institutions having agency within local and regional policy design. Some of them because they are private owner or public land manager in the coastal zones. Others were invited because they are already involved in other collective and social initiative, for exemple non-profit heritage organisation, integrated management of watershed areas; and finally, some because they are basically users of the space and resources either as visitor or as citizen.

Although no one was formally excluded, the invitation was targeting people as citizen, user, expert but not as representative, elected or not, of formal political institution or corporate leaders. In short, they were a sum of individuals searching for common answers to common problems and not, the sum of political and corporate interest looking to protect and expand their assets in the face of those problems.

4 OUR LIVING LABS AS A RESEARCH AND INNOVATION APPROACH AND METHOD

An LL is an innovation and research process conducted with the principle of *action research in a living lab setting*. On the action side, both LL projects

relied on an adaptation of the FormIT approach (Bergvall-Kåreborn & Ståhlbröst, 2009). The role of the lead researcher was to oversee the process, prepare co-creation workshops, and facilitate co-creation both *in situ* and online.

User feedback was captured (iteratively) and sometimes led to modifications/alterations. There were multiple possibilities for feedback and evaluation by users: before, during and after activities; during workshops; and during field testing. In an LL project, we must aim for meaningful involvement and create a safe space for innovation and influence for all users at all stages.

With regard to research, we conducted action research to document the iterative co-creation process, the increase in collaborative innovation skills and the change in participant representation (for tourism technology and climate change adaptation). The data collection to make this documentation of each case was based on:

- In the technological LL: two rounds of Delphi forecasting (10 respondents/6 respondents), interviews (15 respondents), and a project journal (2 years, 7 meetings with participants and on the field observations);
- In the climate change LL: a project journal (first year, 3 meetings with participants), participant questionnaires, experimental lab in the field (3 days) involving park users (residents and visitors) and stakeholders, and participatory online mapmaking.

The analysis of all the data generated through this different methods were conducted with a Rhythmic conception of knowledge (Deleuze & Guattari, 1980). The rhythmic conception of knowledge implies to consider heterogeneous data as being relevant and related.

All those different data can be entered by any point, going towards any point to create sense and knowledge, therefore creating space for different combination and narratives through the analysis. The data was analyzed through narrative exercised (Freeman, 2017) by the research team.

In this analysis, each member of the team creates a narrative with the data to tell and explain what happened in the different workshops, processes and exchange in the living lab.

Once these narratives are built, they are shared between the research team to create a main narrative. If needed, some participants of the living lab can be solicited to give inputs, or even their own narrative. In the actual research presented here, the narratives were summoned under three common themes: people, place and values.

4.1 Living Labs and Tourism

Through LLs, “tourist service providers will obtain insight to what tourists actually want and will have an opportunity to improve and develop new services targeted to different customer segments” (Pucihar & al., 2014 : 259). Such insight (from the LL) could not only enable the identification of new markets, but also spur innovation, development and product improvement (Buhalis & Amaranggana, 2013) through more frequent stakeholder interactions and partnerships.

Interactions between users (tourists) and providers of technology and tourist services are key catalysts for innovation (Hjalager, 2002), allowing LLs to potentially increase collaboration opportunities through a common platform where stakeholders can share, discuss, assess and design various solutions (Lenart & al., 2014).

In addition, LLs have the potential to become innovation facilitators (Schuurman & al., 2013, Lapointe & Guimont, 2015) and thus create what DMOs are struggling to build (Hjalager, 2002; Mcphee, Guimont et Lapointe, 2016) : an environment that promotes the type of cooperation that results in meaningful innovation (Najda-Janoszka, 2013).

This cooperation is built through empathy moments in the innovation process. Instead of using abstract statistical market segmentation to address tourism development, the technological LL allowed us to create a dialogue between participants and potential tourists. This dialogue transformed the latter into a partner in the process instead of relegating them to a strictly consumer role. In the climate change LL, tourists are not directly involved.

Nevertheless, the participants create representations of tourists as co-users of different spaces and consider needs they might have, like public access to the shore and beaches. In this process, tourists are not instrumentalized as strict consumer figures or as competing users of space and place. They are co-users to be included in the adaptation processes.

4.2 Living Labs and Place

An LL is not only an innovation process (Bergvall-Kåreborn & Ståhlbröst, 2009). It is also a physical space, a place where innovation happens, and a territorial development tool (Lafontaine & Gallant, 2013). LLs often use a place—which may be rural (Schaffers & al., 2008), regional (Santoro & Conte, 2009) or urban (Veeckman & Graaf, 2014)—as a focus for development or innovation.

However, few researchers focus on the place as a field for open innovation, although some authors have

defined scales of concertation and intervention (Franz & al., 2015, Bergvall-Kåreborn & al., 2015, Doyon & al., 2015; Guimont & Lapointe, 2016).

In a paper demonstrating the transferability of the LL approach as a model of socio-territorial (rather than strictly technological) action, Franz & al. (2015 : 54) argue that “living labs have the potential to be an instrument for the active inclusion of citizens in urban research projects investigating socio-spatial questions.” They use the term “space of encounter” to describe the space where citizens converge naturally, and where the LL is moved to take this natural tendency into account.

On their part, Bergvall-Kåreborn & al. (2015) examine the concepts of place and space for living lab interventions. They focus on the guiding principles of LLs: openness, realism, influence, value, and sustainability (Bergvall-Kåreborn & Ståhlbröst, 2009). Three of these principles are influenced by the scale of intervention: openness (to share knowledge and welcome new participants), realism (real-life contexts), and influence (contexts to engage, co-create and decide).

In our two projects, the place-based dimension of the LL is expressed in two distinct forms: first in the construction of the place of encounter and second, by expressing a sense of vulnerability in space. In a neoliberal perspective places are competing for tourists. They are trying to attract them to consume in one place instead of somewhere else.

Our LL process has created the opposite effect. Indeed, the LL is a space of encounter: physically, in the open space where we work with participants; virtually, through technology; and geographically, on the shore for field activities. It is also a space of discursive reimagination of space as an archipelago of place distinction within a larger place-based consciousness.

The following three examples show that alternative consciousness in action. First, when the technological LL was working on how and what to discover in the area, people were guided by a concern for selecting sites and attractions for their qualities and interactive possibilities for tourists, instead of working from a catalogue perspective based on who pays how much as a member of the local DMO.

Another example that underscores the importance of place in the process is in the spin-off project on l'Île Verte (Green Island). In this side project an island community and its neighbouring land-based community decided to try to innovate to get to know each other better, work together and link their tourism activities. The work was done not as a market or potential niche analysis, but as a mutual discovery and

quest for common use, representation and values in space and place.

Lastly, the climate change LL provided an occasion to reflect on place and place-making in a site on the verge of major physical transformation. Nature, particularly the shoreline, in the Lower St. Lawrence River is exploited as a central tourism resource for regional development. But environmental degradation due to rising water temperatures and/or erosion is particularly problematic and threatens this resource. Besides natural areas, LL participants also identified built areas as places vulnerable to climate change.

They investigated the ways in which climate change could affect some coastal facilities such as piers, beaches, parks or walks. They were also concerned about flood-proofing residential areas. They identified the risks faced by residents and they also insisted on the strong link between these residents and place, a link that makes moving away particularly difficult.

4.3 The two LLs as Environments for Human Interaction

An LL project can be characterized as an environment that creates an open innovation ecosystem and involves users at all stages of the process, (Veeckman & al. 2013). In these two tourism LLs, the real context is also a space of encounter that takes three forms: co-creation workshops at the LLio Lab, online interactions, and workshops or field observations that happen directly in "tourism places."

The two LL projects involve a core group of 15 to 20 user-participants who have participated in co-creation workshops over a two-year period. In both cases, end users are also involved, but in different ways. In the first project, a group of tourists interacted online with the participant-creators. In the second case, tourists and residents were involved in a field workshop in the first year and will be challenged more significantly according to the specific LL projects that will be launched in year 2.

Most users are already familiar with the use of LLs, but an LL is also an opportunity to integrate new actors into each ecosystem. In the first case, digital players integrate into the tourism ecosystem (where private, municipal and community tourism stakeholders are already involved), which is interested in tourism promotion and experiences.

In the second case, we see a rapprochement between that same tourism ecosystem and spatial planning and environmental fields (actors in urban planning and development and actors from environmental groups).

Both approaches are open to participation and to the circulation of ideas. Indeed, on the "participation" side, the composition of the co-creation groups evolved with the departure of a few stakeholders and the arrival of new ones during the process.

On the intellectual property side, these approaches are more territorial collaborative laboratories. The problems identified and the solutions generated and prototyped are deliberately shared and disseminated in order to facilitate the management of potential spin-offs from any participant.

4.4 Living Lab as a Forum to Negotiate Values

The exchanges with the participants of the LL revealed what values they project on their place. Indeed, this knowledge of the environment makes it possible to target the priorities and understand the site's sensitivities and specific stakes.

At the different stages of the technological and the climate change LLs, participants highlighted the different uses of the river and coastline to be taken into account in adaptation processes. Apart from tourism and housing, agriculture emerged several times as a sector that exploits space.

On several occasions, especially during the workshops, participants insisted on the opening of new access points to the river. In the technological LL, the importance of the shore as a locally valued area and how to structure access to shore of the St. Lawrence River was a common theme.

Question abouts access (for whom? for what?) were often raised. There was genuine concern regarding the increase of access to the shore for local residents as well as for tourists and the access points was one of the attractions integrated into the discovery app developed in the technological LL.

The values attached to free public access to the shore led to the creation of a separate working group to document and evaluate all of the access points, the infrastructure in place and any eventual barriers to accessibility. This subgroup also stimulated the creation of the local climate change LL.

The participants' reflections on adaptation to climate change did not attach much importance to the exchange value of the coast. While they identified the lack of funds as one of the main obstacles to adaptation, LL participants have paid very little attention to the question of land rent (whether it is captured by tourism stakeholders or individual landowners).

In the barrier to innovation workshops and also in the scenario workshop, we inferred that participants were referring to the exchange value of the coastline when they mentioned the need for financial programs

to support the displacement of potential victims of climate change.

The LL process has enabled us to understand that the relationship of residents to the river and place exceeds values of use or exchange. During the workshops, we noted that participants tended to personify the St. Lawrence River.

This very strong link is an old construction, as one of the participants in the workshops pointed out: "Historically, the first nations peoples as well as the first settlers settled along the St. Lawrence. It's natural for us, but it does not prevent things from changing, and the risks are not the same".

The fact that people still inhabit the coast is a legacy that is complicated to leave behind. Again, the same participant stated that, "there is a definite appeal to living very, very close to the water and experiencing all of these moments so close to such beautiful nature."

This highly symbolic value also guided the visual, design and the selection of sites in the application developed by the technological LL. There was also discussion on how to use the application to link that highly symbolic value of the river to inland attraction and sites of values to participants.

In the processes of both LLs, values of collaboration and cooperation were exposed by participants. In the technological LL they created a consistent experience for tourists not as clients, but as visitors interacting with the local community.

It also stressed the importance of collaboration so as not to unnecessarily duplicate costly technological tools in a context of scarce economic resources. The analysis of the technological choices and options for participants were instrumental in exposing the importance of collaboration in the fact that they were to facilitate links between services and sites, in the form of thematic circuits, and that they didn't include personal data analysis functions for their marketing needs.

There was a genuine sensitivity with regard to not invading the private life of the application users. This approach was grounded in the thought that tourists in time off work shouldn't be overly solicited by technology that is more or less related to work.

In the climate change LL, cooperation and collaboration was stressed after a clear consensus that most individual initiatives to adapt to climate change are limited. Indeed, all participants stated that they saw individual hard engineering approaches as a short-term solutions to erosion issues that would not be efficient in the long run.

A sense of despair and abandonment surrounding national public policies was also expressed by participants, who are looking for

cooperation and a more place based local adaptation models from public institutions.

Ontologically, the living lab doesn't offer a counter-capitalist structure, but framed within a social collective action, it does offer a hybrid point of innovation that goes beyond classical market dynamics. The traditional economic development discourse on innovation is structured around Schumpeter's idea of innovation rent. In tourism, it is centred around competitive destination management discourse (Crouch & Ritchie, 1999).

It both discourses we are faced with the dominant neoliberal view of development and economics, one that is market driven, competitive, and efficiency-oriented. The only value this view places on social use and place is the extent to which they can create positive economic rent in the market.

When structured around social issues, the LL user-centred approach opens the door to broaden the scope of what motivates innovation. The forum created for participants to interact is not constructed around a client/supplier dynamic or a governance structure. It is a forum that is owned by the group and evolves with the collective.

The goals of those interactions are not to find a WIN/win situation of neoliberal governance, but to construct collective representations of issues and solutions that acknowledge differences, power relations and agency.

Returning to Healy's arguments (2009), the narratives created by the two LL processes support the fact that many alternative economies exist within neoliberal capitalism and that it is important to not define them according to or against neoliberalism, but within their own contexts.

Indeed, the two LLs discussed in this article were not designed and framed as counter-capitalistic initiatives. They were designed by a community of tourism stakeholders searching for different ideas, solutions and actions to face transformations triggered by neoliberalism that have an impact on their activities, both economic and social. Ready-made market solutions were not seen fit within their local contexts.

The ownership of the innovation results is kept collective for the use of the participant and also mobilized by non-profit stakeholders to transform their understanding of the issues, technological integration and climate change, and their actions as place-based collective stakeholders. Those organisation like the DMO, the regional park, two heritage protection organisations and the watershed area management used part of the knowledge produce through the LL but also integrated in their work culture some of the collective collaboration processes deployed in the LL. Therefore, the main social innovations of the two LLs

sprung from putting participants in a cognitive mindset where multiple participants in collective innovation processes in a safe space became a part of the solution, instead of competing place and knowledge users.

5 CONCLUDING REMARKS

Framing innovation via people and use value within an open innovation ecosystem does not automatically guarantee embeddedness in an alternative economy mode. Therefore, not all LLs can be considered alternative economic initiatives. There are many technologically-centred LLs where users are mainly involved in accelerating time to market and decreasing the risk of trial and error innovation processes in a transformation of consumers as producers embedded in the products as a value creation factor (Thrift, 2008).

Although one of our LLs is technology-centred, the fact that it operates within the structure of tourism activity in a peripheral area makes for it easier to orient its technology around the local social values and collective uses instead of market-based solutions aimed at creating profits for designers. In part, the small size of the local market where the LLs are based motivated the search for different innovation processes.

Finally, LLs can offer a forum to discuss and innovate outside of the profit paradigm, thus incorporating complex value systems that go beyond exchange value. Non-market amenities are perceived as common and economy is reconciled with society through social innovation in what Fontan (1998) call a neo-polanyian perspective. However, our research has major limitations. It is conducted in a very particular social and geographical context that may impact aspects of the results, therefore making them hard to generalize.

Second, the tourism sector is a very marginal sector within the international LL community, which is mostly based on informational technology. The marginality of our tourism focused LL means that there are very few research results available for comparison.

Thirdly, the narratives presented recount the short term (two-year) and ongoing processes, they generate large amounts of heterogeneous contextualized data. This last limitation justified the use of a narrative perspective to present the data, but a larger analysis of those data after a longer sequence of activities within the two LLs will offer a more detailed and robust perspective.

This paper focused on the people, place and values involved and interacting in a territorial LL. Although we mentioned that the process is collective in his way of pooling people, resources, knowledge and

ideas in the creation of commons, we didn't explore in this paper the underlying premises and involvement of working with commons, especially immaterial commons. This call for more research on the LL, open innovation and common as tool and process to build alternative economy.

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