

[DOI: 10.20472/IAC.2018.935.016](https://doi.org/10.20472/IAC.2018.935.016)

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SOCIAL INNOVATION: THE CASE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Abstract:

Social problems arise when communities are identified that do not have access to the labor market, public services, access to housing, drinking water, electrical solutions or other needs specific to their environment. During the last decades, the need to do things differently has increased, either by reversing climate change, creating more inclusive societies or reducing poverty. Therefore, both the public and private sectors consider Social Innovation as a tool that allows generating innovative solutions to problems such as poverty reduction and the improvement of the living conditions of the population. In response to these challenges, Social Innovation has become a relevant topic of research for the research community, academics, politicians, networks, funds and government institutions that have focused their policies specifically on the support and promotion of these innovations aimed at the generation and implementation of new ideas to solve challenges in communities within social systems. For the case of Higher Education, it is particularly interesting, given that these institutions not only have the purpose of transmitting knowledge, but also create economic and social value through the transfer of their teaching and research results to the community. During the last decades, given the international declarations on Higher Education of UNESCO (1998 - 2009), the awareness of the universities has increased with respect to their responsibility to put at the service of the whole community their knowledge and resources. Likewise, they must assume the challenge of articulating knowledge with society to generate the conditions that the world of the 21st century really demands. Exposed the above, social innovation has ceased to be an alternative to become a priority in the agenda of foundations, organizations and companies and of course Universities as engines of economic and social development.

Keywords:

Social Innovation, Higher Education and Knowledge transfer

JEL Classification: I23