

Unpacking value creation and value capture in collaborative networks for sustainability

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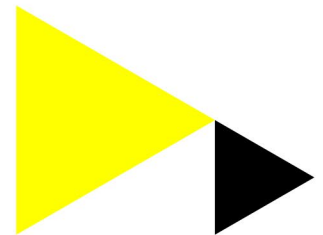
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Unpacking value creation and value capture in collaborative networks for sustainability

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We view value creation and value capture in collaborative networks from a relational perspective (Dyer, Singh & Hesterly, 2018; Guidic, Reinmoeller & Ravasi, 2018). Collaborative networks that focus on innovative solutions for grand societal challenges are characterized by a multiplicity and diversity of actors that increase the complexity and coordination costs of collective action (Ferraro, Etzion, & Gehman, 2015). These types of inter-organizational arrangements have underlying tensions as the partners cooperate to create collective value and compete to capture or appropriate value on a private or organizational level (DiVito, van Wijk & Wakkee, 2020). Our study addresses how orchestrators facilitate relational value creation and value capture in collaborative networks in a context of sustainability, where the flow of potential and actual value among actors is highly diffused and uncertain.

We conduct a multiple-case, in-depth field study of four collaborative networks in the Dutch textile industry. Our data collection is ongoing and draws on engaged scholarship (Van de Ven, 2007). Our data consists of 33 regular, semi-structured interviews with network orchestrators and participants, observation of 22 meetings, participation in 10 events, and archival documentation. All interviews were recorded and transcribed. We coded the interview transcripts, archival documentation and our field notes; discoveries and insights that emerged from the field were reflected and incorporated into the coding scheme.

Initial observations of our data indicate that collective value creation is an elusive process. Orchestrators facilitate actions and engagements that stimulate collective value creation of collaborative outcomes but were less likely to manage and explicate the relational value of the collaborative network. We also observe that network participants capture value differentially, often citing the pro-social (e.g. community, belonging, importance) and extrinsic benefits of

learning and reputation as valuable, but found it difficult to appropriate rents from that value. Differential and asymmetric value appropriation among participants threatens continued network engagement and the potential collective value creation of collaborative networks. Our data indicates that networked value creation and capture requires maintaining resource complementarity and interdependency among network participants as the network evolves. We develop a framework to assess the relational value of collaborative networks. Our study contributes to literature by unpacking the complexities of networked value creation (Chesbrough, Lettl & Ritter, 2018) and to the practice of network orchestration by elucidating the strategic management of value creation and value capture in collaborative networks for sustainability.

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