

## GENERAL PUBLIC DESCRIPTION

Since the 1980s, economics has increasingly used assumptions and research methods typical of other social sciences, including, for example, sociology or psychology. The opening of economics to other disciplines has also resulted in new areas of research in this science, including New Economic Sociology (NES), based on the achievements of both sociologists and economists. The foundation of NES is the concept of social embeddedness developed by Marek Granovetter. This author acknowledged that economic goals are most often accompanied by non-economic goals related to a given social context. In his opinion, all economic activities are embedded in a network of social relations (interpersonal/personal) of individuals undertaking them. From what kind of person an actor knows or what reputation he has in the local environment depends on what economic decisions he makes. This implies that any analysis of market decisions and activities that is conducted in isolation from the social relations of persons undertaking them is incomplete and somehow erroneous.

Previous research results using the concept of social embeddedness are still fragmentary and ambiguous. First of all, they focus only on selected aspects of embeddedness (e.g. trust, knowledge of a partner, sources of private acquaintances, etc.). Secondly, there is no clear conclusion about the kind – positive or negative – of the impact of social embeddedness on interorganizational cooperation, as well as organizational innovativeness.

For these reasons, research on the significance of social relations, as well as the identification of their sources (e.g. familiarity from previous jobs, belonging to joint organizations/clubs, family ties) and elements (e.g. trust, personal sympathy towards a partner) seem particularly interesting among actors from the so-called creative sectors. In these sectors, organizational innovativeness is a prerequisite for functioning. On the other hand, this innovativeness can be achieved due to inter-organizational cooperation, based on social relations of business owners, managers and employees. However, both in Polish and foreign literature, no such research has been carried out so far in a comprehensive manner (by identifying both sources and components of social relations, as well as their positive and negative effects), using quantitative and qualitative methods, and from cross-sector perspective, enabling comparisons of various sectors of the economy. The rationale behind the project is also the inconsistent and insufficient conceptualization and operationalization of the social embeddedness of actors. In addition, the literature does not indicate so far what is the impact of social relations on cooperation, undertaken in various forms, i.e.: formalized, quasi-formalized, informal. This will also be the subject of research in this project.

Therefore, **the aim of the project** is to determine the significance of social relations for organizational innovativeness, achieved through inter-organizational cooperation (but also independently of it) in selected creative sectors (tourism, computer and video games, performing arts, local cultural institutions – museums).

Referring to the methodical contribution of the project, it should be emphasized that the identification of current knowledge about social embeddedness indicates that research on this issue requires taking into account, on a wider scale, not only economics, but also elements such as culture, psychology and sociology. This in turn forces the use of an interdisciplinary approach, and a combination of qualitative and quantitative analysis. This is the approach proposed in the project. Empirical research will be carried out in three stages. Qualitative research will be carried out in stages I and II. In stage I, there will be 40 individual semi-structured direct interviews using the interview scenario (10 interviewees from each of the 4 creative sectors). In Phase II, focus interviews are planned – 4 focus meetings, each with 6 representatives from one of the 4 sectors examined, and one focus for representatives of all 4 sectors together (in total five interviews). As part of stage III, quantitative research (surveys) will be conducted to determine whether and how (positively/negatively) social relations affect the inter-organizational cooperation and organizational innovativeness – both perceived multidimensionally and in the cross-section of its individual dimensions. Research at this stage will be carried out using the online survey (Computer-Assisted Web Interview – CAWI) and computer-assisted telephone interview (CATI). The minimum research sample will amount to 100-150 entities per sector, i. e. a total of 400-600 respondents. The modeling of structural equations will be also used in the research process.