The term "intelligence" is nowadays used not only to name a characteristic of individuals. Equally often, we can speak of "collective intelligence" (hereafter: CI) when we reflect on *groups of individuals doing things collectively that seem intelligent* (definition from: Malone et al. 2009). Collective intelligence satisfying all requirements in this definition has existed for a very long time and is (to a varying degree) a characteristic of nearly all communities. Collective intelligence is a sphere where the collective creates possible solutions to its problems and evaluates them; assimilates, groups, explains and compares knowledge and ideas, and finally – collectively makes decisions. The primary characteristic of a collective showing high CI level is its capability for solving problems whose difficulty exceeds individual capacity. If there is no collective cooperation in a social structure, this structure has limited capability for solving a certain pool of problems: each person seeks solutions independently, and thus, there is neither positive nor negative interaction. Collective intelligence, however, manifests itself when cooperation, competition or mutual observation gives rise to totally new solutions to the problems that the community faces or leads to an increase in the ability to solve complex problems.

The main objective of the project is a critical review of the CI research methods used to date aimed at examining their suitability for application in the public sphere, and then: a practical analysis of selected Polish and foreign initiatives showing CI characteristics implemented on the internet and dealing with public sphere issues; an experiment involving software ("CI Laboratory") aimed at studying the behaviour of volunteers recruited for the project who will deal with public issues; finally: a theoretical reflection on the civic participation model observed in the studied and potentially feasible initiatives. The project will allow both the suitability of the interdisciplinary research apparatus that has been used to study CI to date, mainly in the USA (but also partially in Lithuania) through its confrontation with a strictly defined thematic area (public issues) and a socio-political organism), where such research has not been conducted so far (the vast majority of initiatives that will be studied under this project will concern communities and debates in Poland). In Poland, the research aimed at systematic research on collective intelligence in the public sphere has never been carried out so far, so the conclusions from the observation of the Polish experience with CI might enrich the overall knowledge of the topic. This project will be the first one in the world to seek methods for systematically studying CI from the perspective of political science and public policy studies; the research to date has dealt with the subject from the perspective of management and entrepreneurial science, computer science, or sociology of the Internet. Furthermore, an original (and previously absent) project objective is not only the description of the currently existing phenomena but also a theoretical reflection aimed at creating an outline of a feasible model of the public sphere that will make it a space of actual civic participation, and articulation and confrontation of various political views will take the form of an organised public debate. In the research carried out so far has not been done this, what is the feature of this project, i.e. the observed CI community users activities have not been connected to theoretical models of civic participation taking into account the hitherto achievements of political science.

The applicant identifies the actual social demand for innovation with reference to the state of the public sphere: mainly in Poland, but also in other countries. Traditionally understood public sphere, defined as the area of political discourse and exchange of views, is currently undergoing clearly visible erosion. This is happening not only in Poland, but in our country this problem becomes particularly pronounced: low level of civic participation and poor quality of social capital has become a real social problem.

The identification of a new type of civic participation related to CI leads to a structural transformation of the political system, redefining the role of the citizen in the state, and possible reforms of state institutions. The applicant proposes the first study, in which the observed activities of the CI community, and the activities simulated during the experiment, will be described from the political science position, i.e. taking into account their dissemination in society and analyzing their impact on principles of civic participation. This type of research faces social problems, which will certainly be more and more important in the near future.