

## Experimental projects in the special circumstances of the COVID-19 era

Saku J. Mäkinen,<sup>1\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup>CERN Switzerland/Tampere University, Industrial Management, Finland

\*Corresponding author: [saku.makinen@tuni.fi](mailto:saku.makinen@tuni.fi)

This editorial marks the end of fourth year in the history of the CERN IdeaSquare Journal of Experimental Innovation (CIJ).

The collection of articles in this issue highlights the special circumstances of empirical experimental projects during the global COVID-19-related restrictions. All the manuscripts report initial parts of experimental innovation projects looking at their respective problem areas from a distance. These initial investigations are vital for empirical experimentations as they pave the way for investigators mind set, directions of thought and project-team visions.

Segantini et al. consider road safety and especially the post-crash situational management in order to decrease human casualties and unnecessary suffering. The technological solution suggested has impactful view on multiple beneficiaries and suggestions start interesting views on managing road crashes in highways.

Ricci et al. also investigate mobility issues, as their investigation deals with the transport sector and with decreasing its GHG emission levels. They look at what incentives might do to the mobility related behaviours and find that indeed incentives could be used to guide users towards more sustainable mobility solutions.

Bilardo et al. consider the obstacles in a way of Community Energy (CE), a group of Prosumers producing and consuming energy. They also consider incentives that Prosumers would have on forming CEs. Lack of knowledge on benefits of CE is one hindering aspect and also the complexity of energy production/consumption system is hindering spread of CE and prosumerism.

Angelini et al. investigate cultural tourism with a case from Southern Italy. They find great commitment, and local community level benefits from build-up of stakeholder co-creation type of involvement. Furthermore, their work shows something that pre-COVID-19 era cultural tourism could achieve. Now, the question remains, how does this tourism and cultural tourism, continue in post-COVID-19 era? Does the cultural tourism indeed hold more promise as travellers' reasons for traveling are changing? Interesting avenues for future research indeed.

Crapolicchio et al. find that hotel decision-makers have economic and complexity barriers in making

energy efficiency investments. They further touch upon the complexity of the issues, especially from the respondents point-of-view, as they find no statistical significance between earnings impact of energy consumption and energy efficiency investments. This, indeed, is intriguing paving way for new avenues of future research.

All these contributions show that although experimental and empirical innovation projects suffer greatly from the lack of direct contact to users, stakeholders and the like, these barriers can be overcome with clever designs in research. These restricted circumstances also create new windows of opportunity for various differing online-based experiments and innovations. As we have seen much can be done online without physical, direct contacts like tele-medicine, distance education, online webinars and conferences etc. Though, we are just starting to ask; how are these online, distanced opportunities fruitfully utilized in experimental innovation and elsewhere?