



# Open innovation governance mechanisms for fieldlabs

SOME PRELIMINARY FINDINGS FROM A CASE

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Consortium meeting, Enschede, April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024

# *What entail **open innovation governance mechanisms** in a fieldlab?*

The set of **formal and informal rules and practices** to manage the exchange of knowledge and resources among organizations to jointly create and capture value through collaborative experimentation.

Examples of both formal and informal mechanisms include collaboration agreements and rules to use a fieldlab.

## ***My research question:***

*How do open innovation governance mechanisms influence the creation of economic and social value through collaborative experimentation?*

# *The case*

- **Fieldlab:** specifically centered around exploring and advancing 5G technologies.
- **Project:** focused on testing on an audio-hearing device utilizing 5G technology.
- **Data:**
  - **Interviews:** We conducted interviews with a project manager of a fieldlab and a CEO of a company testing an innovation.
  - **Documents:** Collaboration agreements, business and project plans
- **Methods:** Inductive qualitative analysis

**Key challenges**

**Governance mechanisms**

Project's technical requirements



Fieldlab's technical features

*"We were sort of the guinea pigs [...] and there was nothing to measure because there was no network".*

***Key challenges***

***Governance mechanisms***

Pr *“If latency wasn't low enough,  
then there was no point in the go”.*

- Determining ‘go’ or ‘no-go’ of projects

**Key challenges****Governance mechanisms**

Project's technical requirements



Fieldlab's technical features

- Determining 'go' or 'no-go' of projects

Profit



Non-profit

*"We were contacted with [a fieldlab within a company], and it was a sort of strangulation"*

**Key challenges****Governance mechanisms**

Project's technical requirements  Fieldlab's technical features

*"We see a collaboration with this Fieldlab as an opportunity to carry out practical tests without pressure from commercial parties".*


- Determining 'go' or 'no-go' of projects
- Establishing a 'neutral' organizational structure



**Key challenges****Governance mechanisms**

Project's technical requirements  Fieldlab's technical features

Profit  Non-profit

Partners' knowledge contribution  Project's knowledge required inputs

- Determining 'go' or 'no-go' of projects
- Establishing a 'neutral' organizational structure

*"So, the usual discussion is 'I don't want to pay that knowledge'".*

**Key challenges****Governance mechanisms**

Project's technical requirements  Fieldlab's technical features

Profit  Non-profit


- Determining 'go' or 'no-go' of projects
- Establishing a 'neutral' organizational structure
- Establishing contractual agreements to determine how knowledge is exchanged

*"The consortium parties are each responsible for recording the IP regarding background knowledge".*

**Key challenges****Governance mechanisms**

Project's technical requirements  Fieldlab's technical features


Profit  Non-profit

Partners' knowledge contribution  Project's knowledge required inputs

- Determining 'go' or 'no-go' of projects
- Establishing a 'neutral' organizational structure
- Establishing contractual agreements to determine how knowledge is exchanged

**Key challenges**

**Governance mechanisms**

Willingness to collaborate  Collaboration conflicts

*A competitor [...] of us are also using the same facilities[...]And then I was asked to open our data (for them) and then I decided not to.*

*“A party can have different roles, for example, [...] as a User by testing and developing your own equipment. And users can also participate in Project consortia”.*

### ***Governance mechanisms***

- Establishing fair and transparent rules for using experimental spaces

**Key challenges****Governance mechanisms**


Willingness to collaborate

*“When you have deviation in your project, budget-wise, technical-wise or scope-wise, that’s something you discuss in the steering group”.*

- Establishing fair and transparent rules for using experimental spaces
- Facilitating reflection and learning from experiments

**Key challenges**

Willingness to collaborate  Collaboration conflicts

Sharing knowledge, data and IP  Protecting knowledge, data and IP

**Governance mechanisms**

- Establishing fair and transparent rules for using experimental spaces
- Facilitating reflection and learning from experiments

*"It's not complete open data to me, there are things that I want to keep myself."*

**Key challenges**

Willingness to collaborate  Collaboration conflicts

**Governance mechanisms**


- Establishing fair and transparent rules for using experimental spaces
- Facilitating reflection and learning from experiments
- Establishing contracts for unexpected exchanges of knowledge, data and IP

*"The IP is always from the company, but when it's getting really big[...], there's always an extra contract for that".*



***Key challenges******Governance mechanisms***

Willingness to collaborate  Collaboration conflicts

Sharing knowledge, data and IP  Protecting knowledge, data and IP

- Establishing fair and transparent rules for using experimental spaces
- Facilitating reflection and learning from experiments
- Establishing contracts for unexpected exchanges of knowledge, data and IP

***Key challenges***

***Governance mechanisms***

Updating current infrastructure



Setting up new infrastructure

*The trends and developments in ICT are moving (too) fast and can influence the pre-planned activities in the project..."*

**Key challenges**

*“The ICT infrastructure and test facilities must be maintained up to date after the end of the project so that existing and new project partners remain involved”.*

**Governance mechanisms**

- Ensuring the sustainability of fieldlabs

**Key challenges****Governance mechanisms**

Updating current  Setting up new  
in

*“We primarily aim to further develop our solution with 5G-enabled reduced latency, thereby unlocking significant potential in applications”.*

- Ensuring the sustainability of fieldlabs
- Upscaling innovations

**Key challenges****Governance mechanisms**

Updating current  
infrastructure



Setting up new  
infrastructure

- Ensuring the sustainability of fieldlabs
- Upscaling innovations

Hiding the “jewels  
o the crown’



Disclosing project’s  
results

*We were not happy to have a  
publication with lots of results [...] we kept it very tiny and concise, not giving any clue where the issue was.*

**Key challenges****Governance mechanisms**

Updating current  
infrastructure



Setting up new  
infrastructure

- Ensuring the sustainability of fieldlabs

- Upscaling innovations

Hi

*“The subsidy provider always has basic requirements [...] and one of those requirements is that the knowledge on the 5G subject be shared”.*



- Managing knowledge diffusion at the societal level

***Key challenges******Governance mechanisms***

Updating current  
infrastructure



Setting up new  
infrastructure

- Ensuring the sustainability of fieldlabs
- Upscaling innovations

Hiding the “jewels  
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Disclosing project’s  
results

- Managing knowledge diffusion at the societal level



***Are you involved in a mission-driven innovation project?***

*If so, I would love to learn more about your project!*

*Here's how you can participate:*

- *Interview with key project participants.*
- *Access to essential documents, such as collaboration agreements and project plans.*
- *Visit to your fieldlab.*

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