

Abstract

Open innovation, a term coined by Henry Chesbrough in 2003, has impacted the business and academic worlds in recent years. Companies have implemented their own open innovation initiatives. Likewise, there are open innovation services provided for third parties, which offer organizations the possibility to participate in an open innovation setting without having all the knowhow and networking capabilities in-house. For facilitating the integration of open innovation services for third parties in practice, there are still gaps regarding i) governance, ii) fairness and rules in open innovation settings, and iii) motivating problem solvers to participate in such initiatives. Based on Yin's (1997; 2018) methodological works this study uses a multiple case study design. The two cases studies are i) Industry meets Makers and ii) the Co-Creation Lab Vienna. The results show that there are various ways of practically implementing such open innovation services. Industry meets Makers is an innovation community for particularly hobbyists and makers as problem solvers, while the Co-Creation Lab Vienna is an innovation contest targeting especially innovative SMEs and research organizations as problem solvers. These differences impact the form of governance, how fairness is ensured, and the motivational factors. There is no general superiority of any open innovation practice, such that choosing a suitable approach depends on goals, target groups, context, resources, capabilities, networks and problems. It is essential for practitioners to evaluate those aspects in order to select the most appropriate approach.