



IRS SEMINAR

Richard Lang stays at IRS from
16 until 20 April 2018.

During his stay he is part of the
department "Dynamics of Communication,
Knowledge and Spatial Development".

Richard Lang

**Johannes Kepler University Linz,
Institute for Innovation Management, Austria**

Richard Lang is Assistant Professor at the Institute for Innovation Management (IFI) at Johannes Kepler University Linz (JKU) in Austria. He is also an external associate member of the Housing and Communities Research Group (HCRG) and the Centre on Household Assets and Savings Management (CHASM) at University of Birmingham, UK. From January 2015 to March 2018, he held a Marie Curie Fellowship and a Post-doc Fellowship of the Austrian Academy of Sciences researching the governance capacity of collaborative housing models in Europe. Previously, Richard was a Senior Researcher at the Research Institute for Co-operation and Co-operatives and Assistant Professor at the Institute for Small Business Management and Entrepreneurship at WU Vienna University of Economics and Business. He conducted his PhD studies at WU Vienna and KU Leuven in Belgium and was a William Plowden Research Fellow at the Third Sector Research Centre (TSRC) at University of Birmingham, UK.

Richard's research interests include social enterprises in urban and regional development, social innovation and social capital, as well as collaborative and cooperative housing. He has carried out and coordinated several research and knowledge transfer projects in these fields over the last few years. Richard has also published several contributions to peer-reviewed journals, such as *Journal of Rural Studies*, *Voluntas*, *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, *European Planning Studies*, *International Small Business Journal* and the *International Journal of Housing Policy*. In 2012, he co-authored a book on community-based entrepreneurship and rural development in the *Regional Studies' 'Regions and Cities' Series* published by Routledge.



IRS SEMINAR

Wednesday, 18 April 2018
14:00–15:30, Room 402
Leibniz Institute for Research
on Society and Space
Flakenstraße 29–31, 15537 Erkner

Richard Lang

Rural Social Entrepreneurship: The Role of Social Capital Within and Across Institutional Levels

Recent entrepreneurship literature has highlighted the innovative and problem-solving capacity of social entrepreneurs as promising new actors who tackle the socioeconomic problems of structurally weak rural regions and induce sustainable change. This seminar develops a more nuanced and multilevel understanding of the social network arena in which the rural social entrepreneur operates. A conceptual framework for systematic investigation of rural social entrepreneurship is introduced which combines insights from social capital theory and place-based entrepreneurship literature. Applying this framework in case studies from innovative social enterprises in rural Central Greece and rural western Ireland suggests that this multi-level perspective can offer valuable insights into the still under-researched interplay between rural social entrepreneurs and their institutional environment. A key insight from the analysis refers to the dialectic of horizontal and vertical networking strategies typical of rural social entrepreneurs and their business model. The results inform researchers active at the intersection of social entrepreneurship and rural development and equips them for their future studies with a consistent and empirically supported theoretical and methodological approach.

A respective paper has just been accepted for publication:
Lang, Richard and Fink, Matthias (2018) Rural social entrepreneurship:
The role of social capital within and across institutional levels. *Journal of Rural Studies*