

IPW LECTURES

The Emergence of Civic Enterprise: Bottom-Up Social Innovation and the Possibilities for Democratic Renewal in the Administrative State

Lecturer: **Hendrik Wagenaar**
(Paul Lazarsfeld Guest Professorship)

Chair: Ulrich Brand
(IPW, University of Vienna)

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Seminarraum 1 (A228), 2. Stock NIG
Universitätsstraße 7, A-1010 Vienna

Abstract:

Over the last two decades Civic Enterprises (CEs) have emerged in virtually every European country addressing a wide range of social needs, such as work integration, child care, adult care, urban renewal, community development, social welfare delivery, and sustainable energy. Civic enterprises may become sites of innovation and experimentation with new forms of organisation, financing and governance. Based on fieldwork in the Netherlands, I describe how citizens navigate the political-administrative environment in which their civic enterprise operates and how they position themselves within and against that environment. In the second part of my presentation I address the key question to what extent these bottom-up citizen initiatives are able to scale up to more enduring, institutionalized democratic innovation. Alternatively I interpret them as a form of social innovation, as a counter-institution within a radical democratic framework, and as hybrid forms of governance within a culture of administrative democratisation.