

Foresight, Social Innovation, and Entrepreneurship: Some Issues for Education

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ABSTRACT

Our exploration of the intersections between foresight, innovation and entrepreneurship has consistently raised issues with respect to education. This paper outlines one such exploration that poses specific challenges for those wanting to educate in the intertwined fields of foresight, social innovation and entrepreneurship.

The formation of a social venture relies, in part, upon the participants reaching a shared understanding of purpose and process. Yet, at the intersections of innovation and foresight, there exists circumstances of great complexity and uncertainty and therefore it raises the question: how can shared insight and understanding be created? If the response to complexity and uncertainty is to seek simplicity and order by finding commonality and consensus, then what is lost and what is risked? Can shared understandings of purpose and process be arrived at by embracing complexity and uncertainty in its entirety rather than striving for a distilled and incomplete common ground and if so how? These questions led us to explore the process of dialogue and communication of a team in its formative stages. Our interests were not centred upon the behavioural characteristics of the individuals in the 'forming' stage of group dynamics but rather the process of cognitive and linguistic turns, the wax and wane of ideas, and the formation of insight and shared meaning.