

Schools of Thought in the Field of Social Entrepreneurship

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Abstract : Social entrepreneurship is a new and exciting topic that holds a great promise in helping alleviate the social problems of the world. As a new subject, the meaning of the term is too broad and this is counterproductive in trying to build understanding around the concept. The purpose of this study is to identify and compare the elements of social entrepreneurship as defined by seven international organizations leading social entrepreneurship projects: Ashoka Foundation, Skoll Foundation, Schwab Foundation and Yunus Center; as well as from three other institutions fostering social entrepreneurship: Global Social Benefit Institute, BRAC University, and Socialab. The study used document analysis from Skoll Foundation, Schwab Foundation, Yunus Center and Ashoka Foundation; and open ended interview to experts from the Global Social Benefit Institute at Santa Clara University in United States, BRAC University from Bangladesh, and Socialab from Argentina. The study identified three clearly differentiated schools of thought, based on their views on revenue, scalability, replicability and geographic location. While this study is by no means exhaustive, it provides an indication of the patterns of ideas fostered by important players in the field. By clearly identifying the similarities and differences in the concept of social entrepreneurship, research and practitioners are better equipped to build on the subject, and to promote more adequate and accurate social policies to foster the development of social entrepreneurship.

Keywords : replicability, revenue, scalability, schools of thought, social entrepreneurship

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