DOCTORAL CANDIDATE: Dimitra Chasanidou  
DEGREE: Philosophiae Doctor  
FACULTY: Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences  
DEPARTMENT: Department of Informatics  
AREA OF EXPERTISE: Design of Information Systems  
SUPERVISORS: Amela Karahasanovic, Arne-Jørgen Berre  
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DISSERTATION TITLE: *User participation in innovation platforms: empirical studies and a tool to design for motivation*

User participation in company's innovation processes is an efficient way for companies to receive customer feedback and it is associated with value for customer-company relationship and for company's innovation. Innovation platforms host web-based user participation in firms' innovation processes and show a positive effect on service innovation practices, while increasing the competitive advantage of firms.

The aim of this thesis is to explore the user participation in firm-initiated innovation platforms, in order to reach a better understanding of how companies can benefit from the adoption of innovation platforms. This thesis employs a multidisciplinary view in innovation platforms, where empirical studies in the field of service innovation, human-computer interaction and design-thinking, discuss how the user participation is supported in the design of innovation platforms, with platform characteristics, motivation factors and design tools. Four case studies with business partners and two evaluation studies supported this thesis to build on the role and characteristics of innovation platforms in companies, why and how users interact and contribute to innovation platforms, and how tools support the design of motivational systems. The thesis findings advance the knowledge in innovation platforms and its use in companies, making three contributions. First, the innovation platforms are underscored as tools that can be used in service innovation processes while their role is much broader than an idea gathering tool for the fuzzy front-end of innovation. Second, user participation in innovation platforms involves motivation factors and trust, many interaction and contribution types with varied quality of contribution, as well as ethical issues. Third, design for enhancing user participation and motivation in such platforms can be achieved by using structured and artefact-based tools that support the early design phases, in multidisciplinary teams.