Breakout Session #4
How to measure success in city regions

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Measuring

- Consider diverse social contexts
- Empirically Complex project (with three themes)
  - We are explanatorily modest and prescriptively modest
  - There are things that we may just not be able to answer

What have we done to date?

- We have been making up our own
  - Don't have a common dependent variable? Nothing reduces cleanly to a behaviorally driven outcome…
  - Need to identify a common outcome related to innovation
  - What are we trying to explain?

Economic Development Trajectory

- Suggestion…
  - Economic development trajectory is the variable (dependent)
    - Three streams
  - Normative
    - Those city regions that are more socially dynamic are also likely to have a more successful economic development trajectories

Economic Development Trajectory

- Define "Successful economic trajectory"
  - May be different for different city regions
  - "success" implies all or nothing
    - Can we develop a typological / continuum / classifications? (similar problem that occurred with defining clusters)

Datasets

- Can't think of datasets as a static set
  - We can stratify them
  - We CAN compare… especially amongst those regions that have similar industrial foci
- Distinguish structural factors from local factors
  - Account for Spatial distribution/geographic
  - THEN add in endogenous factors…

What is success?

- The system may indeed be operating as it should, but the "success" outcomes may not be there (i.e. firms not doing well, job loss, not generating wealth, etc.)
- This would suggest that we need other indicators

Indicators

- May have an overarching indicator… but perhaps they need to customize indicators within each of the themes

- Traditional indicators within innovation studies do not work well

- Good indicator = measure of observable changes in knowledge flows

Operationalizing Variables

- IDEA:
  - Independent variable = social dynamics (?)
  - Intermediary variables = themes
  - Dependent variable = economic development trajectory

Means and Ends

- City-regions have different "ends"… therefore the "means" to reach those goals will be "different"…
  - Means could be different = indicators could be different

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