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## **Co-creating technologies: A Dangerous Trend**

Various experts have called for more inclusion of the public and other societal stakeholders in innovation. Inclusion of the public is deemed especially necessary in innovation challenges like the improvement of cities, the sustainable energy transition and others that touch public and private spaces. The trend of co-creating technologies together with different stakeholders is a response to this. While co-creation may offer many solutions, I argue that this trend runs the risk of worsening one specific problem in innovation.

**Involving more parties** The problem of many hands emerges when a collective can reasonably be held responsible for something, but no individual within that collective reasonably can. Three features of co-creation make it more vulnerable to this problem. Firstly, co-creation means involving a multitude of parties in innovation, meaning that individual responsibility becomes more difficult to determine. Secondly, in practice this is often done by partners in flexible roles and through loose partnerships. This makes institutional responsibility also difficult to determine. Thirdly, living lab-style iterative testing of innovations, as is done in some co-creation projects, blurs the agency and responsibilities of the inventor and the test subject.

One solution to this would be to establish clear responsibility structures. A possible consequence of this is bureaucratization and the erosion of spontaneous creative processes. Another solution would be to promote responsibility as virtue. This solution, however has the drawback that it may place an unfair burden on smaller collaborating parties.