



**Dr. Daniela Schmitz**



**Prof. Dr. Daniel Zöbeli**

## Workshop 1

### Social firms highlighted from a business perspective

Not least their hybrid character makes social firms interesting also from a business perspective. Their double objective – work integration plus at the same time producing marketable goods and services – proves to be a particularly tough nut to crack. On the one hand, they are exposed to market-based mechanisms and have to meet market requirements (e.g. order situation, cost pressure, deadline constraints). On the other hand, they have a public performance mandate, which is associated with in part extensive claims to co-determination made by assigning authorities, with endless reporting and other administrative duties.

However, the economic model of social firms has lately also come under criticism, particularly as regards their financing. For example, the luxurious endowment of the so-called “social industry” with public funds has been criticised. The bulk of public funds is said to go into administration instead of supporting clients, the actual profiteers being the social firms themselves in the end.

The “social firm” type of organisation has so far been insufficiently taken into account. Based on the findings of the INSOCH research project and other scientific studies, the Swiss social firms are systematically characterised for the first time, also describing their business functioning in addition to their integrative functioning. The workshop provides a general overview of the business circumstances as well as a detailed insight into the financing structures of selected Swiss social firms.

### About

**Daniela Schmitz**, PhD in Economics, is scientific project manager at the Institute of Management and Innovation (Institut für Management and Innovation, IMI) of the Swiss Distance University of Applied Sciences (FFHS) in Regensdorf. She is concerned with various issues from the field of national and international accounting, non-profit organisations, public private partnerships, auditing and corporate governance. She is a member of the INSOCH research project and of other social firm studies.

**Daniel Zöbeli**, Prof. Dr. rer. pol., graduate Economics teacher, is head of the Institute of Management and Innovation (Institut für Management and Innovation, IMI) of the Swiss Distance University of Applied Sciences (FFHS) in Regensdorf. His work focuses on issues regarding the accounting and finance of non-profit organisations (NPO) and of state-subsidised institutions. He is a member of the INSOCH research project and of other social firm studies.