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Patrons are widely recognized to be instrumental in the nourishment of creative endeavors like art, music, etc. But the role of a patron and the phenomenon of patronage have never been explored in the context of technology. Many individuals enthusiastic about technology demonstrate interest in non-profit supporting technology research and development through donations, crowdfunding, etc., and thus significantly impact the emergent technologies ecosystem. For instance, individuals have donated approximately 0.8 billion USD as funding for 40 thousand technology projects on just a single reward-based crowdfunding platform Kickstarter. Even with such a large scale of growing technology patronage activities in the world, there is hardly any research on them. To study these behaviors should, therefore, be a significant contribution to the research on human-

based crowdfunding of technologies. We describe four key research motivations for exploring this new field of non-profit supporting of technology: a) economic and innovation impact, b) opportunity to shift academic discourse (from consumer to non-consumer roles, technophobia to technophilia, profit to non-profit), c) practical implications for start-ups, developers and platforms, and d) an uncharted territory, in terms of roles, concepts, theories, etc. Based on an extensive analysis of past literature (Ch.2) we present several fundamental gaps, using which we identify four key research objectives: 1) define the role of a technology patron, 2) build a theoretical foundation for the patronage domain, 3) highlight the importance of technology in patronage, and 4) investigate creation of patrons from consumers. We further develop precise research questions to address these objectives, which are each tackled separately in the four different chapters (Ch.3 to Ch.6).

In the first of the core chapters (Ch.3), we begin with a review and classification of all existing techno-centric roles studied in recent Information Systems literature (limited to MISQ and ISR journals) to understand the landscape of technology roles. We define

We also create a more parameterized definition in terms of member, support, and return (intrinsic and extrinsic) to fit it within the landscape and clearly differentiate with other similar roles like technology investor. In the next chapter (Ch.4), we attempt modelling the phenomenon of technology patronage using the key human and non-human actors and their inter-relationships. We use the research methodology of Actor-Network Theory to this end. We first identify all the key actors

(patron, beneficiary, technology, platform, community, portfolio, and environment), then propose elementary actor-networks at the micro and macro levels of the phenomenon, and finally combine them into an integrated descriptive model named as the

. In Ch.5 we apply