Reviewer's report

Title: Bridges, brokers and boundary spanners in collaborative networks: a systematic review

Version: 1 Date: 26 December 2012

Reviewer: Anna Prenestini

Reviewer's report:

The paper is well written and the topic is very interesting. The methods are appropriate and very well described: the authors followed the PRISMA guidelines (2009).

There are few minor revisions which can be addressed fairly quickly.

1. The discussion section is focused on “the value of brokerage” and “the costs of brokerage”. In this section the authors discuss few other papers in addiction to the 24 articles coming from the systematic review. However, one of these further studies should be excluded from this section because it is strictly coherent with the exclusion criteria of the systematic review (Borgatti, reference n° 14, pag. 14): terrorist or criminal networks. Why did you present the results of this paper?

2. Pag. 10, “knowledge brokerage” section. The reference n° 36 in the text could be uncorrect: i) the reference n° 36 is Rangachari (2010), but this paper is not included in the 24 articles of the systematic review, so it shouldn’t be discussed in this section; ii) Rangachari (2008) is the n° 48 in the references section and the n° 46 in the table 4. The authors are requested to control each reference.

3. It might be very interesting that the authors briefly propose a roadmap for future studies in the conclusions.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests