
CAROLINA RIUS



Serving the Public Good Through Social Business

India has the highest incidence of tuberculosis in the world, according to the World Health Organisation. A group of European scientists hoping to help eradicate the disease has been developing a new preventative drug for TB. But their vision can only become reality if they can distribute it widely and affordably to those who need it. The challenge is to serve the public good, but also to provide returns for the investors who fund their research.

Carolina Rius, Executive Master of Public Management graduate 2014, is helping the scientist Pere-Joan Cardon devise a business model that will achieve both goals for the company developing his TB drug. A self-described social entrepreneur, Rius's strong suit is bringing together business partners and stakeholders through a trade consultancy she founded in India in 2007.

Rius aims to support innovative companies that serve the public welfare, often in places where basic human needs are lacking. These new and evolving types of enterprises also require a sustainable business model. Serving two goals – being profitable enough to stay afloat, but also making sure that the lion's share of profits goes toward serving social needs—can be a difficult balancing act.

Cardon's company, MANREMYC, needed someone

who understood that those goals are not mutually exclusive. "When I met the lead scientist, he wasn't familiar with the term 'social business,'" says Rius. "All of the board members were highly committed to their goal of eradicating TB, but hadn't thought much about how to achieve it."

Because of this, they had developed a business model focused on a small portion of the population that could afford a highly expensive drug, but who were at a decreased risk of contracting the disease.

Rius says governance knowledge has been central to helping structure the project.

"I help them find the stakeholders who are funding TB projects, see if this type of product would work for them, ask for suggestions on implementation, find agencies, NGOs and donors," she says. "If we are able to govern well then this universe of stakeholders can be the key to achieving their vision."

Carolina Rius is the CEO of inQuve Business Development, based in India. She studied international trade and development economics at the Universidad Pompeu Fabra in Spain, the London School of Economics and University College, Dublin, before completing an EMPPM at the Hertie School.