

Interview - Creativity for Recovery from Crisis

Arrow, K.

1. How you define inventivity and creativity?

Inventivity is the ability to make new connections among the different aspects of the world. Most such perceptions are wrong; therefore, they must be subject to rigorous criticism, by the author and by others, to insure their compatibility with what we can all observe and with the principles of logical coherence.

2. What were the inventivity and creativity triggers in the case of your contribution for which you were awarded a Nobel Prize?

Like all such events, there are two conditions: the previous knowledge on which to draw and the particular question asked. In my case, I was asked to explain to non-economists what was the meaning of a value to a collectivity (e.g., a nation). I had background in economic theory and in logic which caused me to formulate the

question in a way that admitted of an unexpected analytic conclusion.

3. How to induce inventivity and creativity among young people, especially in small countries, like in Montenegro or Serbia?

A necessary condition for creativity is access to a wide and diverse basis of knowledge. For any country, even the largest, this means that it must reach out to the whole world. For example, our scientific journals are open to scholars from all nations. A small country will have less diversity and therefore more need to reach out to the world. I therefore think it important that the best students be sent to larger countries for advanced study. When these students return and serve as the next generation of academics and research engineers, they will bring more knowledge and higher standards.

About the Author

Kenneth Joseph Arrow (born August 23, 1921) is an American economist and joint winner of the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economics with John Hicks in 1972. To date, he is the youngest person to have received this award, at 51. In economics, he is considered an important figure in post-World War II neo-classical economic theory. Many of his former graduate students have gone on to win the Nobel Memorial Prize themselves. Ken Arrow's impact on the economics profession has been tremendous. For more than fifty years he has been one of the most influential of all practicing economists. His most significant works are his contributions to social choice theory, notably "Arrow's impossibility theorem", and his work on general equilibrium analysis. He has also provided foundational work in many other areas of economics, including endogenous growth theory and the economics of information.