

International Transdisciplinarity Conference 2019

Joining Forces for Change

Integrating communities, universities, cities and research for societal transformation

Gothenburg, 10-13 September 2019

Co-organised by the Network for Transdisciplinary Research, Mistra Urban Futures and Gothenburg University

Our societies are facing critical points in their development, where large challenges are becoming increasingly difficult to handle. Numerous conflicts and complexities are surfacing – to which we can see societies responding with fragmentation, intolerance and exclusion. One way to address such developments is through societal transformation processes that implicitly include a variety of interest groups, stakeholders and organisations. **Transdisciplinary (TD) research** is one approach that focuses specifically on co-producing and integrating knowledge and expertise from a variety of sources, including communities, research, cities and businesses. It is an approach that is driven by the need to create processes where values and transformations towards a more just and sustainable society are openly debated.

The aim of this conference, *Joining Forces for Change*, is to bring together actors from different professional mandates, disciplines and sectors to engage and discuss practical examples and case studies that approach societal transformation through boundary breaking collaboration. The conference invites practitioners and researchers from government and administrative organisations and agencies, interest groups from community and business, and researchers and students from across the university. The overall focus is on what we can learn from our collaborative experiences, case studies and practices regarding *wider societal transformation, methodological innovations and theoretical development*. We will specifically search for “sites for change” in terms of spaces, practices and learnings where TD research and co-production play a crucial role.

Since the first international TD conference we organised 11 years ago, the field has developed considerably. It has expanded into a number of areas such as urban development, health, pedagogy, indigenous studies, natural resource management, art, etc. It has also attracted researchers from a variety of related approaches, for example action research, participatory social science and sustainability science. An additional goal of this conference is therefore to bring together this growing body of practitioners and researchers who are working in different types of collaborative research and change processes, to gauge the state of the art in both research and practice from across sectors and disciplines, and to create an international forum where diverse groups can exchange experiences and learn from each other.

Call for contributions

We invite contributions from all fields and research cultures. We particularly welcome submissions from practitioners and from transdisciplinary teams. Please indicate how your submission aligns with the following streams, questions and formats. Choose one primary stream and indicate one or more key questions relevant to your contribution. Please feel free to add additional questions that contribute to the streams.

Important dates

Deadline for abstract submission: 24 March 2019

Notice of acceptance: mid-May 2019

Streams:

Societal transformation

- What experiences in initiating and fostering transformation processes do we have and what can we learn from them?
- How can different theories of change contribute to sustainable transformations?
- What forms of organising are needed for our institutions, agencies, companies and universities to handle the necessary transformations, with particular reference to collaboration between different types of stakeholders?
- What skills and competences are needed by civil servants, researchers and students to co-design and lead processes that target sustainable outcomes?

Methodological innovation

- What does individual and organisational learning in change processes – working on, challenging and transgressing borders – look like?
- How can universities promote collaborative learning?
- How can different types of transdisciplinary pedagogies, research methods and processes of co-production be developed to more effectively contribute to societal transformations?

Theoretical development

- How can we imagine and conceptualise a sustainable and inclusive knowledge economy?
- What are the core challenges in transdisciplinary research regarding ontological and epistemological issues – what worldviews and paradigms are challenged and what kind of knowledge is included and produced?
- How does TD research engage with systems thinking, scenario planning, design thinking and other holistic theories and practices?

Formats for contributions:

Session

Sessions will be 90 minutes long. To propose a session, provide a title and a short description of the content and the session design (maximum 1200 words, see abstract template below). Sessions can be organised in a variety of formats: with presentations, panel discussions, as impulse talks or discussion formats. We encourage to integrate contributors from different backgrounds and to consider innovative formats

Presentation

Presentations will be 15 minutes long. Presentations will occur in the sessions of 90 minutes. Each session will group three to four presentations with 5–10 minutes for discussion. Provide a title and an abstract (maximum of 600 words, see abstract template below). We encourage presentations from both practitioners and scientists, individually or jointly.

Poster or installation

Posters and installations will be on exhibit during the entire course of the ITD 2019 and presented in “speed talks”. Provide a title and an abstract (maximum of 600 words, see abstract template below). For installations, please contact the conference office to check the feasibility.

Workshop

Activities of joint thinking and acting can form the basis of workshops of 90 or 180 minutes. The format is entirely open. The only limitation is that workshops should not exceed 30 minutes of presentation, and the participants should have an active role. To propose a workshop, provide a title and an outline of the content and the workshop design (maximum 1200 words, see abstract template below). Do not hesitate to contact us if you would like to collaborate with us in developing workshops.

Training workshop

If you want to offer a training workshop, propose either a 90-minutes or a 180-minutes workshop on a particular method, tool, approach or topic. Training workshops will be held Tuesday the 10th of September, 2019. To propose a training workshop, provide a title, learning goals and an outline of the content and the workshop design (maximum 1200 words, see abstract template below). Do not hesitate to contact us if you would like to collaborate with us in developing training workshops.

Network event

For establishing and consolidating existing and new networks on transdisciplinarity. Please contact the ITD 2019 office directly.

Open Stage

During the conference there will be opportunities to open the stage for interventions, performances, presentations, and exhibitions that go beyond the spoken word. Such contributions may need special locations for exhibitions and performances, please contact the ITD 2019 office concerning requirements for these activities.

Abstract template

(the abstract submission and handling system will open early February 2019)

Title

Contributors

Corresponding Author, Institution, Country, Contributor #2, Institution, Country, Contributor #N, Institution, Country

Keywords

List three to five keywords.

Abstract

Plain text only (for technical reasons, tables and figures cannot be included). Avoid using jargon and acronyms. Consider including the following information in the abstract, when relevant: scientific and societal problem and goals, research process and methods (with focus on co-production), summary of findings, ways towards impact

Additionally, for sessions, workshops and training workshops: description of the session/workshop design

Additionally, for training workshops: learning goal(s)

1–3 key readings (optional)