



ART & SUSTAINABILITY SCIENCE WORKSHOP

Realising Potentials: Arts-based Sustainability Science

Barcelona, 3-4th Nov 2016

Institut d'Estudis Catalans

Why?

How can the arts push conceptual and methodological boundaries in sustainability science? How can we bring the aesthetics into sustainability research and transformations and vice versa?

What relations, critical approaches, institutional transformations would it require?

This is an open invitation to restless artists and sustainability scientists and practitioners, interested in gaining insight into the synergies between the arts and sustainability science, both in discourse and practice. In recent years more and more arts-science hybrid experiences are emerging, contributing to the creation of 'blurred genres' in the academia, which seek to co-produce accessible and meaningful research with and for a diversity of audiences beyond academic peers (Cahnmann-Taylor 2008), enhancing transdisciplinary dialogues at the academic-society-policy interface. Artistic outputs are increasingly used for science outreach and scientific questions and results are also frequent inspiration for artistic experiences. Furthermore, the hybridization between arts and sustainability is also inspiring beyond this two paths and particularly promising to a) inspire societal transformation towards social-ecological sustainability, b) foster "out of the box" thinking

and c) inform methodological challenges posed by transformative and learning implications, through the development of innovative, transdisciplinary approaches. The potentials and possible contributions of the arts to sustainability science have been repeatedly highlighted, especially in areas related to action research, transdisciplinarity and learning (Bendor et al. 2015, Fernández-Giménez 2015, Scheffer et al. 2015, Heras and Tàbara 2014, Kagan and Kirchberg 2008). However, cross-cutting knowledge about the potential outcomes, challenges and limitations of such experiences is largely lacking. As researchers and artists involved in societal transformations towards social-ecological sustainability we believe that a key way forward lies in the nourishment of a community of practice and learning, able to cross-pollinate, push disciplinary boundaries and construct more nuanced and critical understandings about how art and sustainability science approaches intersect and enrich each other.

What?

Realising Potentials: Arts-based sustainability science is a two-day workshop conceived as an experiential site for exploration and dialogue around arts-based sustainability science.

Two main motivations guide the workshop:

1. To open up an experiential space where artists and scientists can share, connect and expand different experiences, projects and discussions in the field of arts-based sustainability research.

A space to experience others' approaches, to play, to be surprised... A space to explore together, pushing our boundaries, acting/thinking out of the box.

2. To catalyse a network of Arts-based Sustainability Science as a community of learning, practice and mutual support.

A network expanding in time the sharing of the workshop and connecting different actors working in the field, so as to allow us to critically approach and expand different practices, collaborate together, and face different challenges as they emerge.

When and where?

The workshop will be held in Barcelona (Spain), in November 3rd-4th, 2016 at the Institute of Catalan Studies (Institut d'Estudis Catalans, IEC).

How?

During the workshop, participants will engage in different experiential laboratories and discussions to share, collectively explore and critically inquire different experiences of arts-science hybridation -both from artists and researchers, methodological boundaries and challenges as sustainability researchers and practitioners, and the potentials of bringing together the arts and the aesthetics and sustainability science.

Who?

This workshop is coordinated by a group of sustainability scientists and practitioners who have experimented with a variety of arts-based approaches and it is open to both artists and researchers interested in this intersection.

Participants are invited to share art and research projects directly developed within collaborations among artists and scientists, dealing with one of the thematic areas in question. Understanding the four pillars of sustainability - environmental, social, cultural and economic - proposals should embed the interactions between social and natural sciences and the arts as insightful ways to generate new understandings and relationships, make people aware of the importance of a balanced relationship between human beings and the environment, in its diverse levels, and trying to encourage people to realize potentials as agents of social-ecological transformations.

Are you a researcher or artist working in any of these thematic areas?

- **ECOLOGICAL FUNCTIONS AND PROCESSES/NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT:** natural scientists and/or artists who may portray the current state and alert on trends of ecological systems through interacting with artistic practices

- **SOCIAL-ECOLOGICAL INTERACTIONS:** social and natural science research approaches which may interconnect biophysical, institutional, political, socio-economic and cultural dimensions of sustainability
- **ECOLOGICAL AND JUSTICE CONFLICTS:** research approaches which reflect through arts on questions of justice and equity in the access, control, use and management of natural resources.
- **PARTICIPATION, SOCIAL LEARNING AND CITIZENS' ENGAGEMENT:** arts-based research projects or socially-based art research projects concerned to social engagement with any community or group and encouraging participation of a diverse audience around sustainability issues in the present and the future.



Do you engage in any of these practices?

We expect to receive research involving experimental artistic practices from a wide spectrum:

- **PERFORMING ARTS:** dance, theatre, performance and happenings, music, stand-up comedy...
- **VISUAL AND PLASTIC ARTS:** painting, film and video, photography, drawings and illustrations, sculpture, installations...
- **LITERARY ARTS AND NARRATIVE:** poetry, storytelling, creative writing...



If your answer is yes, we invite you to participate and contribute to the workshop, in any of the following kinds of participation:

- **Proposing a laboratory:** have you already explored arts and sustainability science intersection in some way you believe might be of interest to others? If so, you are invited to present a proposal for a 1-3 hours laboratory. Please see guidelines for proposals.
- **Presenting a communication of previous work:** We invite you to share in a novel format your previous experiences in arts-based science for sustainability. Such experiences may be presented as a short chat (Pecha Kucha) or as an artistic work (performance, exposition, etc.).
- **Attending and participating in the workshop.**

Please, see guidelines for proposals.

Guidelines for proposals

The workshop will engage a maximum of 40 participants.

If you are interested in participating, please fill the submission form, specifying the kind of participation preferred.

If you are submitting a lab proposal or an oral communication, please send the abstract (500 words max.) to the email address specified in the submission form. The title of the email should indicate the kind of participation you are proposing (Laboratory, Short Talk or Artistic Work). The email should include as well a short bio of the applicant (500 words max.).

Deadline for proposals is July 31st, 2016.

Fees and funding

The workshop is free for all participants. It just has a symbolic registration fee of 30 euros (lab facilitators excluded).

Due to funding constraints, interested participants are strongly encouraged to look for funding to cover their expenses. Although at the moment we cannot offer any economic support, we are currently looking for funding to provide partial support to laboratory and

activity facilitators that need it. If that is your case, you can indicate it in the application form, in the “Remarks” section.

If you or your organization might be willing to collaborate funding the workshop, of course we are more than grateful. Please let us now as soon as possible! This offer might contribute to others being able to attend.

For further information or requests, you can contact us by email at:

realizing.potentials.bcn@gmail.com

Workshop conveners:

- Federica Ravera (ICAAM, University of Evora, Portugal), Elisa Oteros Rozas (Universidad Pablo de Olavide, CEI CamBio), Maria Heras (ICTA, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona -UAB, Spain), Diego Galafassi (Stockholm Resilience Centre, Sweden), Isabel Ruiz Mallen (IN3, Universitat Oberta de Catalunya, Spain), Josep Maria Espelta (CREAF; Societat Catalana de Biologia, Spain), Ignazio Diaz (Universidad Austral de Chile, UACH).

Supporting institutions:

CEI CamBio - Universidad Pablo de Olavide, Hohenheim University, Societat Catalana de Biologia-IEC, Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC)

References:

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- Scheffer, M., J. Bascompte, T. K. Bjordam, S. R. Carpenter, L. B. Clarke, C. Folke, P. Marquet, N. Mazzeo, M. Meerhoff, O. Sala, and F. R. Westley. 2015. Dual thinking for scientists. *Ecology and Society* 20(2):3. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5751/ES-07434-200203>