

Online-Workshop on

Organising Interdependencies for a Degrowth Society

by [André Reichel](#) and [Robert Perey](#)

This workshop is an experiment addressing the following question:

How do you organise a web of interdependencies beyond the local to the global?

(Interdependencies include flows of material, energy, people, ideas, values that have to be sustained in the long-run.)

OVERVIEW

[Degrowth](#) narratives argue for a transformational change of current economic systems, their institutional regimes as well as their dominant mindsets. Key principles of these narratives include a sustainable [steady-state economy](#) instead of a steady economic expansion, degrees of (self-)sufficiency for people and communities, localisation and vernacular economies, [autonomy realised in interdependence](#), dematerialisation of lifestyles and economic flows, universal 'income' support, democratisation of economic processes, and change to the nature of work beyond the current confines of gainful employment for ourselves and/or gainful employment for others.

Within Degrowth narratives, there are tensions when it comes to interdependencies between local communities as well as between the local, regional, national and global levels. Following [Ivan Illich](#), autonomy can only be realised in interdependence with our human and non-human others, however the focus of Degrowth narratives is either on the local grassroots level explaining how to transform immediate life worlds through creating small-scale, self-sufficient economic cycles, or on an abstract macro-level arguing for a radical change to current global economic systems and institutions. The tension between local self-sufficiency and global transformation has yet to be resolved. While there is extensive research and activism on e.g. transition towns, community-supported agriculture and eco-villages, we hardly understand what Degrowth might mean for a new kind of World Trade Organisation or an International Monetary Fund or in fact any national or transnational institution. This has implications for undertaking the desired transformation of current economic systems, as the concrete first steps for this change have yet to emerge.

There is acknowledgement within the Degrowth field that some materials will need to come from elsewhere, that people and ideas have to be allowed to roam between different local systems, and that some form of multilateral, international and global cooperation is necessary in order not to fall into a reactionary and nationalist trap. The term '[glocal](#)' – a portmanteau of global and local – has been used as narrative device to frame and hopefully solve these tensions. It is said to come from the Japanese word dochakuka, which simply means global localization, originally referring to a way of adapting farming techniques to local conditions. At a 1997 conference on "Globalization and Indigenous Culture", sociologist Roland Robertson stated that glocalisation means the simultaneity – the co-presence – of both universalizing and particularizing tendencies.

The core ideas underpinning the terms glocal, glocalisation and glocality have to be adapted to our needs in the field of Degrowth and for the investigation of interdependencies. This also entails finding the proper terminology and phrases for these new forms of production and organisation of our lives. In order to create new realities beyond growth, we need a new vocabulary. With this workshop we want to start a conversation about the multiple scales beyond the polarity of local and global that organise and have organised societies both currently and historically. **How do you organise a web of interdependencies beyond the local to the global?**

SCHEDULE & FORMAT

Our workshop will consist of three parts, two hours each, spanning all time zones of the planet.

We will start our conversation on

FRI 26 MARCH 2021 with Part 1 (Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia)

at 09:00 CET (Berlin) / 19:00 AEDT (Sydney).

Zoom Registration Link for Part 1:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAudOGvqD8qG9SA5Not3Sf2BOgn4RIQleP9>

We continue our conversation

ON THE SAME DAY with Part 2 (Americas, Europe, Africa)

at 10:00 PST (Vancouver) / 13:00 EST (New York) / 19:00 CET (Berlin).

Zoom Registration Link for Part 2:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMrd--orzMuGNa7QlulkSgo7oDrN-vX5kzN>

And we finish our conversation in between **FRI 26 MARCH (PST)** and **SAT 27 MARCH (AEDT)** with **Part 3 (Americas, Australasia)**

at Fri 15:00 PST (Vancouver) / Fri 18:00 EST (New York) / Sat 10:00 AEDT (Sydney).

Zoom Registration Link for Part 3:

<https://utsmeet.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZwrDumhrTkqGNFbD8r8ttRu8GimKuUOHHL>

Literature and [additional sources](#) will be provided.

Important: For every time zone there is at least one convenient option to join, but you can of course participate in all three parts if you like. (Although it will mess up your sleep schedule...)

Preliminary schedule:

Part 1 (Fri 26 March, all times are CET)

09:00 Introduction

09:15 First Input by André Reichel (Germany)

09:30 Second Input by Robert Perey (Australia)

09:45 Breakout Session (max. 4 to 6 groups)

10:15 Reporting out of groups

10:30 Plenary reflection

11:00 Close

Part 2 (Fri 26 March, all times are CET)

19:00 Introduction

19:15 First Input by [Ana Maria Peredo](#) (Canada)

19:30 Memory Feedback of Part 1 by André Reichel (Germany)

19:45 Breakout Session (max. 4 to 6 groups)

20:15 Reporting out of groups

20:30 Plenary reflection

21:00 Close

Part 3 (Sat 27 March, all times are AEDT)

10:00 Introduction

10:15 First Input by [Anitra Nelson](#) (Australia)

10:30 Memory Feedback of Part 2 by Ana Maria Peredo (Canada)

10:45 Breakout Session (max. 4 to 6 groups)

11:15 Reporting out of groups

11:30 Plenary reflection

12:00 Close

BACKGROUND

Since 2011 critical perspectives on the paradigm of economic growth are being discussed at the [Academy of Management Annual Meetings](#) in the form of professional development workshops, caucuses and symposia dedicated to [Degrowth and Postgrowth](#). Degrowth, dating back to [Serge Latouche](#) and his “word grenade” of *décroissance*, is a political-economic concept for abandoning the fixation on economic growth as well as a battle cry for a contraction-based society – to think the unthinkable, a world beyond growth. Postgrowth is connected to Degrowth but is a broader term, entailing a multitude of concepts and approaches for what comes after the growth story. Among these approaches are the [steady state economy](#), [ecological economics](#), [beyond GDP](#) and many more. It is important to note that both Degrowth and Postgrowth are not just focused on ecological issues but on social and political renewal as well as a deep cultural change. Our intention as organization and management scholars, researchers and practitioners is to bring this discourse to the table of the Academy of Management and the wider world of organization and society science. We are planning to have two workshops per year from now on: one workshop within the framework (and annual conferences) of the Academy of Management in August, another (online) workshop in the first quarter of the year.

More information can be found at <https://degrowthaom.wordpress.com/>

CONTACT

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