MOOC

Partnering for Change: Link Research to Societal Challenges -

Discover the methods and tools of transdisciplinary research

Information for IGS participants

What is the course about?

In today’s world, we face many complex societal challenges. Research projects addressing these challenges often involve actors and stakeholders from different fields and disciplines bringing together their own perspectives or knowledge on a topic. Accordingly, collaborative transdisciplinary approaches are crucial for the success of a project.

On this course, you’ll explore how to meet the challenges of conducting effective transdisciplinary research. You’ll gain insights into a variety of case studies from different fields as you learn from the experiences of peers and experts. As the course is open for participants all over the world (not only IGS students), you will have the chance to exchange and learn with many other students, researchers, and practitioners.

The MOOC is divided into 6 weeks. Each week is dedicated to particular learning themes. These contain various activities (videos, articles, discussions, quiz) that you should complete within the week through self-study and exchange with other learners. You are free to choose the day and time where you go through the learning material. In addition, you will write an essay to apply the learnings to your PhD project.

Technical information

Course Start: 22. February, 2021

Course duration: 6 Weeks. From the date of the course start, you have 8 weeks free access to the course.

Estimated study time: 5 hours per week, plus 15 hours for writing an essay

ECTS: 1.5 points


Mentoring: The course will be mentored from 22. February to 30. April 2021

Responsible for IGS participants: Cornelia Hett

Submission of the Essay: latest 30. April, 2021 at cornelia.hett@unibe.ch
What topics will you cover?

- Research skills needed in order to produce relevant outcomes for society and academia
- Transdisciplinarity: principles, research processes, and application
- Guiding questions, phases, and steps in transdisciplinary projects
- Pitfalls and opportunities in transdisciplinary projects
- Ethical implications of co-production processes
- Examples of transdisciplinary projects on sustainable development, migration, and health topics

What will you achieve?

By the end of the course, you'll be able to...

- Develop your research skills as you investigate how to co-produce knowledge for society and academia.
- Reflect transdisciplinarity – its principles, its research processes and the context in which it is promising.
- Apply transdisciplinary approaches to societally relevant questions.
- Identify guiding questions, phases and steps of transdisciplinary project.
- Apply the principles and steps of transdisciplinary research to examples in order to reflect the implication for your own projects.
- Reflect the role of scientists and stakeholders in society and consider the ethical implications of co-producing processes.

What are the criteria for successfully passing the course?

- Completion of all course steps
- Active participation in the discussions (asking questions, sharing experiences, answering questions of peer learners)
- Active participation in an additional online discussion session of 2 hours among IGS participants on 9. April 2021 (exact time to be defined).
- Submission of a short essay (1,500 -2,000 words) addressing the following questions related to your PhD:
  - What is your PhD about (short summary)? What societal challenges do you want to tackle?
  - How can transdisciplinary approaches help you to tackle these challenges?
  - What kind of knowledge do you mainly develop in your PhD: systems, target, and/or transformation knowledge? Please specify.
  - What are your key stakeholders and how do you collaborate with them?
  - What might be promising pathways to impact for your PhD?
  - What are your personal three key learnings from this course?
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https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/partnering-for-change-link-research-to-societal-needs

WEEK 1: COMPLEX SOCIETAL CHALLENGES – A TOUGH NUT TO CRACK

Societal challenges and research
Discuss current societal challenges and get to know the educators.

1.1 SOCIETAL CHALLENGES – CHALLENGES FOR RESEARCH VIDEO (04:59)

1.2 SIMPLE, COMPLICATED, COMPLEX, WICKED ARTICLE

1.3 WHY TRANSDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH? VIDEO (04:42)

Setting the frame
Discuss your personal experiences and motivations to engage in TDR. Explore the features of this six-week course that combines theory and real-life cases in order to link existing knowledge with practice.

1.4 WHICH EXAMPLES COME TO YOUR MIND? DISCUSSION

1.5 HOW THIS COURSE WORKS ARTICLE

Cases – societal challenges addressed
Delve into the five cases that serve as real-life examples of transdisciplinary research during the whole course. Each of these cases is unique. They cover different topics in different regions of the world.

1.6 MAKING MIGRATION SAFER: WORKING ABROAD HAS RISKS VIDEO (03:55)

1.7 NOMAD HEALTH: HEALTHCARE FOR MOBILE PASTORALISTS VIDEO (04:30)

1.8 TACKLING WATER SCARCITY – PART 1: ADDRESSING THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE VIDEO (04:47)

1.9 ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE: A WICKED CHALLENGE. VIDEO (05:02)

1.10 COPING WITH DECLINE IN A SWISS MOUNTAIN VILLAGE VIDEO (05:20)

Reflecting on the week
Reflect what you have learnt about the characteristics of today's complex challenges. Assess which questions you should be able to answer at the end of Week 1.

1.11 WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT CHARACTERISTIC OF TODAY’S SOCIETAL CHALLENGES? POLL

1.12 WRAPPING UP ARTICLE
WEEK 2: TRANSDISCIPLINARITY – INTRODUCTION AND CLARIFICATION

What is transdisciplinary research?
Get acquainted with transdisciplinary research: How do you define it? What goals and principles are there? And when is it especially meaningful to make use of it? You’ll collect all the answers in the following activity.

2.1 TRANSDISCIPLINARITY, AN APPROACH DEVELOPED IN DIFFERENT CONTEXTS
ARTICLE

2.2 GOALS AND PRINCIPLES OF TRANSDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH VIDEO (04:48)

2.3 WHEN IS A TRANSDISCIPLINARY APPROACH PROMISING? ARTICLE

Basic concepts in transdisciplinary research
Discover basic concepts used in transdisciplinary research which will help you reflect on the cases and examples during the course as well as on your own experience.

2.4 THREE TYPES OF KNOWLEDGE VIDEO (06:06)

2.5 STRIVING FOR THE COMMON GOOD? ARTICLE

2.6 SOCIETALLY RELEVANT AND SCIENTIFICALLY VALID ARTICLE

Cases – context and actors
Explore the five cases to gain interesting information on the context in which they are situated and the actors that are involved.

2.7 MAKING MIGRATION SAFER – CONTEXT HOME AND HOST COUNTRIES ARTICLE

2.8 MOBILE PASTORALISTS AND COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES VIDEO (10:14)

2.9 TACKLING WATER SCARCITY – PART 2: ACTORS AND CONTEXT VIDEO (06:25)

2.10 THE INTERNATIONAL REGIME COMPLEX ABOUT ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE ARTICLE

2.11 COPING WITH DECLINE: TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AND RESIDENTS ARTICLE

Reflecting on the week
Assess what you have learnt about the basics of transdisciplinarity. Identify the concepts with which you should be familiar at the end of Week 2.

2.12 BASIC OF TRANSDISCIPLINARITY QUIZ

2.13 WRAPPING UP ARTICLE
WEEK 3: SETTING UP A TRANSDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH PROJECT

Phases of transdisciplinary research

Explore the phases of a transdisciplinary research project and have a closer look into phase 1.

3.1 THE STAGES OF TRANSDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH  ARTICLE

3.2 PHASE 1: PROBLEM FRAMING  VIDEO (05:30)

Important steps of a co-designing

When it comes to transdisciplinarity, the inclusion of different stakeholders is essential. Get an idea of co-designing a project and which steps and methods need to be considered.

3.3 CONTEXT AND ACTOR ANALYSIS  ARTICLE

3.4 CO-DESIGN, METHODS, EXAMPLES  ARTICLE

3.5 INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS  VIDEO (08:32)

3.6 HOW COULD YOUR PROJECT MAKE A DIFFERENCE?  ARTICLE

Cases – from an idea to a project

Having reflected how to develop transdisciplinary projects, apply your knowledge to the five cases.

3.7 MAKING MIGRATION SAFER: SETTING UP COLLABORATION  VIDEO (06:34)

3.8 NOMAD HEALTH: AN ETHIOPIAN ONE HEALTH INITIATIVE  VIDEO (07:59)

3.9 WATER SCARCITY: DESIGN OF THE MONTANAQUA PROJECT  ARTICLE

3.10 ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE: FROM A RESEARCH PROJECT TO WORK FOR THE UNITED NATIONS  VIDEO (04:16)

3.11 COPING WITH DECLINE: INITIATING THE BESANDERMATT STUDY  ARTICLE

Reflecting on the week

Setting up a transdisciplinary research project involves many challenges. Assess your knowledge and reflect on what you have learnt about phase 1 of the TDR process.

3.12 SETTING UP A TDR PROJECT: THE ESSENTIALS QUIZ

3.13 WRAPPING UP  ARTICLE
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**WEEK 4: KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION**

**Co-producing knowledge**

Phase 2 of transdisciplinary projects is about jointly conducting research. Find out what this means, discuss what intensities mark the sequence of interactions, and reflect your own possible role.

**CO-PRODUCING KNOWLEDGE**

4.1 **PHASE 2: JOINTLY CONDUCT RESEARCH** VIDEO (05:36)

4.2 **INTENSITIES OF INTERACTION** ARTICLE

4.3 **REFLECT ON YOUR ROLE** DISCUSSION

**Interdisciplinary and participatory aspects**

Gain insights on interdisciplinary and participatory aspects that distinguish transdisciplinary approaches from others. Discuss the process, the co-production of knowledge, and the cooperation with stakeholders.

**INTER-DISCIPLINARY & PARTICIPATORY ASPECTS**

4.4 **INTERDISCIPLINARY CO-PRODUCTION: COLLECTIVE INTELLIGENCE AND COGNITIVE JUSTICE** ARTICLE

4.5 **CO-PRODUCING KNOWLEDGE WITH TRAVELLING CONCEPTS** ARTICLE

4.6 **COOPERATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS** ARTICLE

**Cases – co-production processes**

Once again you are given the opportunity to link theoretical knowledge with the practical experiences of your educators. Do you recognise concepts you have learnt about this week in the cases?

4.7 **MAKING MIGRATION SAFER: HOW THE PROJECT DEVELOPED** VIDEO (04:56)

4.8 **NOMAD HEALTH: CO-PRODUCTION BETWEEN ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC ACTORS** ARTICLE

4.9 **TACKLING WATER SCARCITY – JOINT VISIONING AND STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT** VIDEO (08:42)

4.10 **ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE: INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH AND CO-PRODUCTION PROCESS** ARTICLE

4.11 **COPING WITH DECLINE: ENABLING LEARNING AND REFLECTION** ARTICLE

**Reflecting on the week**

In Week 4 you investigated the co-production of knowledge. Assess your grasp of the concepts, your own role, and reflect on what you have learnt about phase 2 of the TDR process.

4.12 **DECISIVE FACTORS WHEN JOINTLY CONDUCTING RESEARCH** QUIZ

4.13 **WRAPPING UP** ARTICLE
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Co-production towards action and reflection

Synthesise the third and last phase of a transdisciplinary project and develop an understanding of upscaling transdisciplinarity as well as of what communicating beyond a project means.

5.1 PHASE 3: EXPLORING IMPACT  VIDEO (05:56)

5.2 UPSCALING TRANSDISCIPLINARITY THROUGH SOCIETAL LEARNING  VIDEO (05:59)

5.3 COMMUNICATION BEYOND THE PROJECT  ARTICLE

Cases – results and ways of impact

Compare the theoretical insights with the results and impacts described in our five cases. How do you assess these? What questions come to your mind?

5.4 LABOUR MIGRATION: RESULTS, PROCESS OF CO-PRODUCTION, IMPACT, AND BARRIERS  ARTICLE

5.5 NOMAD HEALTH: IMPACT AND RESULTS  ARTICLE

5.6 WATER SCARCITY: RESULTS OF THE PROJECT MONTANAQUA  ARTICLE

5.7 THE REGIME COMPLEX ABOUT ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE – PROJECT OUTPUTS  ARTICLE

5.8 COPING WITH DECLINE: A RESPONSIVE, PARTICIPATORY APPROACH  ARTICLE

Reflecting on the week

What do you need to consider if you are jointly producing outcomes? Assess what you have explored in Week 5 and sum up what you have become familiar with.

5.9 PHASE 3 OF A TRANSDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH PROJECT  QUIZ

5.10 WRAPPING UP  ARTICLE
EFFECTS OF INVOLVEMENT: MOMENTS OF CHANGE

Evaluation
Get an idea of how to evaluate transdisciplinary research projects and reflect on your own development during the last five weeks.

6.1 Reflecting Transdisciplinary Research Projects Video (06:02)

6.2 Your Turn: How You Developed During the Course Discussion

Situating Transdisciplinarity
Find out about what career paths of ‘transdisciplinarians’ exist and figure out ethical dimensions of transdisciplinary research.

6.3 Career Paths of ‘Transdisciplinarians’ Video (07:41)

6.4 Ethical Dimensions of Transdisciplinary Research Article

Cases – reflection and evaluation
Link the concepts of how to evaluate a transdisciplinary research project to the practical experiences in the case studies. Investigate and discuss how they are reflected and evaluated.

6.5 Making Migration Safer: Reflecting Key Elements Article

6.6 Nomad Health: Reflection and Evaluation Article

6.7 Reflections on the Water Scarcity Cases’ Process and Outcomes Article

6.8 Reflecting on the Antimicrobial Resistance Case: Collaboration with the UN System Video (03:00)

6.9 Coping with Decline: Reflecting Bestandematt Video (07:54)

Transdisciplinary Research: Your Own Pathway
Assess what you have learnt about the effects of involvement and moments of change. Recapitulate the most important aspects of the course, and discuss how it might influence your future work.

6.10 Your Future Engagement Discussion

6.11 Goodbye Video (02:10)
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