

SUSTAIN e-learning Course: Transition Management in and for cities

Basic Details

Dates: March 1st – June 28th, 2016

Module Coordinators: Dutch Research Institute for Transitions (DRIFT), Erasmus University Rotterdam

Indicative Work Load: 56 hours

Language of Instruction: English

Application Deadline: February 2, 2016

Costs: Free of charge. Participation costs are covered by SUSTAIN project.

The course offers a series of lectures in combination with expert tutorials, peer discussions, scheduled (online) interactions.

Course Objective

SUSTAIN, a three-year Erasmus Mundus Project, in coordination with the Transition Academy, the next generation academic initiative of DRIFT, invite you to an e-learning course on urban sustainability transitions and transition management.

Experience and learn about how to capture complexity in urban settings and designing co-creation processes for sustainable resilient futures, together with action researchers and experts on Transition Management.

We will take a closer look at the transition dynamics in cities: how to examine and understand on-going processes by bringing together driving forces and have a 'hold on' those who we conceptualise as transition frontrunners.

Registration for the E-learning course is free of charge. Participation costs are covered by SUSTAIN project.

For whom?

This e-learning course is designed for: PhD candidates, junior researchers or post graduate students (Master's degree in the field of urban development and planning, environmental science, and other related disciplines). The course aims to deepen the knowledge and understanding of climate resilient and urban sustainable development.

In this e-learning course we offer:

- An introduction to transitions thinking and complexity in the context of urban sustainability transitions;
- An introduction to the operationalization of Transition Management in urban contexts;
- Sharing of insights from Transition Management processes in practice;
- An interactive web-based course on fitness of Transition Management as a transdisciplinary method and approach to your research problem and context;
- A lecture on the actors in transition management processes and questions of empowerment and power shifts;
- Interactive discussions and assignments to apply Transition Management to your research problem and context;
- At the end of the course, participants taking actively part in the full course will get a Certificate of Completion, as well as a recommendation letter for receiving 2 ECTS credits.
- The course aims to deepen the knowledge and understanding of the processes of planning and realizing climate resilient and urban sustainable development.

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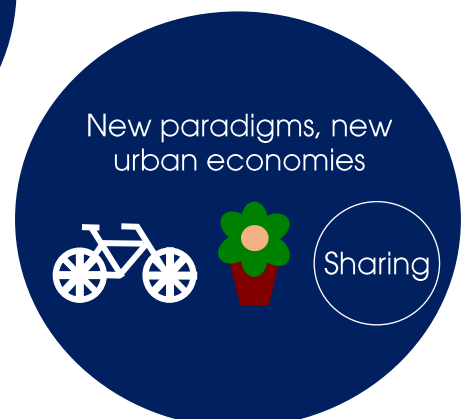
UNDERSTAND HOW CITIES TRANSFORM

Cities can be **cradles for innovation and sustainability transitions**. They are places where slow and fast transitions are initiated and accelerated as well as test-beds and seedbeds for innovations. Cities have social, ecological and technological assets that are essential for economic and social development locally and globally; there is thus an imperative for balancing their efforts for continuity and prosperity while ensuring a livable space for their citizens.

Increasing policy attention is put on the processes of change that takes place in cities and for cities to drive the way to **improved livability and resilience**. This shows the diversity of opportunities and conditions in cities, where challenges such as urbanization and globalization contribute to the pressure for rerouting current development pathways towards sustainability and resilience.

Urban studies scholarship offers insights about how pressures of globalization and urbanization may affect current livability standards in cities and also problematize on the implications of an abrupt transition of cities due to unpreparedness in face of climate change, demographic changes, ageing and a cascade of financial crashes.

Finding the right approaches to tap into the potentials of cities and reroute their development pathways towards sustainability and resilience is paramount. The governance of urban sustainability transitions requires **new strategic environmental planning processes** that integrate diverse sources of knowledge and perspectives, make 'glocal' connections between local urban challenges and broader global, national and regional macro-developments and enable pragmatic decisions in a context of complexity and uncertainty. This challenges urban practitioners and scientists alike to take up a process-content thinking and to reflect on how to navigate societal complexity while mobilizing innovative and transformative societal potential towards action for sustainability.



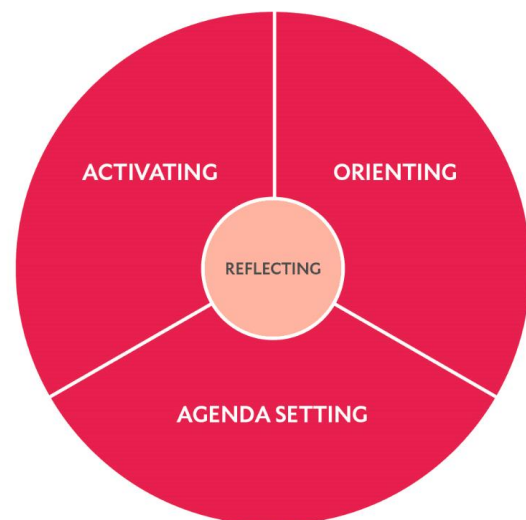
TRANSITION MANAGEMENT FOR CITIES

Tapping into and triggering urban transformations with co-creation processes

In practice, transition management comes down to a combination of developing around a common understanding of a transition challenge and **a shared ambition to drive it toward sustainability**. Using the transition perspective as a lens, transition teams develop an analysis of a particular persistent problem in a complex societal system. This could be a geographical area (from neighborhood to city, country, or region), a sector or societal issue. Based on the preliminary analysis, the transition team can identify regime and niche-actors that are potential contributors to a desired transition.

These are brought together in so-called **transition arenas or experiments**. In and around these arenas and experiments, a shared discourse, ambition, and agenda are developed in such a way that it empowers participants and enables them to translate it to their own daily environments. Through such a social learning process, individuals start to relate to a broader common context and ambitions, creating the conditions for diffusion, self-organizational processes, and emergent innovation. Transition management thus proposes to develop **informal networks** in which individuals and, later, organizations and networks are provided the mental, social, and physical space to develop new ideas, common language, and ambitions, as well as new joint projects.

In doing so over a longer period of time, participants will increasingly translate the transition perspective and ideas into their own operating context, while understanding the complexities, unpredictability and non-linear causalities involved. Transition management processes therewith indirectly influence and change regular policies in government, business, research, and civil society. It is therefore important to evaluate and plan strategically which actors are involved in transition management processes and how their co-creation of strategic agendas influences the role they will take up in sustainability transitions in the making.



Confirmed lecturers that will actively engage in building knowledge with you include:

Niki Frantzeskaki - Associate Professor on Sustainability Transitions Governance at DRIFT, Faculty of Social Sciences at Erasmus University Rotterdam. She graduated her PhD on the topic "Dynamics of sustainability transitions: Driving Forces and Feedback Loops" with TU Delft, Policy Analysis Section. She is working at DRIFT since 2010, she researches urban transitions and the governance questions on how to facilitate and accelerate contemporary sustainability transitions combining theoretical and empirical work across Europe and in developing countries.

Katharina Hölscher - PhD-researcher, is working at DRIFT since February 2014. Her research focuses on the governance of urban transitions in the context of climate change. In her studies of Rotterdam, the Netherlands, and New York City, she analyses questions on how different types of actors build resilience and promote sustainability and coordinate their actions across scales and sectors. Additionally, she is involved in projects on transformation research and transition management, researching in particular how actors become empowered in transition management processes and what power shifts occur.

Giorgia Silvestri - Researcher and Advisor at DRIFT since September 2014. Her research interests lie in the area of social-ecological sustainability transitions. Her research particularly focuses on understanding the interactions, collaborations and learning processes among actors involved in sustainability transitions, as well as on the participatory processes (i.e. transition management) supporting them. She conducted action research in Milan (Italy), applied transition management in Honduras and is currently working on multiple EU-funded projects on sustainability.

Admissions requirements

The e-learning course is designed for a group of 15 and maximum of 30 participants. Interested students should apply filling in the [Registration form](#) and sending the following materials to Giorgia Silvestri at this email address silvestri@drift.eur.nl:

- motivation letter for participating (max 500 words)
- proof of English language proficiency (e.g. IELTS or TOEFL scores, or certificate showing that the programme attended was taught in English (optional))

We will notify you about your acceptance between 9th and 16th of February 2016. For this course, make sure you have a reliable internet connection. Also, ensure that you have time for studying the materials, discuss the topics with your classmates, and demonstrate your understanding of the concepts through certain outputs.

Methodology

The e-learning course offers a combination of self-paced and facilitated learning approaches through Blackboard Virtual Learning Environment. The course is structured in a series of lectures combined with expert tutorials, peer discussions, scheduled (online) interactions, and literature references.

Important dates:

February 2, 2016: Deadline for registration

February 16, 2016: Notification of acceptance; sending of reading material & preparation instructions

March - June 2016: E-learning course days (4 lectures and 2 webinars)

Programme

Webinar 1 - March, 1: Introduction & gathering of participants' expectations.

Lecture 1 - March, 18: Introduction to Urban Sustainability Transitions and Transition Management by Dr. Niki Frantzeskaki.

Lecture 2 - April, 15: Principles of Transition Management & a case study of their application in Aberdeen city by Dr. Niki Frantzeskaki.

Lecture 3 - May, 3: The application of Transition Management in 'La Botija' protected area (Honduras) for empowering local communities to act for sustainable development by Giorgia Silvestri.

Lecture 4 - May, 31: Actors in Urban Transition Management: Reflections from a (dis)empowerment perspective by Katharina Hölscher.

Webinar 2 - June, 28: Final reflections and lessons learnt.

For questions about the SUSTAIN e-learning course, please contact:

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