

Transdisciplinary research/ education for sustainable development workshop

Date: 16-19 June 2025

Venue: OSCE Academy in Bishkek,
Botanicheskiy pereulok 1A

About the Training

Transdisciplinarity responds to the complex challenges of sustainable development and green transformations. While there is no single definition of transdisciplinarity, two features are usually prominent: Firstly, researchers and lecturers are integrating the knowledge of relevant stakeholders from politics, business, arts and society more strongly into the research process or even conducting research together with these stakeholders (co-creation). Secondly, transdisciplinarity is not only concerned with analysing problems, but also with identifying and studying solutions, including their implementation. The aim is to integrate diverse knowledge resources such as academic, experiential and performative knowledge and transfer them into the context of real-world challenges in order to develop practical solutions and generate new academic knowledge.

This 3,5-day workshop introduces the basics of transdisciplinary education and research with a special focus on sustainable development. Participants will explore key concepts, theoretical foundations, and selected methods such as Living Labs, Citizen Science, Entrepreneurship Education and Storytelling. Tailored for academics to cross disciplinary borders and address real-world problems, the session presupposes no prior experience with transdisciplinary approaches.

On the first day, Dr Thorsten Philipp will give an introduction to transdisciplinary education. The second day will see Dr Monika Gonser and Dr Jochen Eckart offering an introduction to transdisciplinary research, using the Living Lab format as an example. On the third day, participants will work in groups to design a transdisciplinary research and education project. The results of this group work will be presented on Thursday morning.

Working Language

The workshop will be held in English, with simultaneous interpretation into Russian available. Participants may contribute and ask questions in Russian. Group work will also be conducted in Russian.

Workshop Output

In order to facilitate a debate on the prospects and challenges of TDER in the Central Asian higher education landscape, we would like to use the training as an opportunity to co-produce and publish a publication in Russian and English together with you. The main target audience will be higher education experts and lecturers as well as policy makers and other relevant

stakeholders. The publication will provide a brief overview of TDER, but will also include the main outcomes of the exercises and discussions during the training.

Organizers, Trainers, and Moderators

The **OSCE Academy in Bishkek** is a public foundation that promotes regional cooperation, conflict prevention, and good governance in wider Central Asia through postgraduate education, professional training, and intellectual exchange. The Academy offers MA degree programs in Economic Governance and Development, Politics and Security, Human Rights and Sustainability as well as BA degree program in Economics. The Academy provides expert training and conducts demand-driven research. More information: www.osce-academy.net.

The **Intersectoral School of Governance Baden-Württemberg (ISoG BW)** aims to promote intersectoral cooperation between the state, business and society. In our executive programme ‘Intersectoral Governance’, participants address current issues affecting society: mobility, health, housing and integration. The executive programme is aimed at anyone who works together in cooperative projects across sectoral boundaries.

SPCE Hub is a network for the joint planning and implementation of interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary transfer-oriented living lab projects in international teams. SPCE Hub also aims to create the conditions for meaningful and equitable research collaborations.

Professor Dr Monika Gonser has extensive experience in the theory and practice of transdisciplinary research and education. She is a sociologist and an expert on cross-sectoral collaboration, as well as being the head of the Intersectoral School of Governance BW in Heilbronn. Prior to studying sociology, she trained as a Russian interpreter in Moscow. She also has expertise in intersectoral dialogue and sociological accompanying research.

Professor Dr Jochen Eckart holds the Chair of Transport Ecology at Karlsruhe University of Applied Sciences. He has extensive experience in transdisciplinary research with real-world laboratories. He heads the ongoing R&D project ‘Collaboration for Active Mobility in Africa CAMA’ under the programme ‘Partnerships for sustainable solutions in sub-Saharan Africa’ (BMBF and DAAD), which develops real-world laboratories to promote active mobility in cities in sub-Saharan Africa. He was also one of the leaders of the R&D project ‘ReallaborGO-Karlsruhe’, which deals with the effective promotion of pedestrian traffic. As part of this project, he investigated the involvement of stakeholders in transformation processes. Professor Eckart has international experience with projects for the World Bank (Kenya and Uganda) and the Baden-Württemberg Foundation (Philippines).

Dr Thorsten Philipp is a political scientist and communication scholar. As an advisor to the Presidium of TU Berlin, his mission is to promote inter- and transdisciplinary education in the interplay between the university, business, culture and society. Thorsten Philipp is lecturer at various universities in Germany, such as Freiburg und Passau. In his own research, he analyses pop music as a sounding board for ecological crises. Recent publication: Handbook Transdisciplinary Learning (transcript, 2023).

SPCE Hub Network Team

The workshop is moderated by SPCE Hub Network members **Dr Kishimjan Osmonova** and **Dr Sebastian Schiek**. The lead author for the co-produced publication is **Komila Naibaeva**.

Dress code: Smart casual

Training Schedule

16 June (Monday)

9:00	Arrival at the OSCE Academy and Registration
9:15 – 9:30	OPENING REMARKS Dr. Pal Dunay , <i>Director, OSCE Academy in Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic</i> Dr. Kishimjan Osmonova and Dr. Sebastian Schiek (SPCE Hub)
Instructor: Thorsten Philipp (TU Berlin)	
9:30 – 11:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Introductions (with special consideration given to discipline) ◆ Introductory reflection: What role does my discipline play in my life? Participants discuss in pairs how their discipline shapes their everyday life and career. The aim of the exercise is twofold: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) To identify the importance and influence of disciplines 2) To collect stories about dealing with disciplinary influences ◆ Introduction to transdisciplinary learning: definition of terms, background, prerequisites and methodological variations. ◆ Transition to stories: Stories as an element of transdisciplinary education (beyond Excel spreadsheets); collecting and telling stories. The ambivalence of stories.
11:00 – 11:30	Coffee Break
11:30 – 13:00	Formats from TD Education <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Service learning 2. Social Entrepreneurship Education 3. Internship 4. Living Lab 5. Reminder: Storytelling
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch

14:00 – 15:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Formation of four to six working groups based on participants' interests. Participants will describe a challenge to be discussed and worked on within the group. ● Working groups design a format for integrating this into teaching.
15:30 – 16:00	Coffee Break
16:00 – 17:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Working groups pitch their results using flipcharts ● Conclusion: Brief evaluation: What have I learnt?

17 June (Tuesday)

Instructors: Monika Gonser and Jochen Eckart	
9:30 – 11:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The introduction will be illustrated by two living labs that serve to exemplify, analyse and learn from transdisciplinary research approaches. One will be in the field of engineering and the other in the field of social sciences. Living labs are a special format that include experiments in real-world settings. ● Joint objectives will be developed. ● Theory: Introduction to the 'golden circle' approach. What are the differences between a solution and an objective? What are the differences between a) practice objective, b) transformative objective and c) research objective? ● Examples ● Reflection based on participants' own experiences.
11:00 – 11:30	Coffee Break
11:30 – 13:00	Developing decision structures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Theory: managing expectations, clarify different levels of participation, reflecting different roles of stakeholders, different roles of research and practice, etc. ● Examples ● Reflection based on own experiences of participants

	<p>Working with and in networks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theory: stakeholder analysis, strength and weaknesses of networks, interest and power of stakeholders, analyzing networks, necessary communication, joint objectives and own objectives, knowledge management, stakeholder engagement plans etc. • Examples • Reflection based on own experiences of participants
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch
14:00 – 15:30	<p>Internal and external communications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theory: storytelling, campaigning, etc. • Examples: Reflection based on participants' own experiences <p>From problem description to valid research question</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theory: the need for research questions and the evaluation concept for living labs, etc. • Examples: Reflection based on the participants' own experiences
15:30 – 16:00	Coffee Break
16:00 – 17:30	<p>From the idea to the implementation of a living lab</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theory: hints from strategy development; the iterative process; flexibility and boundaries during the implementation of living labs; dealing with veto players; using opportunities; piggybacking on other developments; what can be planned in advance; and what has to be developed during the process, etc. • Examples: Reflection based on the participants' own experiences <p>Joint learning from living labs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theory: Learning from successes and failures; presenting learning to a broader number of stakeholders; limits of transparency; continuation of learning alliances; and results

	<p>from living labs, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examples: Reflection based on the participants' own experiences
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18 June (Wednesday)

9:30 – 11:00	<p>Initial planning of the living labs</p> <p>Participants will bring their initial ideas and a plan for a living lab will be developed for one of them.</p> <p>Discussion of the initial ideas for living labs with fellow participants in small groups. The peer advice should help tailor the ideas to local conditions.</p> <p>The small group discussions are guided by tasks, steps and questions that were defined the day before.</p> <p>Facilitation and documentation of discussions in small groups.</p> <p>Workshop leaders circulate the groups, providing help and input.</p> <p>Presenting initial plans for living labs</p> <p>The developed plans for the living labs will be presented to the forum.</p> <p>Collect suggestions on how participants can support each other in further developing living labs.</p> <p>Developing lists of ideas for follow-up activities required to make living labs in Central Asia successful.</p>
11:00 – 11:30	Coffee Break
11:30 – 13:00	Continuation of group work
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch
14:00 – 15:30	Continuation of group work
15:30 – 16:00	Coffee Break
16:00 – 17:30	Panel Discussion “Geopolitical Trends and Sustainable Development: A Dialogue on Future Pathways for Central Asia

	<p>and Europe”</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <p>Dr. Pal Dunay (Director, OSCE Academy in Bishkek)</p> <p>Dr. Emilbek Dzhuraev (Senior Expert, OSCE Academy in Bishkek)</p> <p>Ainur Sospanova (QazaqGreen)</p> <p>David Ritter (Oeko-Insitut)</p> <p>Moderator: Dr. Sebastian Schiek (SPCE Hub)</p> <p>The discussion will focus on the key questions that illuminate the relationship between geopolitical dynamics and sustainable development in Central Asia and Europe.</p> <p>The panel will examine current geopolitical trends that are shaping both regions and assess how these developments might influence the future of the region, as well as cooperation between Europe and Central Asia.</p> <p>A particular focus will be given to the state of the energy transition - a critical element of sustainable development. Where do both regions currently stand in this process? What are the possible future pathways? And how does Europe’s energy foreign policy impact Central Asia?</p> <p>The aim of the session is to foster dialogue among participants. Following brief opening statements from the four panelists, the floor will be opened for questions and discussion.</p>
18.00	Dinner

19 June (Thursday)

09:30 – 11:00	Working Groups pitch their projects
11:00 – 11:30	Coffee Break
11:30 – 13:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion of prospects and challenges of TDER • Evaluation • Closing remarks and certificate presentations

