

## International workshop on facilitation for transdisciplinary research

A joint Mistra Urban Futures & Intrepid Cost Action initiative  
14<sup>th</sup> March, 2019 in Gothenburg, Sweden  
Time: 9.00–17.00  
Location: Läraregatan 3  
Tram stop: Kapellplatsen

Facilitation is commonly interpreted according to procedures and practical attributes that are meant to enhance the realization of desired outcomes of events, educational programs, projects or other collective activities. Although it can be helpful to learn about facilitation in different professional domains these contributions commonly address subjects and purposes that are quite different from interdisciplinary (ID) and transdisciplinary (TD) teaching, research and practice.

**Currently, there is an established literature about the skills and competences of facilitators as practitioners, but this role is not related specifically about how to facilitate research as a process of inquiry. This workshop will address this gap in order to highlight how facilitators can enable participatory action research that is also transdisciplinary.**

The specific challenges of facilitation of TD-projects have been addressed by a small but increasing number of authors during the last decade following the implementation of co-design and co-production processes relating to the complexities of urban development. While these contributions generally provide the challenges and context of facilitating collaborative design and planning projects, they also highlight the need for further analysis and evaluation of outcomes of these projects. This task should include an assessment of the outcomes of facilitation, as well as the prerequisites and contextual conditions in which it occurs, and the skills and competences of facilitators of TD-processes.

**There are few evaluations of the added value of nominating a facilitator for co-design and co-production phases of TD urban research projects. This workshop therefore aims to identify evaluation criteria to overcome this shortcoming in order to improve training and practice.**

This collaborative workshop is intended to launch an international debate grounded in the sharing of experience, knowledge and know-how about the facilitation of transdisciplinary projects within urban development. It is a joint venture between participants in COST Intrepid and Mistra Urban Futures

Gothenburg Local Interaction (GOLIP) Platform, including current and former GOLIP project leaders and participants of the GOLIP Open Research School.

This one-day workshop will address the following core themes and sub-themes about the facilitation of TD projects for urban development in order to improve curricula and training.

## 1. FACILITATION METHODS AND TOOLS FOR TD-PROJECTS AND PROCESSES

There are numerous methods and tool boxes available for application by participants during TD-projects within urban development. However, very little is known today about which methods and tools are used at which stage of the processes. Does this differ between different contexts and international settings? Is the growing number of tools and methods around indicating a demand or ignorance of what has already been achieved in this field, or are they a sign of how the field as such is experimenting and evolving? What can experience of COST Intrepid participants and reports from Mistra Urban Futures project members inform us about the tools and methods that facilitate TD-processes?

## 2. FACILITATOR CAPABILITIES

A facilitator commonly denotes a person who has specific roles and tasks to guide a process, project in order to achieve a desired goal more easily than if they were absent. The facilitator of a TD-process or project is a person who guides the phases of a project using her/ his personal and professional capabilities together with certain methods and tools that enable a group to achieve desired outcomes. What are the specific challenges to be aware of and which theoretical support is required to understand how to interact as process dynamics unfolds? What capabilities can a professional facilitator provide from experiences of multi-stakeholder processes, that also would be useful for a TD-process?

These themes will be discussed by the participants during the day, with a session of reporting back to towards a common final session where the evaluation of criteria will be discussed.

## Tentative programme

### Morning

**8.30** Coffee and registration

**9.00** Introduction to Workshop: Aims, Scope and Outcomes

Intrepid & Mistra Urban Futures (RL, HP, MP, SK)

### Order of speakers

#### RJL Introduce 4 questions

**9.15–10.15** Facilitation methods and tools for TD-projects

#### Q1: How can facilitation methods enable participatory action research that is TD and what has proved successful?

European experiences of method development from the Intrepid COST Network,  
*Josefine Fokdal*, researcher International Urbanism, University of Stuttgart (20min)

Tools and methods from Mistra Urban Futures projects and a suggested frame-work for how to structure a TD-process,

*Kerstin Hemström*, researcher at Mistra Urban Futures. (20min)

Reflections on how to facilitate TD-projects locally and trans-locally, from a practitioner's perspective,

*Åsa Lorentzi*, urban development leader, City of Gothenburg. Project leader GOLIP, professional facilitator. (20min) (*Åsa is currently on vacation. To be confirmed*)

**10.15–10.30** Q&A

#### Answer Q1 at close of session

### Morning refreshments

**10.45–12.00** Workshop in groups

facilitated by *Sophia Kasså* together with Intrepid members and GOLIP

What methods are necessary for facilitators of transdisciplinary projects?

#### Q1: How can facilitation methods enable participatory action research that is TD and what has proved successful?

**Lunch at restaurant to be decided**

### Afternoon

**13.00–13.50** Facilitators capabilities

Challenges of, theoretical support for and skills required in collaborative processes,  
*Alexander Hellquist*, researcher SWEDES/ Uppsala University (30 min)

Competences of a facilitator, possibly useful for TD-processes,

*Sophia Kasså*, professional facilitator, GOLIP (20 min)

**13.50–14.05** Q&A

**Q2: What is the added value of having a trained facilitator in TD projects?**

**Afternoon refreshments**

**14.35–15.50 Workshop in groups**

facilitated by *Sophia Kasså* together with *Intrepid* members and *GOLIP*

**Q3: What skills are necessary for facilitators of transdisciplinary projects?**

**Q4: What changes to the curricula of courses and training programs are necessary in order to account for acquirement of these skills and competences?**

**15.50–16.45 Synthesis & Key messages**

Roundtable reports from group work to plenary (*who is in plenary?*)

**16.45–17.00 Conclusion: Co-Chairs (*Josefine, Roderick?*)**

TARGET AUDIENCE

Apart from a small delegation of INTREPID participants, the Swedish audience would include:

- Network of professional facilitators in Gothenburg, GoCreate
- Alumni network from Ph.D Research School
- GOLIP Project staff of MISTRA Urban Futures projects.
- Project leaders from GOLIP projects
- Beyond, there has been an explicit request from some Chalmers University researchers for GOLIP to provide facilitation skills to research projects.