

Call for papers and panels for the interdisciplinary conference

# RE-DO

## On sustainability and culture's role in sustainable futures

Aarhus University and Aarhus 2017 28.10-31.10 2015

*Confirmed keynote speakers:*

*Nick Shepherd, University of Cape Town, South Africa*

*Nancy Duxbury Carreiro, University of Coimbra, Portugal*

*Noortje Marres, Goldsmiths, University of London, UK*

*Joel Outtes, Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil*

**Main organizers:**

rethinkIMPACTS 2017/Britta Timm Knudsen and Louise Ejgod Hansen

Aarhus 2017 (Aarhus as European Capital of Culture)

Energy Academy on Samsø

and

Aarhus University

**Aarhus as part of the Nordic countries has more to offer than raw crime fiction, Michelin star striped New Nordic Cuisine restaurants and a well-oiled welfare society. Cultural sustainability is a key concept in Aarhus' path towards becoming European Capital of Culture in 2017; cradle-to-cradle thinking and circular economies form a substantial part of the region's "re-think economy" strategy, while renewable energy and fossil-free-zones are part of conference co-organizers' - Energy Academy (Samsø) - agenda for a sustainable future. It is within this setting that the RE-DO Conference, organized jointly between Aarhus University and Aarhus 2017 takes an interdisciplinary approach to the challenge of creating sustainable futures. The conference invites academics, practitioners, artists and activists to take part in the dialogue about sustainable cultures.**

RE-DO indicates that sustainability *has been, is and has to become something we do* as part of our everyday practices and living in order to matter. In this sense we view cultural sustainability not just as an add-on to environmental agendas, but as the very precondition for their long-term success.

RE-DO invites contributions on past, present and future cultural sustainabilities in all kinds of landscapes. Contributions can investigate cultural sustainability theoretically, methodologically and/or through case studies of everyday material practices or sustainability initiatives in cultural industries such as museums, heritage, theatres, tourism, cinemas, media, urban management and planning, architecture and design, restaurants and food industries.

Sustainability is already put to practice in every-day life, in citizen-based initiatives against food waste, in enterprising initiatives to avoid depopulation of outskirt regions, in integration initiatives targeting minority groups, immigrants and political refugees, and in all sorts of “green” initiatives in which citizens show care for biodiversity and wildlife conservation issues. Moreover, cultural sustainability may also serve as a productive focal point for rethinking policies and practices in traditional public sectors such as healthcare, education, children and elder care.

We aim also to investigate critically the concept of cultural sustainability. Has the concept of sustainability never undergone a cultural turn as it seems to be reserved for special interest “green” scholars or criticized for being a new master narrative above the realm of politics fortifying Western Hegemony? Or is it rather that sustainability has triumphed by playing a predominant role in post-constructivist and post-anthropocentric research agendas in the humanities and social sciences since the mid 90ies? Sustainability is on the agenda in Science and Technology Studies’ conceptualization of nature-culture intersections, in Actor-Network-Theory’s focus on environmental entanglements and relationalities between human and non-human actors, in New Materialism’s focus on ecologies and beings with the world. It is also central in digital culture and media studies’ new focus on media as geologies, in groundbreaking thinking around alternative or circular economies and new posthuman or neo-human emerging empowered subjectivities.

We invite presenters to address questions related to cultural sustainability and the role of culture in sustainable futures, including, but not limited to the following questions:

- What role does culture play in the three-legged eco-centric model – with environmental, economic and politico-social dimensions – of sustainability? What understandings of “culture” are relevant or perhaps even necessary for us to work towards cultural sustainability?

- Is it preferable to challenge the three-legged consensual model of sustainability, disputed by critics to be post-political, by a four-legged (environment, economy, social and cultural sustainability) differential model? What would such a widening of categories translate to on the practical (i.e. “doing”) level?
- How could culture – worldviews, every-day practices and living togetherness, pasts, costumes, food, identity-constructions and understandings, aesthetic and ethical values, artistic representations and performances – become an important and measurable part of a sustainability agenda of its own? Is that desirable?
- In what ways does a focus on cultural sustainability change well-known agenda-setting power geometries between North and South, East and West for example due to climate change adaption and mitigation necessities?
- How to conceptualize culture in the new forms of connectivity between humans and non-humans that we see in post-human-oriented theories and what new connections are to be made between deep ecology and ecological indigenous livelihoods and post-human paradigms?
- What do the temporal and spatial expansions implied in the concept of sustainability mean for culture? What role do future generations and non-human actors play in forging materiality?

#### **Submitting a proposal:**

The conference aims at facilitating new dialogues between academics and practitioners in which knowledge-sharing, learning and development is at the center. As much as presenting answers and worked-through solutions, the conference aims at asking questions and stimulating discussion and reflection. We invite participants to submit proposals for:

#### *Papers:*

Abstract proposals for paper of no more than 200 words and a short bio (max 50 words). We encourage submissions of papers from all stages of the writing process – from an early stage in which a potential article is being considered and the associated ideas are in a more conceptual phase all the way through a more final stage in which an associated full article is nearing readiness for submission for journal consideration.

#### *Panels:*

Proposals for a panel with 3-5 presenters, a chair and a discussant. These sessions provide a moderated dialogue between the contributors. In particular, we encourage transdisciplinary debate on a specific theme between scientists

academics, policymakers, and different practitioners. To organize a panel you should invite 3-4 presenters and a discussant. The proposals for panels including the confirmed contributions and abstracts (the abstract of the panel: 250-300 words, abstracts of the presentations: 150-200 words)

*Roundtable Discussions:*

Individual or groups of authors have an assigned table during a session to review and discuss the ideas, frameworks, and perspectives underlying their work with interested delegates who gather at the table. Suggesting a roundtable discussion include proposal of the topic discussed in 50-200 words.

*Workshops:*

Interactive sessions in which skills or concepts are taught, demonstrated, or explored. Proposing a workshop includes a presentation of the aim of the workshop and the questions or tasks being address.

Proposals should be submitted to [impact2017@au.dk](mailto:impact2017@au.dk) before June 1. Authors will be notified of acceptance or non-acceptance before July 1.

**Registration and payment**

Registration is due on October 1.

Conference fee: 140 euros for early birds (before August 1). Ordinary price 190 euros.

Student price (including PhD students): 100 euros for students, including PhD students).

**Form of the conference:**

The conference is an attempt to experiment new forms of dialogue between researchers and practitioners, where knowledge-sharing and dialogue is central. The conference is equally aimed at proposing solutions and answers to problems, and at asking stimulating questions that can provoke discussions and reflections. Therefore the participation is open to a broad category of people, including international guests.

After the submission deadline the organizers will develop the proposals into a coherent program aiming at increasing the ability of the conference to affect both the academic community and actual surroundings of the conference. This might include inviting a relevant audience of decision-makers or possible collaborators or formulating a common task to be solved or discussed within the conference setting.

**Further info:**

RE-DO is a part of a series of conferences leading to Aarhus being European Capital of Culture in 2017. The conferences address the three key values of Aarhus 2017:

2013: Democracy - *Rethink participatory cultural citizenship*

2015: Sustainability - *RE-DO*

2017: Diversity

More info available at the conference website: <http://conferences.au.dk/re-do/>