

Transdisciplinary Research as Transformative Praxis

with Dr. **Ulli Vilsmaier**, on June, 26, 2018 at 12:30 p.m.

The next 'Science Talk', organized by the Institute of Systems Sciences, Innovation and Sustainability Research, will be given by **Ulli Vilsmaier** (Leuphana University of Lüneburg, Germany) on the topic "Transdisciplinary Research as Transformative Praxis". Her talk will take place on Tuesday, 26 June 2018 at 12.30 pm in the **meeting room of SIS (Merangasse 18, 1st floor)**. Duration: **Approximately one hour** including discussion. The participation is free of charge and there is no need to register. SIS usually organizes three to five guest talks in each semester, covering its main research fields, i.e., systems sciences, innovation and sustainability research.

Bio-sketch

Ulli Vilsmaier has been trained as a geographer and currently holds an interim professorship at the Methodology Center, Leuphana University of Lüneburg. Her research and teaching focus is on epistemological and methodological foundations, and methods for inter- and transdisciplinary research. Based on a logic of responsivity she is working on the constitution of space and the design of in-between spaces for transformative research. Of particular interest are concept-, image- and artefact based methods of boundary work and formative accompanying research. Ultimately, she has been focusing on the exploration of transdisciplinarity and sustainability within an intercultural orientation and on the elaboration of the intertelluric as a concept that emphasizes the material dimension of relationality.

Abstract

Demand is growing for research to realize its transformative potential. Research should not only produce knowledge which, in the logic of a transfer model, could be applied in the corresponding areas of society. Research itself should directly trigger or even induce transformation. Under the slogan of transformative research, various forms of research are currently being tested, which pursue not only epistemic but transformative goals. In this way, the praxis of research is brought into view and methodological questions appear in a different light. As a consequence, established legitimization mechanisms and quality criteria of knowledge generation are under inquiry, and negotiations of roles and tasks, as well as power relations between different societal fields are becoming increasingly important.

The currently developing form of transdisciplinary research seeks to meet these demands. In different strands of discourse, a theoretical framework is emerging, which has the potential to unleash the concept of research and to reconfigure epistemological as well as methodological foundations of research. It is obvious that this does not happen without contradictions, challenging traditional values of an academically institutionalized research that has both advantages and limitations.

The lecture intends to give an impetus to sharpening the eye to the need to tackle epistemological and methodological consequences of the claims of transdisciplinary research and to discuss this mode of research as a transformative praxis.