



ITD Alliance

Global Alliance for
Inter- and Transdisciplinarity

News Bulletin
25 November 2024

Dear ITD Alliance Members and Colleagues,

This News Bulletin includes:

- ITD24 conference report and feedback.
- Reports from ITD Alliance networking events.
- Consult the community.
- Conference news.
- Member news.
- About this News Bulletin.



ITD24 conference report and feedback

ITD24 conference report - Looking back on ITD24: Inter- and Transdisciplinarity Beyond Buzzwords.

Report by Timothy Bland and Tobias Buser

From 4 to 8 November, the ITD24 conference, 'Inter- and Transdisciplinarity Beyond Buzzwords - Educational Pathways for Sustainable Research Collaborations,' took place at the Railway Museum in Utrecht, the Netherlands. This unique meeting was organised by the ITD-Alliance, Swiss Academies of Arts and Sciences, and Utrecht University. 500 experts, teachers and researchers from all over the world, came together to take inter- and transdisciplinary education and research to the next level.

Spread over the week, more than 330 presentations, workshops and training sessions took place, and many posters and videos were on display. The conference was opened on Monday by Utrecht University (UU) vice-rectors Manon Kluijtmans and Ted Sanders. In their contributions, they emphasised the crucial relationship between education and research and the core value of 'openness' within UU. These values form the basis for the pursuit of sustainable collaborations in education and science. The first day also ended festively and musically led by band Ghost Science.

New phase for trans- and interdisciplinarity

The conference marked a new phase for the international inter- and transdisciplinary community, which has continued to grow in recent years both qualitatively in expertise and quantitatively in the number of people involved. With renewed language and tools, researchers and teachers can work more effectively. The next challenge is to work together more intensively, literally and figuratively across borders.

While early ITD conferences focused on 'why transdisciplinary research' and 'how to design td projects', we now saw much broader, system-wide approaches to advancing and supporting inter- and transdisciplinary research and education. Presentations and workshops ranged from issues of epistemic justice, to career paths, to new roles such as integration experts, to the design of projects and funding programmes, to university and administrative structures that bridge and connect across departments. In general, we have seen an increase in spaces for experimentation and learning across structural boundaries, including an impressive range of collaborative methods.

To cultivate the competencies and structures for transdisciplinary approaches, capacity development that engages with different actors and contexts is key, with very encouraging examples presented and discussed in Utrecht, such as challenge-based courses at bachelor level for all students across faculties, training and reflection for project leaders, researchers and research partners, training and peer learning for those involved in teaching, as well as for programme managers, evaluators and board members in research funding agencies.

These are clearly exciting times for inter- and transdisciplinarity, and the motivation, enthusiasm and impressive collective knowledge and expertise shone throughout the conference.

ITD24 participant evaluation

If you participated in the conference, don't miss your opportunity to share your evaluation to guide planning for future conferences: [ITD Evaluation Form](#).

Participant perspectives

Below you will find additional feedback we received from participants. We welcome your perspective for inclusion in the next News Bulletin! If you are interested, send a few lines about your experience of ITD24 to Caryn Anderson (caryn.anderson@itd-alliance.org).

Giedre Kligyte, University of Technology Sydney, Australia

It was incredible to finally meet and talk with scholars whose work I've been following from afar or only interacted with on Zoom. Travelling such a long distance for a conference makes you reflect on its worth—especially considering the carbon footprint involved.

What stood out was how genuinely open and engaging the ITD community was. The focus on sharing diverse perspectives and evolving ideas together felt authentic—something not all conferences achieve. The networking opportunities, planned and incidental, were a major highlight, and the countless inspiring sessions and workshops I attended throughout the week are too many to mention!

A key takeaway for me was the maturity of discussions around ID/TD approaches. The focus wasn't on justifying why these methods matter but on evaluating the quality of integration and the knowledge produced through them. I appreciated the conceptual depth this conference offered, staying true to the theme "beyond buzzwords."

That said, I noticed a level of fragmentation in the field. Many people are working on incredible TD initiatives but seem unaware of related efforts happening in adjacent areas. It's not surprising, given how diverse and dispersed this field is, spanning multiple disciplines, journals, and parts of the university. But it does highlight the need for better connections across this vibrant ecosystem, highlighting the importance of maintaining the crucial knowledge infrastructure—mapping, and sense-making work—even more!

#itd24 on LinkedIn

See posts and photos from participants using the hashtag [#itd24 on LinkedIn](#) to get a sense of the conference (or to re-live your experience and continue your connections)!



Reports from ITD Alliance networking events

ITD24 Networking and Member Exchange Session

Report by session facilitators, Helena Guimarães and Theres Paulsen

This session provided a forum for members and other attendees to discuss ideas and activities, with a focus on how the ITD Alliance, as an alliance of mostly volunteers, could provide a vehicle for members in undertaking activities they are passionate about. Attendance was estimated at 40-50. In the first half of the session, participants formed pairs or small groups with people they did not know to meet and share ideas. Ideas for new working groups were proposed covering transformative justice (examining change and power balance) and encouraging organizational change within institutions to support ITD. Other ideas discussed included practitioner engagement, developing local networks, advice on access to funding, learning from other alliances, ideas for education and curriculum development, building a repository of case studies, and institutionalising ITD.

The second part of the session focused on the three established working groups - Early Career Researchers, Toolkits and Methods, Integration Experts and Expertise - as well as providing opportunities to meet for those interested in the newly proposed working groups and an already-planned working group on education and training. Participants were also encouraged to submit any new ideas via the ITD Alliance [Ideas Board](#) on the website.

Overall, the session was full of positive energy. We look forward to seeing how the ideas proposed at the networking meeting develop!

Online networking events

Report by Gabriele Bammer

The energy and enthusiasm of the face-to-face networking event in Utrecht was mirrored – at a much smaller scale – by the 4 attendees at one online event. We savoured the opportunity to get to know each other better and to explore the benefits of small events,

discussing how we might continue such opportunities in future. We also explored how we could promote intersections with like-minded communities, especially organising joint events. We realised that the ITD Alliance news bulletin is a vehicle through which individuals or small groups can organise opportunities to connect with like-minded others, and that this can be one-off or occasional, rather than as an on-going commitment. We also discussed the needs of practitioners and how the ITD Alliance can expand its activities to also provide a supportive home for them.



Consult the Community

This section of the ITD Alliance News Bulletin aims to provide a space to support each of our learning and teaching. If you are stuck finding information you need, the community may be able to help. Additional responses are welcome and will be published in future news bulletins. Please email Caryn Anderson (caryn.anderson@itd-alliance.org) with your response or question for the community.

New Question

Looking for train-the-trainer workshops

I already participated in the highly recommendable [Open Online Course on Transdisciplinary Research](#) and its international learning group by © td-net/Swiss academies of arts and sciences. The open online course is highly recommendable for a sound introduction and overview on what td-research is and how it can be applied. Now I would very much like to develop further my knowledge and skills in terms of facilitating/supporting itd-research teams as a moderator/trainer. And I came across the [Train-the-TD-Trainer Workshop](#) by Sustainability Research + Innovation being offered at their conferences. I am wondering, if there are similar offers/formats which, in the best case, may be joined virtually?

Christine Hobelsberger, Eberswalde University for Sustainable Development, Germany

Previous Question, New Responses

Integrative research case studies?

(initially published, with Response #1, in the [18 November News Bulletin](#))

I'm currently working on the syllabus of the first ever course on Integration to be offered at the London Interdisciplinary School (LIS) in 2025. Do you know if there's something like a "repository" of case studies of integrative research? I've come across a few studies framed in terms of integration, but no explicit articulation of what makes them cases of integrative research. Also, I don't seem to be able to find agreed upon cases of integration of artwork with scientific practice.

Mattia Gallotti, Associate Professor, Head of Research & Development, The London Interdisciplinary School

Response #2

I don't know if these would be detailed enough for your teaching but the [SHAPE-ID Toolkit](#) contains about a dozen [case studies](#) that illustrate the roles that Arts, Humanities and Social Science research and creative practice can play in inter- and transdisciplinary research. These include short accounts of innovative research projects, funding schemes, organisations and infrastructures, and can be freely downloaded as PDF documents.

Catherine Lyall, Emerita Professor of Science and Public Policy, University of Edinburgh



Conference news

Call for papers for Interdisciplinary Integration: Engaging students with Interdisciplinary Thinking and Doing, London School of Economics and Political Science, 10 April 2025

This year's conference will focus on examining the methods that engage and inspire students to think across disciplinary boundaries and challenge traditional subject-focused thinking and practice.

Many educational institutions trumpet their interdisciplinary approaches and opportunities, but there is still a disconnect between what is offered and how students perceive and understand what it means to think in an interdisciplinary way. If interdisciplinary opportunities are to retain their importance, they need to meet - and exceed - student expectations.

This conference will welcome practical ways which bring interdisciplinary activities alive to students, ways for foregrounding the relevance of such opportunities, and experiences of how to engage students in interdisciplinary activities.

For details on the call for papers see: <https://interdisciplinaryuk.net/2024/10/17/call-for-papers-interdisciplinary-integration-engaging-students-with-interdisciplinary-thinking-and-doing/>

Closing date for Submissions: 14 January 2025



Member news

Reflections on the 30th anniversary of the Charter of Transdisciplinarity

Report by Vladimir Mokiý

A celebration of the 30th anniversary of the Charter of Transdisciplinarity written in 1994 was held at CIRET (Centre international de recherches et études transdisciplinaires; International Centre for Transdisciplinary Research and Studies). Details about the celebration and links to the charter are available at <https://ciret.hypotheses.org/transdisciplinarite/fondamentaux/charte-transdisciplinarite-30-ans>.

View recordings of the 30th anniversary events in different countries: http://www.td-science.ru/images/kart/LINKS_CONTENT_30TH_ANNIVERSARY_TD_LETTER.pdf

A Newsletter was prepared for this anniversary (<https://ciret.hypotheses.org/5789>). In the preface, which is called "Embracing Transdisciplinarity in the Modern Era", Cristina Popa Tache (Romania) writes: "The aim of our gathering here is to enrich the cultural and academic heritage of our community. Everything we do, whether individually or collectively, reflects our commitment to education and research, as well as our desire to

stimulate critical thinking and innovation among the younger generations of researchers and practitioners. CIRET, as a re-embodiment of Prometheus bringing the flame of knowledge, embraces its role as a catalyst for this transformation. Our long-term co-project, 'The Development of a Transdisciplinary Systemic Vision in Higher Education' (2023-2026), is a concrete example of our commitment to preparing generations of specialists capable of building bridges between the disciplines of social sciences, engineering, and other fields."

The joint project, which is a collaboration between CIRET (France) and Institute of Transdisciplinary Technologies (Russia), is working on a textbook of "Systems Transdisciplinarity" (http://www.td-science.ru/images/kart/passport_of_the_education_project_2026.pdf).

In my opinion, CIRET is undergoing an important rethink of the essence of transdisciplinarity. In the course of this rethinking, two images of transdisciplinarity are allowed, as a cultural approach and as a scientific approach. It is worth remembering that in the 1994 Charter of Transdisciplinarity, transdisciplinarity was not allowed to be an independent discipline, much less to train transdisciplinarians at universities. If I am not mistaken, then a new stage has really begun in the development of transdisciplinarity.



About this News Bulletin

This News Bulletin focuses on the activities of the ITD-Alliance and its members. We also welcome contributions that may interest members such as policy news in education, funding and research, opportunities (including prizes and visiting fellowships), and relevant conferences and conference reports. Contributions welcome!

Please send contributions to Caryn Anderson caryn.anderson@itd-alliance.org at least a week before you would like to see them published. We aim to publish weekly, but the day may vary.

The News Bulletin is sent to all members of the ITD Alliance and to interested colleagues who have joined the mailing list at <https://itd-alliance.org/newsletter>. Feel free to share the News Bulletin with anyone who may be interested.

Explore past newsletters on our website: <https://itd-alliance.org/newsletter/>.