

Simply Different Fashion: The Balancing Act of Designing a Transdisciplinary Space

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Abstract

There is ample evidence that process design is critical for meaningful inter- and transdisciplinary collaboration. However, practitioners and researchers in transdisciplinary projects are usually overwhelmed with the complex human dynamics in participatory processes and are hardly trained in the sensitive dynamics of working with people. Therefore, this reflexive article extends our practical understanding of the process knowledge of transdisciplinary research by providing deep reflections on design decisions and their implications. We reflect on questions of the why, who, and how of design in transdisciplinarity and the consequences of narrowing or opening these spaces. Then, it dives into a single case and makes use of the opportunity to reflect on a transdisciplinary workshop that took place in June 2022 in a conventional shopping center in Berlin. The interactive space called *Simply different fashion* served to spark a conversation between visitors of the mall and interested stakeholders about a more sustainable textile industry. The authors of this conceptual work use a reflective journaling exercise that helped to stimulate thoughts about opening and closing spaces for transdisciplinarity. Finally, lessons learned from practice and process knowledge are highlighted to strengthen collaboration in overcoming wicked sustainability challenges.

Introduction

Transdisciplinary research is mostly concerned with so-called “super-wicked” problems (Auld et al. 2021). Here, the authors refer to four linking components: time is scarce, there is a lack of central authority, the people responsible also want to solve the issues, and policies are making irrational compromises for the future (Levin et al., 2007, 2009, 2012). Vivid examples are man-made climate change and the recent news that six of the nine planetary boundaries will be exceeded in 2023 (Richardson et al., 2023). In the international textile industry, for example, “super-wicked” problems manifest in interwoven challenges where, in countries of the Global North, individual purchasing decisions are reflected in the phenomena and impacts of Fast Fashion (McNeill and Moore 2015). In countries of the Global South, on the other hand, environmental degradation is mirrored in the improper use of chemicals (Madhav et al. 2018), while poor working conditions are promoted through textile production

processes (Choudhari 2020). Thus, consumption and production are geographically decoupled (Vadén et al. 2020) with different interests and dynamics in place. In addressing these wicked challenges, actors rely on partnerships, as these problems cannot be tackled by individuals alone (Beyers and Heinrichs 2020).

Solution-orientated transdisciplinarity is intended to create space for partnerships to tackle these challenges together. This form of transdisciplinary research is defined as an “integrative, method-driven scientific principle aiming at the solution or transition of societal problems [...] by differentiating and integrating knowledge from various scientific and societal bodies of knowledge” (Lang et al., 2012). The focus lies on the joint search for and development of levers for social change between practice and science in experiments or so-called real-world labs (Bergmann et al. 2021; Schöpke et al. 2018). Transdisciplinary spaces serve to combine knowledge and perspectives from different actors. Ideally, non-scientific and scientific actors come together to first develop a common understanding of the challenges and then to initiate and shape change through scientific and practical results (Lang, Wiek, and von Wehrden 2017). The different knowledge, values, and practices of all stakeholders are to be considered when developing possible solutions (Caniglia et al., 2021). For example, the everyday knowledge and experiences of consumers or textile workers are in some respects just as relevant as the expertise of scientists. This means that lived experience is crucial for solving sustainability problems because it provides a sense of what is needed and should not be replaced by explicit knowledge, which is also important for making connections to theories, for example. Hence, transdisciplinarity redesigns the relation between practice and science. Thus, in this understanding, it is crucial to not only talk about “science” and “scientists” but to talk more generally about “knowledge” (Caniglia et al. 2021) and “practitioners of knowledge” (Mareis 2011). The aim is to generate new and so-called “robust” knowledge together that could not have been developed by isolated scientists or practitioners alone.

However, such interactive transdisciplinary spaces require explicit process design. In a dynamic and complex environment with diverse stakeholders, different values, norms, and forms of knowledge must be dealt with sensitively. It is rarely helpful to simply bring everyone to the same table. Rather, there are different interests, personalities, mentalities, and structural barriers that can lead to dynamic conflicts. Therefore, process knowledge is critical in transdisciplinary research and needs elaboration (Lawrence et al., 2022). Indeed, every design decision has far-reaching implications for opening or narrowing the space for collaboration, human dynamics, and outcomes. Not without good reason, design has been criticized in recent years, especially for its Eurocentrism and modernist perspectives, as well as for its solution orientation (Fry and Nocek 2020). Therefore, the question reveals how to navigate between transition and critique in designing interactive transdisciplinary spaces and how to balance the development of (imperfect but urgently needed) solutions and (nevertheless still necessary but time-consuming) reflections. Thus, we ask, what obstacles and opportunities arise from the various design decisions, and where are the limits of design?

When examining the question of why, who, and how in designs for transdisciplinary processes, we follow Lawrence and colleagues, who argue that process knowledge should be further developed for “non-specialized (research) communities” (2022). We make use of a transdisciplinary space named *Simply different fashion* (in German: *Fashion Mall Anders*), in which we ask ourselves various questions about transdisciplinary design. We take these questions as an opportunity to reflect on the workshop that took place in June 2022 in a

conventional shopping mall in Berlin. It served to stimulate a conversation between visitors to the mall and interested parties about a more sustainable textile industry.

In the remainder of the paper, we will first set up our imaginary reflective space and outline theories of transdisciplinary research and, more specifically, process knowledge. Then, we will address questions in a reflexive practice and show what implications the different design choices bring. We will further discuss our specific example of a transdisciplinary space called *Simply different fashion*, through which our reflective piece evolved. Finally, we highlight the lessons learned by process knowledge experts and collaborative practices.

Setting Up the Space: Theory of Process Knowledge for Transdisciplinary Research

Solution-oriented transdisciplinary processes usually go through different phases to tackle sustainability problems. In the initiation of such projects, also referred to as phase 0 of transdisciplinarity (Horcea-Milcu, Leventon, and Lang 2022), it is often a matter of understanding the current challenges, connecting people, and discussing social and environmental issues as well as developing scientific research questions. In this phase, actors are writing proposals and making funding available. Subsequently, Lang and colleagues (2012) speak of three phases in an ideal-typical transdisciplinary process: Phase A. Problem framing and team building, Phase B. Co-creation of solution-oriented transferable knowledge, and Phase C. the (Re-)Integration and application of created knowledge (p. 28, see fig. 1). Because we know that transdisciplinary processes are hardly ideal-typical, these processes are even more in need of the coming together of different stakeholders in a meaningful manner. The way this is done covers process knowledge of transdisciplinary research.

Transdisciplinary process knowledge refers to specific expertise and skills aside from systems knowledge, orientation knowledge, and transformative knowledge (Lawrence et al., 2022). It aims to design and host communication processes that allow diverse perspectives to connect meaningfully and fundamentally generate new insights and action together. Thus, designers, facilitators, and hosts of such spaces deal with human interaction and consider how to create meaningful and appreciative enquiries between actors with diverse perspectives, knowledges, and worldviews. Many approaches and methods come from educational work, even if it is understood that information is not conveyed in a frontal manner, but that space must be created between people in which they can exchange their knowledge, interests, and values.

Decisions made by transdisciplinary process designers influence the culture of communication in interactive spaces (Wamsler et al., 2020). Design decisions create spatial atmospheres and group dynamics that we as humans feel and sense. They can open or narrow the space by creating inviting - or excluding - atmospheres that follow purposes such as emergence or convergence and usually trigger personal feelings such as ease and joy or rejection and fears in participants. Beyers and Leventon (2021), for example, have shown how policy processes and structures in a multi-stakeholder partnership close down the space for social learning for the wide diversity of participants to favor governance outcomes. In the German Textile Partnership, following a reorganization of governance structures, the process designers opted for smaller expert groups to promote specific governance decisions and avoid fluctuation while neglecting the great diversity of participants. In other words, different interests are at odds here. So, the question is mostly about what is to be achieved, or quite

simply, what are the fundamental purposes of the transdisciplinary space? It is not a question of making the right or wrong decision; designers just need to be aware that these decisions are sensitive to group dynamics and the effects and outcomes of the process. Thus, it is usually helpful if there is a certain understanding of the goals among all stakeholders and/or a certain ownership of a party that formulates the aims. Although we present effects as ‘either-or’ categories, we know that the truth probably lies somewhere in between and that they represent a continuum between two extremes visualized in Figure 1. Process designers and facilitators must be sensitive to these individual and group dynamic factors and, in essence, strike a balance that serves the fundamental goals of collaboration. Below, we asked ourselves a series of questions that helped us discuss specific design decisions and how they open or narrow the space to better understand the practical implications of process knowledge.

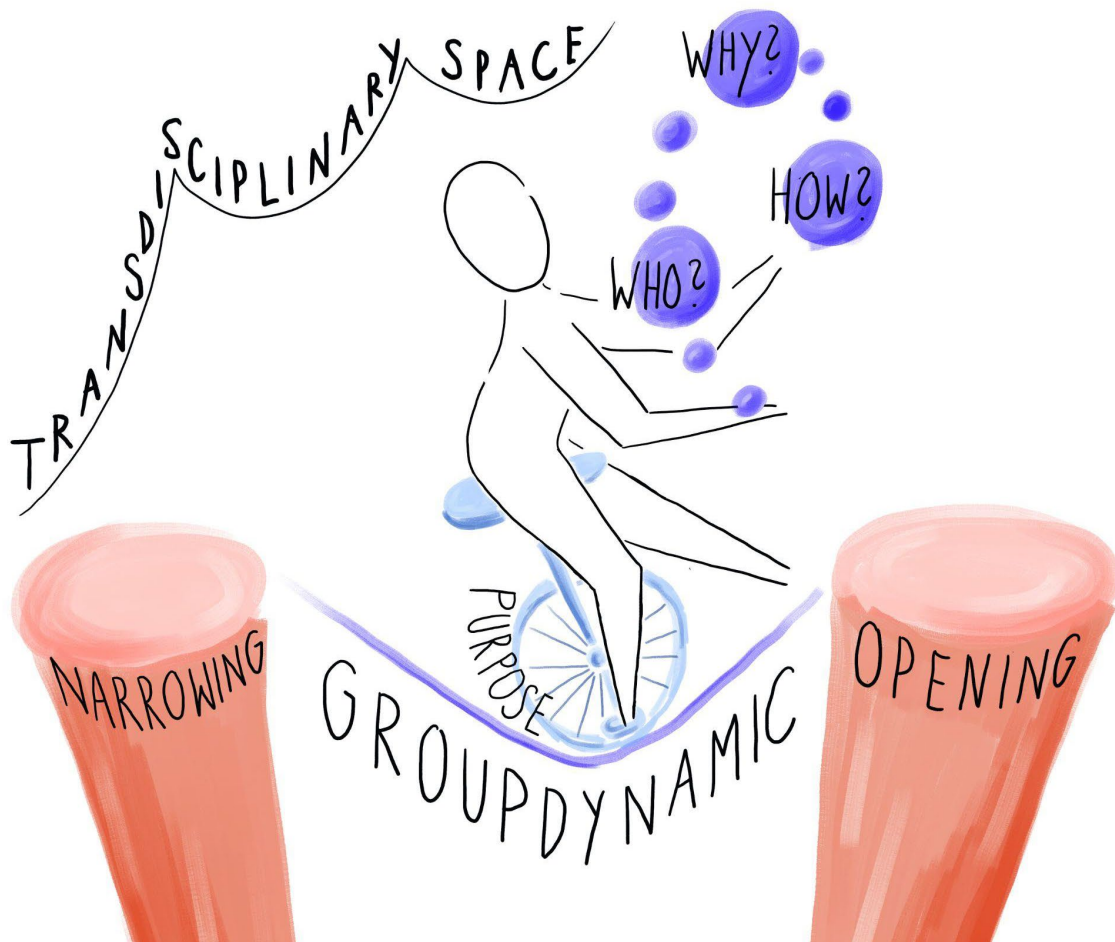


Fig. 1. Metaphorical visualization of a process designer or facilitator balancing between two extreme poles, the narrowing and opening of transdisciplinary spaces, to steer group dynamics through design decisions. Throughout the research process, facilitators constantly juggle decisions about the why, who, and how of transdisciplinarity, represented by juggling balls. At the same time, they must become aware of the deeper meaning of the decisions to support and shape the associated dynamics of the team, which is visualized as a balancing act on the unicycle. © Kersten

The Why, Who, and How of Designing Transdisciplinary Research

A. The ‘why’ in transdisciplinary designs

Why would this project be initiated?

The first question to ask is what requires attention and what the deeper issues are that call for a systemic, transformative approach. What are the specifics of the context, and what is at stake? What is the deeper calling or goal, and what are possible underlying patterns that may have caused the problem at hand? All these questions are central and can be triggers for transdisciplinary efforts. However, what are questions that do not require transdisciplinarity, and why should we consider joint research? Are diverse perspectives necessary to solve the challenges, and which perspectives should not be left out? In general, these questions deserve to be asked to better understand and represent motivations, strategies, and joint efforts.

What kind of results are expected?

Transdisciplinary processes should lead to both scientific knowledge and practical results. Combining these sometimes-contradictory goals often leads to tensions. In addition, different stakeholders derive different added value from the processes and define success differently. For some privileged stakeholders, participation through the opportunity to network may be enough, while others want to push concrete solutions and recommendations for action more strongly. This is certainly also related to the time dimension and the question is which time horizon in which results are expected or aimed for. Additionally, the capacities that the stakeholders must or can contribute need to be considered. Here, too, power dynamics, cultural differences, and mentality must be combined with the motivation for initiating such a space or project. In addition, there are often predefined goals that must already be set in the funding phase that contradict ideas of emergence or that are jointly defined at a certain point in the project. However, collaboration and participatory spaces undoubtedly create opportunities for new developments, innovation, and unexpected outcomes. Fostering an open-minded attitude towards these possibilities could create the potential for transitional outcomes that are central to forms of experimentation.

B. The ‘who’ in transdisciplinary designs

Who gets to initiate the project and design the space?

Phase 0 of a transdisciplinary process is for sure not "neutral" regarding co-establishing and co-designing the project, even if the choice of words may suggest so. The concept of transdisciplinary research evolved out of the science community with varying privileges within the system (Lorenz 2022). Not all people are equally favored or entitled to initiate such initiatives or participate in these processes, which is due to structural imbalances such as classism but also to power dynamics, cultural differences, or mental models. However, engagement, initiation, and participation often reflect personal ownership and co-determination of a project. Therefore, process designers need to honestly consider the dynamics of opening and narrowing the space in the initiation phase. Is there a need or interest for including representatives of a wide diversity of stakeholders at the beginning, or is a smaller core group sufficient, and for what reason? In reality, and often for pragmatic

reasons, smaller and more privileged groups define the initial problem and context conditions and apply for funding in Phase 0. This is not an argument against transdisciplinarity, but its implications should always be honestly reflected upon. How can this be overcome, and what spaces need to be created to bring stakeholders together in project initiation? Some funding agencies take this approach and provide a space for transdisciplinary stakeholders to interact without the need for specific outcomes, but where collaboration can emerge.

Who is invited, and who is typically marginalized in such processes?

This raises the question of whether to invite certain experts or simply allow a large number of relevant interest groups to have their say. This is also a question of the goal set by the initiators or planners. Transdisciplinary projects often take an inclusive stance in order to hear and include all relevant voices for the joint development of sustainable solutions. This can result in an open space for a wide variety of perspectives. However, at the same time, it may also lead to endless discussions and foster frustration among results-oriented perspectives. Therefore, others argue that initiators should first take stock of the various stakeholders, how they relate to the issue at hand, and what interdependencies (if any) exist between them. From this perspective, the pursuit of diverse perspectives requires an initial homework, namely, to analyze the stakeholders and potential voices that need to be included. Otherwise, participants often reflect the "usual suspects" and miss the opportunity to stimulate truly diverse and transformative discussions. However, this approach also comes with the bias that it is dominated by certain perspectives (e.g., academics), and others are not always represented (e.g., minorities or social groups with lower incomes or lack of education). On the other hand, forms of transdisciplinary projects, such as citizens' councils at the national level, deal specifically with the issue of representation and attempt to enable the greatest possible representation of the population by means of lottery procedures. However, other, smaller projects are often unable to meet this requirement due to a lack of financial, human, and time resources. Street experiments, for example, are more of a threshold experience (Walter Benjamin, July 1892 - September 1940): At best, people who may also meet by chance curiously explore differences and ambivalences on a particular topic that arise from different approaches to this topic. In this way, smaller "transformative islands" are created, which are initially not representative but from which - according to the idea - a dynamic can develop.



Fig. 2. Impressions from the *Mall Anders* venue and the participatory and transdisciplinary workshop *Simply different fashion* (in German: *Fashion Mall Anders*) in Berlin, June 22. © Beyers/RIFS

Who has a say, and what is the spatial design?

With a great diversity of stakeholders present in a transdisciplinary space, there is always a balance between providing time for everyone to speak and listening to other voices. Traditional formats favor narrowing logic, with invited experts given space and asked to present their perspectives on a stage while all others listen. This can even be sensed through the arrangements of the seatings. Traditionally, in Western societies, participants sit in rows next to and behind each other while getting to ask a few questions at the end. Following an opening logic of who has a say refers to attitudes and approaches to open communication cultures and interactive discussions with arrangements in a circle (Fraude et al. 2021). The question is whether the designers aim to provide participants with valuable expert knowledge or to initiate discussions and interactions to bring together experts of their own knowledge and fields to foster innovative co-creation.

C. The ‘how’ in transdisciplinary designs

What methods to use?

The open or closed design of transdisciplinary processes has advantages and disadvantages in terms of content and methodology. Ideally, substantive discussions about the “super-wicked”

problems and possible solutions in transdisciplinary research arise through co-creative processes in which different actors come together. Open methods such as world cafés or open spaces can help to generate new ideas and innovative solutions. For pragmatic and time-related reasons, however, these processes often work differently in reality: specialist delegations formulate the problem in advance to submit applications and acquire funding for action research or transdisciplinary projects. The funding programs, therefore, set the framework conditions, which are determined by political will, the complexity of the problem, or social relevance.

This already determines how much time such processes require or are allowed, which does not necessarily reflect emerging aspects and questions that may develop. Thus, when research is predetermined, projects and methods tend to reflect the perspective of those who initiate them rather than that of the wider public. Formats are rather predetermined for the specific focus and hardly address emergence. However, when the content is not predetermined, openness to topics and participants can lead to the unexpected, but sometimes there is a lack of ownership and direction. This requires expanding the comfort zones of actors and donors, and issues of legitimacy come into play.

How to evaluate?

Transdisciplinary experiments want to be evaluated for various reasons. There is an interest in measuring the quality of the processes and better understanding their results. Often, it is evaluated to create legitimacy and transparency for funding bodies or civil society while asking why and for what reason financial, time, and knowledge capacities are constrained. Additionally, others want to learn from such transition experiments and amplify approaches to drive transformation (Lam et al. 2020; O'Brien et al. 2023). Often, however, evaluation is undertaken by an isolated evaluation consortium of funders or other external professionals after the process to measure success or failure by a pre-defined set of quality criteria. But what about using evaluation as a continuous tool among participants for driving transition? In another article, one of the co-authors questioned traditional and narrowing practices of evaluation by elaborating conceptually and through illustrative cases on the potential of opening up evaluation (Williams et al. forthcoming). Opening up evaluation by integrating participants in experiments can lead to empowerment, meaning strengthening participation and the co-design of the project. Additionally, it can foster social learning when understanding evaluation as a tool to learn throughout the process and from each other. Ultimately, opening up evaluation can foster transition itself when linking small transition experiments with broader transition impacts, for example, through long-term evaluation (e.g., 3-5 years after the experiment). The question, therefore, arises as to the reason for the evaluation and which design decision is made.

A Practical Example of Collective and Reflective Journaling: Simply Different Fashion

The setting: In the first half of 2022, *Mall Anders* ([web presence](#)) served as a disruptive element in a conventional shopping mall in central Berlin. Built in an empty shop of the mall, the learning and experimental space was dedicated to both science communication and a diverse transdisciplinary program. This ranged from exhibitions to workshops that were not only intended to bring together students and academics but also to invite urban pedestrians and visitors to the mall to engage in a variety of different topics. Funded by the Berlin University Alliance and supported by the initiative of a few committed people, the *Mall*

Anders space was built by and decorated through recycled materials from the leftover furnishings of the previous shop tenant and thus offered an exciting location for our experiment with a transdisciplinary space (see Fig. 2.). In the following, we would like to reflect on the design decisions of our space *Simply Different Fashion* and its implications for the communication culture and the personal and collaborative dynamics.

Initiation: The idea and transdisciplinary space of the project was initiated by us, researchers, and employees of the RIFS (former IASS) who were interested in using the opportunity of the *Mall Anders* space for our own work, research interests, and experiments. This, for sure, has implications. We had financial and institutional support, while other non-scientific actors tended to participate under the guise of commitment without being given financial or time resources. Thus, the initiation of a transdisciplinary process is usually accompanied by a certain interest, which can be intrinsic or institutional in nature. The interest here relates to a certain goal of the person as an individual or a representative of any kind of party. The interests are often linked to forms of identification or ownership, i.e., the urge to want to participate proactively in the matter. If this is not ensured, actors may question why they participate in such time-consuming and intensive transdisciplinary projects. Ideally, ownership is built beyond stakeholder boundaries by all participants having a ‘stake’ or interest in the project or in solving a specific tension or problem. Then, such projects can be carried out by a wide variety of people with different interests to mirror the diverse perspectives, i.e., not only by scientists, whereas in reality, this is often the case.

Invitation and spatial boundaries: We chose a transcendent approach to open a space for diverse perspectives - sustainability-related as well as everyday perspectives from the mall. Our hope was that a broad spectrum of people with different backgrounds would feel invited. Our underlying understanding was that all participants are also experts in the textile field, as they - like all of us - are in contact with textiles, fabrics, and clothes daily. So, we did not address a specific interest group while advertising the event. This would rather serve to bring together experts from the field, such as chemical managers or labor law experts, who could then deepen their knowledge in exchange. A rather symbolic (and practical) example of our understanding of transcendent boundaries was the open doors of the shopping store during our event. We wanted to keep the doors open to create an inviting atmosphere for interested visitors while being confronted with the challenge of loud and noisy sounds from the mall disturbing our conversations. An intensive application process on site would have been key in the run-up to the event to build up trust with the mall visitors and better understand their interests and, thus, the need for discussion.

Thematic focus and methods: Our aim was to facilitate open exchange between diverse participants, where the unexpected, e.g., projects, learning circles, or working groups, might evolve. We wanted to open a space for the broad topic of textile transformation by intending to develop the themes and specifics throughout the workshop through the engagement and interest of the different participants. We chose the participatory pro-action café method. Here, all participants can present their project ideas before they can vote on the most interesting projects for everyone. Then, the selected projects are collectively developed in three rounds hosted by the project owner with the support of the other participants and can be continued in this way in the future. Thus, a rather open and broad topic, as well as the method, was chosen to follow our understanding of bringing together textile experts from the street. However, this brought the challenge of running and promoting a workshop on a rather undefined theme and without predefined thematic nuances. This, however, was then addressed by the interest of

some participants who expressed the desire to contribute their own expertise on the overarching topic of textile transformation. The openness of the content, therefore, worked well in that some people to whom we sent a very openly formulated invitation contributed their expertise to the process out of intrinsic motivation.

Who gets to speak: A bit controversial to our understanding that every participant is an expert, we were confronted with the request by three main speakers to present their work: Beatrace Angut Oola from Fashion Africa Now who spoke about sustainability from the perspective of African and Black perspectives from the diaspora, Monika Maria Sommer who spoke about human rights and the (inter-)national legal frameworks in the complex political field of supply chain regulation, and Dr Susanne Schmitt, as a Fellow of the RIFS, talked about materiality and the change of values over time from a cultural anthropological perspective. Originally planned as three different and short impulses to stimulate the discussions, all speakers took more time, which felt like expert presentations and mixed conversations between all participants had to be shortened. Valuable learning is thereby to measure time spoken by each individual or the experts depending on what process designers are aiming for. The thematic diversity, however, from the three areas of business, politics, and science, would not have been present if we had narrowed the topic down in advance and enlivened the discussion on a sustainable transformation of the textile industry.

Evaluation: Considerations regarding narrowing or opening evaluation resulted in discussions around, on the one hand, predefining criteria for legitimization to externals of why we are making use of time and financial resources (such as how many participants from what areas, quality of discussions, and results such as outputs and outcomes). On the other hand, we discussed the underlying idea of understanding evaluation as a tool for empowerment and learning for both of us as initiators and participants. Our ideas were more in line with the latter, thus opening evaluation through a co-authoring space to collectively work and write on this article (initially a blog post) with interested participants of the workshop or at least to extend the invitation. This could have fostered ownership as well as learning among the interested participants and could have, as a continuous process, even resulted in new ideas and initiatives. Due to other projects and limited capacities, we were not able to meet this requirement here, and we finally reflected upon our process ourselves. However, we will explore opening evaluation and its potential in future projects.

Results: The most important results were mainly the quality of the discussions. For example, one participant emphasized the relevance of neighborhood initiatives and her desire for quick and visible change. Another participant felt that legislative changes at the international level have already been a great success and noted from her policy advisory perspective that "thick boards have to be drilled slowly" as these processes take a long time. This is also an example of the specific challenges of transdisciplinarity in relation to the topic of textile transformation. In contrast to transdisciplinary projects that deal, for example, with the transformation of transport in the region, the textile industry is much more abstract and seems to be further decoupled from the living conditions of consumers in Germany. Therefore, the perspectives of invited participants from Syria and the Philippines were particularly valuable for the discussions, as they underlined the importance of a decolonial perspective on the topic. Beatrace, founder of Fashion Africa Now, pointed out that from her perspective, aspects such as community building and organization should be more strongly emphasized in sustainability definitions and textile labels. From a feminist perspective, it was also very interesting to observe that women in particular - who traditionally and still do most care work

- created more access to practical applications, such as sewing or recycling old clothes into cleaning rags, and also placed a stronger focus on passing on this knowledge to the next generation.

Reflections, Practical Learnings, and Wrapping Up

Our workshop in the *Mall Anders* showed that even after the adoption of the Supply Chain Act, which is a small milestone on the bumpy road to more sustainability, there is a social interest in a discourse about challenges and opportunities for a textile transformation. In our opinion, there is great potential to build on this through transdisciplinary research. Bringing together diverse perspectives through, e.g., systems thinking can enhance our collective understanding of the highly interlinked “super-wicked” challenges for people on our planet. Working conditions and safety in the producing countries must be taken into account, as must consumer behavior in countries with excessive consumption (geographically located in the global North). It is crucial to know where to intervene in such systems and where the limits of interventions lie. Leventon et al. (accepted) have illustrated that systems are built like onions and that the outermost layers, i.e., the economic structures and political institutions, need to be addressed in order to achieve the most profound changes. We thus ask ourselves whether we need a growing power of the state (Beyers, Leventon, & Heinrichs 2023), especially in democratic countries, when we take into account that liberal economies have created (almost) post-colonial conditions on the international market in recent decades.

The reflective practice prompts us as authors to think about our own research positionality and the lessons learned for future similar projects and transformative research in general. We also need to be aware of our unconscious bias, for example, arising from our cultural and everyday background and our (research) interests. As transdisciplinary researchers, we intentionally created the space because we wanted diverse perspectives to discuss challenges and solutions to the sustainability problem in the textile industry but did not know the everyday problems of the people involved. They may not have the resources and/or interest to participate in such processes. Interested stakeholders may have different institutional or (in)dependent working relationships that create a certain power imbalance for participation. Thus, many want to participate out of their own room for maneuver (agency) but also recognize the need for the right structures in place to counter the challenges. So how do we intentionally and continuously reflect our own biases in design decisions and create new capacities and structures to open spaces in which everyone involved can and wants to participate in order to ultimately enable a better individual and collective life? For us as individuals, the application process was an important learning that should be taken more into account in future projects. However, an increase in collective efforts to open up to transdisciplinarity could also lead to a change in the attitude of funding organizations that openly invite and financially support different actors and perspectives without demanding specific outcomes but rather allowing collective thinking for the emergence of new ideas and actions.

Our example highlights that we must deal consciously and transparently with process design and decisions to counteract any power and social constraints. The article calls for more time and space for learning from and with each other by bringing knowledge from applied practices and science together in deeper dialogue and deepening the learning on process knowledge for process design. Thus, where, when, and with which habitus the space opens or

closes during the different transdisciplinary phases is critical to balancing the mix of people for the right level of knowledge and opinions.

Looking back on the *Simply Different Fashion* workshop, the biggest tension for us was probably that, on the one hand, we planned a closed workshop to promote social learning, and on the other hand, we had the idea of an open space in mind where mall visitors, neighbors, and experts could discuss freely. This structural tension between openness and closedness, which is often inherent in transdisciplinary research, was reflected in the symbolic element of the glass door of the *Mall Anders*, which we deliberately left open at the beginning of the workshop to invite pedestrians in, but which we had to close after a while because of the distracting noise coming from outside.

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