

Transformative Innovation Policy Conference: Towards a Global Research Agenda Final Report

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Date and location: Valencia

4th November 2019- Mirador de Comedias, Carrer de les Comèdies, 7, 46003

5th November 2019 – Ingenio, UNIVERSITAT POLITÈCNICA DE VALÈNCIA, Ciudad Politécnica de la Innovación, Edif 8E 3º Flor [Red Cube], Camino de Vera s/n, 46022

(Followed by funders dinner in central Valencia)

Organisers: Organised by TIPC in association with Eu-SPRI & with a representation of STRN & Globelics members

Key Speakers: Kirsten Dunlop (ClimateKIC), Jordi Molas Gallart (Ingenio), Johan Schot (University of Utrecht)

Panellists: Fred Steward (Policy Studies Institute), Mike Asquith (EEA), Anastasios Kentarchos & Sander Happaerts (European Commission), Matthias Koller (German Environment Agency), Astrid Martens (Netherlands Environment Agency), Karin Fink (Environment Office, Switzerland), Matthew Wallace (IDRC), Imraan Patel (DST, South Africa), Diana Velasco (Universidad de Ibaguè), Ellie Gilvin (EPSRC), Nina Strandberg (SIDA)

Number of Participants: 110

Including (approximately): Eu-SPRI: 30, TIPC: 45, STRN: 35, Globelics: 15

Many of the participants who attended the conference are members of multiple networks and some were not part of any network.

Number of Participants from EU-SPRI: Appox 30

Overall Impression:

The one and half day conference was an effort to mobilise the community of scholars and practitioners to explore the emerging 'Transformative Innovation Policy' theme. It followed ongoing dialogue between members of four research networks – the [Transformative Innovation Policy Consortium \(TIPC\)](#), [European Forum for Studies of Policies for Research and Innovation \(Eu-SPRI Forum\)](#), [Sustainability Transitions Research Network \(STRN\)](#) and [Globelics](#) (in particular Africalics) in order to understand how different actors around the globe are interpreting and enacting transformative innovation policies through research and policy actions. To this end, the conference accommodated more than hundred participants, affiliated to one or multiple research network and offered multiple highly interactive sessions and two panel discussions between European policymakers as well as research and policy funders.

One key impression from the conference is that the participants valued the range of projects they were exposed to in the conference by replacing presentation session with dedicated poster session. This one hour dedicated poster session provided the opportunity to participants to expose

themselves to a wide of research topics, and also offered the flexibility to widen and/or deepen knowledge on specific topics. An example feedback on the conference is “I thought the session content and organization was excellent - very refreshing to not just come and talk about our individual projects, but rather use these projects in dialogue around the wider issues of transformations. Much more rich discussions.”

Another important session was the “engagement activity” where groups of conference participants discussed one of ten themes/topics, which constitute the proto research agenda on TIP. These themes were:

1. Conceptual Foundations of Transformative Innovation Policy
2. STI Policies for Transformative Change
3. Experimentation for Transformative Change
4. Politics and Governance of Transformative Change
5. Role of Research and Innovation Agencies for Transformative Change
6. Role of Governments and Ministries for Transformative Change
7. Role of Businesses and Entrepreneurs for Transformative Change
8. Transformative Innovation Policy in Developmental Context
9. Transformative Innovation Policy in Regional Context
10. Tools for Transformative Innovation Policy

Through an in depth facilitated discussion on each of these themes, the groups contributed to the research challenges and opportunities on each topic. The inputs from all groups were recorded online and is available for access by the community [here](#) in the Padlet platform. The feedback from the participants about this session were mostly “very positive”, with a few suggestions to allocate more time for such discussion sessions in future.

Key insights from the interactive engagement sessions were shared more widely among all conference participants in the “Agora of topics” in the penultimate session of the conference. Topics like “assessing transformation”, “Configuration of actors in the hidden world of business”, “transformation innovation administration” attracted many audiences.

In the closing session of the conference, it was agreed that a research agenda needs to emerge on the broad topic of transformative innovation policy. The proto-research agenda which has emerged from this conference will be a useful input to that process. Many practitioners remarked that besides generating new knowledge, there should also be efforts in translating and sharing scholarly knowledge for capacity building among practitioners for broadening innovation policy. To this end, a new “Transformative Innovation Policy Research Network (TIPRN)” was officially launched at the conference. Interested individuals from the STI research and practise community and affiliates of all four research networks were invited to [join this new network](#), and support development of the network and the research. A core committee will continue to seek funding and members for each of the four research networks have shown interest in continuing these discussions in further dedicated meetings and in dedicated sessions in different conferences, while also seeking out funding for further activities and for publishing the TIP research agenda.

Key Emerging Outcomes:

- A proto-research agenda has emerged based on further inputs on the various topics and research themes that constitute TIP research, following from the February 2019 workshop in Utrecht. There is an agreement on the need to finalise on a research agenda on TIP based on these inputs.

- A new platform of “Transformative Innovation Policy Research Network (TIPRN)” was launched for interested individuals to commit to building a research community around TIP. A core committee consisting of members of Eu-SPRI, STRN, TIPC and Globelics is in place and set to meet in coming months in order to coordinate attempts to support development of the network and the research.
- Members and governing board of TIPC have agreed to organise a low-emission virtual conference in 2021. This conference could be focussed on the TIP research agenda, if the TIP research network is effectively mobilised.
- A next step in this initiative to understand whether Eu-SPRI will be willing to continue to support the implementation of the TIP agenda, supporting various aspects of this initiative like publishing the research agenda and co-organising the conference in 2021.

Agenda:

Day 1: 25 th February 2018	
9.30-10.00	<p>Introductions</p> <p>Welcome to the conference from Professor Jordi Molas Gallart, Director of CSIC- UPV Ingenio.</p>
16.30-16.45	<p>Welcome Address</p> <p>Johan Schot welcomed all participants to the event on behalf of TIPC members.</p>
16.45-17.30	<p>Engagement Activity I</p> <p>The sessions opened with a semi-structured speed networking game, intended to introduce group members, explore expectations for working together and check in to the conference – leaving behind other duties and concerns. Each group was provided with a pack of cards, addressing a series of questions, such as motivations for attending the event, work responsibilities, collaborative styles, likes and dislikes and roles played within a team. Players were given a few minutes to take a card and discuss the question with other group members, before moving on to another group member – and question – when the bell rang.</p> <p>We observed how different groups interpreted this game and the social and cultural dynamics on display – some groups adopted an informal approach, circulating independently and mixing randomly with members; others were more formally facilitated, with players taking turns to circulate under the direction of the facilitator, or sharing responses one by one with the whole group. Participants finished the exercise by scribbling down anonymously their initial thoughts, reflections, hopes and fears for the event. These notes highlighted themes that ranged across hopes ‘to learn more about state-of-the-art innovation studies’ to have ‘challenging discussions that give new ideas’ to fears around ‘getting bogged down in theory’ and ‘networking with new people’ and ‘how to translate theory to practice’.</p>

	<p>Overall, the post conference survey indicated that 73% of respondents found this opening session a 'very positive' experience, 18% 'somewhat positive' and 9% neither positive nor negative.</p>
17.30-18.15	<p>Keynote by Dr Kirsten Dunlop, CEO EIT Climate KIC</p> <p>An inspiring talk focused on the EIT Climate KIC mission to catalyse systemic change through innovation; which looked at the drivers of their strategy, 'Transformation, In Time' and how this is being achieved through experimentation and collaboration.</p> <p>Chair: Johan Schot Speaker: Dr Kirsten Dunlop</p>
18.15-20.00	<i>Cocktail reception and networking</i>
Day 2: February 26th 2019	
9.00 – 10.00	<p>Welcome and Introductions</p> <p>Professor Jordi Molas Gallart, Director of CSIC- UPV Ingenio and Dr Bipashyee Ghosh shared an update on how the TIP global research agenda work is shaping up thus far with the inter-network dialogue participants – Eu-Spri, Globelics, STRN and TIPC. Each shared their vision for transformative change from their network's perspectives and how this links to aspects of the emerging research agenda.</p> <p>Different STI communities are mobilising innovation policy for addressing persistent socio-economic-environmental challenges. The main aim of the conference was to provide a platform for advancing the ongoing debates of different scholarly networks like Eu-SPRI, STRN, TIPC and Globelics/AfricaLics on transformative innovation. The conference brought together people and transdisciplinary research projects from different Global South and Global North contexts. The sessions in the conference were designed to facilitate maximum interaction, debate and mutual learning among participants towards co-creating new narratives around TIP.</p> <p>In this session, as well as the overview given from Professor Molas Gallart and Dr Ghosh, participants affiliated to each of these four key networks briefly introduced their perspective on TIP – how they approach this concept and how relevant is understanding and enacting TIP in their own contexts.</p> <p>Chair: Jordi Mollas Gallart Bipashyee Ghosh</p>
10.00-11.00	<p>Engaging with the projects through a poster exhibition</p> <p>This was a formal session, designed to facilitate informal interactions between participants. Each participant was requested to bring a poster describing their projects and results. More than 60 project posters were displayed in the hallways – which triggered rich discussions and engagement between the poster 'host' and 'visitors'. The projects ranged from biodiversity approaches to development, using AI to understand the</p>

	<p>impact of R&D, open data against government inertia to new narratives of green growth, Transformation for achieving SDGs in Mexico, Policy Labs for mobility services – to name a few. The session resulted in either deep understanding of a few projects in depth by some participants or a quick overview of many projects by others, given an hour time limit. Owing to the virtual exhibition of the posters on the TIPC website, participants could start the conversation with “Oh, I was looking at this poster online, and I have a question...”, instead of seeing the poster for the first time in this session.</p>
11.00-11.30	<i>Tea and Coffee</i>
11.30-13.00	<p>Engagement Activity II</p> <p>A key session of the conference were these facilitated group discussions on specific themes that emerged out of the project proposals submitted for the conference. Participants in each group brought forward insights from their projects or policy work to contribute to the theme of the group. Following these inputs, the groups chose a topic or a range of issues to discuss in-depth following the lead of the facilitator. The dynamics in each group and the resulting discussions were different. The note-taker recorded these discussions in an online platform called Padlet. This platform is open for knowledge sharing across all groups. The key aim of this activity was to generate knowledge from different individual as well as STI community perspectives on multiple facets of transformative innovation policy. These insights will feed into the effort of creating a shared research agenda on TIP through finding synergies and contrasts between different perspectives on each theme related to TIP. A key outcome of this activity was that a vibrant community of learning and practice emerged, made up of members who are enthusiastic about carrying forward the discussion and contribute to the research and action for transformative change.</p>
13.00 – 13.45	<i>Lunch and Networking</i>
14.00 – 15.00	<p>Plenary session on “Policy for Global Transformations ”</p> <p>The plenary was led by Mike Asquith from the European Environmental Agency (EEA). The core of the session was statements from the panel of representatives from various European agencies setting out how they are operationalizing transitions thinking and the challenges that this creates for assessing various initiatives.</p> <p>Chair: Mike Asquith Matthias Koller, Anastasios Kentarchos, Sander Happaerts, Mike Asquith European Environmental Agency, Fred Steward</p>
15.00 – 16.00	<p>Panel: ‘Supporting Global Transformations research’</p> <p>This panel focused on a discussion around what can be considered as ‘cutting-edge research’ for transformative change from funders’ perspective. In this session, a panel of funders shared their experiences of funding proposals that offered to contribute to transformative innovation. They shared the kind of projects they anticipate to be emerging in the field of science, technology and innovation that can be considered transformative. The panelists in this session had extensive experience in</p>

	<p>funding projects, particularly in the Global South, therefore a greater insight into research support in specific contexts became clear.</p> <p>Chair: Matthew Wallace Diana Velasco, Ellie Gilvin, Imran Patel</p>
16.00-16.30	Networking Break
16.30-18.30	<p>Bringing it together and forming the inter-network research network – Venue: Red Cube Lecture Theatre</p> <p>This session brought together the supply (the research community) and demand (the funders), although supply and demand is also cross cutting since researchers are looking for funding and funders are demanding fit with strategic priorities, aligned with ambitions to address the Sustainable Development Goals. The first half of this session brought it all together and defined next steps for the research agenda work and the related research network.</p> <p>In the beginning of this session, facilitators of each group presented short reflections and the key arguments put forward in their respective tables. These inputs were then matched with the funders’ experiences and anticipations in an open floor discussion. The goal was to find implications for a global research agenda on Transformative Innovation that bridges the supply and demand.</p> <p>The last part of the session launched a network around transformative innovation research and funding to continue collaboration and experimentation by designing a global programme of research on TIP.</p> <p>Chair: Johan Schot and Bipashyee Ghosh</p>
18.30 – 19.30	Closing drinks reception
20.00 – 22.30	<p>Funders Dinner in central Valencia</p> <p>A dinner hosted by TIPC, and co-funded by EU-SPRI, brought together research networks leads, policy makers and national agencies to consider opportunities for collaboration around a Transformative Innovation Policy (TIP) agenda aligned to societal and environmental goals. It built on earlier discussions with members of research networks, including STRN, EU-SPRI, Globelics and Africalics. TIPC founder, Johan Schot, hosted the meeting, calling for global research networks for sustainability transitions and innovation studies to mobilise in pursuit of a new shared research agenda, and for policy makers and funders to play a role in influencing this. He said: To address the SDGs, the Academy must transform, and as academics we need to rethink the way we do our business. How can we nurture more interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary work? The current model of working, underpinned by working individually, in smaller projects and in silos with cross-fertilisation at conferences, is a model of the 20th century. We need to establish new research infrastructure and work together in a bigger way. The EU, and other agencies globally want to prepare for sustainability transitions and as academics, it is no longer enough to do our own thing. TIPC is a step towards this, bringing together researchers and policy makers to work on shared learning and co-creation of TIP. However, there is further scope</p>

to strengthen ties with other networks to capitalise on the shared impact. The dinner meeting highlighted opportunities that this would present, along with obstacles to be overcome, and opened a dialogue for a way forward. Harnessing plurality Discussions highlighted the difficulties in establishing a new shared research agenda. While there is value in mobilising communities around common goals and themes, this approach is potentially at odds with scholars taking mutually informed individual approaches. Representatives emphasised, however, that networks can act as platforms to assimilate and mobilise knowledge, particularly for interaction with policy communities. One strategy, for example, might involve deliberate engagement with policy practitioners at annual conferences, such as demonstrated at the TIPC conferences. The challenge laid for building a shared research agenda is how to harness the plurality of perspectives within the networks. Network leads drew attention to the capacity for strengthening partnerships and connections, for aligning TIP enquiry with network research themes, and for using existing forums to promote a TIP research agenda that individuals may wish to subscribe to. Experimentation with evaluation, for example, was a common interest amongst network members. The time is right for alliances on transformation The policy makers, multilateral organisations and national agencies present, drew attention to the relevance and timeliness of this dialogue, and the scale of opportunity to work together. Implementation of the European 'Green Deal', for example, will throw up the need for new mindsets and practitioners. National, regional and city administrations will also need to work with researchers on systems mapping and the design of transformative policy actions. There is an opportunity for research networks to step up to the task of co-creation for policy experimentation and evaluation, along with the training of civil servants, with scope for initiatives such as EIT Climate-KIC to engage with TIPC and other networks to build capacity. Policy makers and researchers are speaking different languages Participants also touched on obstacles to closer collaboration. The current interface between scholarly networks and policy practitioners is not working effectively, with academic thinking sometimes lost in translation to the policy world. Policy makers called for more systemic links with researchers, arguing that networks need to demonstrate solutions through action that is working on the ground and leading to impact, rather than relying on practitioners to engage with more abstract thinking. The TIPC approach of experimentation and openness to policy makers is very attractive, and resonating globally, but the language being used should enable effective collaboration. Researchers were asked to make a shift to enter the terrains of policy makers, reaching out to officials who would not ordinarily attend academic forums. Finally, researchers need to develop expertise in engaging not only with agencies acting as investors or funders, but also with those politicians who are answerable to societal needs. Finding and sharing new ways of working together Funders and national agencies suggested their interests lie in partnerships with TIPC and the other networks, particularly with a view to identifying new ways of working together. An explicit research agenda is secondary to this and would not necessarily align to funding frameworks at any given time. There is complementarity in thinking, emerging from the Global South and North, and opportunities to learn from each others' approaches. But some contributors expressed frustration at the way funders facilitate policy interaction – particularly in the South – with investment dependent on satisfying the funders' agenda, rather than delivering the impact sought by those on the

ground. New models for engagement and practice, such as bilateral initiatives between a single agency and research team, can help us to challenge one another on how we work on transformative change. Participants voiced the appetite for a community of practice, linking together policy actors from across the world – and viewing not just innovation, but also education, wealth, industrial, environmental and other policies through a transformative lens. The opening of a dialogue TIPC founder Johan Schot thanked representatives at the meeting for their contributions and commented on the broad scope for collaboration and scale of opportunity. TIPC will continue consultation on the development of a shared agenda and has launched a Transformative Innovation Policy Research Network (TIPRN) space (sign up on the website homepage) to facilitate continued dialogues between interested parties. A month on at the beginning of December, around 90 researchers and practitioners had subscribed to this network. Rather than concluding collaboration at the conference, this meeting has started a new, transformative dialogue.

Attendees at the meeting were affiliated to the following networks and organisations:

African Network for the Economics of Learning, Innovation, and Competence Building Systems (Africalics)

European Commission, Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy (REGIO)

European Commission Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (DG RTD)

European Environment Agency (EEA)

European Forum for Studies of Policies for Research and Innovation (EU-SPRI)

European Institute of Innovation and Technology Climate Knowledge and Innovation Community (EIT Climate-KIC)

German Environment Agency

Global Network for Economics of Learning, Innovation, and Competence Building Systems (Globelics)

INGENIO [CSIC-UPV]

International Development Research Centre (IDRC)

Kenyan National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI)

Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency (PBL)

Research Council of Norway

Science and Technology Policy Research Institute (CSIR), Ghana

Science Policy Research Unit (SPRU)

South African Department of Science and Technology (DST)

Sustainability Transitions Research Network (STRN)

Swiss Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN)

Transformative Innovation Policy Consortium (TIPC)

UK Research and Innovation (UKRI)

Université Cheikh Anta Diop de Dakar (UCAD)

Utrecht University Centre for Global Challenges (UGlobe)

Vinnova, Sweden

