TRANSDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH: LESSONS FROM THE FRONTLINE

TRANSDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH AIMS TO:
CLOSE KNOWLEDGE-ACTION GAPS IN ORDER TO SOLVE PROBLEMS AND SUPPORT TRANSFORMATIONS TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY

CHALLENGE: UNSUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

GOAL: GLOBAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

PRINCIPLES OF TRANSDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH

1) Understand the complexity of problems
2) Take account of diverse views of problems, goals and solutions
3) Link abstract and specific knowledge
4) Ensure knowledge and practices focus on creating common good

PUTTING PRINCIPLES INTO PRACTICE
CONDUCT CONTEXT ANALYSIS
DEFINE PROBLEM TOGETHER
DEVELOP RESEARCH QUESTIONS
BUILD TEAM WITH TD COMPETENCIES
DESIGN STRATEGY

BRING TOGETHER STAKEHOLDERS IN A STRUCTURED WAY
DEVELOP BRIDGING CONCEPTS TANGIBLE FOR ALL
DESIGN, PREPARE, FACILITATE INTERACTIONS
ASSIGN ROLES

INTEGRATE RESULTS
PRODUCE INTERVENTIONS FOR SCIENCE, POLICY AND PRACTITIONERS
DEVELOP LONG TERM STRATEGY

RESPONSES FROM THE WORKSHOP

"There needs to be training in transdisciplinary research"

"Sometimes it is a challenge to get people to participate"

"There are capacity limits for co-design"

"It is necessary to embed transdisciplinary research in academic institutions"

"There's a politics of inclusion required for transdisciplinary research"

"There are a small number of people with power and means"

"It is essential to communicate beyond academia"

LESSONS FROM THE FRONT LINE

Transdisciplinary research is a long term process. It is necessary to find common goals and understandings amongst stakeholders for problems to be defined, and goals identified. A range of rules, tools, skills and understandings need to be developed together, recognising that there are power differentials between stakeholders in terms of capacities and resources to participate.
"There is a need for new, radical thinking and decisions"
Dr. Frank McGovern (EPA)

"There is a duty for scientists to communicate their findings to inform public policy"
Dr. Lynn Dicks (University of East Anglia)

"There is a lack of fora for science communication"
Johanna Ickert (Plymouth University)

"Bringing together natural and social sciences inculcates a culture of innovation"
Jim Clarken (CEO, Oxfam Ireland)

"The Dublin Living Lab has inbuilt transdisciplinarity. The objective is to look not only at scaling up projects but also how to evaluate them"
Dr. David Prendergast (Intel)

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

This infographic was produced from a transdisciplinary workshop held by Future Earth Ireland and Chaired by Professor Anna Davies on 29th November 2016. A full report on the workshop can be accessed from the Future Earth Ireland website: https://www.ria.ie/programmes/policy-and-international-relations/future-earth-ireland

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