

Transition Australia Convergence: **Networks for Action**



Sunday 15th September: Storey Hall RMIT

It's no exaggeration to say that we face a crisis. We need to do more than stop emissions, pollution, waste and habitat destruction but rapidly reverse course to enable developing countries to bring their populations out of poverty. It can be daunting. This conference takes the challenge to match the scale of the problems with the scale required to solve them based on three foundations and three key questions.

Three Foundations of the Convergence

Foundation 1: Nobody has THE answer. That's not to say that people don't have answers, but that we need all of the answers working together in synergy to really make this work. A forest made up of a single species of tree is brittle and lifeless, we need an ecosystem of activism and action working together

Foundation 2: People need to see the network but find the node. It's easy to feel like you are the only one worried about what's going on, yet see coordinated lobby groups and big business as speaking for the masses. This is completely backwards; there are millions of people spending billions of hours to build a sustainable and just future, but we only tend to see those groups we personally encounter. What we need is to connect, so that people don't see the group... they see the network. More than that the network needs to enable individuals to find groups that meet their passion at their first attempt and are supported to take powerful action.

Foundation 3: We need to be interdependent not competitive. In this world we struggle for models that aren't competitive and capitalist. If we are to turn the tide we need to be autonomous but connected, work to our strengths and always remember that it is the outcome that is most important not the organisational vehicle.

The Three Key Questions

This conference will take these foundations and encourage us to find the wisdom in the room to answer three questions

- How do we more effectively work together?
- What can we imagine as a life-sustaining future for the generations to come?
- How do we promote interdependent, powerful and visible action

These three questions will produce clear, accountable and actionable statements that face to the magnitude of the challenge. They will speak to how we will work together, the goals that we aspire to and how to ensure that actions are interdependent, powerful and highly visible.



Session 1: The Scale of the Problem; The Urgency of the Solution

This session is all about setting the scene. First we will come together as a group and honestly acknowledge the scope of our challenge whilst identifying how we will work in challenge, but with kindness and hope. Then we will zoom in to the reality of our situation from international to local, hearing from:

- Transition Australia: What we do, why we do it and the vision for networked action!
- Transition Darebin: A suburban group that has been building action for over 10 years
- Regional Update: Hearing the voice of the regions and rural areas

This session finishes with the provocation for the day:

How can we bring about real change through cooperative, networked, powerful and visible action?

Session 2: The Political, the Technical and the Human

To face the level and complexity of our challenges we need change at many levels. We need our decision makers to be courageous and visionary, our plan to be science based and powerful, and people to experience first hand that whilst the future will be different, it could be a more rewarding and fulfilling one.

Zone 1 The Political.

How can we put pressure on our decision makers, whether in business or in government to acknowledge the challenges and take courageous action for our future?

Extinction rebellion: XR holds that conventional approaches of voting, lobbying, petitions and protest have failed because powerful political and economic interest prevent change. Their strategy is therefore one of non-violent, disruptive civil disobedience – a rebellion!

Local Government: In December 2016 Darebin council became the first government of any level, anywhere in the world to declare a climate emergency. Since then 967 other jurisdictions have followed suit. We will be hearing from Councillor Trent McCarthy about the crucial role local council can have in driving change

School Strike for Climate

Students across the country and the world are striking from school to tell politicians to take their future seriously and treat climate change for what it is – a crisis.

Zone 2: The Technical.

When our decision makers are ready to face the challenge need to make sure that we have the answer and processes that will form a plan that is powerful, ready to go and most importantly works, not just now but for the rest of Earth's existence. To help us think about how this works will be hearing from three technical and design thinking groups.

Beyond Zero Emissions

Beyond Zero Emissions is an internationally recognised climate change think tank providing independent and ambitious climate change solutions for Australia.

Sustain: Australian Food Network

Founded in 2009, Sustain works with municipalities, organisations and networks to be a national voice supporting transition to a healthy, sustainable food system.

Permaculture Victoria.

Designed in the 1970's permaculture identified a set of design principles centered on whole systems thinking that utilised patterns and features seen in nature.

Zone 3: The Human

Recent elections here and across the world have shown that without a personal experience of what could be governments taking powerful action can be defeated through fear or change. We will hear from three groups giving a local and personal view of what life could be.

Transition Street Geelong

Transition streets are all about empowerment and connection. They are a way of bringing many people on board who are thinking globally but acting locally

Cohousing Australia

Cohousing is seeks to reduce the footprint, economically and ecologically of households by having a variety of communal spaces, community activity and resource sharing. Could cohousing drive a significant shift in the way we structure our lifestyle?

New Economy Network Australia

Working through geographical, NENA is working to transform Australia's economic system so that ecological health and social justice become its primary objectives.

To take information to Action, each group will present 3 key asks, actions or directions. The final step of this session is to call on the wisdom of the group to both prioritise and operationalise these actions, asking:

- What will it take to achieve this action?
- How could it work in practice and what would be the best way to make it happen?
- What would it look like when it was achieved?

This discussions and the outputs from them will then be used to provide the content for the open space session to follow where we will look at making a plan to get it done using the wisdom in the room.

Session 3 Open Space Technology: Bringing the political, technical and human together to create action.

Anyone who has ever been part of an open space technology session knows what a powerful process it is. It harnesses the passions and wisdom of those in the room under the 'Law of Two Feet', participants use their feet to take them to the place they can be active, productive and passionate. In this session we will be taking the list of calls to action from the previous session and asking how we can bring it together to create powerful, interdependent and visible action.

#OpenSpace

The Law of Two Feet

If people find themselves in situations where they are neither learning nor contributing, they are responsible for moving to another place -- using their two feet to find a place where their participation is more meaningful.

Session 4: Where to from here: The head, the heart and the hands?



In this session we bring together the work of the day both in Melbourne but also connecting to our other events in Queensland, Tasmania, New South Wales, Western Australia and South Australia to bring our 'Networks to Action'. We will attempt to bring the wisdom, the passion and the statements of action from across the country to finish the day with a set of statements that drive visible, interdependent and powerful action.

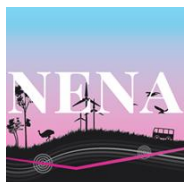
The Head to the hands. Using a popcorn style of reporting we will be harnessing the wisdom in the room and the power of technology to highlight actions that will make our final statements of action. Whether this exists in the political, technical or human sphere we aim to have clear and accountable statements of action to drive this emerging network.

The Heart. We cannot help others if we are in need of help ourselves so we finish the day by looking after our heart.

- **Regenerative Culture.** As the world changes, we need a culture that is resilient, healthy and can propel us into a new future. By caring and reconnecting to ourselves, we are able to care for the people in our circles and our wider international communities as well as for the natural world. By taking care of ourselves and each other we can change our culture and also avoid 'burn out' in the journey.
- **Hope and the Future.** There are great challenges in our future but also great strength in ourselves, our friends and our communities. Hear from local community leader and Uniting Church Minister Ali Sangster about how we can maintain hope in the fight for the future.

Close. We will finish the day as we began, coming together in a spirit of collaboration, challenge but also care and compassion. We will acknowledge the work to be done, celebrate the challenges that lie ahead and affirm a commitment that powerful actions come from passion, action and inter-connection.

The 2019 Transition Convergence is held in collaboration with:



SUSTAIN the Australian food network



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