



Amsterdam University
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INAUGURAL LECTURE

Collaborative Organizing for Grand Challenges

Engaging in collaborative
innovation and entrepreneurship

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Innovation and
Entrepreneurship

Creating Tomorrow

Collaborative Organizing
for Grand Challenges

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Engaging in collaborative innovation
and entrepreneurship

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by
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*“Calling all economic rebels: humanity’s future depends on you.
Yes, really. Because, unless we transform the
economic and public debate, we stand very little
chance indeed of thriving in this century.”*

Kate Raworth

Preface

Collaborative Organizing for Grand Challenges introduces the Collaborative Innovation and Entrepreneurship (CIE) professorship research themes and integration of research in education and practice. Established in 2017 as a personal chair at the Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences, Faculty of Business and Economics, the CIE professorship has developed expertise in the field of multi-stakeholder collaboration and inter-organizational relations, especially in the context of societal grand challenges and global value chains. CIE aims to contribute knowledge, support organizations, and facilitate learning about collaborative organizational forms and practices — what we call collaborative organizing — for a more sustainable, regenerative, and thriving 21st-century economic system.

At the time of this writing, Russia had invaded Ukraine and the media is continuously reporting on the devastation, bravery, and humanitarian crisis unfolding there. It is a constant reminder of the fragility of a peaceful world order and the power relations between the East and West. Also at this time, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change released the Working Group II contribution to the sixth assessment¹ looking at the impacts, vulnerabilities, and adaptation to climate change. António Guterres, United Nations secretary general, describes the report as “an atlas of human suffering and a damning indictment of failed climate leadership.”² In my opinion, the implications of climate change are as devastating as the war in Ukraine. My hope is that the unity that governments, multinational businesses, and citizens have shown to support a freely elected democratic order and condemn Russia's aggressive actions spills over to the war on climate. Just imagine if Big Oil multinationals like Shell, British Petroleum, and Equinor, which announced the decision to divest from Russian assets, made the same swift decisions to invest in sweeping climate change reform. Does society need to wait for a catalytic climate event equivalent to an unprovoked invasion of a sovereign nation to get industry and business leaders to stop emissions and human-induced climate change?

My hopeful answer is no, and I optimistically believe in a new generation of business leaders — economic rebels — who can reform our economic system. CIE aims to be instrumental in developing knowledge and changing the course of business and management education for 21st-century business leaders to be more inclusive of diverse stakeholders and collaborate more ef-

fectively to address societal grand challenges. Thankfully, the CIE purpose is shared by many, including my team, university colleagues, academic peers, students, and business partners. Through collaborative organizing, we hope to bring climate and social justice — something generally distant in business — to the heart of business.

Our calling

The Collaborative Innovation and Entrepreneurship (CIE) professorship heeds the call for economic rebels. We place the context of grand challenges front and center and see business and business leadership as a catalyst for positive change.³ Businesses increasingly see themselves as corporate citizens, recognizing the good they bring to society and communities.⁴ Corporate social responsibility has become a common and recognized professional function, although it often remains a siloed function within organizations rather than being holistically integrated into business operations.⁵ Executive boards and shareholders demand more and better monitoring of non-financial, sustainability indicators and require environmental, social, and governance reporting, especially in global value and supply chains. More and more social and sustainable entrepreneurs are starting firms that put sustainability — social justice and ecological preservation — at the core of their purpose⁶ while also providing an economic foundation to sustain development within a safe and healthy boundary of prosperity.⁷ There are great examples of small, new firms paving the way toward more distributive and regenerative business practices. Mud Jeans springs to mind, along with Lightyear.⁸ Incumbent firms like Unilever are also setting standards for sustainable practices.⁹ Yet society is still threatened by daunting global grand challenges defined as “formulations of global problems that can be plausibly addressed through coordinated and collaborative effort”¹⁰ and embodied in the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).¹¹



Figure 1 United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals

Ecological grand challenges and climate justice

Climate justice refers to the idea that responsibilities for climate change — one of the grandest challenges society faces — are addressed and distributed in a fair and equitable way. The 6th Assessment Report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) sends a clear message: Climate change has increased due to human influence on the planet's ecosystems, and we need to immediately start reducing emissions.¹² More than 70% of these emissions come from fossil fuels used for industrial manufacturing, food and agriculture, transport, and buildings (Figure 2).¹³ We can no longer deny that industry and the products, food, and utilities we use contribute to increasing levels of greenhouse gas emissions and rising temperatures. We can no longer afford to allow business-as-usual to continue and lead society down a path of climate destruction. To meet Paris Agreement¹⁴ targets and reduce emissions, we need to limit global warming to no more than 1.5 degrees Celsius,¹⁵ which means all fossil fuel emissions need to be eliminated by 2050.¹⁶ We all need to change our behavior; however, in the CIE professorship, we focus on businesses because they need to drastically transform the way that they produce and sell products. The structure of industries needs to be redefined and redesigned to support more regenerative and distributive business practices.

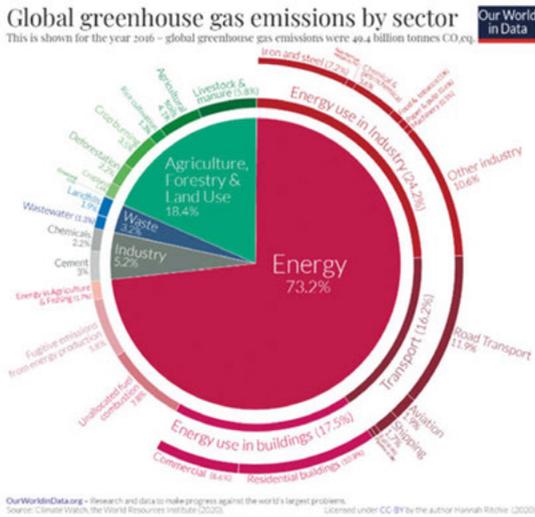


Figure 2 Global greenhouse gas emission by sector, 2016
Source: OurWorldinData.org

Social grand challenges and social justice

Gross domestic product (GDP) indicators have shown that, since the 1950s, most world economies have made people wealthier¹⁷; however, an equitable distribution of wealth and economic well-being is skewed. Today's global inequalities are a result of unchallenged economic and political structures, power relations, and unequal progress. Centuries of industrial production and economic growth based on colonialization that extracts natural resources and exploits labor have exacerbated social inequalities.¹⁸ But progress has been made, and fewer people are living in extreme poverty today compared to 1990.¹⁹ Living under extreme poverty means that the world's poorest suffer from hunger, malnutrition and poor health, are less educated, and lack electricity and energy. These extreme poverty communities are disproportionately impacted due to living in high-risk locations to climate change (e.g., areas prone to droughts, flooding, or excessive rain) as well as to limited access to resources (e.g., income, infrastructure, education) to cope with the effects of climate change.²⁰

Economic inequalities, and particularly opportunity inequalities, are still prevalent in many parts of the world. World maps of economic and well-being indicators show the inequality dividing line between the Global North and Global South. In Figure 3, global maps of income inequality, economic opportunities

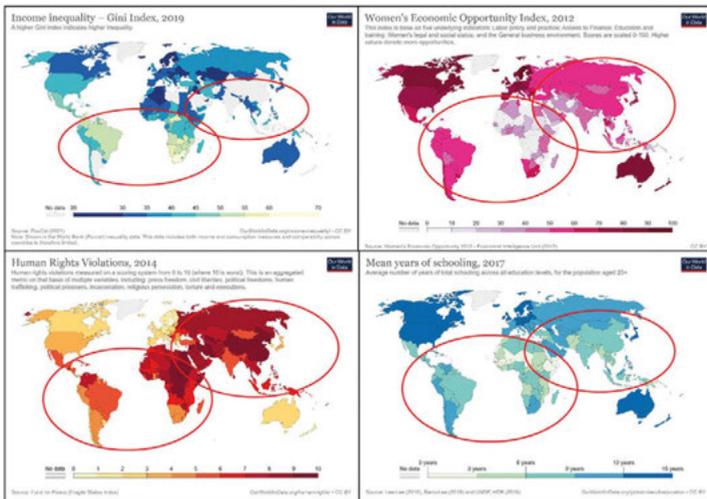


Figure 3 World maps of income equality (2019), women's economic opportunities (2012), human rights violations (2014), and mean years of schooling (2017). Source: OurWorldinData.org

for women, access to education, and human rights violations clearly show that the Global South (circled) lags behind the Global North. History has shown that human prosperity goes hand in hand with economic progress. Even though institutional and political environments vary across nations, businesses and business leaders can make decisions that have positive impacts on the economic equality and prosperity of countries in the Global South.

Doughnut Economics: The safe zone

In Kate Raworth's book *Doughnut Economics*, she lays out principles for a 21st-century economic system that aims to replenish natural resources rather than deplete them and to distribute economic wealth more equally and justly. It is clear that businesses', shareholders', politicians', and consumers' addiction to the continuous economic growth that fuels production and consumption behavior is out of balance with our planetary resources.²¹ The Doughnut

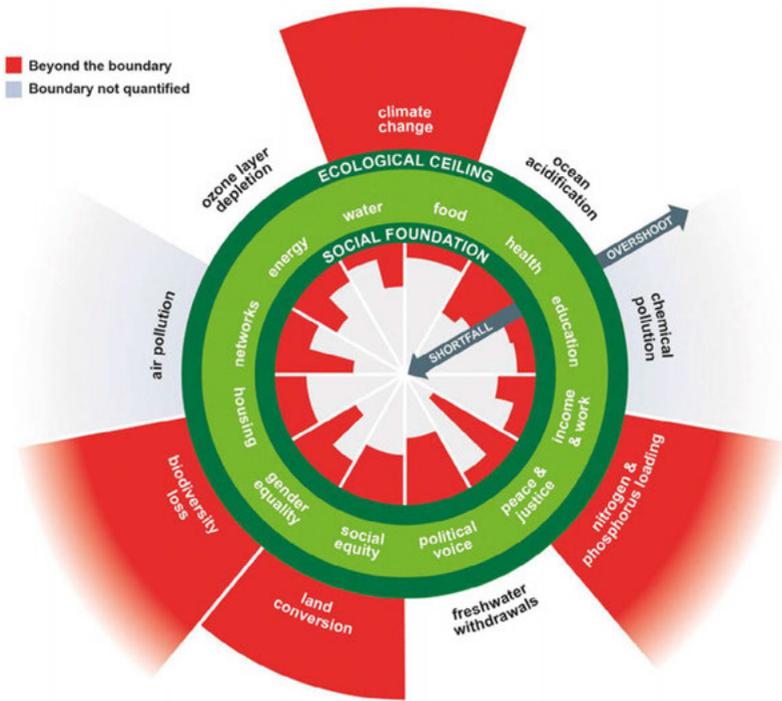


Figure 4 Doughnut economics. Source: Kate Raworth (2017)

model posits that the safe zone for a thriving, as opposed to an infinitely growing, economy provides a social foundation to satisfy the needs of its population, but remains within the seven planetary boundaries so that natural systems can regenerate and continue to provide the resources we need to survive. Figure 4 shows the green doughnut economic safe zone, where shortfalls are gaps in the social foundation, such as access to healthcare, education, and jobs, and overshoots are economic growth that exceeds the ecological ceiling and planetary boundaries.²² Remaining in the doughnut implies that economies thrive for future generations by providing social welfare that does not deplete natural resources.

Collaborative organizing is necessary

We — the Collaborative Innovation and Entrepreneurship professorship — respond to the call for economic rebels, to the call for more sustainable and just business practices, and to the call to educate the next generation of business leaders to critically question and dare to change the economic system.²³ There is no time to lose to reverse ecological damage, restore social justice, and set world economic systems on a new path toward contributing to regenerative and distributive economic systems. This is a massive undertaking that requires multiple types of organizations — businesses, governments, inter-governmental organizations, investors, non-governmental organizations, citizens, social movement organizations, academia — to collaborate more and better. If centuries of industrialization have given rise to our current ecological and social challenges, then in the years to come, industry and business leaders can reverse unsustainable processes and chart a new sustainable path. But reversal is only possible if we haven't passed the tipping point and exceeded planetary boundaries. The need to act is immediate; the scale of change is systemic. The challenges we face are grand and cannot be resolved by organizations in isolation.

The CIE professorship focuses on the collaborative paradigm in this economic transformation, including the ways diverse organizations innovate and act in partnership to address ecological and social grand challenges. Collaboration with multiple and diverse stakeholders is complex and challenging. Stakeholders have different interests, may compete with each other, or are just not ready to move as fast or as radically as others. Yet we know that these grand challenges are too complex and systemic for any one organization to address alone. Business leaders have an important role to play in catalyzing change among their stakeholders and industry actors. Business leaders must move

beyond thinking about sustainability as a market for new and improved products with lower environmental impact or giving models; collaborative organizing must become an integral strategy to business practices so that businesses, and their complex global value chains, become ecologically and socially just and inclusive of multiple, diverse stakeholders. We are calling on economic rebels to be the transformational business leaders for the 21st century and new economy.²⁴

Our research

Transformative systemic change occurs when diverse stakeholders across sectors, industries, and their ecosystems align and collaborate to address societal grand challenges. The collaborative paradigm is informed by different streams of literature. In the Collaborative Innovation and Entrepreneurship professorship, we connect the fields of strategic partnerships, innovation, and entrepreneurship. Although these are distinct fields of study and practice, we explicitly link them in our research to understand the interplay of collaboration with innovation and entrepreneurship. Tackling societal grand challenges requires diverse knowledge and skills from multiple stakeholders and organizations. Partnerships are thus needed to bring distinct resource sets together to develop technological and social innovations that offer solutions to grand challenges. Yet innovations from collaborative efforts need entrepreneurial action to scale them and facilitate diffusion and wide adoption. Each of these fields — collaboration, innovation, entrepreneurship — is a piece in the puzzle for understanding and acting on transformational change in global economies, industries, and value chains. The CIE research team draws on more than a decade of prior work rooted in inter-organizational partnerships, innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystems, and social, sustainable, and institutional entrepreneurship. These fields are starting points for our research on collaborative organizing. We focus on two levels of analysis: collaborative organizing in ecosystems (macro level) and collaborative organizing in partnerships (meso level).

Collaborative organizing at the ecosystem level

Innovation, the implementation of novel or significantly improved inventions, products, methods or ideas, and entrepreneurship, the recognition and exploitation of opportunities for economic gain,²⁵ are two sides of the same coin. Innovations emerge through entrepreneurial action. In the CIE professorship, we are interested in ecosystems of organizations and actors that engage in social, sustainable, and institutional innovation and entrepreneurship.²⁶

Research from the past two decades has shown that innovation is an open, distributed, and collaborative process. Open innovation, a term coined in 2003 by Henry Chesbrough to refer to markets for buying and selling technologies,²⁷ originally exemplified networked research and development (R&D) as an alternative for a firm's internalized R&D function, but it has evolved to

mean a “distributed innovation model that involves purposively managed inflows and outflows of knowledge across organizational boundaries”²⁸ A recent *California Management Review* special issue proposes and highlights the use of open innovation processes to address grand challenges.²⁹ Open innovation, while previously seen as something that firms do in their product or business ecosystems,³⁰ is now being hailed as a vehicle to unite multiple stakeholders across industries and geographical boundaries to tackle grand challenges.

The rise of the mission-oriented innovation ecosystem³¹ goes hand in hand with the increasing use of open innovation for sustainability and grand challenges. Mission-oriented innovation is often likened to a “moonshot,” referring to the required resources, tenacity, cross-discipline knowledge, and public-private partnerships to put a man on the moon. Moonshot thinking and moonshot innovations have permeated the lexicon of transformational change. They are ambitious projects that accumulate knowledge and learning and aim to disrupt or displace the institutionalized status quo.

Moonshots or mission-oriented innovations need entrepreneurial action that disrupts deep-rooted institutional norms and creates space for systemic change.³² We particularly focus on the role of institutional entrepreneurs who engage in collaborative organizing and initiate change, upsetting the institutional status quo and contributing to transforming existing ecosystems.³³ For example, our work has looked at how institutional entrepreneurs in the denim industry acted collectively to create a sustainability-oriented entrepreneurial ecosystem.³⁴ Our work has also looked at the tourism industry to highlight how sustainable tourism activists created pressure and opportunities for systemic change, spurring the formation of partnerships among activists, incumbent firms, and the trade association of tour operators.³⁵ Similarly, our prior work on non-profit organizations studied the African Wildlife Foundation, illuminating their role as an institutional entrepreneur that incentivized communal landowners to protect wildlife on their land while improving their livelihood with safari tourism that wildlife attracts.³⁶ In our current project Collaborative Networks for Sustainability and in the context of circular textiles,³⁷ we see that institutional entrepreneurship is distributed across different organizations and individuals. We observed how the network organization, Dutch Circular Textile Valley, assumed the role of ecosystem coordinator enabling change in the Dutch textile industry by coordinating multiple actors to initiate regulation on extended producer responsibility and set standards

for textile recycling. Private organizations, non-profit organizations, non-governmental agencies, social movement organizations, foundations, and all types of organizations provide institutional entrepreneurship that is required for deeper systemic change and the creation of new organizational forms, practices, industry standards, and business models.³⁸

The CIE professorship focuses on innovation and entrepreneurship as functions in global production ecosystems, particularly commodity global value chains of textiles, cocoa, coffee, tea, timber, and fishing, and in service ecosystems like ecotourism. Global value chains are pervasive in industrial organization and comprise an extensive, complex, and often fragmented network of hundreds — if not thousands — of organizations. Institutional norms, practices, and regulations associated with global value chains are dispersed across different geographies and sectors with unique dynamics that influence collaboration between lead firms and other stakeholders. Some of the practices in

Collaborative organizing at the ecosystem level

Understanding collaborative organizing as a vehicle for innovation and institutional entrepreneurship that impacts systemic transformational change in global value chains.

In this theme, we focus on collaborative organizing in mission-oriented innovation ecosystems.

Examples of questions include:

- What effects does consensus-driven collaborative organizing have on disruptive innovation? What types of collaborative initiatives enable and realize systemic change?
- How do collaborative initiatives interact to scale the adoption of mission-oriented innovations and how do spill-over effects influence transformational change?
- Which actors in collaborative organizing engage in institutional entrepreneurship, what are their motivations, and how do they differ across industries?
- How can unintended system consequences of collaborative organizing be avoided? How do actors in local ecosystems respond to negative effects?

This research theme aligns with the AUAS Centre for Economic Transformation theme Economic Ecosystems Transformed, which takes a systemic view of grand challenges and considers the relationships and interconnections of ecosystem actors.

global value chains are abhorrent, such as forced and exploited labor, squalid working conditions, the deforestation of nature. Transparency and (local) regulations are often lacking.³⁹ Understanding how actors work together in global value chains is crucial, as actors are interrelated and the actions of actors in one part of the system, such as optimization and efficiency of just-in-time operations, have unintended effects on other parts of the ecosystem, such as excessive overtime of workers at suppliers in production countries. Consider the fishing industry. The landing obligation, which is the EU regulation that requires fishermen to bring to shore all the fish they catch instead of discarding the bycatch at sea,⁴⁰ results in the large wastage of natural resources. The bycatch, which is often fit for human consumption is sold for fishmeal at a lower value or discarded on land. The alignment between on-land market demand and at-sea natural ecosystems to reduce bycatch waste requires more collaborative action and institutional entrepreneurship to improve or change the current fishing industry ecosystem.⁴¹ We are initiating a project with stakeholders in the fishing industry to address this challenge collaboratively. Individual organizations cannot act and accomplish systemic institutional change on their own, and they need to collaborate with other and multiple innovative firms, incumbents, and institutional entrepreneurs to scale technological and social innovations to a level that can change business-as-usual.

Collaborative organizing at the partnership level

Collaborative organizing with multiple and diverse stakeholders is a complex process where parties come together based on shared values and ambitions.⁴² Multi-stakeholder collaborations are generally informal arrangements⁴³; even if parties may sign charters and agreements or establish non-profit legal entities, the resources accessed and used are pooled from individuals employed by diverse organizations and remain informally bounded. Collaborations are in essence “in-between” organizations with fuzzy and permeable boundaries, making the coordination and control of actors and resources an arduous and negotiated process.⁴⁴

In the strategic management literature, a continuum of partnerships can be mapped along the degrees of coordination and control,⁴⁵ where equity joint ventures, acquisitions, and mergers provide firms with more internalized coordination and control mechanisms through ownership stakes (Figure 5). In preferred supplier relations and collaborations, there is no legal ownership of an entity.⁴⁶ Activities and resources are externalized among partner firms, thereby inhibiting complete governance, coordination, and control.

Firms partner for various reasons. For example, they may enter equity joint ventures or acquisitions to internalize the production of key product components, which is exemplified in the classic outsourcing decision of “make or buy.”⁴⁷ Firms also partner to enter foreign markets more easily or access specialized resources for innovation, where strategic alliances or collaborations provide more flexibility and less direct investment in assets.⁴⁸ Prior literature focuses largely on inter-firm, bilateral relations, like buyer–supplier partnerships and R&D collaborations.⁴⁹ However, in our current reality of grand challenges, collaborations with many more types of organizations than just firms are required.

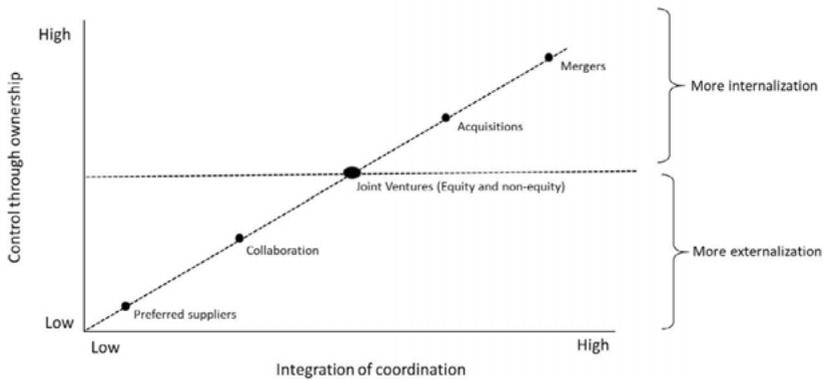


Figure 5 Strategic partnership continuum

In the CIE professorship, we focus on collaborative organizing that involves a variety and multiplicity of organizations and stakeholders, which the literature refers to as cross-sector partnerships.⁵⁰ These partnerships involve organizations from the profit, non-profit, and government economic sectors and include public–private partnerships, like university–industry or government–industry relationships.⁵¹ Cross-sector partnerships give us a better understanding of inter-organizational relationships among diverse types of organizations that typically address societal issues.⁵² They have been categorized along a continuum ranging from philanthropic or reactive to transformational partnerships.⁵³ Figure 6 shows that the scope of the partnership increases relative to the shared responsibility. Transformative partnerships are innovative and systemic and have the highest levels of complexity, partner diversity, and ambitions.

SUSTAINABILITY CONTINUUM

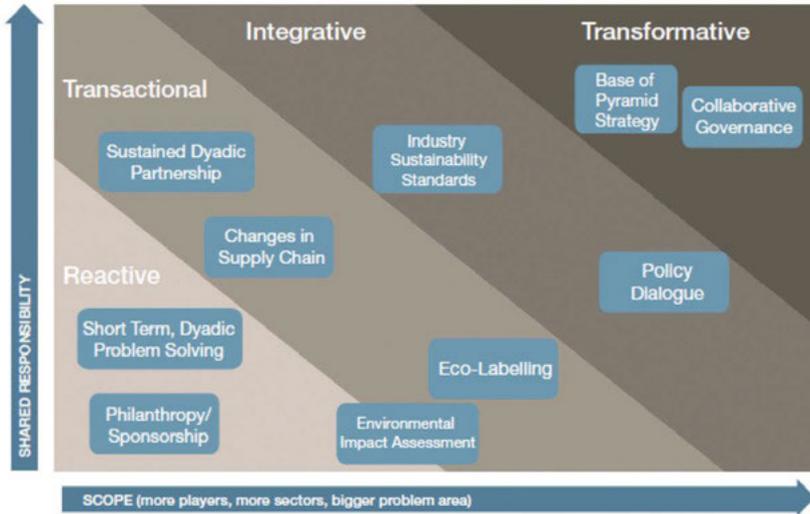


Figure 6 Sustainability continuum (Gray & Purdy, 2013)

We believe that collaborative organizing exemplified in cross-sector partnerships is crucial for transformational change, but we lack knowledge about how they work, how they should be organized, how effective they are, and how much societal impact they achieve. We do know that they are networks of diverse and multiple stakeholders, including organizations from entire global value chains like multinational and small and medium-sized enterprises, social movement organizations, foundations, charities, associations, governments, non-government agencies, farmers, consumers, civic communities, and citizens. The informal, open and temporal nature of multi-stakeholder collaboration are rife with tensions that need to be managed⁵⁴, such as between competition and cooperation,⁵⁵ knowledge sharing and knowledge protection,⁵⁶ short-term and long-term thinking,⁵⁷ or open and closed membership.⁵⁸ These tensions are felt unequally among partners, where free-riding perceptions are unavoidable, and there is an underlying trade-off of how much to cooperate and how much to compete.⁵⁹ Regardless of the commitment and goodwill of each partner representative, there is a stronger allegiance and affiliation with an employer than with the cross-sector partnership. Interests and tensions,

therefore, are continuously negotiated to create space where tensions allow for productive collaboration.⁶⁰

With the proliferation of multi-stakeholder collaborations, initiatives, and cross-sector partnerships, it is important to understand how they are convened or orchestrated⁶¹ and to have the knowledge, practices, and tools to increase their productivity, effectiveness, and impact. In the project Alliance for Responsible Denim,⁶² we studied how competitors collaborated to improve sustainability in denim production. We uncovered governance mechanisms that orchestrators used to navigate tensions and create space for productive collaboration.⁶³ In van Hille's work, the neutrality of orchestrators to manage tensions is questioned, arguing that conveners or orchestrators of multi-stakeholder collaborations cannot hold a position of neutrality and influence how the collaboration evolves.⁶⁴ Therefore, network orchestrators need to develop reflexivity to maintain a neutral position. The role and profession of network orchestration are the focus of one of our current projects, Collaborative Networks for Sustainability, which aims to create knowledge, tools, and community for this professional role.

What is a network orchestrator?

Network orchestrators represent a new professional role that is essential in the 21st-century economy. The term originates from the literature on open innovation networks that are generally large, open networks of scientists, engineers, and designers. A network orchestrator initiates, manages, and facilitates a network of individuals from multiple organizations and may be dedicated to a specific network or manage a portfolio of networks or initiatives. The role may also be distributed across several network orchestrators, constituting a network orchestration team. Network orchestrators convene members and facilitate them to align interests, manage conflicts, and collaboratively act toward intended collective goals. Network orchestration requires a variety of skills, such as design thinking, facilitation, interpersonal and cultural sensitivity, conflict resolution, reflexivity, negotiation, and project management.

Another important aspect we focus on in this theme is creating and capturing value from multi-stakeholder collaborations, which is a complex topic when diverse actors are involved in loosely structured collaborative organizing. Multi-stakeholder collaborations generally bring together sets of specialized resources, like knowledge, to collectively create value and innovative solutions.

However, to maintain commitment and engagement, the joint (or collaborative) value created needs to be captured by those participating in the collaboration.⁶⁵ Figure 7 illustrates mechanisms orchestrators can use to manage tensions and the effect on the continuous process of collaborative value creation. Our focus here is on understanding how orchestration enables the creation and capture of collaborative value, which is often relational and manifests in network connections, pro-social benefits, or political influence, in addition to the material value of output produced from the multi-stakeholder collaboration. Value capture by stakeholders or ecosystem partners is essential for the continuation of collaborative activities and joint value creation. We are developing tools, trainings, and best practice guides to help orchestrators monitor value creation and capture.

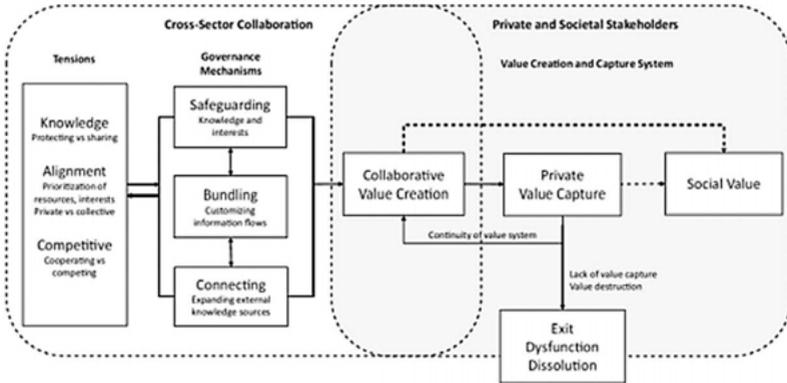


Figure 7 Value creation and capture in cross-sector partnerships. Source: DiVito et al. (2021)

Collaborative organizing at the partnership level

Understanding how collaborative organizing is orchestrated in partnerships to create value and social impact.

In this theme, we focus on the orchestration of multi-stakeholder collaborations.

Example questions include:

- How do orchestrators manage tensions and create productive space for collaborative value creation?
- How do orchestrators create governance structures and mechanisms that encourage effective collaboration?
- How do actors capture value from multi-stakeholder collaboration? What trade-offs are made when private value capture and societal value capture are misaligned? What are the enablers or barriers to value capture from multi-stakeholder collaborations?
- How do orchestrators avoid collaborative inertia and maintain momentum to ensure continuous collaborative value creation?
- How do actors exit multi-stakeholder collaborations without destroying collaborative value creation? What effect does orchestrator exit or succession have on the effectiveness of the collaboration?
- How can orchestrators avoid the "dark side" of collaborative organizing and design inclusive collaborations that represent the voice of marginalized stakeholders, indigenous communities, or nature? How can structural power relations be reconciled?

Our guiding principles

The Collaborative Innovation and Entrepreneurship professorship is guided by five principles rooted in our beliefs, values, and expertise. We select empirical contexts, partners, methodologies, output channels, and end products that reflect the following principles.

Bring climate justice and social justice to the heart of business

We believe that production and consumption systems need to exist in harmony with people and the planet. This implies that products and services are designed, produced, consumed, and discarded with nature in mind, preserving biodiversity and animal ecosystems. It also implies that businesses need to shift to circular and regenerative business strategies and models where there is minimal waste and a sustainable extraction of virgin materials. Harnessing local and indigenous knowledge and fair-trade practices in production and consumption systems can accelerate this shift, help restore balance, and distribute wealth more equally between the Global North and Global South.

Example: Circular Fashion

The context for the Collaborative Networks for Sustainability (CONESU) project is circular textiles and fashion. The fashion industry's pursuit of economic growth at the expense of people and the planet has increasingly moved to the center of attention. Scandals such as child labor or the Rana Plaza factory collapse have raised consumers' awareness of the existing perils of production and put companies under collective pressure from stakeholders and activist groups, such as Fashion Revolution, to change. The textile and fashion industry offers an ideal context for transformational change to a circular industry and economy.

Build knowledge about collaborating more effectively with diverse stakeholders

We believe that collaborative organizational forms that are inclusive and open to multiple stakeholders are essential to establishing business practices that provide social and climate justice. Whereas businesses have begun to embrace shared value for multiple stakeholders, they also need to embrace shared ownership and responsibility for the products and services they deliver. This requires much more collaboration and interdependency with diverse and multiple stakeholders outside of their organizational, sectoral, and geographic boundaries and throughout the entire global value chain. Collaborative organizing that is democratic with the voice and representation of under-represented communities creates a more socially just economic system.

Focus on contexts close to nature

We focus on contexts close to nature because industrialized products rely on commodities and raw materials that come from our natural environment. Our focus is on industries that use commodities such as tea, coffee, cocoa, cotton, and timber for products. We also focus on service industries such as tourism, where the dynamic and intensive movement of people can have unintended and dire consequences on natural and urban environments and how sustainable and conservation tourism can mitigate the negative impacts of tourism.

Participate in the field using methods of engaged scholarship

We believe that our work makes greater impact when we engage and work with professionals and students in the field. Engaged scholarship allows us to gain fresh and multiple perspectives about collaborative organizing for economic transformation. Through our research, we witness and experience firsthand the complexities that businesses and industries face as they transition to more socially and ecologically just practices and models. Through active participation with our partners, including practitioners, academics, and students, we co-create knowledge that is more relevant and impactful for professionals, academics, students, and policymakers.

Empower a new generation of economic rebels

We believe that the new generation of business leaders engages in economic and public debate and makes bold decisions that drive transformational change. This new generation of business leaders needs to develop a voice that encourages collaboration and inclusion of multiple stakeholders. We recognize and are fully committed to our role in providing education and experiential learning that teaches current and future business leaders skills to orchestrate multiple stakeholders, challenge existing structures and norms, and find new and innovative ways to do business that take heed of ecological and social sustainability and thrive from positive impact.

Example: Changemakers

We designed and deliver a minor program of study that encourages students to develop voice, agency, and confidence to address societal grand challenges. Students work in interdisciplinary teams on issues important to them and learn how to align stakeholder interests, create theories of change, and design interventions to bring attention and action to an issue. We create a safe space that empowers students to explore their voice, learn essential skills for transformational change, and experience entrepreneurial activism.

Our engagement

As researchers, we have developed world-class expertise in practice-oriented research⁶⁶ and consider ourselves to be engaged and participatory scholars.⁶⁷ The complex and highly contextualized problems that we research require us to learn and experience the phenomenon firsthand from different points of view. We engage in action-oriented, ethnographic practice research, jointly defining with our field partners relevant research questions and approaches and developing a broad learning community to co-create, co-produce, and co-validate knowledge. Our close and deep engagement with the field results in rigorous, relevant, and impactful knowledge for our target groups — namely, business leaders, students, academics, and policymakers.

Co-Value-Creation Lab

The Co-Value-Creation Lab is the living lab of the Collaborative Innovation and Entrepreneurship professorship where we engage with our field (business) partners, students, academics, and professionals. We offer tools, surveys, datasets, trainings, coaching, peer-to-peer interventions, workshops, and resources for professionals who engage in collaborative organizing and manage multi-stakeholder collaborations.

Tools, best practices, and resources

We develop tools to provide insights into managing effective multi-stakeholder collaborations. For example, we developed tools to assess and steer competitive tensions and to monitor value creation and capture in multi-stakeholder collaborations. Orchestrators or other professionals who manage multi-stakeholder collaborations can freely use these tools online or download them. In addition, we are developing a simulation tool that models the economic, social, and ecological costs and ownership transfer of circular products, allowing organizations to model optimal circular product loops. Our research provides input into new tool development and continued improvement of existing tools.

Systematic data collection

We recently launched the SDG Barometer with our partners the Maastricht School of Management and TIAS School for Business and Society. The purpose is to gather longitudinal data from organizations about their sustainability development and implementation of the SDGs in the Netherlands. We administer the survey every two years, and the open access data can be used

for research and teaching purposes. We also maintain a database of multi-stakeholder initiatives on circular transitions, living wages, and nature-based or regenerative solutions that inform our research and teaching.

Workshops, interventions, and coaching

To provide support to organizations using our open source tools and resources, we offer workshops, coaching, and advice to professionals who are initiating or managing multi-stakeholder collaborations. Orchestrators face many challenges, and we assist them in aligning stakeholder interests, designing strategies of engagement, developing collaborative value propositions, and evaluating collaborative value creation. We facilitate online or face-to-face workshops for orchestrators and collaboration members, organize roundtables for peer-to-peer learning, and provide one-to-one coaching.

Events, roundtables, and conferences

We hold annual events and roundtable discussions that bring scholars, practitioners, teachers, and students together to discuss and debate current themes around societal grand challenges and business strategy and response. These events provide the food-for-new-thought and the seeds to inspire economic rebels. For example, CIE team members Rob Lubberink and Tuanh Lam organized the event Chocolate for Everyone, which took a more systemic view of change in the cocoa industry.⁶⁸ They posed questions such as: What does biodiversity and natural capital have to do with a living wage? A panel of industry experts from the global value chain discussed the challenges of earning a living wage, like climate change and deforestation, while at the same time regenerating and preserving landscapes in cocoa farming. This event highlighted the numerous multi-stakeholder collaborations that are taking place to address these issues.

We also organize a biennial conference on collaborative organizing for grand challenges. Every two years we bring together scholars and practitioners to discuss the state-of-the-art and critically reflect on the research field through thought-provoking debates. We contribute to setting the tone and future direction of research in this field.

Education

Executive training and educational material

Our research results are incorporated into different educational materials, such as executive trainings, masterclasses, and teaching cases, some of which

are freely accessible as downloads or videos. We offer online or on-site executive training and courses in systems thinking, collaborative organizing, and the circular economy. We also fully integrate our research practice and findings in the joint master program Global Sustainable Business Management from the Amsterdam School of International Business and Northumbria University. For undergraduate students, we have developed a minor program Changemakers, which is open to students from all universities and guides students along a journey of entrepreneurial activism ultimately helping them find and develop a voice for leading transformation in the 21st century.

Partners

As engaged researchers, we actively collaborate with partners within the Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences and beyond. Our research partners consist of a worldwide network of academics and a range of businesses and business professionals.

AUAS Partnerships with professorships and Centres of Expertise

Within the Faculty of Business and Economics, we are closely connected to the professorships of Urban Economic Innovation from Dr. Willem van Winden and Entrepreneurship from Dr. Ingrid Wakkee. Together, the three professorships Urban Economic Innovation, Entrepreneurship, and Collaborative Innovation and Entrepreneurship form the research group Innovation & Entrepreneurship.

Due to our expertise on the circular economy and the textiles industry, CIE also works closely with the professorship Circular Design and Business from Dr. Inge Oskam in the Faculty of Technology and the professorship Fashion Research and Technology from Dr. Troy Nachtigall in the Faculty of Digital Media and Creative Industries. We collaborate on research projects as well as cross-faculty educational programs.

The Collaborative Innovation and Entrepreneurship professorship is also closely linked to the Centre for Economic Transformation (CET). We lead one of the four CET themes: Economic Ecosystems Transformed. Furthermore, CIE works with the Centre of Expertise Urban Technology on circular economy and the Centre of Expertise for Creative Innovation.

Industry and corporate (field) partnerships

We work with a variety of small and large firms, government agencies, and non-profits. We believe in long-term strategic partnerships that create mutual value for all parties and engage in various research and educational projects. All of our research is grounded in field work and involves close cooperation with field partners.

We are deeply grateful to our field partners and indebted to their openness and willingness to allow us into their collaborative organizing processes.

ABN Amro Circl • Amsterdam Economic Board • Amsterdam InBusiness • BSR (Business for Social Responsibility) • Chocolatemakers • Circle Economy • CPB Netherlands Bureau for Economic Policy Analysis • Heineken • IDH, the Sustainable Trade Initiative • Kumasi • Kuyichi • Metabolic • Modint • Mud Jeans • MVO Nederland • SDG House • Reblend • Rokbar • The Student Hotel

Academic partnerships

We collaborate with our academic partners on research projects, educational programs, and events. We are active in worldwide academic networks to ensure that our research is rigorous and relevant to our target audiences. We work closely with academics from the following universities:

Copenhagen Business School (Denmark) • EGADE Business School (Monterrey, Mexico) • IESEG School of Management (France) • Ivey Business School (Canada) • King's Business School, King's College London (UK) • Kogod School of Business, American University (USA) • Maastricht School of Management (Netherlands) • Montpellier Business School (France) • Northumbria University (UK) • Penn State University (USA) • Prague University of Economics and Business (Czech Republic) • TIAS School of Business and Society (Netherlands)

Collaborative Innovation and Entrepreneurship Professorship Research Team

The CIE professorship team includes associate and assistant professors, doctoral candidates, senior researchers, and teaching faculty from the Amsterdam School of International Business. We represent diverse knowledge expertise and experience.



Jakomijn van Wijk, PhD
Associate Professor Sustainable Management

- Collaborative Networks for Sustainability Project
- Organizing for Sustainability Transitions module in Global Sustainable Business Management master program
- Changemakers minor program

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Iteke van Hille, PhD
Senior Researcher, Cross-Sector Partnerships

- Collaborative Networks for Sustainability Project
- Organizing for Sustainability Transitions module in Global Sustainable Business Management master program

[View research publications and activities](#)



Rob Lubberink, PhD
Assistant Professor Circular Economy

- Systems Thinking, Circular Economy, and International Supply Chain Management modules in master and bachelor programs
- Climate and social justice in commodity value chains

[View research publications and activities](#)



Jason Good, PhD
Assistant Professor, Organization and Environment

- Collaborative Networks for Sustainability Project
- Sensemaking of ecological-economic systems
- Managing in the Circular Economy module in bachelor, master, and executive programs

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Tuanh Lam, MSc Entrepreneurship
Sustainability Advisor & Community Manager CET

- Collaborative Networks for Sustainability Project
- Alliance for Responsible Denim Project
- SDG Barometer
- Changemakers minor program

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Zita Ingen-Housz, MSc
Senior Researcher, Collaborative Networks for Sustainability (CONESU)

- Collaborative Networks for Sustainability Project
- Alliance for Responsible Denim

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Mike Russell, PhD
Senior Lecturer, Blockchain Technologies

- Sustainable Business Analysis and Metrics in master program
- Information technology and blockchain

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Amir Ghasemi, PhD
Senior Lecturer, International Supply Chain Management

- Decision support systems in global value chains
- Cost/benefit simulation for circular products

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Vincent van den Berg, MSc
Senior Lecturer Marketing Research

- SDG Barometer



Carolyn O'Rourke, MSc
Senior Lecturer Entrepreneurship
• Alliance for Responsible Denim Project
• SDG Barometer

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Judith Ford, PhD
Senior Lecturer, Leadership, Culture & Sustainability
• Changemakers minor program
• Stakeholder Engagement for Climate Resilient Societies

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Erik Kosteljik, PhD
Associate Professor, Marketing and Research
• Sustainability and consumer behavior

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Jose van Eeuwijk, MSc
Head of Department Organizational Leadership and Change
Senior Lecturer Co-creative Entrepreneurship and Ethics Responsibility and Sustainability
• Changemakers minor program

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Anoesjka Timmermans, DBA
Senior Lecturer, Entrepreneurship and Sustainability
• Changemakers minor program

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Alexandro Carolina, MSc
Senior Lecturer, Organizational Leadership and Change
• Responsible and inclusive innovation

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Angela Blokland
Administrative Support
• Collaborative Networks for Sustainability Project

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Closer to home, I turn to the CIE team, who are a source of inspiration for the work that we aim to do. I am blessed to have a team dedicated to the cause and calling of the Collaborative Innovation and Entrepreneurship professorship. We think together, we build together, and we celebrate together. We keep each other sharp, and we make each other better. Together, I know we can make a difference and contribute not only to the knowledge base but also to society and generations to come. My academic home includes the Amsterdam School of International Business, and the colleagues, graduates and students that I have had the pleasure of working with for the past 15 years. I am thankful and fortunate to be part of such a multi-cultural and exciting learning community.

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Author bio

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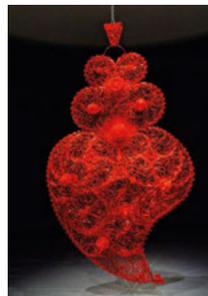
DiVito leads the Collaborative Innovation and Entrepreneurship professorship as well the Centre for Economic Transformation theme Economic Ecosystems Transformed. She is also the Research Director for the Amsterdam School of International Business. Her research interests focus on understanding the dynamics of multi-stakeholder collaboration and inter-organizational relations, including their formation, governance, and internationalization, in the context of innovation and sustainability. Her recent projects have focused on longitudinal studies in the textile and fashion industry. The Alliance for Responsible Denim (ARD) project aimed to understand how competitors collaborate together to improve sustainability impact. Her current project, Collaborative Networks for Sustainability (CONESU), investigates the role of orchestration to create and capture value from multi-stakeholder initiatives. She has published her work in international peer-reviewed journals such as *Business & Society*, *Journal of Business Venturing*, *Academy of Management Proceedings*, *Research Policy*, *Long Range Planning*, and *Small Business Economics*. She presents her work at various academic conferences in Europe and the USA. She received her PhD in organizational studies from Alliance Manchester Business School, University of Manchester. Prior to that, she acquired extensive work experience in strategy and marketing for multinational firms.

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About the cover

Coração Independente Vermelho
[Red Independent Heart] [2005]



About the artist Joana Vasconcelos, born in 1971, is a Portuguese contemporary visual artist with a 30-year career who is renowned for her monumental sculptures. Drawing inspiration from everyday life, pop references, Portuguese traditions, and the opulence of the Baroque, Vasconcelos also establishes a dialogue with artists who preceded her, such as Bernini or Duchamp. In the footsteps of Niki de Saint Phalle or Louise Bourgeois, her work gathers a wide variety of media and materials, from video to textile. She updates the arts and crafts concept to the 21st century, channeling old techniques into contemporary practice. Her immersive site-specific sculptures and customized installations work in dialogue with the architecture of the place, calling upon the interaction of the viewer. Her thought-provoking yet colorful and uplifting art reaches audiences from all ages and walks of life.

Materials Translucent plastic cutlery, painted iron, metal chain, motor, power supply unit, sound installation
Songs performed by Amália Rodrigues: *Estranha Forma de Vida* [Strange Way of Life] (Alfredo Rodrigo Duarte/Amália Rodrigues), *Maldição* [Curse] (Joaquim Campos da Silva/Armando Vieira Pinto), *Gaivota* [Seagull] (Alain Oulman/Alexandre O'Neill). Authorized by IPLAY–Som e Imagem/(P) Valentim de Carvalho.

Dimensions 371 x 220 x 75 cm
Collection Museu Coleção Berardo, Lisbon

Text *Red Independent Heart* presents itself in the shape of an enormous “heart of Viana,” the iconic piece of Portuguese filigree, patiently filled in with red plastic cutlery. Suspended from its axis, the work makes a movement of circular rotation, evoking the cycles of life and of the eternal return, accompanied by the sound of three meaningful fado songs: *Estranha Forma de Vida* [Strange Way of Life], *Gaivota* [Seagull], and *Maldição* [Curse], as interpreted by Amália Rodrigues, a diva of Portuguese music in the second half of the 20th century. The title of the work is taken precisely from a verse of the first of these three fados, written by Alfredo Duarte (Marceneiro) and Amália Rodrigues, whose lyrics invoke the conflict between emotion and reason. By multiplying the use of plastic cutlery to the point of abstraction of their original form in order to convert them into a work of art inspired by a precious piece of filigree, the initial referents are transfigured by the suggested new social and artistic schemes, thereby exposing the artificiality of the boundaries separating luxury and vulgarity. *Red Independent Heart* presents itself as a powerful and emotive installation of sound and movement — a diptych dedicated to wealth, love, and death, which are recurring themes in the lyrics of fado.

The Collaborative Innovation and Entrepreneurship professorship focuses on the collaborative paradigm in economic transformation – the ways diverse organizations in global value chains innovate and act in partnerships to address ecological and social grand challenges. Collaboration with multiple and diverse stakeholders is complex and challenging. Stakeholders have different interests, may compete with each other, or are just not ready to move as fast or as radically as others. Yet, we know that grand challenges are too complex and systemic for any one organization to address alone. Business leaders have an important

role to play in transforming economic ecosystems and catalysing change among stakeholders and industry actors. They must move from linear thinking, where sustainability is a market for green or social products, to circular and inclusive thinking, where regeneration of natural ecosystems occurs and economic profits are equally distributed. The Collaborative Innovation and Entrepreneurship professorship aims to contribute knowledge, support organizations, and facilitate learning about collaborative organizational forms and practices – what we call collaborative organizing – for a more sustainable, regenerative and thriving 21st century economic system.



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