

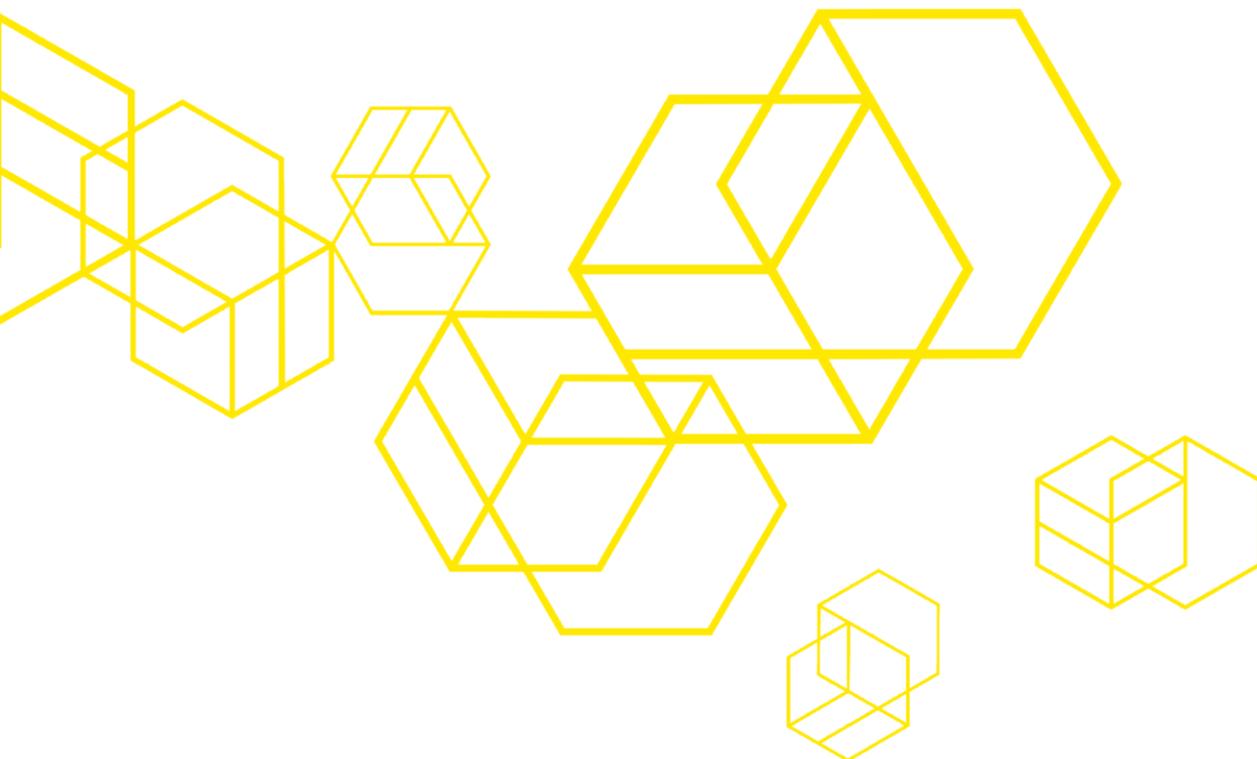


# **Empowering Social Innovation for Transformative Change**

*A two-day workshop for critical thinkers and doers*

*Amsterdam*

*May 17th-18th, 2018*





# Empowering Social Innovation for Transformative Change

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Social innovation and transformative change are inherently political. Political in the sense of (reclaiming) power. Such politics manifests as people produce their own energy, envision alternative futures, reshape places, participate in decision-making and frame their own rules. For social innovation to be transformative, it has to engage in politics in the sense of challenging existing institutions and norms, (re)negotiating new rules and decision-making arrangements and shifting existing power relations.

This workshop will gather critical thinkers and doers, who are working on social innovation in practice and/or in theory, who are excited to engage in critical discussion to gather and share experiences on power and empowerment dynamics in social innovation. We will discuss questions such as:

- How do we deal with power in our social innovation work?
- Who has power and how do we empower ourselves and each other to (re)claim power?
- What are the power dynamics and unintended consequences in our social innovation field(s)?

We tackle these questions during a two-day workshop in Amsterdam, which will take place at the community centre **Meevaart**.

Day 1 will offer an interactive programme with various speakers and session formats. In the morning we focus on power dynamics and neighbourhood politics, including the case of participatory budgeting and other examples. In the afternoon we zoom out to discuss empowerment and transnational social innovation movements. In between, there will be a session with the acclaimed participatory drama approach '**Theatre of the Oppressed**' for an embodied experience of power and empowerment.

Day 2 will consist of a writing workshop in which participants are challenged to distil their ideas on and experiences with power and empowerment in social change into a sharp piece of writing (blog, essay or article). A delicate topic like power makes it all the more important to ask: who is your intended audience and what is the best form to describe the power relations that come into play?

## Registration by the 20<sup>th</sup> of April

Seats are limited. If you are interested, please sign up a.s.a.p. and **before the 20<sup>th</sup> of April** by writing an email to [rach@drift.eur.nl](mailto:rach@drift.eur.nl), including:

- Some lines about yourself in relation to the topics of power, empowerment & social change
- Whether you want to participate on both days or only on day 1 (it is not possible to participate in the writing workshop without having participated on the first day).
- What topic(s) you would like to write on and what you would like to get out of the writing workshop as an outcome.



## Day 1 – Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> of May 2018

- 09:00 Arrival, coffee & tea
- 09:15 Welcome & introductions by Julia Wittmayer
- Social Innovation & transformative change (the case of participatory budgeting)
  - Getting to know each other
- 10:00 – 12:30 **Localising Power Dynamics in Social innovation**
- The six faces of power - Introduction by Flor Avelino
  - Appreciative inquiry on your own power experiences
  - Local power dynamics in neighbourhood politics: a collective interview with Firoez Azarhoosh and Julia Wittmayer
- 12:30 – 13:30 Lunch & the story of the Meevaart location by Firoez Azarhoosh
- 13:30 – 15:00 **Theatre of the Oppressed with Luc Opdebeeck**
- Embodying power & empowerment
- 15:00 – 17:00 **(Dis)Empowerment through Transnational Social Movements**
- 6 Dimensions of (dis)empowerment - Introduction by Flor Avelino
  - The power of transnational social movements by Lara Monticelli
  - Mapping your own (dis)empowerment potentials
- 17:00 – 17:30 Closing & bridge to writing workshop next day
- 17:30 – 21:00 Neighbourhood Walk & Dinner

## Day 2 – Friday 18<sup>th</sup> of May 2018: Writing workshop

A writing workshop facilitated by The Broker, in which participants are challenged to distil their ideas on and experiences with power and empowerment in social innovation into a sharp piece of writing (blog, essay or article). A delicate topic like power makes it all the more important to ask: who is your intended audience and what is the best form to describe the power relations that come into play?

- 09:00 – 12:30 Writing workshop part I
- 12:30 – 14:00 Lunch & neighbourhood walk
- 14:00 – 16:00 Writing workshop part II
- 16:00 Neighbourhood walk & drinks (optional & self-funded)

A number of websites will be explored to publish (a selection of) the writings:

- <http://www.thebrokeronline.eu/>
- <https://www.siceurope.eu/>
- <https://www.socialevraagstukken.nl/>
- <https://drift.eur.nl/>



**Facilitated & co-designed by people who share a passion for social change:**

**Dr. Julia Wittmayer** has a background in Social and Cultural Anthropology, and is interested in roles of and social relations and interactions between actors. A specific focus is on the role of research and transdisciplinary engagements as well as research methodologies. At **DRIFT** she has worked with numerous local and national transition projects, and had a leading role in a variety of international research projects, such as **TRANSIT**, **SIC – Social Innovation Community**, **MUSIC**, **PROSEU** and **InContext**.

**Dr. Flor Avelino** works as a transition researcher and lecturer at DRIFT. With a background in political science, she specialises in the role of power and empowerment in social change, and is particularly passionate about studying grassroots initiatives and translocal social movements. As scientific coordinator of the **TRANSIT** project she was one of the initiators of the **Transformative Social Innovation Manifesto**. As the academic director of the **Transition Academy**, Flor strives to co-create new learning environments to challenge people to think and act for radical change.

**Firoez Azarhoosh** is an active community builder and initiator of the **Meevaart** in the Indische Buurt district of Amsterdam. The community centre strives to facilitate a place for community building and organizing, as well as offering rental options. The organization opened in 2009 and is publically funded by the local government, acting as a social experiment to use space to create community within neighbourhoods. Firoez has worked at several local governments, also knowing these organisations from the inside out.

**Luc Opdebeeck** is specialised in Participatory Drama, focused on the **Theatre of the Oppressed**. As co-founder of **Formaat**, Workplace for Participatory Drama, he has been working as artistic director since 1999. Under his supervision, dozens of major and minor productions were launched on issues like racism, bullying, emancipation, crime prevention, alcohol and drug abuse, ethical dilemmas, community conflicts and minority rights. He has worked internationally as a trainer in South Africa, Spain, Croatia, Serbia, Moldova, Belgium, Laos, India, Mozambique, Israel, Palestine, Lebanon & Iran.

**Dr. Lara Monticelli** is an independent research fellow, awarded by the FBML Foundation (Italy), specialised in community-based social movements and how these movements re-politicize and re-configure everyday life, thus representing radical attempts to embody the critique to contemporary capitalism and prefigure alternative futures.

**Frank van Kesteren** from **The Broker** is a knowledge broker working for the **INCLUDE knowledge platform**. Frank has performed research on various subjects, such as social protection policies in sub-Saharan Africa, European policies on irregular migration and the sustainability discourse underlying the Sustainable Development Goals. For the Broker, he promotes the uptake of research by policymakers.

**Sarah Rach** works as a researcher and advisor at **DRIFT**. With a master degree in both urban planning and public administration her research focuses on social sustainability issues in urban areas and the governance thereof. She is interested in the political dimension of space and the intersection of the social and physical in cities. For TRANSIT she has worked on the case study of Participatory Budgeting in Amsterdam.