

Regenerating Local Economies with Permaculture Principles

Thomas Kern, Nick McGuigan

The goal of this workshop is to interactively reimagine our interaction with money, exploring alternative ways for individuals to participate in the economy. The presenters argue that permaculture ethics and design principles can guide this exploration resulting in practical solutions that can act as disruptors and forces for change within local economies. In doing so, the audience will be left with a deeper understanding of the current economic environment and have uncovered real-life solutions they can apply within their own everyday world to build heightened levels of personal and community resilience.

Accounting academics and aspiring permaculture designers, thinkers and educators, Thomas Kern & Nick McGuigan will provide an insight into how the current degenerative economy is working and discuss the beginning transition towards regenerative economies. Unpacking the role of banking institutions, accountants and the associated language ('accounting') they use. Using permaculture ethics, design principles and systems thinking they will facilitate an interactive discussion on alternative economies, uncovering possibilities for a transition towards right livelihoods.

This workshop will actively involve the audience in a wide-ranging and diverse discussion around permaculture ethics and design principles and how these can be creatively applied to businesses and the wider economy. The presenters strongly believe that we need to prepare future generations for the required paradigm shift in thinking and that this needs to occur through mainstream education.

The presenters argue that the third permaculture ethic - fair share - through its meaning '*distribute surplus to need*' facilitates the satisfaction of a fundamental human need - that of security. Integrating the audience, the presenters will embark on a journey of self-discovery by drawing on their prior experience of money, economics, banking and finance in order to make explicit a tangible set of working ideas which can facilitate a shift from the false sense of security based on money and in so many ways consciously and unconsciously suggested by the current financial, legal and economic system to a more resilient, genuine form of security that is based on social relationships.

Conference Themes: Money, exchange

Bio:

Thomas lectures in financial accounting at Macquarie University. Prior to his transition into academia, he was Head of the Financial Reporting Competence Centre of an international commercial bank based in Hamburg, Germany. Such banking and finance experience aroused the conviction within him that business education needs to undergo a revolution in its conceptualisation and execution. He is attempting this through the embedding of Permaculture ethics and design principles within business education. His work and research in this area is supported nationally through both professional accounting bodies and internationally with recognition from the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC) and the International Integrated Reporting Council (IIRC). In support of this work, he has recently held international visiting scholar positions in Germany and England.

Nick actively researches in the area of education, innovative teaching practice, environmental governance, social permaculture and alternative economics. He is passionate about the reconceptualisation of our current business and education system - creating a shift towards more holistic forms of accountability. Nick has led and/or taken key roles in competitive research funded projects equating to just under one million dollars. He has published in international journals, presented at numerous conferences and been invited to present at research and professional centres in Europe, Australia & New Zealand. He has held visiting positions in Germany, England & New Zealand and currently works with the American Accounting Association (AAA). He is Co-Chair of the Australian Accounting Education SIG and an Associate Editor of Issues in Accounting Education & Higher Education, Research & Development.