



UK Society for Co-operative Studies 51st Annual Research Conference

Friday 31st August – 2nd September 2018

Hosted by:

FairShares Institute for Cooperative Social Entrepreneurship
at Sheffield Business School, Sheffield Hallam University, S1 1WB

Diversity in Co-operation: People, Places and Organisation

2018 Conference Programme

The co-operative movement, even with its agreed values and principles, has always wrestled with the diversity of people, places and organisational variations that have emerged under the banner of co-operation. This creates a specific challenge as the global movement attracts new advocates in the wake of the 2008 crisis.

Stephen Yeo's work reminds us that mutual associations were envisaged as places to handle and manage the diversity of interests and identities that exist in people, places and wider society. And yet, our identities and interests have become fragmented by industrial, geographic and demographic divisions as well as the diversity of co-operative legal forms.

This year, we invited presenters to submit papers on the diversity of people, places and organisations that contribute to the co-operative movement and wider social solidarity economy. Today's co-operative movement is made up of a plethora of co-operative identities divided by industrial sectors (housing cooperatives, agricultural co-operatives, marketing co-operatives) and by collective economic roles (producer, worker and consumer co-operatives). Another dimension of diversity is the representation of minority interests. In 2009, Co-operatives UK launched Co-operative Diversity Action to focus on race and gender equality within and beyond the co-operative economy. This work continues today at Olmec Co-operative CIC through business advice and support services.

In this programme, we offer an overview of the keynote addresses, panels and presentations and list papers in each conference track to aid your event planning.

Programme

Friday 31st August 2018

16:00 – 18:00 UK SCS Annual General Meeting

Chair: Ian Adderley, UK Society for Co-operative Studies

Location: Room 7138/7139, Stoddart Building, Sheffield Business School

Please see the AGM notice and papers that were sent out by the society for more details.

18:00 Refreshments (Sponsored by Sheffield Business School)



18:30 Opening Plenary - Inaugural Professorial Lecture by Rory Ridley-Duff

Chair: Steve Johnson, AD for Research, Sheffield Business School

Location: Room 7140 (Lecture Theatre), Stoddart Building, Sheffield Business School

Diversity, Co-operation and the FairShares Model

In his inaugural lecture, Professor Ridley-Duff tracks how changes in the field of social enterprise necessitate the definition and development of co-operative social entrepreneurship (CSE). Internationally, the impulse for social enterprise arose out of changing attitudes to charity trading, the cooperative movement and a growing interest in social businesses and sustainable development. Highlighting the cooperative origins of the social enterprise movement in the UK, he tracks how resistance to the narrative advanced by New Labour led to the formation of a new network of academics and practitioners that developed a 'FairShares Model'. Using examples from early adopters of FairShares, he shows how the common bond is redefined to focus on solidarity between social entrepreneurs, producers, consumers and citizens. The application of the FairShares Model explicitly considers share wealth and power amongst founder, labour, user and investor members to give more emphasis to co-operative principles 5, 6, and 7. This 'multi-stakeholder turn' characterises the sub-field of CSE and supports the social solidarity economy (SSE).

Background: *Rory Ridley-Duff was a director and CEO of the worker co-operative Computercraft Ltd before he completed his doctorate in 2006. He was appointed Professor of Cooperative Social Entrepreneurship at Sheffield Hallam University in March 2018 for his research on participatory approaches to governance, industrial relations and entrepreneurship. His papers have appeared in management journals such as Human Relations, Journal of Business Ethics, Industrial Relations Journal, Corporate Governance: An International Review, International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior and Research as well as sector-specific journals like the Journal of Co-operative Studies (the UK SCS's journal) and Social Enterprise Journal. He is a director of Social Enterprise International Ltd and FairShares Association Ltd, editorial board adviser to the Social Enterprise Journal, associate editor at the Journal of Social Entrepreneurship and a workgroup leader for the EMPOWER-SE COST Action funded by EU governments.*

19:30 – 20:00

Drinks / Canapes Reception, Sheffield Business School

Saturday 1st September 2018

9:00 - 9:30 - Registration Stoddart Building, Sheffield Business School

9:30 - 11:00 – Welcome (Rory Ridley-Duff) and Keynote 1 (by Susanne Westhausen)

Session Chair: Cilla Ross, Co-operative College / UK Society for Co-operative Studies

Location: Room 7140 (Lecture Theatre), Stoddart Building

Diversity in Co-operation: People, Places and Organisation

Susanne Westhausen is not only the CEO of Kooperationen (a confederation of co-operatives and social enterprises in Denmark) but also a current board member of the International Co-operative Alliance and Vice President of Co-operatives Europe. In her keynote, she will address the topic of the conference drawing on her experience of the Danish co-operative movement and international work at CECOP-CICOPA, Co-operatives Europe and the ICA.

11:00 - 11:30 - Coffee Break, Stoddart Deli

11:30 – 1.00 - Parallel Sessions 1

<i>New Forms of Co-operation</i> <i>Chair:</i> Rory Ridley-Duff <i>Location:</i> 7138	<i>Governance and Participation</i> <i>Chair:</i> Roger Spear <i>Location:</i> 7139	<i>Co-operatives and Sustainable Development</i> <i>Chair:</i> Graham Boyd <i>Location:</i> 7140 (Lecture Theatre)
The case of the SMart cooperative model by Rocio Nogales - 45 mins Transferable non-voting investor shares negotiable on a co-operative capital market by Steve Gill - 45 mins	Worker directors, gender democracy and efficiency by Virginie Perotin - 45 mins Indivisible reserves in the UK and the other 27 EU member states: a basis for cooperative development, cooperative identity and growth by Cliff Mills - 45 mins	Exploring the lived experience of worker co-operators by Janette Hurst - 45 mins The 'co-operative ethos' in public services By Temidayo Eseonu - 45 mins

N.B. Participants can organise impromptu Open Space sessions using the meeting places in the Stoddart Deli.

13:00 – 14:00 – Lunch, in the Stoddart Deli

14:00 - 15:15 - Keynote 2 (by Sion Whellens)

Chair: Nick Matthews, UK Society for Co-operative Studies / Co-operatives UK

Location: Room 7140 (Lecture Theatre), Stoddart Building, Sheffield Business School

The Worker Co-operative Solidarity Fund

Background: Sion is a founder member of the Worker Co-operative Solidarity Fund, vice president of CECOP-CICOPA (the European Federation of Co-ops in Industry and Services), and former Director of Co-operatives UK.

This short non-academic paper is an update of a 2016 paper written for Co-operatives UK. It describes the background of the Worker Coop Solidarity Fund (SolidFund); its origins; the motivation of its proposers and early members; subsequent growth path; critical success factors; and problematics. In this context, it is designed to provide insights to students and practitioners working in the field of cooperative development, and contribute to a wider discussion about cooperative self-help, collaboration (Principle Six), and resourcing the growth of the movement. The paper contains 10 sections - Introduction; Background; Origin; Objectives; Governance; Operations; Disbursements; Current Status; Growth and critical path. During the presentation, the fund's key success factors will be explored.

15:15 - 15:30 - Coffee/Break, Stoddard Deli

15:30 - 17:45 - Parallel Tracks 2

<p><i>Co-operative Education</i> Chair: Cilla Ross Location: 7138</p>	<p><i>The Politics of Co-operation</i> Chair: Rocio Nogales Location: 7139</p>	<p><i>Leadership in a Cooperative Context</i> Chair: Janette Hurst Location: 7140</p>
<p>The Big Co-op Census By Michelle Parkin-Kelly</p> <p>"Why co-operative studies?" revisited By Mark Craig</p> <p>The co-operatives of choice by Philip Coulthard</p>	<p>Gendered democracy in cooperatives? by Esther Gluck</p> <p>The Irish credit union business model: Is it still fit for purpose? By Paul Jones</p> <p>Effective negotiation: the key to profitable collaboration By John Carlisle</p>	<p>Workforce participation: leading from the co-operative sector by Clare De Normanville, David Wren and Rory Ridley-Duff</p> <p>FairShares needs co-operative ways of leading and developing each other By Graham Boyd</p> <p>The coming of age of the social solidarity economy By Rory Ridley-Duff and Mike Bull - 30 mins</p>

4:30 - 6:30 - The Co-operative Press AGM

Chair: Rebecca Harvey, Co-op Press

Location: Room 7332, Stoddart Building (Third Floor)

Separate registration is required. Please see the notices and agenda sent out by Co-operative Press.

19:30 – 23:00 - Conference Dinner

Hallam View Restaurant, Owen Building

Directions: On leaving Sheffield Business School, turn right and follow directions to the main university building (Owen Building). Once inside the entrance (Floor 5), take the stairs (or lift) to Floor 6. The entrance to Hallam View Restaurant is next to the lift.

The bar will open at 7.30 and remain open all evening. Please take your seats by 8.00 - food will be served from 8.15. If you have mentioned a special dietary requirement, please check-in with a designated member of the UK SCS Committee when you arrive at Hallam View.

Sunday 2nd September 2018

09:00 - 10.30 - Panel Session

Chair: Rory Ridley-Duff

Location: Room 7140 (Lecture Theatre, Stoddart Building, Sheffield Business School)

Co-operatives and the Social Solidarity Economy: Europe and beyond

During this panel, each speaker will comment for 10 minutes on the way co-operatives interact with each other and other players within the SSE ecosystem, and what is likely to develop in the future.

- **Dr Rocio Nogales**, *Managing Director of the EMES International Research Network, coordinator of a 4-year COST Action (EMPOWER-SE) that is investing in the next generation of co-operative and social economy researchers.*

Rocio will discuss the building of a network of researchers engaged in scholarly activities, and the role that EMPOWER-SE is playing in bridging communities of scholars in over 40 countries who connect with each other across the SSE. The International Comparative Social Enterprise Models (ICSEM) project, led by members of EMES since 2013, recently found strong empirical evidence that three types of co-operative (social, financial and work-integration) contributing to the SSE and its ecosystem.

- **Cliff Southcombe**, *Managing Director of Social Enterprise International Ltd and a co-founder of FairShares Association Ltd (a specialist in supporting solidarity cooperatives and companies).*

Cliff will discuss the role that co-operatives and cooperation continues to play within the ecosystem of the SSE. As coordinator of Erasmus exchanges for social entrepreneurs across Europe, and as a partner in numerous funded and commercial projects, Cliff has wrestled at the boundary of 'old' and 'new' cooperativism for two decades. He will discuss the potential for cooperative development in FairShares Labs for Social and Blue Innovation and cooperative education in schools within the NEMESIS Horizon 20/20 project.

- **Cory Fletcher**, *Cory Fletcher works with Molly Scott Cato MEP on economics and finance, including sustainable finance.*

Cory will talk about how social ownership in the sustainable finance agenda is key to its successful implementation. Co-operative banks have been leading actors in the consideration of the environmental, social and governance factors in sustainable investments. Institutional actors such as the UN and the EU are now recognising the urgent need for policy and regulation for sustainable finance. The EU must ensure that it works with stakeholders at the local, national and international level to create robust policy for responsible investment.

- **Susanne Westhausen**, *CEO of Kooperation (a confederation of cooperatives and social enterprises in Denmark), current board member of the International Cooperative Alliance, and Vice President of Cooperatives Europe.*

Susanne will build on her opening plenary by giving further insights into the way

Danish co-operatives and social enterprises interact with the SSE. Based on work to develop national and international legal frameworks for cooperatives and social enterprises, she will draw on her roles within CECOP-CICOPA, Cooperatives Europe and the ICA to discuss the challenges facing the cooperative movement.

- **Siôn Whellens**, a founder member of the Worker Co-operative Solidarity Fund, vice president of CECOP-CICOPA (the European Federation of Co-ops in Industry and Services), and former Director of Co-operatives UK.

Siôn will build on his talk about the Worker Co-operative Solidarity Fund (SolidFund) based on his experience representing worker co-operatives within Co-operatives UK and CECOP-CICOPA. He will comment on the potential of online communities to support worker co-operative development and mutuality in the SSE.

10.30 - 11.00 - Coffee/Break, Stoddard Deli

11:00 - 12:30 - Parallel Tracks 3

<p><i>Co-operative History</i> Chair: Richard Bickle Location: 7138</p>	<p><i>Co-operative Education</i> Chair: Cilla Ross Location: 7139</p>	<p><i>UKSCS Future Strategy Workshop</i> Chair: Cliff Southcombe Location: 7140</p>
<p>The Past Informing the Present: The Co-op Movement and Anti-Slavery – 45 mins By Nick Matthews</p> <p>Cuba's transition to 21st century socialism – 45 mins By Joseph Tharamanglam</p>	<p>Promoting and supporting genuine self-help enterprises: Edgar Parnell previews his forthcoming book and is seeking your feedback - 90 minutes By Edgar Parnell</p>	<p>Session to discuss the future strategy of the UK Society for Co-operative Studies - 90 mins Facilitated by Cliff Southcombe</p>

N.B. Participants can organise impromptu Open Space sessions using the meeting places in the Stoddart Deli.

12.30 - 13.00 Final Networking Opportunity

13:00 - 14:00 Packed Lunch and Depart

Presentations by Track Themes

Track Name - Co-operative History

Historically, the co-operative movement has a plethora of records that detail the formation of small, grassroots co-operatives and mutuals across Europe, North America and Japan in the 19th Century. Despite its long history, the co-operative movement and co-operative business has remained secondary to the investor-owned models of industry and services provision. Diversity issues have affected the history of the co-operative movement. Whilst some early co-operatives societies excluded women, the Rochdale Pioneers admitted women from the outset, and women played an important part through the Woman's League for the Spread of Co-operation (1883) and later the (re-named) Women's Co-operative Guild (1885). Historical accounts of collective and individual contributions are needed to deepen our understanding of co-operators as well as co-operatives, and how their social histories contributed to the diverse range of organisational forms and sectoral initiatives.

Room 7138 – Sunday

11:00 - Matthews, Nick - *The Past Informing the Present: The Co-op Movement and Anti-Slavery*

In 2017, the Co-operative Group was a recipient of the Thomson-Reuters Stop Slavery award. It is hard to know if the Group's founders would have been delighted or shocked (delighted that the Group still supported the anti-slavery movement or shocked that slavery still existed). Formed during the American Civil War in 1863, it is often assumed that the Co-operative Wholesale Society was abolitionist from its inception. The reason for this, as Wilson, Webster and Vorburgh-Rugh (2013) point out in 'Building Co-operation', is that the wheatsheaf trademark of the society incorporates as its motto, 'Labour and Wait' in the American spelling. This is believed to come from the final line of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow poem, 'A psalm of life'. There are two assumptions here, firstly that the founders of the CWS were abolitionists and that they were familiar with the writings of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. This paper seeks to explore these two assumptions. Were the founders of the CWS part of the Lancashire Abolitionist Movement (a county dependent on Southern cotton and deeply split on the issue)? Also, were they familiar enough with the writings of Longfellow to use his words in this way, and - more importantly - confident that anyone reading it would understand the meaning of the Longfellow motto?

11:45 - Tharamanglam, Joseph - *Cuba's transition to 21st century socialism*

Faced with an existential economic and political crisis in the aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet Union, Cuba launched reforms aimed at putting its socialist system on a more sustainable basis. Reformed and new co-ops, unlike the earlier ones, are to be self-managing and independent of state control. They also extend beyond the traditional agricultural sector into the industrial and service sectors. This paper briefly examines the debates and the reforms with reference to the new co-ops. Drawing on the author's Cuban fieldwork and on secondary material, it argues that Cuban co-ops have a fair chance of success, but that there are uncertainties, especially with regard to the project of "downsizing the state". Even as the reforms begin to take hold, the Cuban state and the PCC are very cautious and slow in finalising and implementing the long promised legal and institutional framework for the transition. While such caution is warranted to pre-empt the kinds of errors in the Soviet Union and elsewhere (e.g. transferring public property to "pseudo co-ops" controlled by mafias) it appears that the project of downsizing the state in some respects may be leading to "bringing the state back in" in other respects.

Track Name - The Politics of Co-operation

2017 marked the centenary of the UK co-operative movement's involvement in party politics, and the election of the same year resulted in a record number of Labour and Co-operative Party members getting elected to the UK's parliament. The "politics" of "co-operation" – the way in which collective co-operative endeavour sets out to affect (and has succeeded in effecting) political changes in attitudes to wealth and power distribution - is particularly salient as technology creates new opportunities and challenges. How - for example – has the Mondragon Co-operative Corporation maintained a highest to lowest pay differential of 5:1 for over 60 years when US corporations now report a ratio of over 400:1? This track seeks to explore the political impact of co-operation, both at a local level in workplaces and within the wider infrastructure of party politics. Does the co-operative movement need its own political party, or is it sufficient to lobby other political parties? How are the internal political systems of a co-operative organised and enacted and how do they affect issues of diversity?

Room 7139 – Saturday

15:30 - *Gluck, Esther, Gendered democracy in cooperatives?*

Participatory democracy has been criticised by Young and other scholars for ignoring gendered structural inequalities and the degradation of female voices (Young 2000). Therefore, it is pivotal to find out whether participatory democracy in co-operatives is a chance or a risk for gender equality. Using interviews conducted in two co-operatives which were analysed for contents related to decision-making structure, democratic principles, the co-operatives' handling of care work and participation in the decision process, the paper explores the dimensions and intensity of inequality regimes (Acker 2006). Whereas none of the respondents of [Case 2, Berta] mentioned instances of direct discrimination, a female employee of [Case 1, Agatha] described the leadership and structures as highly male dominated. Correspondingly, a male respondent reported a rather "provocative" behaviour of the executive board of [Case 1], but only problematises sexism among blue collar workers and migrants and not as a structural problem. Segregation is crucial in both cooperatives, but at [Case 2], segregation only occurs in highly female connotated fields, where there is a lack of male applicants. In [Case 1] there are femalised and masculinised sectors and segregation is more problematised as a lack of interest of women in male connotated jobs. Vertical segregation is common in [Case 1] and non-existent in [Case 2]. Although there are no concrete incidents of discrimination in [Case 2], there are still some doubts about the equality of voices between men and women. All of the respondents appreciate the highly tolerant culture, but some mentioned that they or others experienced that contributions of male colleagues are more often supported than contributions of female colleagues. It seems that more opportunities to take part in decisions in each level can enhance gender equality. But even if there is no structural inequality, participation might be gendered because of gender status effects (Ridgeway 2011). Therefore, the next step will be an analysis of excerpts of meetings in co-operatives focusing on such biases.

16:15 - *Jones, Paul - The Irish credit union business model: Is it still fit for purpose?*

By any objective standard, the credit union movement in Ireland achieved amazing success during the first four decades after its founding in the 1950s. In the years since, however, it has been in gradual but on-going decline. Despite their current financial strength, this paper argues that credit unions must substantially change how they do business, or their long-term future is in doubt. The objective of the paper is to explore the reasons for this decline and to prompt discussion and debate by credit unions and their stakeholders on how that decline can be reversed. It is intended to respond to increasingly urgent warnings that the traditional credit union business model is no longer fit for purpose. The approach is to examine how well credit unions are faring in a rapidly changing

competitive, economic and social environment, to explore how in other countries they have modified their business models to overcome similar challenges whilst preserving their core values, and from that analysis to suggest new business models likely to work in Ireland.

17:00 - Carlisle, John - *Effective negotiation: the key to profitable collaboration*

This presentation explores the implications of forty years of research into collaboration and negotiation, starting at the Huthwaite Research Group (HRG). Based on an initial sample of 17 union, 12 management, 11 contract and 9 third sector negotiators, HRG used interactive behaviour analysis to compare variations in the levels of the nine key/differentiating behaviours on negotiation outcomes. Additional in-depth interviews made it clear that there was another facet (weak plans stemming from poor leadership and/or the lack of a clear mandate). Behavioural skill at internal meetings are just as important as the interactions during the negotiation itself. The model was later applied in major multinationals like Shell, Motorola, Chrysler as well as the Civil Service College, African political youth parties, Housing Associations and charities. The contribution of the approach, particularly when applied in multi-stakeholder workshops, has been well-catalogued. Savings in time and costs on projects have been as high as 30%. Innovation blossomed and relationships were sustained under trying conditions. The presentation of these findings is offered as a stalking horse for a discussion on the development of skilled co-operators.

Room 7140 – Sunday

9:00 – Panel - *Co-operatives and the Social Solidarity Economy: Europe and beyond*

In the context of a world still being reshaped by policies and politics arising out of the 2008 financial crisis, is the growth of the SSE (and the place of co-operatives within it) assured? Panellists will share their experience of contributing to policy development in Europe, at the United Nations, within the International Cooperative Alliance, CECOP-CIPCOPA, the Global Social Economy Forum and Green Party.

Track Name - Co-operative Education

Following the reforms that brought about the creation and conversion of hundreds of schools to co-operative schools and academies, what are the prospects for Co-operative Higher Education? Co-operative education combines programmed (class-based) education and experiential learning (through work-based learning, structured work experiences and internships). What balance between directed and self-directed learning should drive the education experiences of students in co-operative schools and universities? What new pedagogies from the field of social innovation might promote co-operative principles, values and ways of working? Woodin (2014) suggests that co-operation and democracy in educational settings is a complex process and in need of deliberation and debate. What do we mean by a 'co-operative pedagogy'?

Room 7138 – Saturday

15:30 - Parkin-Kelly, Michelle - *The Big Co-op Census*

The Big Co-op Census is the first large-scale survey of co-operatives of this type known in the UK. As part of the two-year National Co-operative Development Strategy (NCDS) undertaken by Co-operatives UK (CUK), the census was designed with following aims:

- To assess the current state of the sector in relation to development needs
- To gain greater insight of, and engagement with, those co-operatives with whom CUK has had little prior relationship (to extend the validity and reach of sector intelligence)
- To inform the NCDS process and ensure the strategy is evidence-based and representative of the diverse co-operative sector

In meeting these aims, the census has contributed to substantial developments in both the means of engagement and practicable matters in how CUK may approach sectoral development. Key outcomes include data cleansing and the accumulation of enhanced and new intelligence of the sector; a greater understanding of the direct challenges faced by co-operatives on the ground, and; where further collaboration and insight may mitigate knowledge gaps to enable a strategy to effectively serves CUK members and the wider sector.

16:15 - Craig, Mark - *Why co-operative studies? revisited*

Despite the fact that co-operatives have been studied in the UK and elsewhere for almost as long as the modern form of co-operation has existed, co-operatives and co-operation remain under-researched and under-theorised. This paper revisits Ian MacPherson's think piece entitled 'Why Co-operative Studies?' Ian stated that: 'In time, it [the conference] may prove to have been a seminal event for the development of the field'. Whilst there is far more research on co-operatives being undertaken and greater academic interchange occurring, I argue in this workshop that his hopes have not been fulfilled. Despite some excellent - and sometimes challenging - work on the nature of co-operation and co-operative studies the field of Co-operative Studies remains in a pre-paradigmatic state. As a contribution to the discussion, I advance the view that Co-operative Studies is characterised by 'The Five Ps of Co-operative Studies':

- (a) a philosophically partisan approach to research;
- (b) a focus on co-operative practice;
- (c) a focus on the prefigurative activities of co-operatives;
- (d) co-operative research as performative in character; and,
- (e) methodological pragmatism and inter/multi-disciplinarity in co-operative research.

Whilst not my intention to advance a fully-formed view, I put forward suggestions to engender a lively debate.

17:00 - Coulthard, Philip - *The co-operatives of choice*

Can psychology add new understanding of co-operative structures? Psychology provides new insights and a new framework of understanding which was not available when the co-ops of the late 1800's were founded. In this work, I am drawing on the experience of Edith Eger's book "The Choice". Edith is an eminent psychologist but also someone with that rare insight of surviving Auschwitz, Mauthausen and the death march to Guns kirchen. The work also draws upon the experience and rich case notes of Carol Tavris and Elliot Aronson provided in the book "Mistakes were made (but not by me)". The work contrasts self-organising (SO) with hierarchical structures (HS). My purpose is to understand from Edith's experience how an organisation might continue to operate when hardship and survival form the context in which the organisation must operate. Ultimately, my goal is to find a path for organisations to come to terms operating within the constraints of climate change.

Room 7139 – Sunday

11:00 - Parnell, Edgar - *Promoting and supporting genuine self-help enterprises: previewing a forthcoming book and seeking your feedback*

The session will start with a session (20 minutes) introducing the content of the book, and the author will pose some questions that need answering if a new wave of self-help and cooperative action is to be fostered both in the UK and internationally. This will be followed by a 70-minute question and answer session with a skilled chairperson and an active correspondent to summarise the conclusions of the session independently.

Track Name - Co-operatives and Sustainable Development

As the internet is increasingly monopolised by a small group of big players - Facebook, Amazon, Twitter and Google (Wu, 2010) how can new co-operative marketplaces be developed and supported by co-operation among co-operatives? How can new technologies be used by co-operatives to provide new benefits and opportunities that attract and build membership of their co-operative? How can sustainable growth be integrated into independent co-operative enterprises?

Papers

7140 – Saturday

11:30 - Hurst, Janette - *Exploring the lived experience of worker co-operators*

Since its conception, the co-operative business movement has been values-led with a set of guiding values and principles (including social commitment, democracy and equality) and has recently turned its attention to more contemporary and normative notions of sustainability (ICA 2012, 2013). This research answers the call within the sustainability research literature for more micro-level research exploring how individual actors make decisions and make sense of the complex array of contested sustainability issues in the light of their values and ideologies (Söderbaum, 2014). Guided by a central open-ended question (“How do workers experience sustainability in a worker co-operative setting?”), Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis was chosen because it promotes exploration of participant experiences, understandings and emotions in a situated and complex world. Worker co-operatives have been selected due to their owner-member status, democratic model of governance and distributed leadership environment. Via semi-structured interviews, individuals' personal, co-operative and sustainability values and principles were explored, together with their experiences of making sustainability decisions in the specific setting. This paper reports on the understanding and meaning of externally-focussed sustainability activity within the co-ops by revealing that individual worker co-operators have highly evolved and individual views, can articulate a nuanced and complex view of sustainability, seek to work with others outside their organisations in a co-operative manner towards sustainability goals, and believe the cooperative business model to be a suitable change vehicle for wider socio-economic (paradigm) change.

12:15 - Eseonu, Temidayo - *The 'co-operative ethos' in public services*

This paper is interested in exploring what a ‘co-operative ethos’ in public service means, and its potential to pave way for more inclusion of under-represented communities in policy making and public service design and delivery. The first wave of co-operative councils gave new meaning and identity to public services by facilitating the maintenance of communities and societies. This paper theorises that a ‘co-operative ethos’ influences the institutional factors which facilitates or constrains inclusive citizen engagement leading to an argument that where councils have a ‘co-operative ethos’ it should be evident in its willingness to engage with the public. Of interest to this paper is the Co-operative Councils Innovation Network (CCIN) adapted principle of democratic engagement: support the active engagement of the full range of residents in decision-making and priority setting. These CCIN principles have the potential to provide a purposeful commitment for co-operative councils as they set out a clearly defined ways on how they seek to work with their communities. Although the CCIN principles provide what a co-operative council identity might look like, the concept of a co-operative council can be viewed as problematic because councils are non-enterprise and non-autonomous organisations (and therefore cannot be categorised as ICA co-operatives). However, this paper takes the view that the CCIN principle of democratic engagement, if embedded within public service organisations, can birth a ‘co-operative ethos’ and consequently, a culture of inclusive citizen engagement.

Track Name - New Form of Co-operation

In 2010, *Affinities: A Journal of Radical Theory, Culture, and Action* ran a special edition on new co-operativism to highlight how a new generation of co-operators are not necessarily looking to the examples of 'old' co-operatives. What new entrepreneurial incubators and networks are supportive of co-operative learning and organising? Do they practice co-operation in new ways and challenge taken for granted assumptions about the nature of co-operation? What roles will Open Access and Creative Commons publications have on the development of the cooperative economic paradigm (Rifkin, 2014), and how should co-operatives participate to build a commons-based economy? Are crowd-funding, -lending and -equity evolutions of the co-operative model or a new form of capitalism?

Track Papers

Room 7138 – Saturday

11:30 - *Nogales, Rocio - The case of the SMart cooperative model*

The aim of this research is to explore the context of economic, political, social and environmental transitions through a study of SMart - a cultural and artistic social enterprise (CASE) which has developed a relevant co-operative model that mitigates the structural labour precariousness of artists and creators. The case study SMart is presented through the lenses of social enterprise and social innovation to provide an evaluation of the scaling up strategy. This is based on the statistical analysis of data collected during the research. Three country cases (Austria, Spain and Hungary) were studied to offer descriptions of national SMart implementation efforts. The main conclusions of the research comment on the potential of the cultural sector to adapt solutions to contexts different to the ones in which they originated.

12:15 - *Gill, Steve - Transferable non-voting investor shares negotiable on a co-operative capital market*

The paper introduces a proposal to create a new financial institution: the Co-operative Exchange. Transferable non-voting 'investor shares' could see co-operatives able to raise the same capital as their capitalist peers whilst still retaining all co-operative principles and values. If co-operatives can raise the same capital, they can deliver the same results - often better results - as enterprises are more likely to succeed when they are less likely to have the rug pulled by a VC firm that prioritises high gains to compensate for write offs and failures. To make the next Google or Facebook a co-operative, we need to change the definition of fair price of an investor D share (ordinary company share) to a negotiable price based on supply and demand using (importantly) a co-operative capital market that is a co-operative itself, and which adheres to co-operative principles. Margaret Thatcher said 40 years ago that owning shares would be as common as owning a car, yet today only 12% of individuals own shares. Capitalism has meant the rich get richer and everyone else loses out. Introducing non-voting transferable investor D shares negotiable on a co-operative capital market has the potential to solve that and increase this percentage. Imagine being able to easily with one-button press support a growing co-op in Africa and equally imagine an African being able to easily invest 10 USD in a co-operative in the UK, all using a phone. This is what a Co-operative Exchange can deliver but if the concept of non-voting transferable investor D shares negotiable on a co-operative capital market is embraced by the co-operative community as a viable solution.

Track Name - Leadership in a Co-operative Context

Co-operative institutions make specific demands regarding the role, nature and practice of leadership. Yet, the organisation of internal arrangements cannot be exercised in a vacuum and regulatory guidance often favours hierarchically structured rather than collectively governed and managed work processes and structures. Which forms of co-operative, and cultures of co-operation, are best able to sustain co-operative values and principles? This track considers the theoretical and practical implications of leading and managing within a values-driven framework in which democratic accountability is expected from leaders and governing bodies. How can participation, active membership and control, communication and collaboration amongst co-operatives be catalysed through co-operative leadership, management and entrepreneurship?

Papers

Room 7140 – Saturday

15:30 – *De Normanville, Clare; Wren, David; and Ridley-Duff, Rory - Workforce participation: learning from the co-operative sector*

This paper advances research on the power to participate using two case studies of worker owned business. The paper extends a theoretical framework developed by Ridley-Duff and Ponton (2013) to answer the question “How can Gaventa’s Powercube be integrated with theories of industrial democracy?” A new composite framework is offered to draw attention to the value of Gaventa’s (2006) conceptualisation of who can create, control, open and close the spaces in which governance occurs. Using the cases of the Mondragon Co-operative and John Lewis Partnership, the paper concludes by theorising that the ‘visible’ power of an enabling constitution combined with the ‘invisible’ power of the social economy’s normative values and principles can reshape the power to participate in the institutions of governance. It does this by reinforcing the rights of worker-members to continually (re)claim the spaces in which workplace democracy occurs, and to use it to reverse the hiring relationship between capital and labour.

16:15 – *Boyd, Graham - FairShares needs co-operative ways of leading and developing each other*

The global challenges we face, and complementary ways of addressing them, are clear. At the same time, the lifetime job, or even career is less common. The growth of the gig economy, the sharing economy, portfolio careers and much more, will continue. These require an integration of the emerging alternatives to three distinct elements of traditional business. All three have peer-to-peer cooperation in common.

- 1) Alternative legal forms, such as FairShares.
- 2) Alternative organisation design and leadership (e.g. Holacracy, Sociocracy 3.0)
- 3) Alternative ways of developing people (e.g. Deliberately Developmental Organisations).

We have found in our company, and in our clients, that each of these enables the other two. Even more, if any one, or even two of these is missing, then the gap creates a fragility. We have found integrating all three into a FairShares Self-governing Developmental organisation effective. In this presentation, we will cover the results we are seeing when all three are present, and the issues we see when one or two are used alone. We will also describe what can be done to make it easy for organisations to start where they are and take incremental steps towards implementing all three.

17:00 - Ridley-Duff, R. and Bull, M. – *The Coming of Age of the Social Solidarity Economy*

This paper uses six examples of co-operation to illustrate Polanyi's distinction between redistribution, reciprocity and market. We set out an argument for a broad-based economy based on three member-driven approaches to organising: redistribution through the joint actions of unions, societies and non-profit associations building the SSE through charitable trading activities (CTAs); reciprocity through mutual financial institutions and worker-owned businesses creating new co-operative and mutual enterprises (CMEs); market action by socially responsible businesses that use participatory management techniques to pursue sustainable development goals (SRBs). To test this thesis, we deconstruct six platform-based projects using five of Ostrom's principles for collective action. These cases, combined with updated research on the scale and reach of the SSE, shows that it is coming of age. There is no longer a defensible justification for rendering the social solidarity economy (SSE) as a marginal choice between public service and private business.

Track Name - Co-operative Governance and Participation

Balancing economic indicators, good governance and social impact is a critical challenge for co-operatives. In 2014, the ICA committed the international co-operative movement to UN sustainable development goals, and the UK Department for International Development has hosted workshops on co-operatives and corporate governance to highlight challenges in policy and regulatory environments. The contribution of co-operatives and mutuals remains 'poorly understood and perennially underestimated' (Ernst & Young, 2012, p.3). So how can co-operatives update their governance and participation systems to meet new commitments to sustainable development? How might the rising popularity of social and integrated reporting create opportunities for co-operatives to develop governance systems that create economic, social and environmental impact?

Papers

Room 7139 - Saturday

11:30 – *Perotin, Virginie - Worker directors, gender democracy and efficiency*

Using data on French worker cooperatives, the paper revisits whether democratic workplaces that have greater gender democracy are also more productive. In empirical studies of labour-managed firms or worker co-operatives, workplace democracy is measured as the proportion of the workforce that are members of the co-operative, and sometimes as the proportion of blue-collar workers on the board. The paper considers separately the question of the membership rate among employees and that of board representation and examines whether worker co-operatives where female members are better represented on the board are more productive. Hypotheses that workplace democracy has a positive effect on productive efficiency broadly involve two types of arguments: information issues (e.g., lower agency costs, better informed decisions); and intrinsic motivation/commitment arguments (greater autonomy and recognition, voice and ownership supporting intrinsic motivation). Using a large unbalanced panel dataset covering all French worker co-operatives from 1989 to 2003, I estimate a translog production function on the co-operatives that have a board and are present in the panel for at least two years augmented by measures of the membership rate and of the representation of female members and blue-collar and clerical members on the board. Preliminary results show the membership rate to have a positive and significant effect as in previous studies, in all specifications. The effect of female representation on the board relative to female membership also has a positive and significant effect in all specifications.

12:15 – *Mills, Cliff - Indivisible reserves in the UK and the other 27 EU member states: a basis for co-operative development, co-operative identity and growth*

The UK does not make provision for indivisible reserves in its legislation; most other EU Member States do. This study looks at what indivisible reserves are, how they feature in the ICA Principles, and then explores how the 28 EU Member States cover this aspect in their national laws. It looks briefly at the EU's own approach to co-operatives through legislation and case-law. By looking at the Member States' legal provisions relating to indivisible reserves, and issues such as whether a state's national constitution refers to co-operatives, whether the state has specific legislation providing for co-operatives, and whether "co-operative" is defined, it seeks to draw some conclusions about the extent to which such States provide a supportive legal framework for co-operatives.