

Requirements & Suggestions

From the experience of earlier conferences we came to a few requirements and suggestions that we wish to share with those groups who are interested in hosting **the 6th International Degrowth Conference on Degrowth for Ecological Sustainability and Social Equity**. Please understand everything which is in *italics* only as a suggestion, while the order in which the points are listed does not correspond to their importance. Also note that none of the following is carved in stone.

The Requirements & Suggestions are here sorted along the following:

1. General points
2. The organizing process
3. The conference – including general points and content
4. Other points

1. General points:

1.1 The **title of the conference** in English shall be “Sixth International Conference on Degrowth for Ecological Sustainability and Social Equity”.

- This title shall appear in all material related to dissemination of the conference, including leaflets, website, etc.
- *Variations on the title theme are possible in the local language, as needed to fit the local context and specifics of the language*
- *We further recommend to translate the term “degrowth” into the local language*
- *and to have also a thematic subtitle to indicate a possible specific focus of the conference*

1.2 There shall be an informative **webpage** in English (minimum).

- The official website of the conference would use the following domain CITYNAME.degrowth.org (e.g. leipzig.degrowth.org) in order to make the continuity among the different conferences explicit.
- Visible links to the previous conferences shall be included on the website including their logos
- and further the plenaries as streams or as a web video after the event should be available here.
- provide open access to papers and/or proceedings
- R&D appears as co-organizer of the conference

1.3 We expect a conference structure that benefits from **self-organization, cooperation and participation**;

- that is organized in democratic processes and evaluation both for the organizing committee and the actual conference (e.g. working groups, small groups discussions and general assemblies)
- which brings researchers, civil society and practitioners together
- and which has an international dimension and an excellent scientific level, which would be

reflected by the membership of the organizing committee.

1.4 Gender balance, as well as diversity of geographical and cultural backgrounds, should be a central criteria of the conference:

- from the composition of the local organizing committee to the invited key-note speakers
- One keynote should be given by a renown feminist scholar/activist relevant for degrowth
- *gender balance: potential organizers shall show that they will take every possible step to ensure that a 50-50 balance will be attained with regards to speakers*
- Even when a 50-50 balance is not reached at least 1/3 of the plenary speakers should be female

2. The organizing process

2.1 Include at least two representatives of the **Support Group** in the organizing committee.

Therefore:

- *make sure they can participate in the organizing process by giving regular updates in English.*
- *two members of the local organizing committee would be in charge of giving regular updates to the Support Group.*
- *and further it is really helpful to have several national members of the organizing committee who have already been to a degrowth conference so they carry forward the spirit.*

2.2. **Finances:** The conference should not be sponsored by multi-national corporation or bodies that are not coherent with the spirit of degrowth (e.g. big banks, mining companies, privatized public utilities) and preferably also not by commercial enterprises. The conference can be supported by:

- public funding
- participants' fees
- non-profit organizations
- and grass roots fund raising (e.g. crowdfunding).

The actions of partners and supporting organizations must pursue solidarity, ecological and emancipatory goals.

2.3. The conference should consider **sustainability, justice and conviviality as a main criteria for its own organization:**

- *adopting measures for the safeguard of the environment (transport, logistics, waste, energy consumption...)*
- *respecting people's work, including voluntary work (work hours, acknowledgement)*
- *caring in the use of commodities and material resources (organization, general set-up)*
- *applying ecological sustainability and social equity criteria when choosing suppliers*
- *promoting as much as possible local and fair economic subjects (especially as regards of food).*

2.4. *As much as possible, involve local and national public administrations, civil society and research institutions*

Further recommendations:

- *We recommend the conference organizers to develop a project plan [milestones etc.], that can be consulted with the support group in the beginning of the process, the support group offers to support the local organizing group in developing such a project plan.*
- *The organizers of the 4th International Conference in Leipzig have developed a manual which we highly suggest for consideration once you start your actual planning. It is sent out on request.*

3. The conference

3.1 Enable inclusive and active participation, therefore:

A. Organize the conference in a way that allows for **active participation and meaningful interaction amongst scientists, activists and practitioners** (building upon and improving the methodology used up to now) while ensuring a high quality of academic presentations, debate and interactions.

- allow time for discussion in plenaries, paper sessions and workshops
- *and consider to also including artistic work.*

B. Consider ways to **meet the expectations of all participants** (with different backgrounds, young and old, newcomers and more experienced actors)

- *From previous experiences, it is essential to have introductory sessions about degrowth for beginners, one idea could be one plenary followed by discussions in small groups before the conference starts, as the one organized by R&D in Leipzig*
- *Also consider ways to engage plenaries and sessions for cutting edge research, as well as sessions on networking meetings, and practical or activity workshops for practitioners and activists.*

C. Have **sessions open and available to the general public**:

- *e.g. opening and/or closing ceremony, parallel events, special guest speakers, etc.*
- *online streaming and recording of all plenaries*

D. The **official language** of the conference should be English

- *with simultaneous translation for the plenaries and*
- *language mediation for conference sessions to ensure the effective engagement of all participants.*

E. The degrowth conferences have a strong **international character**

- *No more than 1/4 of the plenary speakers should be of the same nationality as the hosts*
- *international participants should be able to engage with the conference contents, possible are discussions and streams via social media on degrowth.net, before, during and after the conference*
- *And we suggest that the conference is not dominated by local participants (max 70%), with*

minimum 500 participants.

F. The conference should be open for people of all ages, providing events and opportunities for children and offer childcare.

3.2. Requirements/suggestions on content:

A. Ensure **multidisciplinarity**, while focusing on certain themes and giving a balanced representation to all the sources of degrowth (ecological economics, ecology, democracy, anti-utilitarianism, development critique, voluntary simplicity, social justice, non-violence, religious critique and spirituality, etc.).

- Foster **participation and exchange involving communities with affinities from other research communities and social movements**, such as feminism, post-development, buen vivir, Marxism, eco-socialism, anarchism, political ecology, environmental justice, post-capitalism, post-carbon, post-colonialism, decolonialism, post-extractivism, Occupy and Indignados, commons, social ecology, solidarity economy, Transition, peer production, LGBT, anti-racism etc..

B. Ensure that the conference **builds upon, and develops further**, the results of the previous conferences, assuring continuity and an accumulative process of knowledge generation.

- *The next conferences shall follow-up on the collective process of deepening and linking degrowth proposals and research questions as initiated with the Group-Assembly Process in Barcelona, followed up in Leipzig and through the online social media platform (<https://community.net/gap>). We recommend to assign this objective to a specific organizational team.*

C. Combine local to global perspectives, as well as a variety of strategies (i.e. oppositional activism, building alternatives, research, dissemination, policy making and reformism etc.)

D. Ensure an **innovative character**, bringing and deepening new ideas, new links, new themes and avoid general presentations and general statements except at the introduction of the conference.

*E. We also expect great care to be made in the **conviviality dimension** of the conference and wish that some “empty spaces and times” are left over for free exchanges and networking among the participants.*

4. Other points:

4.1 Participants who register would be asked to be included in the list of recipients of R&D information (newsletter, etc) and social networking (degrowth.net), for ex. in the registration form.