



VIU
summer
SCHOOL
organizing
FOR SUSTAINABLE
FUTURES: micro
and macro-
INSTITUTIONAL
CONDITIONS
OF TRANSFORMATION

**Organizing for Sustainable Futures:
Micro and Macro-institutional Conditions
of Transformation**

June 17-20, 2024

**Venice International University
Isola di San Servolo, Venice**

VIU Summer School

Organizing for Sustainable Futures: Micro and Macro-institutional Conditions of Transformation

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Scientific Coordinators:

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Ruth Sealy, University of Exeter Business School

In its 8th edition, the summer school aims at the development of ideas that promote a more sustainable future by bringing together young scholars from all over the world to discuss their ideas on the Grand Transition of our society from the micro level of individual decision making to the organizational and the societal level. It gives young scholars the opportunity to discuss with eminent scholars in management theory and to test their ideas and present their work.

Participants will become familiar with recent research from a broad set of disciplines. They will work on their ability to engage in the transdisciplinary discourse which is required for the development of innovative answers to grand sustainability challenges.

Who is it for?

The Summer School is addressed to mainly PhD students and young post-doc scholars in management, economics and finance, political science, philosophy, psychology and sociology. Moreover, high level policy makers and high level officials in public and private institutions will be admitted if their background is adequate.

Faculty

Giovanni Favero, Ca' Foscari University of Venice
Elisa Giuliani, Università di Pisa
Johanna Mair, Hertie School of Governance/
Stanford University
Guido Palazzo, University of Lausanne
Juliane Reinecke, University of Oxford
Francesco Rullani, Ca' Foscari University of Venice
Ruth Sealy, University of Exeter
Christine Vallaster, University of Salzburg
Francesco Zirpoli, Ca' Foscari University of Venice

Program theme

Our society is facing a legitimacy crisis. The accelerating ecological crisis, the growing gap between the rich and the poor as well as the systemic risks provoked by disconnected financial markets make it necessary to profoundly rethink our routines of production and consumption. While there is a growing awareness for the importance and urgency of radical change, deep processes of transformation usually face numerous institutional and psychological barriers that have to be overcome. As Jared Diamond described in his book "Collapse", civilizations often react to a crisis of which they do not understand the causalities by reinforcing the routines that might have created the crisis in the first place. The VIU Summer School in 2024 will go beyond those routines, to reimagine pathways for the Grand Transition on which we have

embarked on a planetary scale, and to reflect upon the radical change, both in what economic actors do, and how organization scholars theorize about it. We look forward to engaging in discussion with the young scholars in the Summer School.

Topics

Storytelling and Societal Change (G. Palazzo)

This session will discuss the impact on language, discourse and storytelling on human behaviour. How does the way we make sense of the world influence ethical and unethical decisions and how can we use the insights on the narrativity of human existence as a leverage for societal change?

Doing Responsible Leadership Research

Responsibly (R. Sealy) | Responsible leadership (RL) research can be defined as moving away from individualistic or purely economic approaches, to consider organisational decision-making that reflects “all constituents and thus the common good in mind too.” Responsible leaders are expected to engage with environmental, social and governance (ESG) challenges within and outside of their organisations. Using leadership diversity research as a case, we will consider whether current academic approaches might hamper our understanding and thus our ability to improve the world. Looking forward we will consider our responsibility as academics and how RL research can address deficiencies in current leadership theories and frameworks.

Transformative Processes and Enabling Conditions (J. Mair) | In this session we put the spotlight on organizations that adopt alternative organizational forms, often considered as the hope to ensure diversity within capitalism. In our conversation we will rather examine enabling conditions for their emergence and how what they do triggers transformation. Using readings as a starting point we will revisit the potential of studying gradual processes of transformation that lead to new social orders, and discuss theoretical opportunities and implications for research designs to push forward this line of inquiry.

For the good and for the bad: individual and organizational perspectives on networks with hybrid purposes (F. Rullani) | In this session we will focus on hybrid organizations, i.e., organizations striving to realize a positive social

impact while generating economic gains at the same time, using the case of social cooperatives to show how networks of hybrid organizations may “lose sight” of their social goals in favor of the economic ones, and how they may gain them back by interacting within their network. The aim is to capture the micro-level mechanisms allowing “bad seeds” to flourish within a field characterized by “good deeds”.

International business and human rights (E. Giuliani) | This session will discuss the link between business and human rights. Up to 10 years ago, the word “human rights” was rarely associated with “business”, while now human rights are becoming a core concept in the business & sustainability scholarship and practice. This lecture provides an overview of the theoretical lenses through which the business and human rights phenomenon can be understood and predicted. We will review theories applied in the past to explain criminal or corrupt behaviour at the organizational level and discuss the complex predictability scenarios of business-related human rights harm.

Transforming into a circular economy: Hybridity of organizations and related challenges to overcome (C. Vallaster) | Linear economic thinking is reaching its limits: climate crisis, scarcity of resources or loss of biodiversity. Searching for new ways of doing business that fosters a transformation towards a circular economy comes with a wide array of managerial challenges. New forms of so-called hybrid organisations are emerging at the intersection of business, charity and politics emerge, which all have to manage the blending of identities. This presentation addresses the major question as to what kind of conflicts occur due to the hybrid nature of organizations and how to overcome them in the context of circularity, specifically when it comes to forming new B2B relations.

Taming Wicked Problems? Understanding the Evolution of Transnational Governance and Social Movements Dynamics (J. Reinecke) | This session will critically examine the role of private power in developing transnational governance solutions to wicked problems, defined as the large scale social challenges caught in causal webs of interlinking variables spanning national boundaries that complicate both their diagnosis and prognosis, such as poverty, inequality, climate change, deforestation or conflict in global supply chains.

Irresponsible decision making in the network firm (F. Zirpoli) | This session will give particular attention to the implication of the fact that decision makers are often “multiply embedded” in organizations, in places, in informal social networks, in more formal associations, and so on. Interdependent decisions and actions of multiple agents acting in a distributed environment are profoundly altering both decision-making and the strategy implementation processes in ways that demand some rethinking of the governance and management conceptual toolkit.

Itinerant Workshop through Venice (G. Favero)
Walking through the city, we will discuss how Venice became Venice during the 20th century.

Methodology

During the Summer School, participants will present and discuss their own research projects in working groups to the professors and their fellow participants and will receive valuable feedbacks.

Credits

Number of **ECTS credits** allocated: **2**
A Certificate of attendance will be issued at the end of the course.

Application procedure

The Program will admit **15** student participants.

Rolling admissions open until May 5, 2024
via the [VIU website](#) | 3 places available.

Applicants must submit the application form, a letter of motivation – which should include a research statement (max. 1500 words), a curriculum vitae, a photo, and a short video presentation (2-3 minutes).

Students will be notified of their application status shortly after receipt of their application and, if selected, asked to pay the tuition fee and accommodation fee (if requested) within ten days.

Fees

Students of VIU member universities: **€ 250** incl. VAT.

Students of other universities: **€ 500** incl. VAT.
VIU Alumni are eligible for a reduced fee.

The fee will cover tuition, teaching materials, lunches in the VIU cafeteria and social events. Student participants will be responsible for covering their own travel expenses to and from Venice, local transportation and accommodation. PhD Students in EU universities may be eligible for Erasmus+ funding. Refer to international

offices in home universities or contact VIU Erasmus office: erasmus@univiu.org.

Accommodation costs on campus

The costs of accommodation on campus in shared room with other participants (triple or quadruple) is **€ 260** for 5 nights (breakfast included).

Applicants can ask for VIU assistance in booking accommodation: please note that the facility is not managed by VIU and availability cannot be guaranteed for **rolling admission** candidates.

Venice International University is a consortium of 23 institutions, representing 15 countries throughout the world. The mission of VIU is to foster cooperation among VIU member institutions while facilitating the exchange of knowledge and ideas, by developing, promoting and organizing joint academic, research and training/capacity-building program. Students from non-member universities may participate in selected academic programs. The academic programs at VIU are distinguished by a markedly interdisciplinary approach to the topics, and by the international perspectives that the participants contribute to the discussions. The VIU campus is on the island of San Servolo in Venice, Italy.

Location



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