

Exploring the co-creation of a transition to a circular economy

Studying the interplay between artists, entrepreneurs & policy makers

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Project description

The circular economy is often understood as a way to deal with contemporary issues related to the economy, society and environment. The concept is gaining traction in multiple spheres, from business to academia, from policy makers to NGOs, in brief: different actors engage with the concept in different levels of governance (e.g. Bauwens et al., 2020; Calisto Friant et al., 2020). In this study, we focus on how the transition to a circular economy is being envisioned as a desirable future as a sociotechnical transformation to sustainability (Beck et al., 2021). In this envisioning, we explicitly focus on processes of co-creation in *Het Werkspoorkwartier*. *Het Werkspoorkwartier* is a circular hub in Utrecht where artists and creative entrepreneurs are working together towards a circular society. While this hub is at the forefront of exploring the opportunities related to a circular economy, the process of co-creation between policy-makers, artists and entrepreneurs brings quite some challenges. The aim of this project is to get a closer look at these processes and its challenges.

The Bright Minds Assistant will undertake a vital role in exploring the co-creation processes that are understood as part of the transition from a linear to a co-created circular economy? The main task for the Bright Minds Assistant is twofold, being

- (1) to map the various co-creation processes in *Het Werkspoorkwartier* both through site visits as well as through desk research.
- (2) to conduct an in-depth case study on a specific co-creation process through interviews and site visits.

Job requirements

I am looking for an applicant with a strong interest in co-creation and the circular economy. The assistant is expected to work together on building and studying a case in *Het Werkspoorkwartier*, specifically on a co-creation process that is preferred by the assistant, in close methodological collaboration with the supervisor. Excellent communication skills in Dutch and/or English are required.

Literature suggestions

Bauwens, T., Hekkert, M., & Kirchherr, J. (2020). Circular futures: what will they look like?. *Ecological Economics*, 175, 106703.

Beck, S., Jasanoff, S., Stirling, A., & Polzin, C. (2021). The governance of sociotechnical transformations to sustainability. *Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability*, 49, 143-152.

Calisto Friant, M., Vermeulen, W. J., & Salomone, R. (2020). A typology of circular economy discourses: Navigating the diverse visions of a contested paradigm. *Resources, Conservation and Recycling*, 161, 104917.

Project proposal Bright Minds Assistantships – February 2025

Chambers, J. M., Wyborn, C., Ryan, M. E., Reid, R. S., Riechers, M., Serban, A., ... & Pickering, T. (2021). Six modes of co-production for sustainability. *Nature Sustainability*, 4(11), 983-996.