



International Research Network for Food Quality and Health

Seminar January 19th, from 9-10 am CET on ZOOM

Alternative and Civic Food Networks as the bases for creating Living Labs - opportunities and challenges

The workshop is free of charge, but you have to sign up at shb@nexs.ku.dk, just write FQH as subject and you will receive a zoom link for the meeting

Program:

9.00-9.05 Welcome by Carola Strassner

9.05 – 9.35 " Alternative and Civic Food Networks as the bases for creating Living Labs - opportunities and challenges" by Dr Konrad Stępnik



Dr Konrad Stępnik is a sociologist, currently working in Socjometr Foundation, which he co-founded in 2013 (www.socjometr.pl). He is especially interested in rural areas development, sustainable food systems, living labs and social farming. He gained research experience in numerous applied research projects. One of the most important of them was research conducted by the Regional Center for Social Policy in Krakow (2014), where he was a part of a team evaluating local social welfare projects. This allowed him to cooperate with many NGOs, including numerous Local Action Groups from all over Poland. Between 2016 and 2021 he worked in the Agricultural Advisory Centre, where he was responsible for the development of care farms in Poland. For two years he also served as the head of Centre's Rural Development Department (2018-2020). For the last three years (2021-2023), he worked at the Institute of

Sociology of the Jagiellonian University as an associate professor in the international project FOODIVERSE (www.foodiverse.eu). His main responsibility was to design tools dedicated to Living Labs working for food system transformation.

9.35-9.55 Discussions in plenum or break-out rooms dependent on number of attendants

9.55-10.00 Wrap-up, presentation of next workshop and goodbye

Abstract

Alternative and Civic Food Networks as the bases for creating Living Labs - opportunities and challenges

A presentation of the results of case studies assessing the transformative potential of 15 food initiatives operating in five European countries. The evaluation criteria were developed on the basis of the living labs approach. Research has shown that food-related initiatives are similar to citizen-centered living labs and have the potential to facilitate sustainable transition of food systems. Food initiatives' innovative potential stems from their ability to empower citizens by redefining their roles in the food system. I argue that projects concerning transition in the food system can benefit from creating living labs based on existing food initiatives. This could increase their transformative potential and the durability of their outcomes.