

Transition Factory Alliance Charter

The systems of thought, development models, forms of governance, legal, economic and financial conventions conditioned by market-dominated globalization, and lifestyles that structure our societies are inherited from the previous centuries. They have led to a threefold crisis in relations: that between humankind and the biosphere - climate change being its most spectacular expression; that among individuals - leading to the disintegration of social cohesion; and that among societies - which carries the risk of reverting to nationalism, which would lead to the inability to manage interdependence together. This threatens the very survival of humankind.

In spite of these findings of more than 30 years and exposed through countless speeches, international conferences and agreements, the necessary transition to sustainable and cohesive societies has not begun, giving rise to a justified sense of rage and powerlessness as we face ever more specific threats of collapse.

There are many reasons for our inability to achieve systemic change - that is, change that will affect every aspect of our lives. Two are particularly obvious: we cannot hope to solve a problem with the same terms under which it arose; and our narrow conception of the responsibility of each actor means that no one really feels responsible for the disasters that are brewing.

Faced with the need to radically change our systems of thought, our economic models, our institutions, our development trajectories, territories, in the sense of human communities woven out of relationships, appear to be a decisive player in the needed transition. But they are as yet far from playing this driving role. There are many obstacles. Some are internal and are the reflection of multiple compartmentalizations. Others are external and stem from the fact that over the last two centuries, the political and economic role of territories has been steadily diminishing to the benefit of states and large companies.

There is a growing consensus on the need and urgency of a systemic transition and the role that territories can play in leading it. Numerous territorial initiatives have emerged, and they are often networked together. A few, despite all the obstacles, began very early on to embark on a genuine strategy for change to be implemented over several decades.

These experiences are both a source of inspiration for others and, through their similarities, the basis for engineering change in societies. The initiatives show that the transition is possible and that it is a source of joy and hope for all those by committing to it become the subjects of their own destiny. While they cannot transform the entire system on their own - other transformations are indispensable within and at other scales, those of the world, Europe and nations - they can be a source of strong proposals, provided they are supported.

We, various actors involved in the transition of territories, believe that the time has come to join forces, our experiences and our energy to contribute to a change of scale, by supporting the many territories willing to move forward in the transition, and by constituting a force, in alliance with similar movements, capable of producing and consolidating the necessary changes.

Our commitment to each other is expressed in this Charter.

1. Objectives of the Factory

The title 'Transition Factory' underscores that this is *work to be built piece by piece and step by step*, that it implies a profound change in how territories and their governance are viewed and designed, that it challenges the institutional, legal and economic framework in which the transition is taking place and that it is part of a long-term strategy.

The Transition Factory is *a forum open at all times to the most diverse actors* as long as they demonstrate through the Charter their commitment to share the objectives, values and methods of the Factory and accept to assume its history, which is the condition for long-term work.

The Factory has four objectives:

(a) to *form, together, a learning community* so as to continuously enrich the *common heritage* by pooling everyone's contributions, linking them together and deepening them, in particular through participatory research whenever it proves necessary to analyse obstacles more effectively, to refine the methods and to substantiate proposals;

b) to *place this heritage at the service of territories in transition*, and support them by mobilizing the members' capacities and resources, where the Factory will provide the territories with a guarantee of the quality of their efforts;

(c) to *make joint proposals for changes* to the economic model, governance, corporate law and relations, and financing, in order to increase the feasibility, scale and impact of territorial transitions;

(d) to *encourage the deployment through all means, particularly training, of an engineering approach to the management of systemic change at the territorial level*, drawing constantly on new experiences.

2. Shared values

Allies identify with common ethical principles, which they commit to put into practice:

- an ethics of *rigour*, each striving to report honestly on the scope and limits of his or her own action and to present his or her experience in a form useful to others;
- an ethics of *listening and dialogue*, where everyone's contribution is welcomed with respect and consideration;
- an ethics of *cooperation*, at the heart of the transitional relations of territories;
- an ethics of *responsibility*, where each person contributes to the extent of his or her knowledge and power, complying with the terms of collective manufacturing, which are the conditions for its impact.

The strength of the Factory stems from the activity of its members, their competences, their personal involvement, the wealth of their experience and the networks they have been able to build or share over the years, the methods and tools they have developed, the credibility they have acquired and their willingness to constantly seek cooperation and synergy with others. The power of

each within the Factory stems from the added value they bring to the common work.

The Factory benefits from the contributions of the actors and networks that make it up; it does not replace them and does not claim to speak on their behalf. Each of their contributions helps to enhance their identity, not to dilute it.

3. Working methods and disciplines

Building the long-term work embodied by the Factory, the effective capacity to build and continuously enrich the common heritage of experiences, methods and operational concepts that enable each and every one to strengthen their effectiveness, the credibility of the Factory and its members, and the impact of the proposals supported jointly are *based on each Ally's compliance with the working methods and disciplines that are gladly agreed upon and effectively applied.*

These working methods and disciplines are enriched over time. An initial list is possible, reflecting three requirements: constituting and continuously enriching the common heritage; transparency, a condition of trust; and pooling opportunities and mutual assistance.

(a) *Constituting and enriching the common heritage:*

- *a common bank of experiences and operational concepts*, recalling and enhancing the value of their producers, constituted from feedback on experiences and providing an index adapted to the systemic and relational nature of the approaches;
- *a bank of discussion papers, tools, methods and proposals* for changes in the framework for conducting transitions.

(b) *Transparency as a condition of trust:*

- *a directory of the Allies* and a presentation of each of their field of activities;
- *transparent accounting* of the use of the Factory's financial support and of the distribution of related expenses according to their nature and purpose;
- *visibility* of the commitments made for the Factory.

(c) *Pooling opportunities and mutual assistance:*

- *an initiatives and events bank*, making it possible for Allies who wish so, to be associated with the initiatives of each;
- *a competence bank* enabling the Factory to recommend to the territories involved methodological support that will promote the common heritage, to encourage a multi-actor and multi-level dynamics identified with the objectives, values, methods and disciplines of the Factory, and to mobilize *Allies* in a mutual, flexible and decentralized way to respond to requests for support.

4. Current bodies of the Factory

The Factory is not timeless. It has a beginning and a history, and is part of a long history. It calls for effective leadership by *people who derive their legitimacy not*

from a statutory position but from their competence, their contribution to the history of the common adventure and their ability to embody the spirit and values of the Factory. On this basis we can identify three bodies in addition to the group of founders.

Founders. The initiative to start the Factory came from a small group of people and institutions gathered around Jean-François Caron, the mayor of Loos-en-Gohelle, and his chief of staff, Julian Perdrigeat. These founders will not have eminent prerogatives in the future but, in the first stage, will embody the spirit of the Factory.

1. Guarantors. To ensure that this spirit is maintained over the long term, the founders set up a group of guarantors. They will have no operational responsibility in the Factory but will ensure that its objectives and ethics are complied with. They will draw Allies' attention to possible slipups and will propose remedies.

2. Operational Team. General Secretariat of the Factory, it is dedicated to implementing the annual work programme and, initially, to elaborating the Factory's feasibility modalities in all its dimensions. Its legitimacy is based on the involvement and recognized competence of its members. The initial core will be constituted with and by the founders. It will draw up a proposal for the annual work programme to be submitted to the Allies, ensure the dissemination of methods and tools, prepare collective deadlines, encourage and possibly coordinate initiatives taken jointly by Allies, ensure all around cooperation, train newcomers in working methods and shape the common heritage of the Alliance and its progress. The team must be small and compact. It will not have to take on all the Factory objectives or acquire all the required competences. On the contrary, it must ensure that missions are distributed among all the Allies according to the competences of each on the basis of a collective discussion.

3. Assembly. It exchanges regularly through the Internet. It is organized according to the topics in discussion. It meets at least once a year to ensure that the trust placed in the operational team is honoured, to measure progress, to develop the common heritage based on the contributions of each and to define the outlook for the coming year.

5. Pace of work

The Factory is developed on an annual basis and a three-year basis.

(a) Annual cycle

Each year *an annual work programme* will be adopted. It will be based on the commitment of all concerned. Decisions not meeting with the support of the interested parties would be meaningless. *Stock* is taken on the following points:

- evaluation of the common heritage
- status of the transitions undertaken
- identification of blockages and proposals made collectively to remove them
- a common work programme and development of the Factory's cooperative relations, including international ones, supporting Allies with established networks

(b) *Three-year cycle*

The Alliance Charter is the keel of the Factory and prevents it from capsizing at the slightest storm. It is not a text cast in stone. Every three years it is subjected to collective review and may be enriched in the light of everyone's experience.

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