



Between transitions

Navigating Uncertainties
in Service Design

Agenda for today:

- 17:00 – 17:10 Welcoming and Check-in
- 17:10 – 17:30 **Part 1 – Setting the context**
Introduction: UnSee – framing transition patterns for the expansion of service design
by Beatrice Villari and Riccardo Torta
- 17:30 – 18:05 **Part 2 – Exploring Alternatives**
Unconference: Groups conversations
Facilitated by the UnSee team with Mieke van der Bijl-Brouwer, Zeynep Falay von Flittner and Rocco Scolozzi.

- 18:10 – 18:50 **Part 3 – Discussing Alternatives**
Designing Effective Systemic Responses – What's at the Core?
by Mieke van der Bijl-Brouwer
- How Can Designers Build Agency to Change Systems?**
by Zeynep Falay von Flittner
- The Role of Futures and Foresight in Systemic Service Design**
by Rocco Scolozzi
- 18:50 – 19:20 **In Conversation**
by Manuela Celi and Daniela Sangiorgi, with Mieke van der Bijl-Brouwer, Zeynep Falay von Flittner and Rocco Scolozzi.
- 19:20 – 20:30 Drinks and aperitivo :)

UnSee: Framing transition patterns for the expansion of service design.

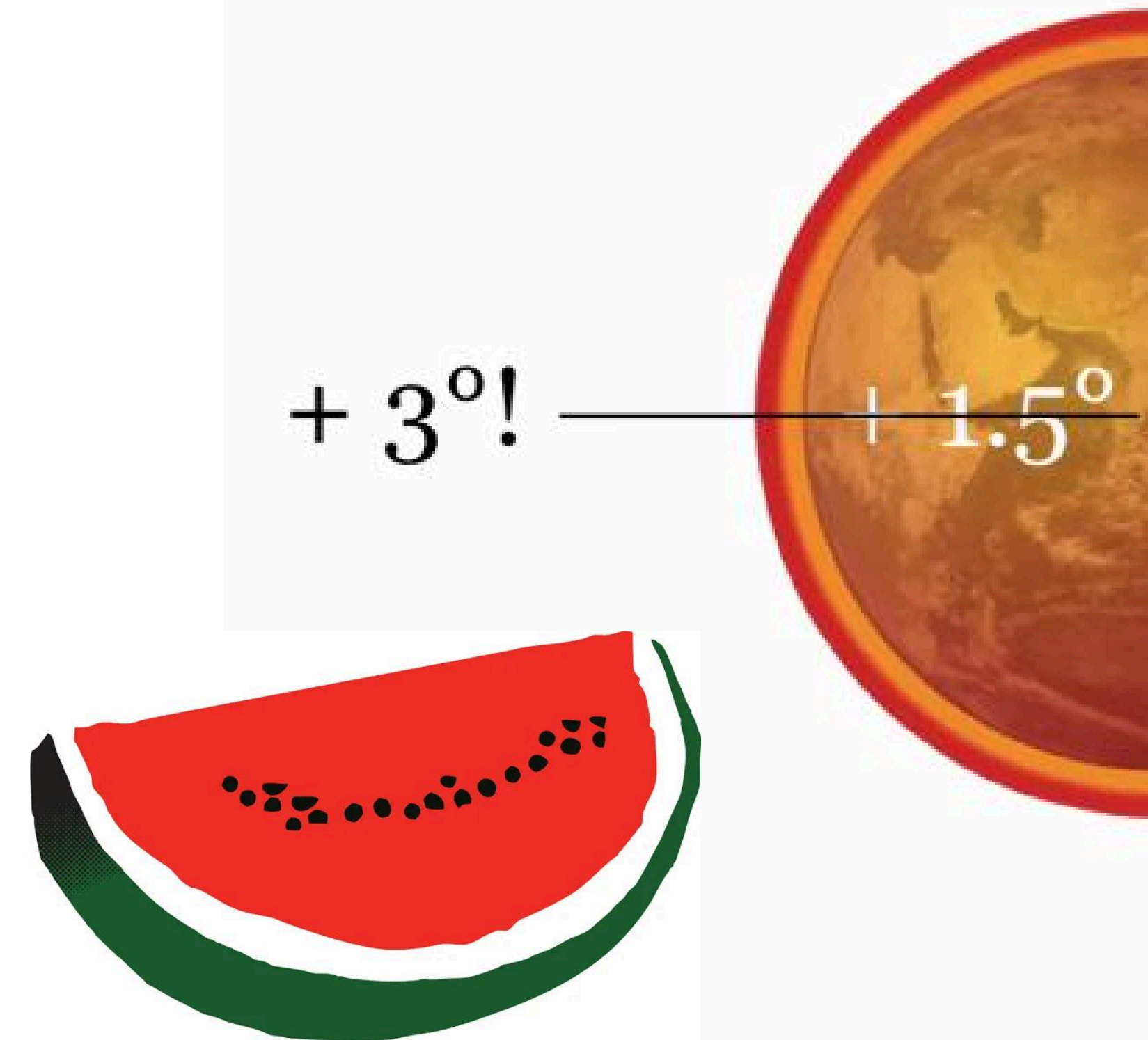
Beatrice Villari and Riccardo Torta.

Whatever you are doing right now is probably not as important as addressing climate breakdown and structural capitalist oppression.

We must become a zero emissions carbon neutral world **if we want to survive** into the future, avoid run away warming, and pass on a world to the next generation that survivable.

The window for mitigating action on climate change will close in the next decade. We must help governments, companies, and individuals take radical action today. Let's understand this urgency, and embed this existential issue into all of our thinking and everything we do. What can you do today to enable change?

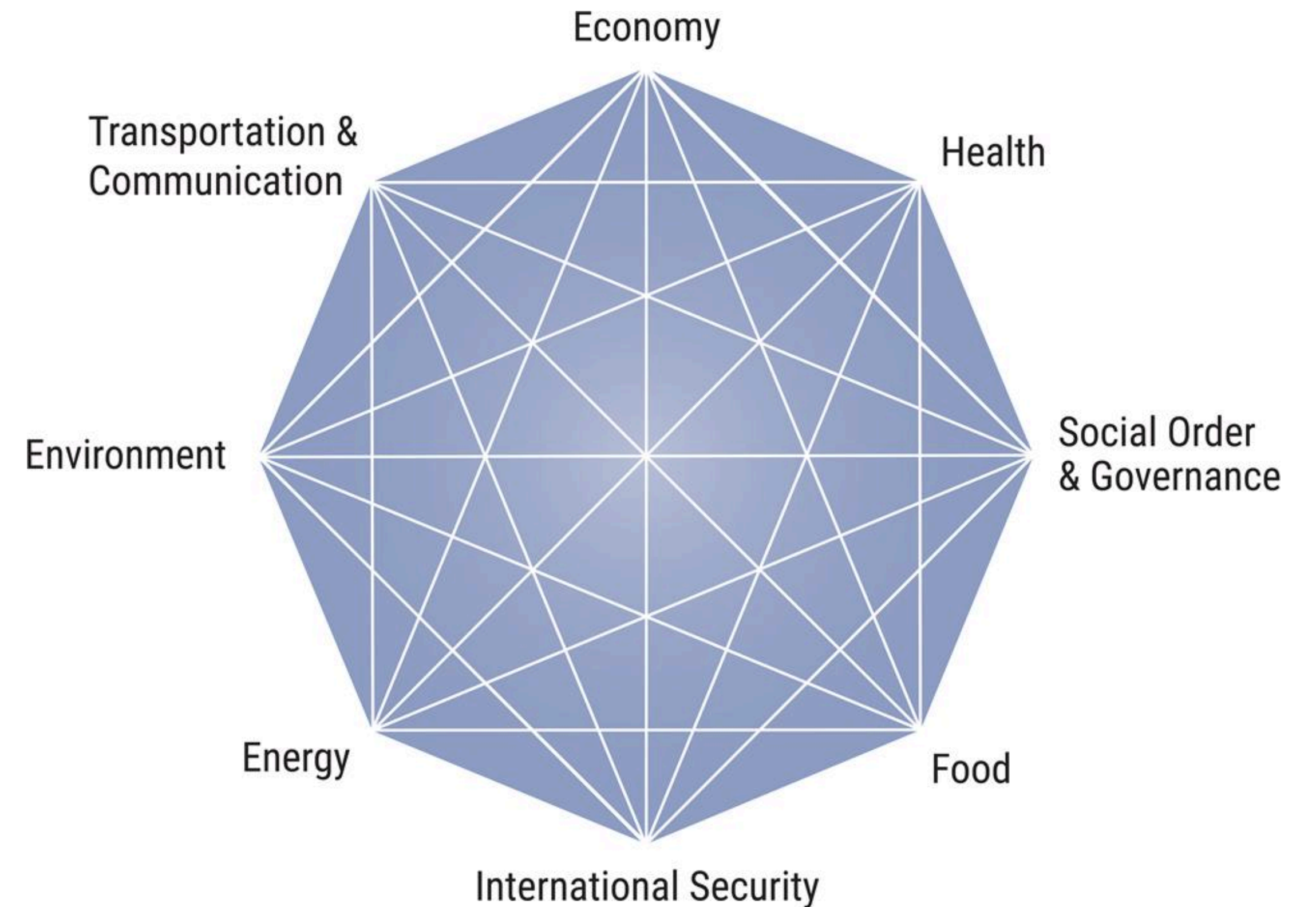
Adapted from: <https://climate.studio>



Context //

If that is a certainty,
many other different
aspects of today
are not.

Global Polycrisis as the causal
entanglement of crises in multiple
global systems significantly degrading
humanity's prospects (Lawrence et al.,
2024) heightening uncertainty and
complexity.



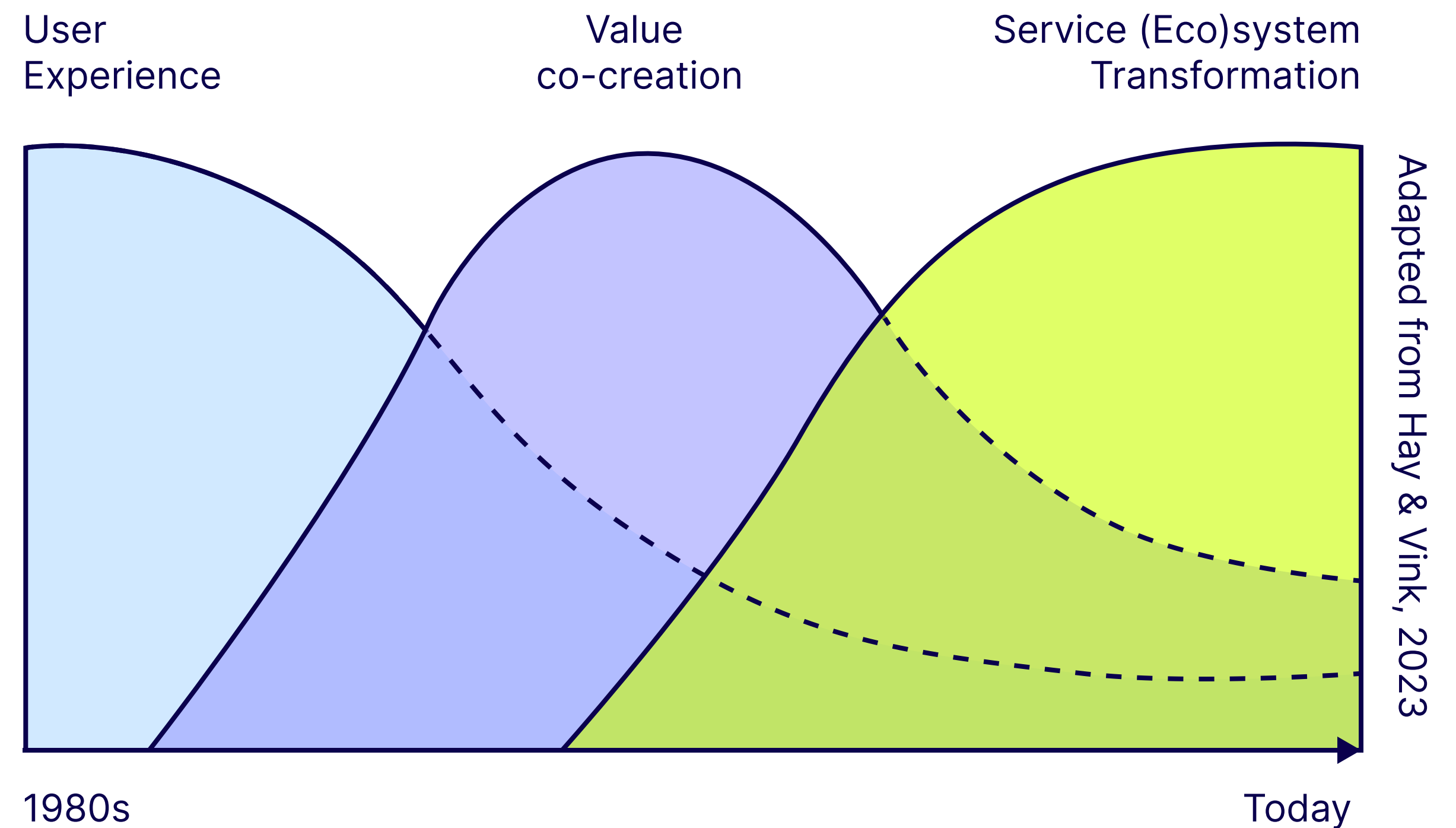
Adapted from Meadows & Wright, 2008

SD practice //

Service design increasingly deals with an expanded focus on service (eco)system transformations.

This expansion calls to reflect on the systemic and long-term dimension of the SD project, incorporating elements of Systems Thinking and Futures Thinking.

Signals testify to the theoretical evolution of the SD discipline but what is happening in practice?



What is UnSee?

UnSee investigates how service design practices are evolving by uncovering, at the operational level, its link with systemic and future-oriented perspectives to achieve system-level transformations.

We mostly interviewed people practicing design in the Global North

27

The majority are design practitioners in one of the three fields we investigated

25

Most of them work in international or local design consultancies

18

Sketchin, Livework, JP Morgan, frog, Relative Creative, Falay Transition Design Collective, Smithery, -skopia, Tpic, BIG Mind.

or as solo practitioners

5

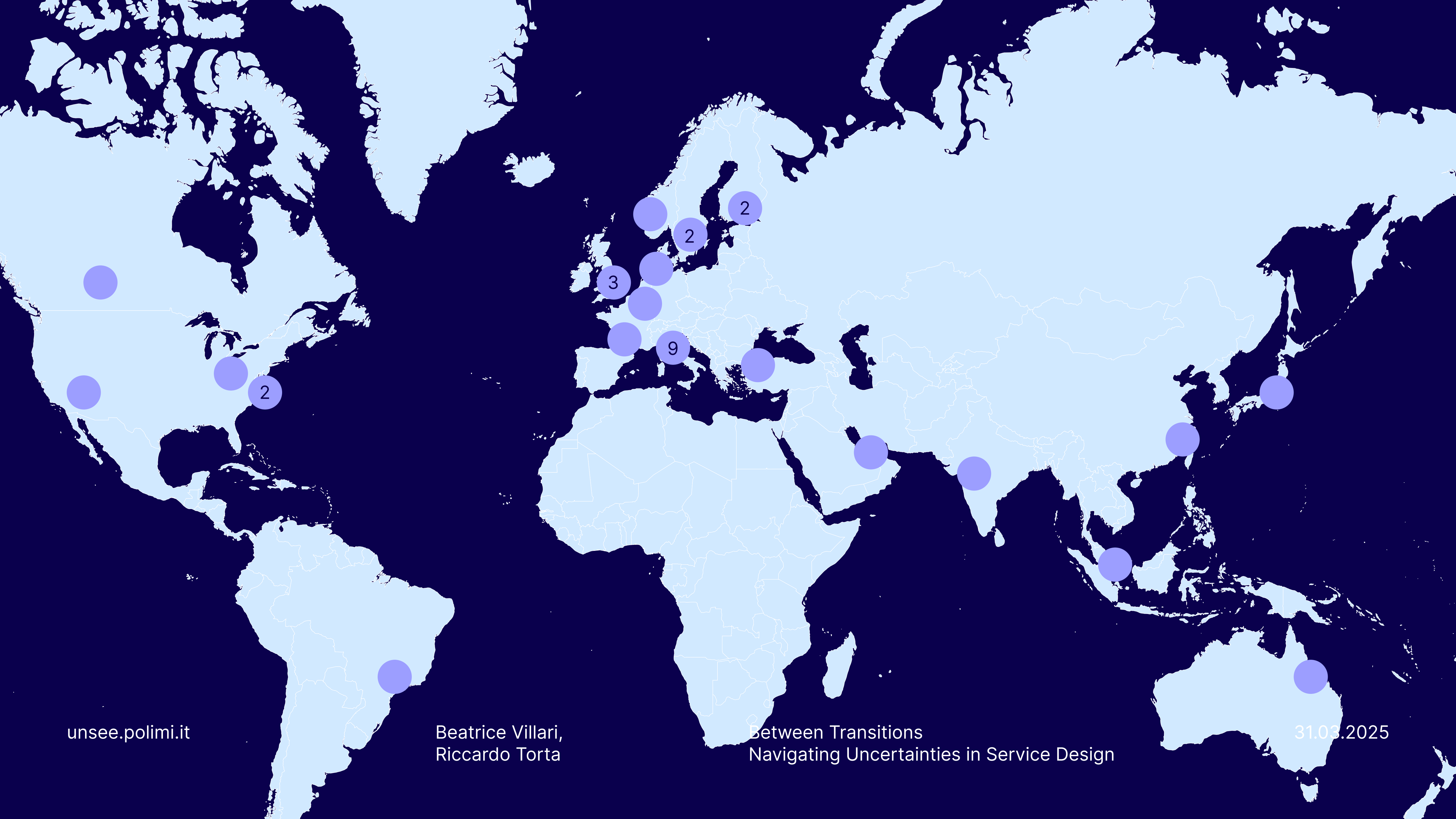
or in non-profit organizations

2

IFRC Solferino Academy, UNDP.

practicing in the public, private or government sector within different industries.

We involved ≈ 33 practitioners and academics in the research



**Smart Home Future Value
System and Scenarized
Innovation for Midea**

// BIGmind Design
(Consulting -
Digitalization)

China, 2023

**Foresight work with
Investment Holding**

// Sketchin
(Consulting - Urban
Mobility)

Switzerland & Italy, 2021

**Open Policy through
design driven pilots**

// Experio Lab
(PA - Healthcare)

Sweden , 2023

**Culturally-led plan to
lower emissions with the
Government of Tonga**

// Relative Creative
(Consulting -
Sustainability)

Tonga (Oceania), 2021

**RECOVER, Edmonton's
Urban Wellness Plan**

// MaRS Solutions Lab
(PA - Social Innovation)

Canada, 2017-ongoing

**Food Security and
Livelihoods**

// IFRC Solferino Academy
(NGO - International
Development)

Kenya, Zambia & Malawi &
EU, 2023

**Dreamweavers: Transition
design on decolonising aid
with Fingo**

// Falay Transition Design
Collective (Consulting -
International Development)

Finland, 2024

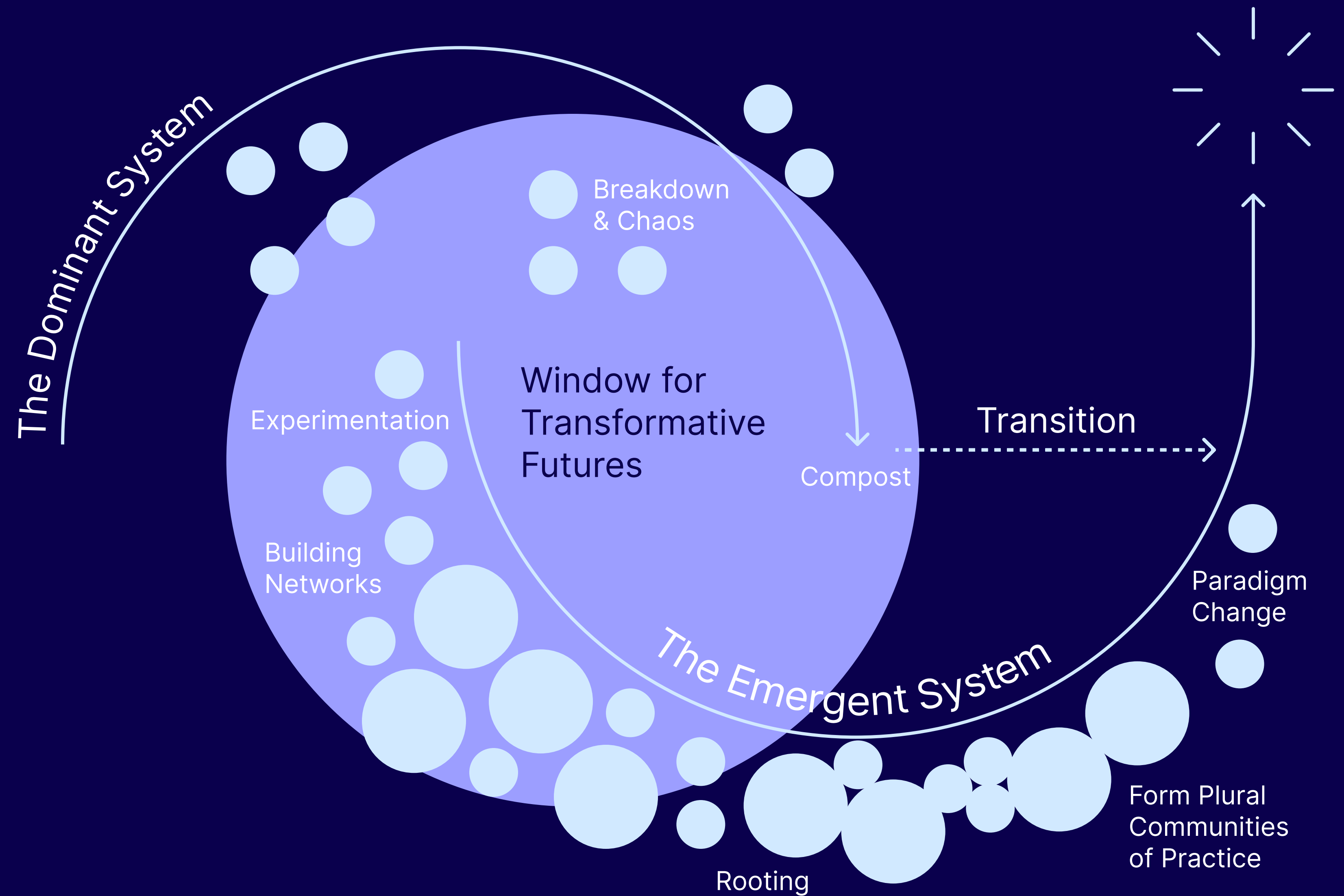
**Organizational
Transformation for RHP
Social Housing**

// Smithery
(Consulting - Org.
Management)

United Kingdom, 2020

Between Transitions

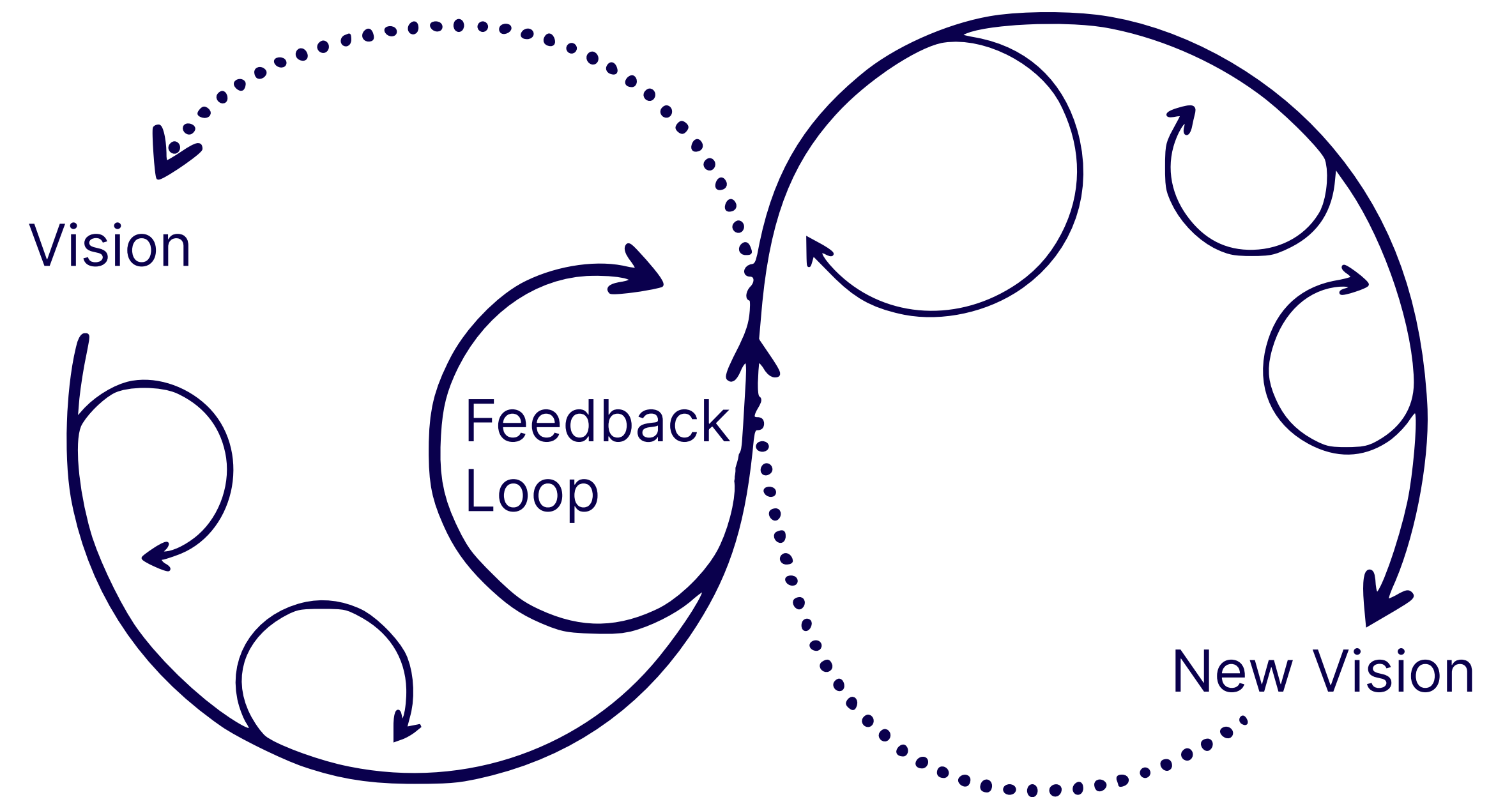
We sit between the transition from a dominant system to emergent ones by inquiring into those practices that experiment and make up the seeds for a transformative regenerative system.



Beyond linearity //

The inclusion of emergence as guiding principle for processes.

Experimenting with new processes that go beyond linear cause-effect and embracing a more systemic and holistic direction that builds upon what emerges from the process itself.



Adapted from BIG Mind, 2024

Beyond linearity //

Smithery x RHP Social Housing

Mapping the system in an iterative way together with the actors; then using the map as an operative tool for actors-resource allocations and capabilities.

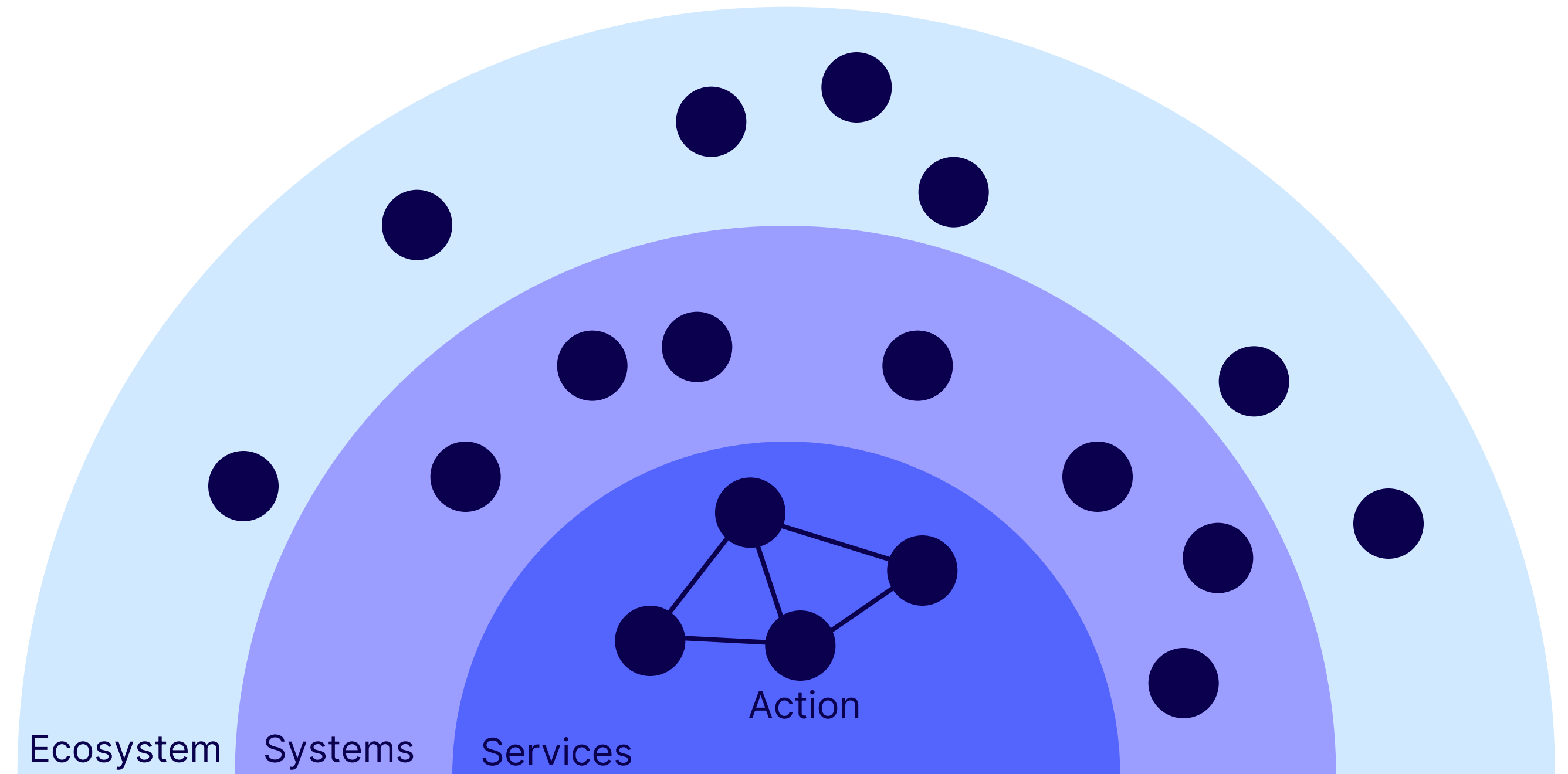
Interviewee: John V. Willshire (Smithery) and Lucy Graley (RHP Social Housing).



Beyond solutionism //

The space of the intervention becomes infrastructural: the rise of platforms, portfolios and transition arenas.

The space of the interventions provided to clients expands to foster ambiguity and interpretation, with a transformative long-term intent.

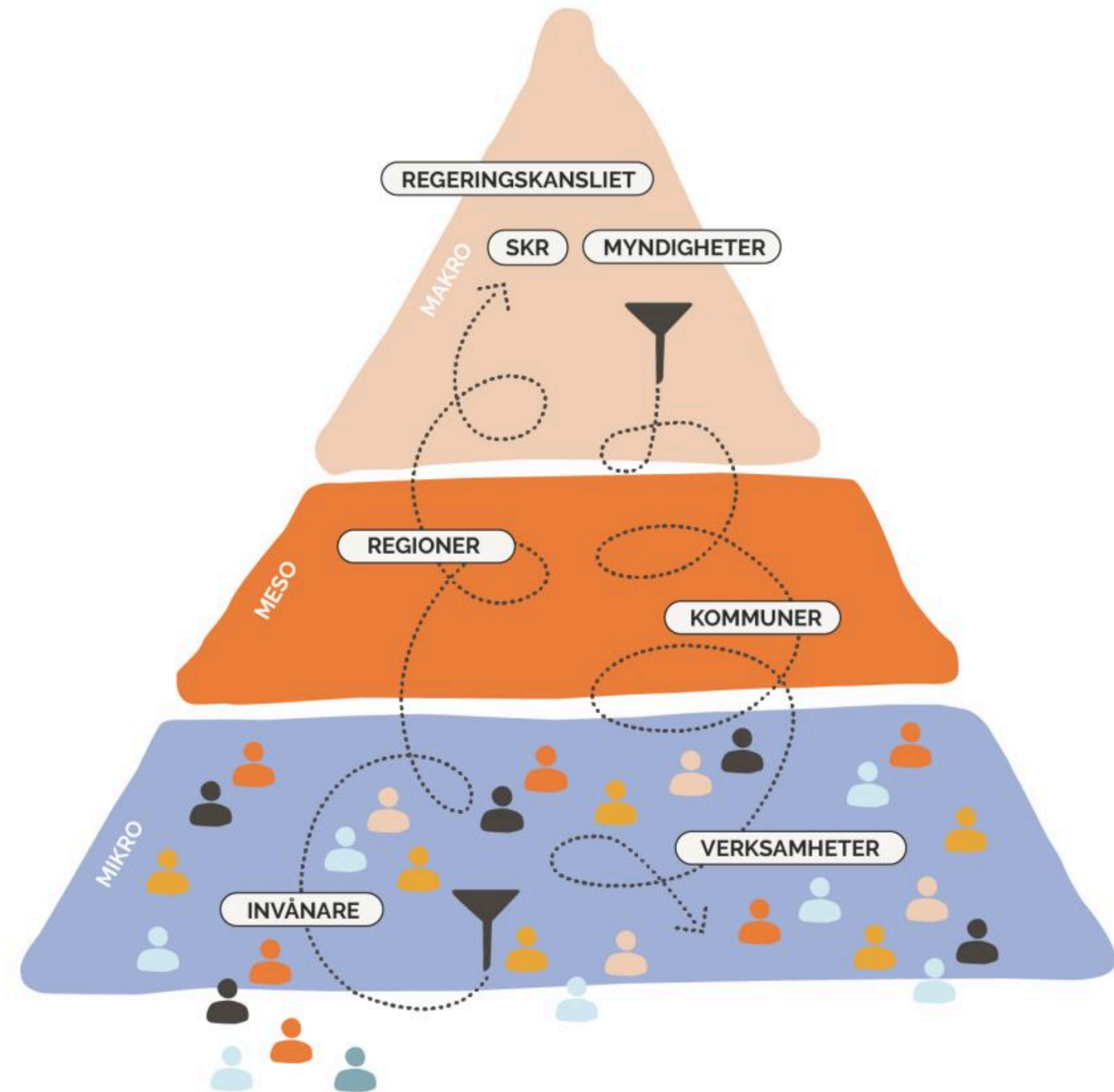


Beyond solutionism //

Experio Lab – Open Policy through Design Driven Pilots

Facilitating arenas to make multiple perspectives visible—from citizens with lived experiences of the system to frontline practitioners and decision-makers who holds authority of the system at different levels.

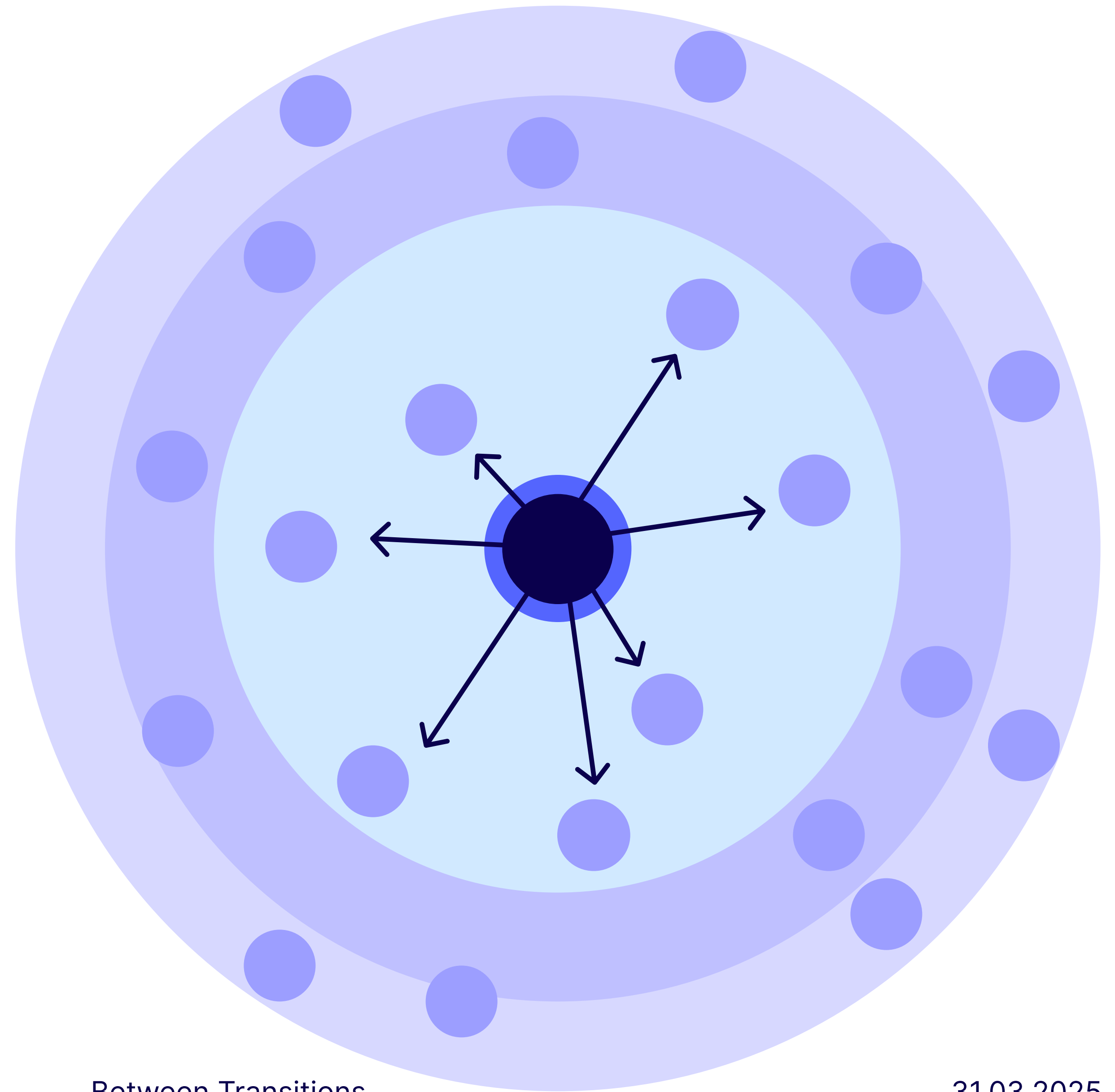
Interviewee: Tomas Edman and Kajsa Westling (Experio Lab).



Beyond reductionism //

An all-encompassing
frame for projects:
Planetary logics and
long-term impacts.

Shared sensibility towards planetary
challenges and the long-term effects
that the service design work might
cause, translating into temporal and
system-conscious actions.



Beyond reductionism //

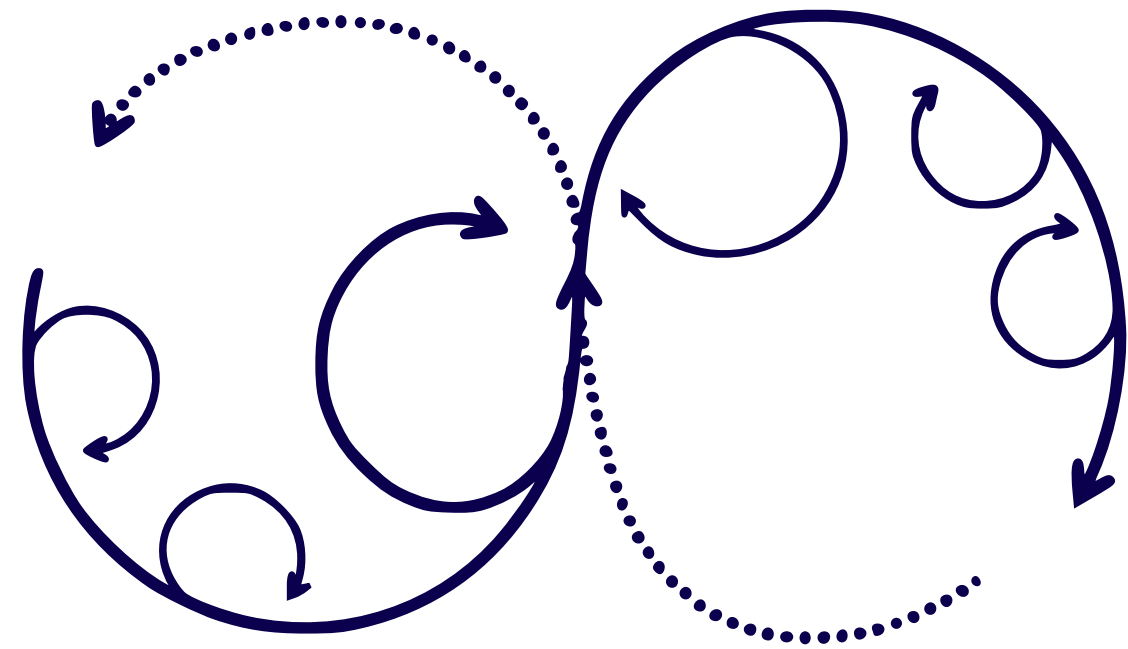
Culturally-led plan to lower emissions with the Government of Tonga by Relative Creative

Build coalitions at multiple levels and timeframes in the Government of Tonga to craft plural narratives of regenerative futures for human and non-human actors within the country's Low Emission Development Strategy for 2050.

Interviewee: Bec Barnett (Relative Creative).

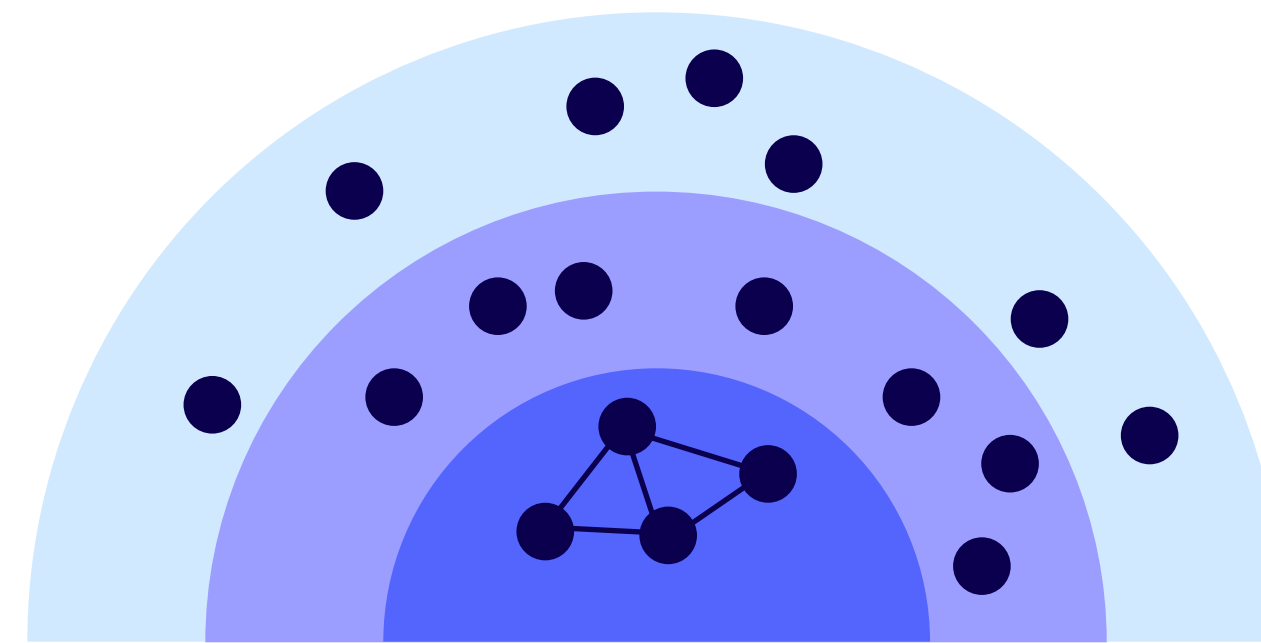


Three Simultaneous Patterns //



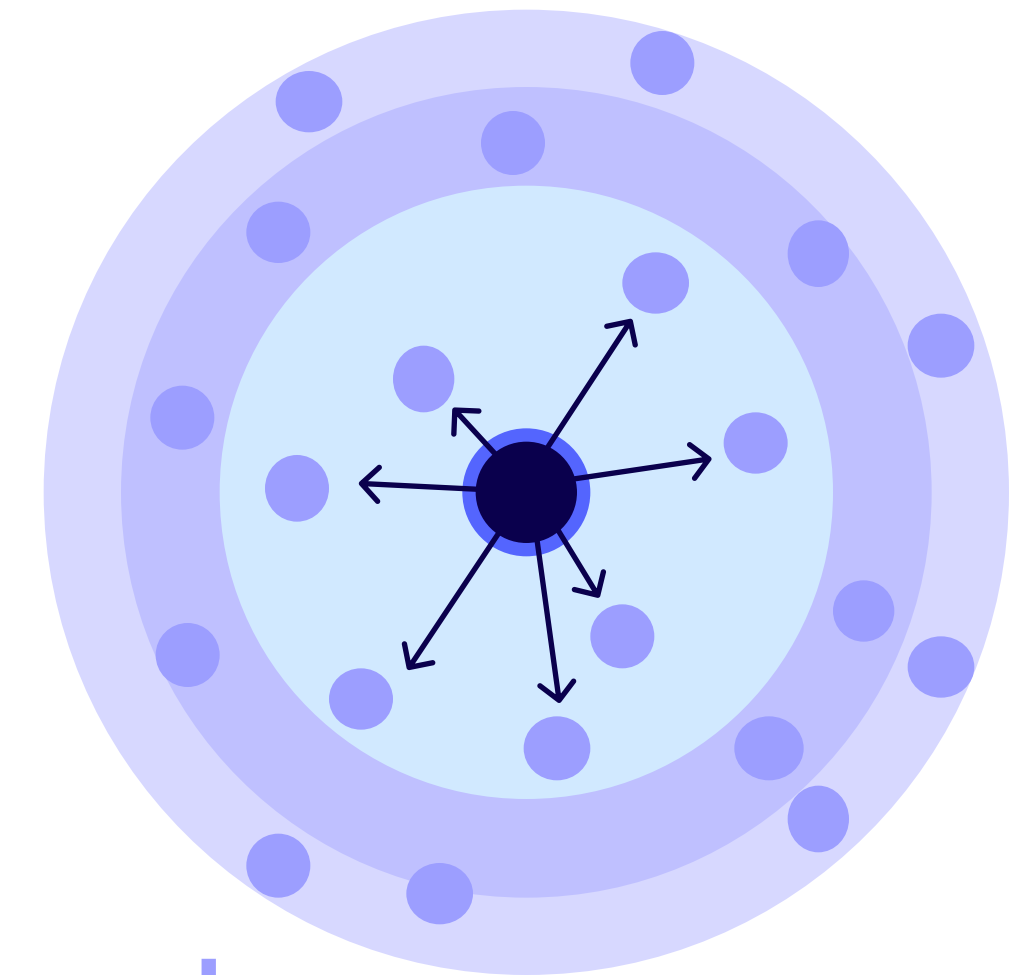
Beyond Linearity

The inclusion of emergence as guiding principle for processes.



Beyond Solutionism

The space of the intervention becomes infrastructural: the rise of platforms, portfolios and transition arenas.



Beyond Reductionism

An all-encompassing frame for projects: Planetary logics and long-term impacts.

Opening new spaces for investigation //

[multi-disciplinarity]; [exogenous changes for system-level transformation]; [accompany long-term transitions].

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[multi-disciplinarity: as service designers increasingly deal with multiple fields and capabilities – new experiments might emerge on how to manage a multi-disciplinary project]; [exogenous changes for system-level transformation]; [accompany long-term transitions].

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Opening new spaces for investigation //

[multi-disciplinarity: as service designers increasingly deal with multiple fields and capabilities – new experiments might emerge on how to manage a multi-disciplinary project]; [exogenous changes for system-level transformation: understanding what are the changes the current system needs to accommodate these new ways of working]; [accompany long-term transitions: benefitting from the tensions between contingent actions and long-term planning without prescribing visions of futures].

Let's hear your experiences, we will reflect together on these three challenges in the following unconference :)



Find your number in the handbook and join your Unconference Circle

Unconference Circle #1

with Daniela Sangiorgi,
Zijun Lin & Mieke van der
Bijl-Brouwer.

Workshop Space 3

Unconference Circle #2

with Manuela Celi,
Riccardo Torta & Zeynep
Falay von Flittner.

Uno.Sei

Unconference Circle #3

with Beatrice Villari,
Victoria Rodriguez Schon &
Rocco Scolozzi.

Blue Meeting Room

See you in 20''



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Navigating Uncertainties
in Service Design

Unconference Circles Conversations
// back in 20 minutes