

BRIEF ON REGIONAL WORKSHOPS PRIOR TO THE GLOBAL ASSEMBLY FOR KNOWLEDGE DEMOCRACY 12 & 16 JUNE 2017, CARTAGENA, COLOMBIA.

The purpose of this brief is to help you prepare and run regional/local workshops prior to the **Global Assembly for Knowledge Democracy**, convened around the question: *To what extent can epistemological, ideological and political differences be reconciled in the interest of a sustainable and socially just world?*

To ensure that as many voices as possible are included in this discussion, there is a call for local workshops to be held to develop regional/local concept papers on knowledge democracy and related issues of decolonization and globalization. These papers will be fed into the Assembly where there will be opportunity to engage with other researchers, either in person or virtually. There are also opportunities to publish papers in accredited journals or book format, subject to stringent peer review.

What is knowledge democracy and why do we need to discuss it?

Sousa Santos (2008, p. xxxiv) calls for discussion around the “geopolitics of knowledge, its eagerness to problematize the equation of who produces knowledge, in what context, and for whom.” Thus, the 1st Global Assembly is being organized with the intention of initiating a thoughtful and strategic assessment of the politics of knowledge creation and the potential of participatory approaches as alternatives to a monolithic knowledge enterprise based on the domination of the Global North and the marginalization and subordination of other knowledges. According to Hall and Tandon (<http://www.politicsofevidence.ca/349/>) democratizing knowledge means acknowledging the different ways of knowing and their value in different contexts; valuing the various ways to create and represent knowledge (not just text based); and understanding that knowledge is “a powerful tool for taking action to deepen democracy and to struggle for a fairer and healthier world.”

What would a regional workshop entail?

The format of each workshop will of course differ, depending on the context. It could be done in person, or virtually. However, we imagine that scholars in various fields (and not just action researchers) could dialogue around questions such as, but not only:

- *What knowledge ecologies are appropriate/recognized for our context? And why?*
- *How can we (do we) address the democratization of knowledge within our teaching and research?*
- *What are the political and pragmatic implications of knowledge democratization? What principles/philosophies might inform them?*
- *What research methodologies might advance such knowledge?*

There is no funding for the workshop available from the organizers of the Global Assembly, so costs will have to be covered locally.

What might the outputs of such a workshop look like?

Ideally, apart from the individual papers that attendees might like to submit in response to the envisaged call for publications, each region could compile a composite paper to feed into the Assembly. The format of this paper could be text-based or some form of digitalized visual representation of the thinking of the participants.

Who should the outputs be submitted to and by when?

All outputs can be submitted to either Lesley.wood@nwu.ac.za or mcateerm@edgehill.ac.uk. Please indicate if you will be attending the Assembly, either in person or virtually. At this point, we are still exploring ways that people who are unable to travel to Cartagena might take part and we will keep you updated. Please submit your outputs by 30 April, 2017.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you would like more information. Also, visit the website at <https://knowledgedemocracy.org> for more information on knowledge democracy and the assembly.

Regards

Lesley and Mary

References

Sousa Santos, B. (Ed.) (2008). *Another knowledge is possible: Beyond Northern epistemologies*. London: Verso.