

Repositioning Circularity: The Rethinking Matrix

A Repositioning Workshop: The Pluriepistemic Matrix for Rethinking Circularity in Design

Een herpositioneringsworkshop. De pluri-epistemische matrix voor het heroverwegen van circulariteit in design

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Project Information (EN)

Rethinking as Enquiry

Rethink is R1 in the circular economy hierarchy, positioned immediately after Refuse and above reuse, repair and recycle (Potting et al., 2017). Its elevated position notwithstanding, it remains the least procedurally articulated of the R strategies, prescribed as a priority without an account of what rethinking would involve.

This workshop approaches that underdefinition as a site of enquiry rather than a gap to be closed, examining it along three axes where circular discourse may be understood to foreclose the transformation it proposes. The temporal axis, where circular design tends to inherit a linear conception of time that marginalises other temporalities (Mignolo and Walsh, 2018). The epistemic axis, where circularity has been argued to take Western technoscientific knowledge as the universal ground of transition (Corvellec et al., 2022). The agential axis, where an emphasis on material flows can render less visible the more-than-human agencies through which circular processes are constituted (Latour, 2014).

These axes draw on anticipation studies, Deleuzian and decolonial philosophy, and speculative design (Deleuze, 1994; Dunne and Raby, 2013; Miller, 2018).

The Matrix Answers Back

Participants arrive with a project of their own, circular or otherwise, and interrogate it through nine prompts answered on a phone, asking which temporalities the project works with and which agents it allows to act. Answers are drawn by hand onto a diagram of multiagential and multitemporal circular form, where the centre is wellbeing rather than technocentric efficiency.

The presenters, a designer and a political scientist, have attempted to turn quantitative data into speculative reading. While participants assess their own answers, the facilitators draw the room's collective diagram and open it for discussion. What appears is a speculative shape for rethinking what circularity for regeneration and wellbeing might represent, rather than a verdict.

Projectinformatie (NL)

Rethink als onderzoek

Rethink is R1 in de hiërarchie van de circulaire economie, direct na Refuse en boven hergebruik, reparatie en recycling (Potting et al., 2017). Ondanks die hoge positie blijft het de minst uitgewerkte van de R-strategieën.

Deze workshop benadert die onduidelijkheid als onderzoeksterrein in plaats van als een leegte die gevuld moet worden, en onderzoekt haar langs drie assen waarlangs het circulaire discours de transformatie die het voorstelt juist lijkt af te sluiten. De temporele as, waarin circulair ontwerp doorgaans een lineaire tijdsopvatting overneemt die andere temporaliteiten marginaliseert (Mignolo en Walsh, 2018). De epistemische as, waarin circulariteit westerse technowetenschappelijke kennis tot universele grondslag van de transitie maakt (Corvellec et al., 2022). De agentschaps-as, waarin de nadruk op materiaalstromen de meer-dan-menselijke agentschappen minder zichtbaar kan maken waardoor circulaire processen tot stand komen (Latour, 2014).

Deze assen putten uit anticipatiestudies, deleuziaanse en dekoloniale filosofie, en speculatief ontwerp (Deleuze, 1994; Dunne and Raby, 2013; Miller, 2018).

Image List

Filename	Caption	Credit
1_1788166823.png	Repositioning Circularity Matrix	Authors
2_1788166852.png	Repositioning Circularity Diagram	Authors

The images above are included in the ZIP under /images.