



## EDITORIAL

### **Editorial: The Degrowth Journal celebrates its fifth year! Publications, learnings and steps forward**

Editorial collective

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#### **Information**

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## 1. A journal for degrowth: a review of topics published

Degrowth Journal was founded in 2020 with the goal of providing a specialised academic home for degrowth. At its core, this academic journal recognises the importance of exploring the large spectrum of degrowth studies across different disciplines, without having to force authors to always re-explain the problematic growth-driven system causing the socio-ecological perma- and poly-crisis that communities across the globe are experiencing.

Setting up a new journal involved a steep learning curve (intensified by the complex global situation of the Covid-19 pandemic) for the young scholars who founded it (listed in our manifesto). Over the years many other editors joined our collective ("about us"). Their consistent efforts and shared vision led to the publication of the first volume in 2023, and of the second and third volumes—alongside special issues—in the years that followed! Our first volume intersected multiple domains, from degrowth philosophies to degrowth reforms for healthcare systems and the military, all the way to the relationships between the Global North and South countries. For example, Hensher's article, 'Preparing for the degrowth transition in healthcare: Understanding the challenges and opportunities', explored transformations in healthcare systems. The article raises the importance of building healthcare system resilience, questioning current for-profit healthcare organisations. Hensher argues that there is a tension between degrowth-aligned healthcare and the need for complexity and scale in modern healthcare delivery. Also in this volume, 'Placing the military in the degrowth narrative', dealt with an often neglected degrowth area: the military and defence industry. The authors question how degrowth principles can be aligned and applied to the military in practice and propose three specific steps that we invite you to read. While some scholars work towards reforming large institutions, others explore the degrowth potential of niche initiatives. Vrettos et al., in 'A framework to assess the degrowth transformative capacity of niche initiatives', provide a framework based on five key elements (Degrowth Goals and Visions, Democratic Governance, Fair Resource Flows, Building Networks, Empowerment and Learning) that can be used to analyse real-world degrowth initiatives or to tweak their initiatives' practices, interactions, and aims to better align their work with a degrowth transformative process.

We have also published a paper on whether and how degrowth should engage with the Global South. In 'Only for the Global North? Questioning the 'who should degrow' issue', Cabaña Alvear and Vandana argue that restricting degrowth to the Global North would erase voices from the Majority World and hence perpetuate epistemic violence, imperialist developmental agendas, and colonial relationships. Through case studies from Chile and India, they show how limiting degrowth to the Global North often implies that growth is an imperative in Global South countries, even when it causes large social and environmental issues.

But degrowth does not have to deal just with terrestrial matters. The article 'Toward the degrowth of the economics of orbital space and space debris: A preliminary theoretical application in low-Earth orbit' invites us to question and rethink the use of the "new space" and proposes a preliminary theoretical application to providing a sustainable solution to obtain both physical and economic access to orbital space, while reducing space debris.

The journal has attracted scholars investigating a wide range of topics, including anarchism and degrowth, degrowth and masculinities, degrowth and feminist perspectives, and degrowth-aligned food systems—more than we can possibly cover here. We have been delighted by this blossoming of degrowth scholarship and we are excited to see where it may go next. In the coming months, a few special issues will be published, including more articles in the special issues on art and degrowth and anarchy and degrowth.

## **2. To the next five years: tasks, hopes and collaborations**

As expressed in our manifesto, Degrowth Journal was not only founded as a response to a lack of specialised academic journals for this field, but it was also founded with the goal of contributing to a much-needed change in academic publishing systems. This is a huge undertaking that our movement must embrace collectively, and in which this journal plays a small but important part. To keep this conversation going, we will be running a special session, 'Advancing a degrowth-aligned academia' (no. 138), at the 18th Conference of the International Society for Ecological Economics (ISEE)/11th International Degrowth Conference in Oslo (24th to 27th June 2025). We welcome participants to attend and meet some of our editorial collective in person!

This is not our first participation at a conference; our editorial collective nourished connections with the broader degrowth community at the 9th International Degrowth Conference in Zagreb (2023) and the 10th International Degrowth Conference/15th Conference of the European Society for Ecological Economics (ESEE) in Pontevedra (2024). We endeavour to be as visible and connected to the wider movement as possible. These events help us better understand the role we can play in furthering the degrowth debate and creating a journal that is representative of the degrowth community, so we always welcome your invitations.

Transforming academia and the publishing system is a long-term objective and it will require efforts from different actors and organisations in society on a global scale. In the meantime, the Degrowth Journal is contributing to this journey. The editorial collective are aware that persistence over time will be required to become an established academic journal; and has been managing the journal in parallel to their other academic jobs, or lack thereof. The journal has been nurtured by the labour of love, with many hours of voluntary work, but it has met a strong and supportive community. Today, our editorial team is based in numerous countries, such as Australia, Finland, Poland, the UK, the USA, Germany, and the Netherlands. Moreover, the editorial team is working towards engaging more with Global South scholars.

However, the journal could not exist and flourish without the work of the authors who submit to us and our peer reviewers. We thank all of the researchers who believed in the journal in its infancy, submitted articles, undertook peer reviews, and who have read and engaged with the published articles. Our editorial team continues to treat with the highest respect, diligence, and gratitude the manuscripts submitted, especially in these first stages of the journey. We continue to seek collaborators, and we also always welcome scholars interested in proposing and managing special issues.

Moreover, this journal exists thanks to the support provided by many individuals and organisations in these last five years, such as Noesya for creating a degrowth-aligned website, the University of Glasgow for support through an open access journal management system while respecting our independence, for all the collective members that helped manage submissions, and to all reviewers that contributed their scientific expertise and rigour to our

publishing process.

We aim to provide open-access knowledge to the broader public, but in doing so, we also want to support the socialisation of degrowth studies, with the hope that degrowth-aligned topics will enter academic and non-academic institutions. Our hope is that the material shared in this journal will nourish new academic courses and discourses, reading groups, social movements, policymakers and experts who aim to deepen their knowledge, and newcomers eager to explore how to transform societies towards more socially just and ecologically sustainable futures. In the current turbulent global geopolitical times, housing degrowth scholarship and fostering alternative socio-economic pathways is an honour and a duty.