

Partner profile / Proposal for a contribution to a collective level action addressing the Green Deal topic *Behavioural, social and cultural change for the Green Deal*

The research group *Values, Welfare and Health* at the Department for the Study of Culture, University of Southern can contribute to the *Green Deal* call as a partner by investigating how the substantial changes in lifestyle that will be necessary for the transition to a greener economy can be brought about without impeding quality of life. It proposes to study and develop methods for achieving lifestyle changes in ways that support sustainability, ensure genuine subjective wellbeing and are practically feasible and ethically acceptable. Such methods must be at once imaginative and realistic, breaking with old habits, but also taking into account the limitations of human nature. The group can contribute to this task by combining philosophical theorizing on the nature of wellbeing and the idea of cultivating one's personality with psychological research on the mechanisms that may prevent or support behavioural changes and/or studies of literary fiction that describe affordances and obstacles for societal transitions and lifestyle changes. The group also proposes to employ user-involvement methodologies in order to probe pre-theoretical beliefs about the relationship between material living conditions and wellbeing and attitudes towards behavioral change, explore ideas about alternative forms of living and testing and refining specific conceptions for pro-environmental behavior change. It further proposes to study what makes interventions and changes acceptable, exploring the idea that bending to social pressures and adopting societal norms can be not just compatible with, but even strengthen one's autonomy, provided that the process is agency-driven, subjectively rewarding and fosters identification with the new norms and habits. These contributions can be given either individually or jointly, depending on the structure of the overall project and the allocation of resources.

The research group has particular expertise in

- Wellbeing theory and empirical wellbeing studies (especially qualitative, but also survey-based research)
- Philosophical and psychological research on the mechanisms and conditions for self-control and behavioural change
- Literary studies of fiction that explores different ways of living, different ways of achieving wellbeing, different societal organizations and relationships between humans and the rest of nature
- Ethics, including discussions of paternalism and alternative conceptions of autonomy
- User-involving methodologies (deliberative workshops, focus group discussions and interviews)
- Science communication about wellbeing, values and different ways of living

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