

# **RGS-IBG Annual International Conference 2014**

## *Geographies of co-production*

**SESSION: What is the future of the 'alternative economy'?**

**Convenor: Agatha Hermann**

Over the last 20 years, alternative economic systems have increasingly offered another way of engaging economically to the hegemonic neoliberal market. Local currencies, co-operatives, community credit unions, faith-based engagements and ethical trading initiatives have, amongst others, changed our relationships as consumers and producers but where do we go from here? This session takes a participatory workshop approach to reflect on and discuss issues around the central question: what is the future of the 'alternative economy'? Through a series of creative exercises and discussions we will work towards a position paper that will be submitted to Area as a co-produced opinion piece on alternative economic futures, drawing on experiences from both the developed and developing worlds.

For your information the session format would be as follows (although this is still in formulation):

10 minutes 'A Cabinet of Curiosities' I: each participant thinks of an object that, to them, epitomises 'alternative economies'. On the paper provided they draw this object and provide an 140 character caption.

20 minutes 'A Cabinet of Curiosities' II: the objects are all exhibited either, depending on number of participants, as a brief presentation or as an exhibition around the room.

15 minutes Out of the objects and issues raised through these, 3-5 key themes/questions will be agreed upon.

20 minutes Each theme/question will be discussed by one group.

35 minutes Each discussion group feeds back, leading into a whole group discussion.

The main discussion will be recorded and will be used alongside the objects in the Cabinet of Curiosities to form the basis of the opinion piece. I was also going to issue a 'call for objects' (Stephanie suggested closer to the conference) to get people to bring things along as well as 'curating' an online blog in association with this.