



Nominees for  
ESEE Board Member  
2024-2026

Richard Bärnthaler

Zoltan Bajmocy

Timothy J Foxon

Halliki Kreinin

Rita Lopes

Ourania Papasozomenou

Elke Pirgmaier

You can vote for up to 5 nominees.

# Richard Bärnthaler



I research and teach in the area of social-ecological economics, with a focus on sustainable wellbeing and a political economy of sufficiency. My approach to research and teaching builds on an understanding of economics as the science of social provisioning, i.e., the study of how societies can organise their livelihoods within planetary boundaries. This approach not only highlights how we organise society-nature relationships through shaping provisioning systems but also puts questions of (cultural) political economy centre-stage: from class struggle and milieu analyses to accustomed forms of life and vested interests.

Since December 2023, I am based in the UK, holding a position as Lecturer in Ecological Economics at the University of Leeds, School of Earth and Environment, Sustainability Research Institute. Before joining University of Leeds, I held a University Assistant position at the Vienna University of Economics and Business (WU) at the Institute of Multi-Level Governance and Development, where I also taught in the Master program “Social-Ecological Economics and Policy” (SEEP) and co-authored the book “Zukunftsfähiges Wirtschaften: Herausforderungen der sozialökologischen Transformation” (“Future-Fit Economics: Challenges of Social-Ecological Transformation”), which among others introduces Bachelor students to the field of Ecological Economics. I have also been Lead Author in the [APCC Assessment report “Structures for Climate-Friendly Living”](#) and I am currently Lead Author in the [APCC Assessment report AAR2](#).

My recent research includes [linking research on the foundational economy with ecological economics](#), exploring potentials for unconventional transformative alliances ([here](#) and [here](#)), [envisaging production corridors in a sufficiency economy](#), and [investigating the transformative potentials of universal basic income, universal basic services and time politics](#). Currently, I am working on strategic deliberations for a degrowth transformation and on a history of power complexes that have undermined necessary steps towards achieving climate-friendly living.

## Motivation

Given the emphasis on the socio-cultural and political dimensions of economic development and change, (social-)ecological economics – more than ever – needs to engage with our current conjuncture: from geopolitical ruptures to the securitisation of energy politics; from power complexes stabilising the status quo to the current rise of climate delaying institutions and political actors. My motivation to stand for election arises against this backdrop: to draw ESEE’s attention to the political economy of climate politics.

Therefore, as a board member, I would aim at developing new and strengthening existing formats, spaces, and networks that allow us to thoroughly explore the prevailing political economic conditions that constitute the opportunity spaces for effective climate (and wider social-ecological) action. I would be honoured to serve on ESEE’s Board, and I am confident that my thematic interests and experience in bringing people together (e.g., [through co-organising conferences](#)) would make a meaningful contribution.

# Zoltán Bajmócy



My aim is to conduct meaningful research in a cooperative manner, with a particular focus on furthering social justice and environmental sustainability.

I am a professor, and deputy dean for science and equal opportunities at University of Szeged, [Faculty of Economics and Business Administration](#), Hungary. I am the coordinator of the PhD Programme in Ecological Economics, which is launching in September 2024 as a specialisation of the Doctoral School in Economics. I was a [research fellow](#) at IAS-STS Graz, Austria.

My research focuses on socio-technical, environmental and spatial aspects of sustainability transitions. In my recent projects, I worked with communities of disabled people; attempted to bring about transformation at the universities by furthering community engagement and equal opportunities; and co-create change in the broader research and innovation system alongside the concept of responsible research and innovation.

I attempt to apply cooperative methods also in my teaching activities. Together with my colleagues and local civil society organizations, we run 'Service learning' and 'Science shop' courses. My traditional teaching activity focuses on 'Sustainable local development' and 'Technology and sustainability'.

## Motivation

It took a long journey for me to arrive to the field of ecological economics. I was taught mainstream economics and growth-centred regional development during my post-graduate and doctoral studies. My interest in human well-being and planetary health, and the inspiration I received from colleagues and friends, helped me to critically reflect on the mainstream premises, as well as on the modes of knowledge production. I started to attend the 'living knowledge' and the 'critical science and technology studies conferences'.

This journey led me to my first ESEE conference in 2015. Then I had the opportunity to be the member of the local organizing team of the 2017 (Budapest) ESEE conference and summer school. We proposed the title "Ecological economics in action: building a reflective and inclusive community" to indicate our commitment to research with societal impact and activism with critical reflection. This year, I got the exciting opportunity to coordinate a new PhD Programme in Ecological Economics, which will launch from 2024.

If elected, I would be very happy to contribute to the ESEE board alongside topics, which are connected to this experience. One of these fields is education: making ecological economics more visible and accessible for students. Another highly important field for me is to facilitate the co-creation of knowledge and action, building bridges between research and action (for example through science shop or community engagement activities).

# Timothy J Foxon



I am currently Professor of Sustainability Transitions at SPRU (Science Policy Research Unit), University of Sussex, UK. My research explores the technological and social factors relating to the innovation of new energy technologies, the co-evolution of technologies and institutions for a transition to a sustainable low carbon economy, and relations and interdependencies between energy use and economic growth. I was a member of the UK Centre for Research on Energy Demand Solutions (CREDS), where I co-led the Digital Society Theme and led research on Local Green New Deals. I am now part of the governance theme of the new UK Energy Demand Research Centre. My research is interdisciplinary, drawing on a range of ecological economics, evolutionary economics and innovation theory approaches.

## Motivation

I have been an active member of the ESEE since 2001, a Board member since 2011, and chair of the organising committee for the ESEE 2015 Conference in Leeds. I am currently Chair of the Conferences Committee, and so advising on organising the forthcoming ESEE-Degrowth 2024 conference. I also would like to continue contributing to the role of ESEE in promoting the transdisciplinary approach of ecological economics to creating a more economically stable, environmentally sustainable and socially equitable world, applied to real world social, ecological and political challenges.

# Halliki Kreinin



Since February 2022, I have been working as a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Münster within the EU 1.5° Lifestyles project. I hold a PhD in Economic and Social Sciences, specialising in ecological economics, from the Vienna University of Economics and Business. I was also one of the organisers of the 2020 Vienna Degrowth Conference "Strategies for Social-Ecological Transformation" and a founding member of the Degrowth Vienna Society. For almost three years, from 2021-2023, I contributed to the ESEE community as Communications Officer. During my "tenure", I managed the social media communication and the website and gained valuable insights into the different perspectives and needs of our members. This experience has given me a broad understanding of the dynamics of the organisation and a strong connection with ESEE members.

## Motivation

My motivation for joining the Board is to support the organisation's objectives to reach out beyond the academic bubble and to promote collaboration and cooperation between ESEE and various NGOs, movements, political institutions and actors. My unique combination of academic expertise, active involvement in the ESEE community, communications experience and active participation in social movements and political groups positions me well to contribute effectively to the strategic development of the Society. My experience in coordinating projects, co-organising conferences and acting as a bridge between academia and wider audiences has equipped me with the necessary skills to facilitate meaningful discussions and initiatives within the ESEE community and beyond. This is also evident in my experience in communicating ecological economics to wider society through organising campaigns, participating in radio and podcast shows, and writing articles for various newspapers/languages and popular media.

I look forward to the opportunity to contribute to the continued success and growth of the European Society for Ecological Economics. Thank you for your consideration of my application.

# Rita Lopes



Rita Lopes holds a PhD in Climate Change and Sustainable Development Policies from NOVA University of Lisbon (2017). Before her Ph.D., she completed her master's degree in Environmental Engineering.

In her doctoral project she developed a Participatory Framework (PARTiculatES) for the Integrated Valuation of Ecosystem Services.

She is a researcher and integrated member at CENSE: Center for Environmental and Sustainability Research at NOVA University of Lisbon in the Ecological Economics and Environmental Management research area. She has been focusing her research on socio-ecological systems, ecosystem services valuation, circular economy and low carbon economies, where she has been developing and applying different collaborative tools and approaches, with focus on participatory modelling. She has an extensive experience on the design and conduction of

collaborative processes engaging different stakeholder groups from public authorities, business, civil society and research in the co-production of knowledge and sharing of experiences. She is the Portuguese country contact for European Society of Ecological Economics since 2015.

## Motivation

In the work I have been developing, my main motivation has been to understand how stakeholders engagement in environmental and sustainability participatory processes could support better informed decisions and how these collaborative approaches may contribute to the definition of pathways towards a regenerative planet, where people and nature are healthy integrated.

Being the Portuguese country contact for European Society of Ecological Economics, gave me a deeper understanding of ESEE and had intensified my will to be a more active member. As a board member I would like to contribute to promote debates, share of ideas and collaboration within the society members; working on different collaborative initiatives to foster societal outreach and contribute to increase memberships and participation in ESEE activities.

# Ourania Papasozomenou



Dr. Papasozomenou is an ecological and institutional economist, with experience in environmental policies, water, and energy management. She has worked on projects on water governance and on mainstreaming rainwater harvesting, and the political economy of energy infrastructures in divided cities. She is particularly interested in the interplay between institutions and human behaviour. Her current work focuses on planning and designing for just and kind urban transformation. Since 2021 she is the assistant editor of the Journal of Ecological Economics.

## Motivation

Why do I want to be elected an ESEE Board Member? Well, I have been an ESEE member for almost 15 years and I would like to actively contribute to my longest-standing academic relationship. I have benefited from ESEE's conferences (attending them since 2011) and summer schools, its amazing and inspiring people, its network. Just like everything in life, reciprocity and community keep positive and beautiful things alive. I would like to help in increasing ESEE's outreach to the public (with podcasts, workshops, art collaborations) because I want to amplify ecological economics urgent message: we can and should have an economy and society that allows us to live a good and satisfying life withing ecological limits.

# Elke Pirgmaier



Hello! I'm Elke. I'm currently based at the University of Lausanne, where I work as an educator, postdoctoral researcher, project coordinator and facilitator.

For several years, my research focused on building bridges between ecological economics and Marxian political economy. I did a PhD in economics at the University of Leeds in which I make a case for stronger theoretical foundations in ecological economics grounded in a Marxian understanding of capitalism.

I have gradually moved away from research, and core theory, out of a longing to work more with people and more applied. What I really care about is practicing collective liberation (rather than writing about it). I explore how emancipatory practices could be realised at the university, in contact with students and colleagues, and gradually more with people outside of the university confines.

I teach ecological economics in Lausanne and virtually in Barcelona, and I'm a member of the REAL project that aims to establish a sounder evidence base for post-growth deals and eco-social revolutionary politics.

## Motivation

I joined the ESEE board in 2018 with the ambition to strengthen community building in terms of content and strategy. This is still the case. I am aware that we have our ups and downs in the board – we are all well-intended people, but many of us suffer from overwork and from not being able to physically meet as a team – so to be honest with you: it remains challenging to find ways to unite as a motivated engaged team to get good work done for advancing ecological economics in Europe.

Yet, as a team, we've managed to expand our range of activities in recent years to projects that move beyond the necessary tasks to keep the society up and running. The ESEE podcast under Szandra Köves' initiative is a wonderful example. I am motivated to contribute to this ongoing process of prioritising our efforts around a few "flagship initiatives" that have real world impact. I'm especially keen to contribute to curriculum development, teaching support and student engagement.

I am currently the Secretary of ESEE. In this role, I offer impulses for how we can better organise our activities as a team. I take care of coordinating our meetings and the ESEE elections, and I would be honoured to serve for another term.