Dr Rosalind Armson works with groups, teams and organisations to develop their capacity for dealing with complex issues using systems thinking. She is one of the world’s foremost teachers and practitioners of Systems Thinking. As a practitioner, scholar and teacher, she has extensive experience of using systems ideas to develop systems-thinking skills in individuals and organisations facing complex and uncertain situations.

Formerly with the Systems Group at The Open University (UK), Rosalind has an international reputation for her work, particularly her ability to communicate systems ideas. Her recent book, *Growing Wings on the Way: Systems Thinking for Messy Situations* is testimony to the accessible manner in which she presents new ideas and develops people’s skills for Systems Thinking in Practice.

Rosalind has delivered systems-thinking workshops in the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, UAE, and South Africa and in Europe. She will be visiting Australia in November 2012. In her workshops, she draws on ideas, stories, images and her own extensive experience as a systems practitioner to provide lively and challenging learning experiences. Workshops are directed towards change and renewal that meet the real needs of participants and their organisations.

You are invited to consider whether to participate in one of her scheduled workshops or whether to ask for a bespoke workshop to meet your own organisation’s needs.

**Why invest in Systems thinking in practice?**

As the cartoon suggests we are at a telling moment in human history which, when fully appreciated, invites all professionals to consider their thinking and practice skills – to ask whether what we do when we do what we do is appropriate for our circumstances? Is it time to consider new ways of thinking, practicing, designing institutions (the ‘rules of the game’ that govern what we humans do), investing and thus governing? Taken together these also suggest a need for new ways of organising.

Engaging with systems thinking in practice generates new ways of seeing old problems. New questions emerge and the systems concepts, tools and techniques that are introduced provide a means to break out of messy traps that have been around for too long. Some will also find it affirming to discover a set of ideas and practices that validate the way you already understand situations, but which may not be highly valued by others.
Australian Sponsors

Rosalind Armson’s visit is co-hosted by three organisations that appreciate and use Systems thinking in their training, research, consulting and policy development practices.

The Systemic Governance Research Program, based within the Monash Sustainability Institute has, since late 2008, built a significant portfolio of systemic research and development projects mainly in climate change adaptation, water governance and reflexive practice fields (see http://www.monash.edu.au/research/sustainability-institute/programs/governance/).

The Institute for Sustainable Futures (ISF), at the University of Technology Sydney is a research institute that creates change towards sustainable futures by conducting independent project based research for Australian and international clients using a variety of approaches. Through its project portfolio ISF aims to foster lasting change and build independent capacity in their clients by passing on knowledge and skills through sustainability practice and extending current thinking (see: http://www.isf.uts.edu.au/about/index.html).

The Systemic Development Institute undertakes training and consulting and applied research drawing on the Systems traditions pioneered at the University of Western Sydney (Hawkesbury) from the late 1970s till the early 1990s (see http://systemicdevelopment.org/).

Opportunities

Rosalind will be in Australia between 13th November and 7th December. During that time she will be running two open workshops, one each in Sydney and Melbourne (see below for more information). While she is in Australia, Rosalind is open to running additional workshops either as open access events hosted by your organisation or as workshops tailored to your specific organisational needs.

To explore other possible opportunities relating to Rosalind’s visit please contact either Nicky Ison from the Institute for Sustainable Futures at the University of Technology, Sydney (nicola.ison@uts.edu.au) or Ray Ison from the Systemic Governance Research Program at Monash University, in Melbourne (ray.ison@monash.edu.au)
Sydney Opportunities (Week of 26th November 2012)

Option 1: Tuesday 27th November - Workshop Growing Wings on the Way: systems thinking for dealing with complex situations (hosted by the Institute for Sustainable Futures)

This one-day workshop concerns working out what to do when you don’t know what to do. Such issues typically arise in situations experienced as volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous. The workshop will be an experiential encounter with systems-thinking ideas, engaging participants in systems thinking rather than simply learning about systems thinking. The workshop approaches systems thinking as a way of opening new opportunities for action by thinking about your thinking, understanding your understanding and knowing about your knowing. It is thus both practical and thoughtful. The workshop is designed for those engaged in multidisciplinary projects or research. Participants will be asked to work with an issue of their own that they experience as complex and for which they have some responsibility. At the end of the workshop, participants will have:

- experienced systems thinking
- developed some systems-thinking skills:
- progressed the issue they are addressing
- identified how they might use systems thinking in their work
- acquired the confidence to use systems-thinking ideas in their own work
- acquired the confidence to use systems-thinking ideas in their work with other people (two-day version)

The Workshop cost is $560 per person waged plus GST and $360 per person concession/student plus GST. Organisations signing up more than one participant will be eligible for a discount. The workshop will be limited to 40 people, with a registration on a first come basis.

Option 2: Two day workshop: Tuesday 27th – Wednesday 28th November – Growing Wings on the Way plus Using systems thinking with others

This option incorporates Option 2 but is designed to deepen participant’s skills around using systems thinking with others. Specifically, the second day’s workshop will explore the skills of working with other people in addressing messy situations - systems thinking in practice. Systems thinking recognises the value and challenges of working with multiple perspectives, drawing them into a more systemic appreciation of the situation. Participants with some systems-thinking skills, whether well developed or beginner level, will explore working more effectively with others as teams, finding better ways of dealing with complex and ambiguous issues, and finding trajectories for sustainable improvement. The workshop is intended to be challenging, experiential and fun, building systems-thinking skills as well as applying these in group working.

At the end of the second day of the workshop, participants will have:

- explored the inter-relationships between themselves, their context, others, their own systems thinking, and their other areas of expertise
- become aware that they have choices in how to engage with others in using systems thinking
- engaged with the opportunities, responsibilities and choices presented by using systems thinking with others
- learned new skills and developed their existing systems-thinking skills
• have become sufficiently familiar with some systems ideas and tools to use them with other people
• experienced matching systems approaches to particular situations and people
• identified and explored some of the ethical issues entailed in working with other people and their perspectives
• explored the idea of systems thinking in practice
• have experienced using systems thinking with other people
• had some fun in a learning environment.

The Workshop cost for the two days is $800 per person waged plus GST and $500 per person concession/student plus GST. Organisations signing up more than one participant will be eligible for a discount. The workshop will be limited to 40 people, with a registration on a first come basis.

To register for either Option 1 or Option 2 in Sydney please go to: https://shortcourses-bookings.uts.edu.au/ClientView/Schedules/ScheduleDetail.aspx?ScheduleID=970
If you have any queries about registration please contact UTS Short Courses on Tel: +61 (02) 9514 2913 or email short.courses@uts.edu.au. If you have any queries about the course content please contact Nicky Ison - Nicola.ison@uts.edu.au.

**Melbourne Opportunities (20th November or 20th-22nd November)**

**Option 1: Tuesday 20th November - Workshop Growing Wings on the Way: systems thinking for dealing with complex situations (hosted by the Systemic Governance research Program at Monash Sustainability Institute)**

This is the same version of the one day workshop that will be run in Sydney (as described above).

The Workshop cost is $550 per person plus GST and $350 per person concession/student plus GST. Organisations signing up more than one participant will be eligible for a discount. The workshop will be limited to 40 people, with registration on a first come basis.

**Option 2 Three day workshop: Tuesday 20th November – Thursday 22nd November – Growing Wings on the Way plus Designing a systemic inquiry for transforming a situation of concern.**

This option incorporates Option 1 but is designed to deepen participant’s skills around an issue of significance to them. The second two days, restricted to a maximum of 20 participants, will be organised as a Systemic Inquiry co-facilitated by Rosalind Armson and Ray Ison. The systemic inquiry will also explore how to build capability for Systems Thinking in Practice at the personal, group or organisational level. Not only will participants learn how to design and conduct a systemic inquiry they will leave with new insights and agenda for on-going transformative change in the situation of concern to them.

The Workshop cost is $1100 per person plus GST. Organisations signing up more than one participant will be eligible for a discount. The workshop will be limited to 20 people, with registration on a first come basis.

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1 Professor of Systems, The Open University UK since 1994; Professor, Systems for Sustainability, Monash University since 2008, author of *Systems Practice. How to Act in a Climate-Change World* (Springer, 2010).