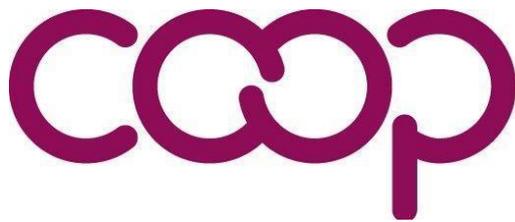


**ICA CCR EUROPEAN RESEARCH CONFERENCE 2022**

*“Rethinking co-operatives: From local to global and from the past to the future”*

13-15 July 2022, Athens Greece

**Organizers:**



**International  
Co-operative Alliance**  
Committee on  
Co-operative Research



ΙΝΣΤΙΤΟΥΤΟ ΣΥΝΕΤΑΙΡΙΣΤΙΚΩΝ ΕΡΕΥΝΩΝ  
& ΜΕΛΕΤΩΝ (ΙΣΕΜ)

**Title of abstract:**

Mesh Cooperativism - Toward Mycorrhizal (Infra)structure for the Cooperative Movement

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**Abstract:**

As the cooperative movement turns its focus from the Cooperative Decade to the future of cooperativism that will build upon the investments of that work, the ecosystem impacts of cooperative collaboration must take a central position in strategic efforts to encourage cooperatives to flourish around the world. We must look to emerging cooperative networks and the processes through which they are facilitated, operationalized, and structured to gain a deeper understanding of the promise and needs of this critical foundation for sustainable global cooperativism.

The question of “scaling” has long been the overwhelming focus of entrepreneurial, governmental, and non-profit interventions into economic empowerment. Conventional conceptions of scaling might be grouped into two general forms - “organizational” or “programmatic” - in which a given approach is implemented across an ever larger landscape within a single organization, and “model” scalability in which a single process or approach can be extensively replicated.

We posit that symbiotically interconnected cooperative networks - what we might call “Meshed Cooperatives” - offer an alternative model to these conceptions, a model that simultaneously offers great advantages to cooperatives and can serve as a transformative model for organizations outside the cooperative movement as well. We designate the term Meshed Cooperatives (MCs) to refer to cooperative networks formed through a combination of both shared infrastructure and interoperable practice. It is our contention that MCs offer these advantages and contributions:

- Effective governance
- Inclusivity through adaptability
- Resilience through decentralization
- Organic ripple effects

This poster explores different conceptualizations of cooperative scaling and the potential afforded by the meshed model. We will share insights gleaned from direct

engagement with and between members of evolving networked cooperatives (including Open Collective, FACCTIC, The Global Solutions Alliance, and Up&Go), interviews with cooperative developers working with emerging cooperative networks, and designers and technology creators building infrastructure for higher-order cooperative organization and operation.