Master Thesis – The perks and pitfalls of being different: Exploring the potentials of alternative organizations like Fridays for Future

**Background**

In a world facing mutually reinforcing and accelerating crises – from pandemics to wars, from climate change to social inequality – the dominant logics of capitalist societies and the business corporations they are relying on to generate economic growth are called into question. In that light, alternative approaches to organizing are on the rise, and they are leaving their mark. Self-organizing networks like “Fridays for Future” or online communities like Reddit’s “r/wallstreetbets” ([read more here](#)) mobilize hundreds of thousands of people for a common cause, heavily impacting our social, economic and political orders. While community-based approaches to organizing human collaboration have long been seen (and practiced) as alternatives to our currently strong reliance on markets and hierarchies, we know rather little about how alternative organizations work “from the inside”, and what we can learn from their approach to organizing.

**Project Description**

The purpose of this master thesis is to explore the potentials of alternative organizations in a multi-crisis world. While you are encouraged to shape and explore the topic yourself, potential focus points of study could be:

- **Organization design**: How are alternative organizations being designed? How, for instance, do they distribute tasks and make decisions among their “members”?
- **Motivation**: What motivates people to engage (i.e., commit time and resources) in alternative organizations and their activities?
- **Potentials**: What are the key principles and practices of alternative organizations? How can these principles and practices inform and inspire how we organize more broadly?

We are very open to your suggestions on which alternative organization(s) to investigate and how to do so, building on your personal interests and experiences. Still, we are of course there to help you find an interesting research context and approach. We will expect you to conduct an empirical study on one or more case organization(s) relevant to the phenomenon of alternative organizations described above, for instance through interviews and observations. The study will also include a review of relevant literature on alternative organizations.
Qualifications
We are looking for 2 engineering students from Chalmers with an interest in organization design, particularly in alternative organizations. Courses in organizational and management topics are helpful. Personal experience of engaging in or with alternative organizations is beneficial but not required.

Further information
Please send in individual applications with CV, motivational letter and grade transcripts.
Planned start: January 2023, with some flexibility
Final application date: November 13th, 2022
Duration: 30 ECTS

For questions regarding the project, please contact:
Constantin Bremer (academic supervisor)
constantin.bremer@chalmers.se

This master thesis is made in collaboration with the Division of Innovation and R&D Management at Chalmers. Academic examiner will be professor Maria Elmquist.