



# oikos

Transforming Education for  
a Sustainable World



If governance and management are the key bottlenecks preventing businesses from shifting to sustainability, then we want to restore the professional integrity of management through a transformation of the education system that develops and trains the world's (future) change agents.



## **Imagine the Future**

We recognise that business practices and economic policies that value short-termism and profits above all else are impeding our progress towards a sustainable world. Our goal is to evolve our collective mindset through education and action.

We see a future where people and the planet are appropriately valued and measurements of wealth move beyond quarterly earnings.

We see a future where there is a collective shift in our value systems that will fundamentally alter the way that we choose to conduct business and live our lives.

We see a future where education institutions assume their traditional roles as the lighthouses of society and are focused on the development of responsible and engaged citizens.

We see a future where educational institutions teach students of all ages about the complexities of our modern economy and the challenges posed by disruptive technologies, the degradation of our natural systems and the erosion of trust in global institutions.

We see a future where the world of academia and the world of business are working hand-in-hand to ensure the resiliency of our planet for future generations.



## The Challenges We Face Today

While there has been progress on integrating sustainability into higher education curricula, it is not happening at the speed or scale that is required. The majority of our educational institutions continue to focus on developing technical skills without adequate **consideration of people and the planet**.

The result is that our education system continues to produce functionally and operationally capable graduates, but are ill-equipped to be **effective managers, leaders and economic policy makers for a sustainable world**.

Consequently, society continues to consume resources and generate waste at rates that far exceed our planet's ability to cope.

**Change** is needed on a number of areas:

- 1.** The **content** of management and economic education separates sustainability from the core discipline. The challenges faced by our world necessitates management and economics education to be based from sustainability principles, by definition!
- 2.** Teaching should shift towards an **experiential, action-based learning** approach that reinforces learning and retention while developing deeper understanding of the complexities of a globalised economy.
- 3.** The **selection** process at universities tend to undervalue creative and aspirational minds whom may be better equipped to be transformative and responsible leaders.

Businesses play a critical role in influencing curriculums around the world. The gaps that exist between the worlds of academia and business must be bridged if any lasting solution is to be found.



# The Role of oikos in Creating Change



oikos has a set of unique characteristics that support a global mindset for change, create change agents, and reinforce sustainability topics in research and academia.

## Supporting a global network of grass-roots initiatives at some of the world's leading universities

With a global network of students, faculty, alumni, advisors, partners all over the world, we passionately work to enable change. oikos International supports more than 45 local student chapters around the world. These student chapters organise and coordinate a plethora of projects and grass-roots initiatives that incorporate sustainability to create lasting social change. Our support and guidance work to reduce barriers and empower students to become change agents in their communities.

The community congregates through a series of online and face-to-face meetings on a regional and international levels several times a year where they share ideas, best practices, and empower each other to do more. This includes our flagship conference **FutureLab**, an annual **Global Spring Meeting**, **Asia Meet**, **Germany Meeting**, **Francophone meeting**, and the Central and Eastern European meeting.



## Developing student change agents and the leaders of tomorrow

With the **oikos Leadership Program (LEAP)**, oikos International equips young leaders with the insights, knowledge, and tools to become more responsible in their decision making. Through their local project work, our members strengthen their project management skills, teamwork abilities, their awareness on and knowledge about sustainability topics, methods and tools.

Members also develop their leadership skills through their involvement in the local Chapter management (e.g. member in local Executive Board), project management opportunities, international working groups and subcommittees. Their participation in regional and/or international meetings help them gain cross-cultural insights in the diversity of sustainability issues and perspectives.

## Transforming the way we do research, education, and life

Our collaborative network has allowed us to test concepts, conduct research, and effect lasting change in our communities. For instance, oikos has been reinventing its long lasting Case Program according to the evolution of education to always innovate and push further the integration of sustainability into curriculum. We also developed partnerships with a network of faculty to build up the oikos-PRME Research Hub to support and encourage students to integrate into their thesis to sustainability perspectives. More recently, we developed a Curriculum Change Initiative which includes several projects like the oikos Academies  $\text{\textcircled{R}}$  and the oikos in Residence.

The best way to describe our ambition is to think of oikos as an **open source platform for learning, creating, developing, and sharing** learning solutions in management and economics.

# Working areas & Programs



## Curriculum change, Research and Implementation

- 1. Curriculum change Initiative
- 2. Case program
- 3. *International Pilot Program*
- 4. Positive Impact Rating
- 5. oikos PRME Research Hub
- 6. Associate



## Empowering individual change agents and creating a Network

- 1. LEAP
- 2. FutureLab
- 3. Spring Meeting
- 4. Regional Meetings
- 5. Winter School / Summer School

## Funding

**Please consider making an annual contribution of CHF 10,000 - 50,000 to oikos, with a minimum commitment of 3 years**

We need to be in a position to manage our projects strategically, and to plan our work with a longer-term view than simply meeting our obligations from one year to the next. We will always welcome contributions of any size and for any length of time; however, we hope that you see the importance of supporting us over a period of time rather than a one-off grant.

## Time

**Please consider contributing time and effort to help us in creating change in the education sector**

We need partners who:

Can help us expand our world view of management and economics education; who are willing to explore sustainability issues with us in specific topic areas

Have expertise in sustainability issues to connect with us and share that expertise with our network

Are interested in engaging with academics and students to develop learning projects that can benefit all participants

Who are interested in innovation in teaching, and want to participate in our development work in this area

## In-kind

**Please consider contributing professional services or products to support oikos in developing its impact as an organization**

We have needs that can be met through the services and offers provided by your own organizations. Here are examples of how you can help us:

Web development and support

IT infrastructure

Training and coaching

Travel subsidies

Social media / communication services

Space for conferences / seminars

If perhaps you have ideas to help us that we haven't considered, we'd certainly be open to discussing them with you

**We thank our supporting partners by giving them some internal and external visibility (intranet, website, annual report, etc) and by inviting them to meet and exchange with the oikos community (online and/or on-site).**





**oikos**

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