For the sixth consecutive year, the oikos community is gathering in St Gallen, Switzerland for the FutureLab 2016 to pursue the implementation of our mission: integrating more sustainability in economics and management education. Whilst many understand and talk about the struggle of our educational systems to integrate sustainability and teach for its internalisation, we at times cease to couple the talk with the walk. A gap can be observed both in the struggle to teach for sustainable change agents and for inciting people to walk their talk in implementing projects that can bring about transformation. Do you believe in this need too? Are you involved in executing such a project? Then, get ready: From November 6th to 9th at the FutureLab 2016, we are going to #WalkTheTalk by empowering and inspiring each other to advance our actions and close educational gaps!

Why Learning Circles at the FutureLab?

Learning Circles (LC) are not workshops, they are an occasion to bring together people with the same topical interest to deepen knowledge and understanding in that specific topic. Learning Circle projects happen throughout the whole year, and the FutureLab (FL) acts as a meeting point for people involved in the Learning Circle to meet, improve and continue their endeavours. So LCs are a continuous process and the FL is designed to be a meeting point, to get face-to-face with other members of a LC, but NOT a starting or ending point of an LC. We also recommend at least two managers per Learning Circles.

During the FL, you will have in total 3 and half hours to gather. These are divided in 2 sessions. The first session will last 2 hours and the second session 90 minutes. Each LC will have up to 15 participants.

The way to the FutureLab (Actions Pre-FutureLab)

STEP 1:

1. Think about and reflect on the journey of your LC from now until the Spring Meeting 2017
2. How can you inform the entire (students, partners, alumni, etc.) oikos community about your projects/initiatives in an exciting way and how can you motivate potential participants?
3. Think about the final goal and output you want to achieve with this journey and the projects.
4. How can you use the time during the FL to really strengthen the LC and your project(s)?

On May 30th:
First informative call with all the potential Learning Circle Managers. We will record the call.

By 15th June:
Frame your LC and reflect on your current status by filling in the “First_Reflection_file”. Then please send it back and the FutureLab team will give you feedback. (futurelab@oikos-international.org)

until the 22th June:
The FutureLab team will give you feedback on your concept.

STEP 2:

1. Make sure you have a clear idea on how the projects will continue or improve after the FL.
2. Link your ideas and project(s) to our topic #WalkTheTalk. Get people engaged in your project and then let themselves take actions in this field.

3. Define a core team with certain tasks (approximately 5 positions in your project), as not everybody of your participants will be willing to work on a project and not everyone needs to come to the FL.

4. You may include another existing project into the Learning Circle activities.

STEP 3:

until end of August:

1. Share with the rest of the community (for example by writing an article for the website) what your plans are and the overall goals behind your projects.

2. Arrange skype meetings with the participants, use your Facebook group for the LC to share ideas. Also use Podio to exchange related documents and thoughts.

3. By now you should have at least a project going and a clear idea of what your members will be doing at the FutureLab meeting.

4. The FutureLab team also plans to send out email updates on the progress of planning the FutureLab and it would be great to include updates on your progress too.

By September 5th:

Draft your concept of the session by filling in the “Session_outline_Learning_Circle_oikos_FutureLab_2016” + the necessary equipment. Then please send it back and the FL team will give you feedback.

The may give you feedback after one week (futurelab@oikos-international.org).

STEP 4:

till October

1. Keep on nurturing the commitment and knowledge on your project(s). E.g. when it is needed for your project to increase the knowledge in a specific area, send them the necessary papers to read and then have a (skype) meeting about what they have learned and what was unclear.

2. Keep involving participants from the FutureLab that may not be part of your LC yet. Create certain milestones for the potential participant, which have to be accomplished before the FutureLab, e.g. ask them: what could be your role in the projects? Who could be our sponsors?

3. Also there is no need that you just focus on one project or one aspect. If there is the need to split up your group and let the participants work on different projects or different aspects of a project, feel free do it.

4. Please inform other chapter presidents (or the responsible EB) in detail about your Learning Circle, so they can pass the information on to their members.

If you have any difficulties to get in touch with some participants, please let us know, we will help you to solve this problem.
At the FutureLab:

1st session (8th November 10:30-12:30):
Start WALKING THE TALK with your participants. As you will have been in contact with most of them before the FutureLab, you can start right away with your plan. Also try to include some of the thoughts and concepts you have heard during the first day.

2nd session (8th November 14:00-15:30):
1. Determine which of your participants is willing to keep working on your project and which role is the best for each one. Contreticise and adapt the milestones. Clarify the ownership of tasks and set specific deadlines with the participants. Also think about the people, who were not able to attend the FL, what are their next steps.
2. After this session you will have the opportunity to present your session, project and ideas during a pitch festival to the whole FutureLab community. So please be prepared for this.
3. During or after the session please write a summary about the topics you discussed during the FutureLab. So that people, who were not able to attend the FutureLab, can be informed about the progress.

After the FutureLab:
Please keep in mind that, LC are a continues process, which started in 2014.
So really work on your project with the team you have found during the journey at least until the next FutureLab (so a one-year horizon).

To support you and the 5 other Learning Circles in the best way, the FutureLab team will have two members, Bhakti and Christoph, who are each responsible for three different Learning Circles.
Bhakti will be helping the Entrepreneurship, Supply Chain-Fashion and Energy.
Christoph will be helping the Economy, Participatory Learning and Finance.
Bhakti and Christoph will give updates on the progress of each Learning Circles. On the one hand to inform the Learning Circles about ideas, steps and thoughts of the other ones and on the other hand to inform the whole community about the progress of the Learning Circles. These updates will be included in the emails the FutureLab will send out.

Please inform us if you are able to work as a manager of the Learning Circles at least until the next Spring Meeting (including the Spring Meeting). If this is not the case, please provide us with a good replacement for you.

If you have any questions, suggestions or need help, please feel free to contact us at future-lab@oikos-international.org

For impressions of the previous Learning Circles and the FutureLab please visit: www.oikos-international.org/future-lab2015/