LEAP
YOUth
part of oikos leadership initiative
oikos is an international student-driven organization for sustainability in economics and management. Founded in 1987 in Switzerland, we today empower leaders to drive change towards sustainability worldwide.

Our programs embed environmental and social perspectives in faculties for economics and management. They comprise conferences, programs, seminars, simulation games and other initiatives to transform teaching and research. They promote the integration of sustainability in curricula and provide platforms for learning, creating and sharing solutions.

The heart of our organization are our student members who turn ideas into action, currently in 50 oikos chapters around the world. They are supported by a global community of oikos alumni, advisors, faculty, and partners, as well as an international team working remotely across the globe.

Our Mission: To transform economics and management education by empowering student change agents, raising awareness for sustainability opportunities and challenges, and building institutional support for curriculum reform

Our Vision: Economics and Management purposed for a sustainable world.

Our Purpose: To create spaces and support for human development on different, interlinked scales, so that humanity can thrive in alignment with nature.

Our Values: Respect, Integrity, Accountability and Openness

Learn more about oikos
what is LEAP

LEAP is the oikos Leadership Initiative focusing on building capacity in the oikos community with the necessary competencies, qualities, practices, tools and global network to become conscious leaders in the co-creation of thriving and sustainable societies.

Within this initiative we have developed 4 different programs:

- LEAP YOUth: Intense 10-month personal and leadership development journey.
- LEAP Researchers: 9-month program for earlier career researchers to develop their leadership, teaching and research skills.
- LEAP Life: for LEAP Alumni & Volunteers from all Tracks to continue your development.
- LEAP Tools: a living set of resources and guides forming a platform to help oikos students, alumni, partners and friends of oikos on the journey to conscious leadership at the local level.

LEAP YOUth

oikos LEAP YOUth is an intense 10-month-long leadership development journey that challenges participants to face the most daring questions in life – What are my values? What is my purpose? How do we want to live, lead and learn together for a thriving, sustainable tomorrow?

As the participants adopt and share the lessons learned in their oikos chapters, they start to practice conscious leadership. The result is strengthened chapter performance and greater impact in line with the oikos mission. These basics, moreover, accompany participants throughout their lives and result in a change towards sustainability.
Main Objectives
The main objectives of the LEAP YOUth program are:

(1) to equip participants with capacity in key aspects of conscious leadership with a focus on personal development and transformative change for sustainability;

(2) to empower and inspire the participants to act as conscious leaders, expanding their learnings and impact in the different communities and organizations they are part of with initiatives connected to conscious leadership, sustainability, and systems change (i.e. transforming education);

(3) to equip participants with capacity for personal care/wellbeing and resilience in leadership;

(4) to form a global network of conscious leaders and a community of support based on connection, trust and belonging within LEAP & oikos (formed by facilitators, coaches, programme developers, LEAPERs alumni, partners, volunteers, etc.).

Target Audience
Our target audience is the oikos community with a main focus on chapter leaders and members and oikos International volunteers. We also invite active oikos Alumni as well as members in leadership roles of partner organizations to apply.

why do we need LEAP?
The question of transitioning to sustainability, creating thriving and flourishing living systems highlights the need for conscious leadership development. There is a blind spot in our global efforts to create a sustainable global society. A growing number of researchers in sustainability science, as professor Christine Wamsler from Lund University, elucidate that our sustainability challenge cannot be resolved only by new technology, policy or governance approaches. There is a need to address leadership, to educate and prepare students to lead solutions for sustainability and to focus on
the role of the inner dimensions (described as people’s mindsets consisting of values, beliefs, world-views, motivations and associated cognitive, emotional and relational capacities) of human beings and the potential of inner transformation as a powerful leverage point for sustainability (Wamsler 2019a).

A big part of oikos’ mission is to transform education. We understand we have a significant role in developing our individual and group members to be inspired, skilled and empowered at imagining and leading sustainability transitions.

In this context, LEAP plays a key role in introducing emerging leadership models, in order to overcome the dominant paradigm of leadership, which is often seen as a driver of unsustainable practices together with society’s current ways to understand and tackle sustainability challenges. We used the Solution Tree framework to identify means-end relationships and take an overview of the range of interventions needed to tackle the core issues identified.
how do we create impact?

LEAP YOUth Framework, Methodology, Structure, Timeline, Ecosystem and Impact Measurement

At the same time that the oikos community of student change agents works towards transforming education for sustainability and to create the change we want to see in the world in particular contexts, our impact with LEAP comes from fostering the space to our oikos members, partners and friends exploring and practicing the leadership our world needs in the 21st century.

**Conscious leadership framework**

The cohort of 2022 will have The Inner Development Goals (IDG) framework as the main framework to develop conscious leadership. This framework refers to the skills and qualities needed as a leader to successfully work with complex societal issues, in particular those identified in UNs Agenda 2030 and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. [Watch a video explaining IDGs.](#)

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<th>Being – Relationship to Self</th>
<th>Thinking – Cognitive Skills</th>
<th>Relating – Caring for Others and the World</th>
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The purpose of the Inner Development Goals project is to draw attention to the need to support the development of abilities, skills and inner qualities for people and organizations involved in efforts to contribute to a more sustainable global society. We
agree that when facing challenging tasks, there is a need for a range of cognitive and emotional skills and other qualities that go beyond what is currently taught in schools and higher education. Over the years, significant knowledge and insight has accumulated about what these skills and qualities are and how they evolve, in several research fields, such as adult learning, development and in the study of strategic leadership regarding complex issues, such as sustainability studies.

There are similar frameworks exploring the skills needed in order to develop conscious leadership to manage sustainability issues more effectively. However, there is no scientific consensus regarding these skills and qualities. The IDG framework is not closely linked to a particular theoretical framework, but acts as a broad base and contains key elements presented in all the other frameworks mentioned above.

Methodology and structure
LEAP adopts transformative and emancipatory perspectives to education. Seeking to stimulate self-awareness and critical thinking, LEAP considers pedagogical approaches and methodologies that encourage participants to consider and reflect on personal and collective world-views, values, practices, and behaviors. At the same time LEAP offers the participants opportunity of active involvement, with several chances for co-creation and prototyping during their leadership journey.

The LEAP YOUth program runs over 10 months (starting in the end of February and finishing in December) and is held in English with most elements being online. There is an onsite cohort who will have two onsite meetings at the beginning of the journey (end of April) and in the middle of the program (end of July). Additionally, there is also an online cohort, which will continue to have all modules online throughout the duration of the program to take into account different needs of the community.
The pedagogy and methodology of the program includes inputs in the form of webinars and reading/watching materials; workshops; hands-on projects; onsite events, and contemplative practices as individual reflections; group reflections, dialogues, individual coaching sessions and peer coaching. The inputs in the form of webinars and reading/watching materials introduce theories, concepts, methods, tools, practices and skills. These are deepened, applied, integrated and reflected upon through the other learning items. The webinars are held by experts in topics connected to conscious leadership and personal development towards positive systems change. They present different backgrounds, professional experience and perspectives.

Passing through these different elements, every two months the participants will tackle one of the 5 dimensions of the Inner Development Goals Framework – Being, Thinking, Relating, Collaborating, Acting – first understanding the topic, then relating the topic to themselves and their context and ultimately practicing and implementing it, to finally reflecting on their learnings and journey moving forward.

**Main concepts, models and tools guiding us**

The LEAP program uses a rich scaffold of theories, concepts, methods, tools and practices to foster conscious leadership in the context of transformation for sustainability. Below are the most important ones guiding us in this process. The elements explained above are based on those theories.

**The Iceberg Model**

Our societies’ trajectories remain deeply unsustainable as our dominant technical sustainability approaches have not catalyzed the necessary change. A second aspect of reality has been vastly neglected: individuals and the sphere of human inner di-
dimensions. This means that instead of viewing and framing sustainability challenges as purely technical external problems we should look at them as relationship problems. This broadens the scope and allows us to integrate a deeper analysis in order to find new ways of tapping into our human potential to create effective change towards sustainability. This change refers to the lens through which we see and relate to ourselves and the world around us.

There are several theories and frameworks that underlie the understanding and analysis of inner transformation in the context of leadership for sustainability. These theories have in common the understanding that systemic change and personal transformation are deeply interconnected, and that addressing mindsets might hold the most potential for transforming systems for sustainability. Many of these theories and frameworks are based on the Iceberg Model.

The iceberg model explains that what we can see, the 10% part of the iceberg that is visible above the surface of the sea, are the events that define our world today. However, around 90% of the iceberg is invisible to us. And what is hidden beneath the surface, are the underlying patterns, structures and mindsets that are responsible for creating the events that define our world today.

According to this model, the capacity to address and reflect on our own mindsets and potentially adopt new paradigms, is one of the most powerful ways to dramatically influence sustainability outcomes, considered a deep leverage point for change.

The iceberg model also indicates that we can work at different levels towards sustainability: at the level of behavior, at the level of structural change, at the level of cultural change, and at the psychological level. This last is the level of our mindset, or how we make meaning regarding the world around us. Society needs to address all these levels if we aim to create the kind of change we are hoping for. However, today, the goals to meet climate change and other sustainability challenges are generally located mainly at the behavioral and structural level, with technical and political responses, which relates to the systems and structures we create and use to organize society. However, to focus at the same time at the personal sphere, looking at the individuals, our shared beliefs, values and worldviews that influence how we see the system and how we see ourselves in relation to the system, is critical to lead change.
**Theory U**

*Illuminating the Blind Spot of Leadership: Inner Qualities and Inner Transformation*

To support us in this process of working with personal transformation for systemic change in an interconnected way we use **Theory U**. Theory U is a process created by Otto Schamer that helps us to become aware of the blind spot of leadership: bringing attention both individually and collectively to our inner qualities, to the places where we are operating from: what we pay attention to, and how we pay attention to. By moving through the "U" process we learn to connect to our essential Self, see our own blind spots and pay attention in a way that allows us to experience the opening of our minds, our hearts, and our wills. This holistic opening constitutes a shift in awareness that allows us to learn from the future as it emerges, and to realize that future in the world.

As the diagram illustrates, we move down one side of the U (connecting to the world that is outside of us) to the bottom of the U (connecting to the world that emerges from within) and up the other side of the U (bringing forth the profound systemic changes needed in society today).

The 10 month transformational LEAP journey is thought of as a big U journey for the participants to experience their learning using these leadership capacities - holding the space - observing - sensing - presencing - crystalizing - prototyping - performing. Still, for each module of the program (every bi-month) there are smaller U journeys happening.

**4 fold practice**

The **4 Fold practice** is a practice introduced from the **Art of Hosting** organization to guide the different levels of participation. This is the practice that inspires our participants to create a culture of caring and collaboration. This is the way they should navigate all the LEAP process in these 10 months as a participant, but also to get inspired to live and bring it back within their communities.

By promoting a culture of hosting in 4 different levels, they learn how to take personal care and deep care for others, assessing needs and taking leadership for creating healthy communities of learning.
4fold practice

By promoting a culture of hosting in 4 different levels, they learn how to take personal care and deep care for others, assessing needs and taking leadership for creating healthy communities of learning.

Timeline

The cohort starts in February with an online Kick-off Meeting where they all get to know each other and meet their peer groups for the first time.

In March & April we start with Module 1: Being and we will also have an onsite Kick-off for the hybrid cohort.

In May & June we continue with Module 2: Thinking.

In July & August we tackle Module 3: Relating and the hybrid cohort will also meet for the Midterm meeting.

September & October we dedicate to Module 4: Collaborating.

In November & December we put our focus on Module 5: Acting and we finish the cohort in December with a joint reflection and feedback session.
LEAP Ecosystem

Team
Leadership and strategic development and project management: Roberta Domingues, Alexandra Horvath and Lenka Kepkova, with the support of the oikos international team.

Experts
Provide expertise on the topics offered in the different formats (suggesting readings, design and facilitation of sessions etc.).

LEAP Peer coaches
LEAP Alumni who support the cohort as coaches for peer groups.

Individual Coaches
LEAP Alumni who were peer coaches at least once and professional coaches. Provide 1-1 coaching sessions to participants and alumni coaches.

LEAP Volunteers
Support the team in project management, communication and content related tasks, organizing sessions and meetings on a content and logistical level and supporting the communication about LEAP.

Participants of LEAP cohorts
Individuals selected to participate in a cohort of the LEAP program. The participants’ different cultural and educational backgrounds and professional experience are an immense advantage in the learning process, offering the opportunity for learning through diversity and cross-pollination of ideas.
LEAP network
Alumni of the program, oikos International team or leadership & personal development professionals.
Providing support and exchange to support lifelong learning of the community and the participants.

oikos Partners
Partners of oikos International that are interested in the LEAP program and want to bring LEAP to their organization. They can also participate in the LEAP YOUth.

Donors
Financial and institutional support for the program.

oikos community
Other oikos Initiatives & Projects, oikos members, partners, friends & family members that are influenced by LEAP

Other Stakeholders
Universities, Organizations, Companies, Participant’s environment

Measuring Impact
To assess the impact of the program we are applying the Theory of Change (ToC) model. The Theory of Change supports us to describe how and why the intervention (project) is assumed to lead to a desired end-result. The ToC process advances then to the definition of indicators and instruments for measurement in all its levels of activities, outputs, outcomes and impact. A measurement plan is created and applied throughout the program, and a constant evaluation is possible of what the impact is, what is working, what needs improvement or change. The results are reported at the end of the program.

LEAP YOUth Theory of Change
Specific Learning Objectives

An overview of the impact of LEAP YOUth 2021
A total of 250 participants over 6 years of LEAP

Number of participants: 38
female/male: 26/12
countries: 17 countries
oikos chapters: 20
Number of coaches: Alumni (20) & professional (33)

Topic: Personal Awareness, GROW Model, Emotional Intelligence, IKIGAI and living a purposeful life, Creating a culture around resilience, commitment, compassion and equity

4 Inputs, 4 Workshops, 2 online Meetings, 1 onsite Meeting in Switzerland, 8 reflections, 7 individual coaching sessions, 9 peer group meetings, Multiple Micro LEAPs in chapters, work, families, groups of friends, etc.

Testimonials

Anyone looking to build a career in sustainability should undoubtedly take part in the LEAP program! It truly is a transformative and insightful leadership experience.

Madeleine Bruce, Participant 2021

The LEAP experience has been transformative for me. Overall, it has provided me with improved self-awareness, allowing me to create my life compass. This facilitates navigation in our complex world with alignment regarding my personal vision, values, strengths and wheel of life.

Mathieu Shanks, Participant 2021
Leap has been an important journey in my personal development as well as preparing a sustainable roadmap for my professional development. Peer interactions introduced me to newer perspectives and the personal touch of 1:1 coaching was the most helpful element in achieving my personal goal.

Nishant Kumar, Participant 2021

It took one special friend who told me that LEAP is life changing to start this journey in 2019. And it is! In LEAP there is always room to grow - to grow with and through others. I continued as a peer coach which offered a whole new perspective - especially as the room changes from being hosted to host others.

Janina Hoffmann, Peer Coach 2021

Support LEAP

The work of oikos International and LEAP is only possible through the support and contribution of individuals and organizations that share our vision of creating a more resilient and sustainable world by empowering students to become change agents and conscious leaders of tomorrow.

If you agree that:

- Sustainability challenges aren’t purely technical external problems, but instead relationship problems;
- Systemic change and personal transformation are deeply interconnected, and that addressing mindsets might hold the most potential for transforming systems for sustainability;
- Youth education should embrace the sphere of human inner dimensions and inner transformation as an effective way of tapping into our human potential to create effective change towards sustainability;
- More conscious leaders are needed to transition society to sustainability;

And if you are looking for a meaningful way to support this cause, we invite you to join us as a donor and contributor! Donate today either as a one-time donation or contact us to become a monthly/yearly donor to help us sustain ourselves in the long term.