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Design for Sustainability



Final Report

EDE Findhorn 2018



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Gaia Education
Ecovillage
Design Education
Programme



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Course Overview

Background of the Organisation

Findhorn College is the host organisation for the Ecovillage Design Education course at Findhorn. The course takes place at the internationally renowned The Park Ecovillage, Findhorn in the north of Scotland.

Findhorn College adopts an ecological and holistic worldview for all of its work. Our focus is in the areas of community resilience, social development, system design and engaged transformative action.

All of Findhorn College's courses adhere to the standards set by the British Accreditation Council (BAC). We work collaboratively with selected partners to deliver our courses as well as draw on the expertise available from Findhorn community members.

Our courses offer:

- New knowledge and skills to further your career and aspirations
- Deepen the sense of meaning and purpose in life
- A chance to openly explore beliefs, values, theories and perceptions
- Strengthen connection with the inner, spiritual dimensions of life
- Develop capacity for more loving relationships with all life
- Contribute to a better future for our planet and humanity.

Attending a course at Findhorn College means you will learn alongside like-minded others, from participants, faculty, facilitators and community members who are engaging transformative change in their lives and the world. You will make new friends from all parts of the globe that share similar interests to you. You will enjoy the stunning surroundings of Moray, from the beautiful Findhorn River to the Moray Firth coastline.

Class sizes are small, usually between eight to 25, to ensure you get the most out of the learning & research opportunities available to you.

For the EDE specifically, each week participants explored facets of what is required to design a full-featured human settlement or ecovillage. The whole picture is, of course, much greater than the parts we can explore; however, many additional resources are provided in our shared online resource library offering leads and indicators for further research and skill development.

Attending the course with Findhorn ecovillage as both the learning campus and the Design Studio project sites adds an important dimension to participant's learning.

Diversity of participants and facilitators

In 2018 many of the participants were themselves Educators. .

EDE is promoted as a course for beginner to intermediate participants, however, in part due to the Gaia Education trainer track we had some participants who had completed the GEDs and the TOT and in other cases we had people who were already quite advanced in their knowledge relating to the EDE Wheel of Sustainability.

Main Highlights for the course were

- Access to the Ecovillage as a learning space and for Design Projects
- An emphasis on “nuts and bolts” of ecovillage design - especially legal and financial issues.
- Plenty of nature connection to balance the indoor learning
- Sharing circles in nature with fire
- Design teams with onsite projects - with detailed survey information provided
- The opportunity to practice communication, facilitation and other skills in the small design teams
- Introducing design team retrospectives - end of week time to talk about how they are working together
 - what went well? What could we do differently?

Key success factors

- The participants delivered a number of design projects including
 - Design Group agreements
 - A social enterprise project
 - A cumulative, holistic design that incorporated elements from all the EDE modules.
 - Participants had an opportunities for intense, powerful and collaborative experiences in their Design Teams

Participants

We welcomed a cohort of 14 activists from Brasil, USA and various European countries- Denmark , Latvia, Norway, Sweden, England, Belgium & Germany. The group consisted of 9 women and 5 men; they ranged in age from 20-76. They came with knowledge from their careers in various levels of education, IT, business, engineering, and the healing arts. And a few had experience of living in community prior to being in Findhorn.

Course Rhythm

The course took place over 5 weeks - usually Sunday to Friday with free time on Saturday and part of most Sundays.

Participants started the day in their guest accommodation and had the option to join the community in morning meditations or Taize singing.

Morning sessions were from 9:05 - 12:15 and began with a poem, a brief meditation, some movement or a check-in depending on the energy of the group. This was followed by a recap of learning from the previous day's content. This year the recap session was delivered by two participants sharing what they thought was the key learning from the day before.

EDE modules took place mostly in the mornings, although some modules also took place in the afternoon. Participants usually had a two-hour lunch break - giving them enough time to eat and then rest or take a walk to the beach or in the surrounding woodlands, do laundry or however else they wanted to exercise their passions.

Afternoon sessions were a mix of Design, Design Studio and other EDE modules. In the evenings there were, with one exception optional sharing activities organised by group members, course organisers or events for the wider Findhorn community that participants can join.



Social Dimension

What went well	Learning to apply for the next EDE
<p>We had several group building games - including outdoors on the Hinterland and some blind-folded activities . This helped to create connection between individuals.</p> <p>Sociocracy was introduced and the option to use consent decision-making and a facilitator at appropriate moments in the design teams was proposed. Where possible consent decision-making was demonstrated in the learning space as proposals that needed consent emerges - for example getting agreement on use of photographs.</p> <p>There were two communication sessions one in the first week and the second in the third week. Non-Violent Communication was the foundational model, along with Authentic Communication.</p>	<p>The group didn't fully gel.</p> <p>To address this we plan to re-introduce and be clearer the purpose of the Ag</p> <p>Based on experience from previous EDE sharings, finding that participants we</p> <p>On reflection we are considering bring during the day and perhaps have the find time in the schedule for this we that takes place at the end of the we either at the start of the end of a ses</p>

This worked well as in the first week people are still arriving and by the second session they had been in design teams and were more aware of communication challenges that could be addressed using the tools offered in these sessions.

Leadership was addressed through the Dimensions of Success - Task Process and Relationship with a survey of the different tendencies for which dimension.

The Community Compass gave an overview of the Social aspects that need to be addressed in order to Embrace Diversity and Build Community - this includes Governance and Decision-making, Values, Vision, Mission and Aim, Communication skills and Project Management.

Threaded through the course we had two Community Panels:

Caring for Our Community - four community members who have a particular passion and focus on aspects of community care.

The second panel was Children and Families in Community. The panel format was a brief introduction by each panel member so participants had a sense of their area of focus followed by time for questions and answers. These panels gave participants a connection with yet more community members and was enthusiastically received.

We had some participants who were interested in how to better intended engage with someone else's perspective in a debate.

We are considering designing a community course of the first four weeks and school evenings.

We'd like to bring in Forum and Constitution

We will continue the Panels - while they are a bit of a challenge to add a rich dimension of community life



Economic Dimension

What went well	Learning to apply for the next EDE
<p>We introduced a new session called Getting Started - this compared how four communities around the world got started - in terms of the legal structure the formed to purchase and co-own their land. And how they financed this.</p> <p>We continued the legal and financing in week 2 with a session on what types of legal structures to consider forming for both land ownership and Social Enterprise - Right Livelihood.</p> <p>We devoted one full session to introducing the basic elements of a Social Enterprise including the key skill of Costing. This along with the legal structures and financing gave the participants the tools they needed to develop their Social enterprise aspect of their Design Project.</p>	<p>Due to scheduling circumstances the the 2nd week. While the results participants was that it was too mu back in the 3rd week. We may also that people have a more relaxed lear</p> <p>We gave participants pre-course mate Economics - it would be good to have delivered in the learning space.</p>

This session also included inspiration for Community Banking used for funding a range of community projects and which legal structures to consider to attract investment.

A session on a various options on for complementary exchange gave the participants the opportunity for an extended research time and then relaying their discoveries to the rest of the group.



Ecological Dimension

What went well

We began the week with a day-trip to a market garden that was set up using Permaculture Design. While farm scale, participants were exposed the idea of design in part being about the placement of elements in a system which they could then translate to their ecovillage design project.

Our Green Building session was well received - this year we started with the eco-tour of The Park Ecovillage - including being able to go inside several homes.

Learning to apply for the next EDE

The Energy and Water sessions are rich mainly through a powerpoint presentation. We set up the powerpoint and give participants a chance to ask questions. We're considering this also for the Community Banking session.

Local Food and Soil Nutrients included a rich discussion linking food and the implications in relation to distribution, land ownership, technology, spirituality and celebration, and cities and countryside.

We are sitting with the question: What can we do to help participants to be able to apply some of the learning and not be overwhelmed?

Our Water session focuses on large-scale water issues and could move to an evening presentation to bring in more input on Infrastructure and Waste.

Biomimicry was received with mixed feelings, some found it inspiring while others found it to be a bit of a "pitch". It also introduces a design framework that gives participants the chance to then apply to their eco



Worldview Dimension

What went well

We offered several opportunities for Reconnection with Nature - including a facilitated session in our surrounding nature conservation area, nature tracking and nature connection activities from the Work that Reconnects.

Learning to apply for the next EDE

If we continue with more of a focus on nature connection, we have an opportunity to place a Holistic Worldview as a core theme of the course so we bring in an understanding of the importance of nature to participants to base their

We approached Holistic Worldview through an interactive session on Spiral Dynamics bringing awareness that the same situation or theme can be viewed differently

Participants were introduced to a number of immediately applicable tools to develop their Personal Resilience - especially mental and emotional wellbeing in the face of the current global crisis.

thinking on during the course.

We introduced participants to our co meditation, and suggested people p people really engaged with this. Nex group meditation. The question is w session time or do it before the sess practice.



Design Dimension	
What went well	Learning to apply for the next EDE
<p>Design group we selected with grace in that approximately even numbers were interested in the three projects.</p> <p>Our course pay particular attention to design approaches and design methods ; our extra week - five week course -- gave the design groups extra time to develop their concepts. We invited in community members to partake in the inspiration fresh eyes could give to the challenges.</p> <p>The Design teams also provide opportunities to practice facilitation and a way to</p>	<p>We need to refresh the materials for t continues to develop the areas that v</p> <p>Two years ago we offered a zero waste needs designing but not land based. based design challenge in the future</p>

practice some of the methods of Sociocracy.	
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Design Studio Projects

Three local projects were offered for the Design Studio focus. Participants had the opportunity to select the project m
We were fortunate that there was a fairly even distribution of participants for each project. The purpose of the site s
on apply the knowledge and experience gained in the course and what they came with into a local design project usi
whole living systems design approach.

EDE Findhorn 2018 provided participants with design projects based in the Park Ecovillage, Findhorn w

- Equivalence among the project team members
- Providing thorough project information at the beginning of the design time
- Ability for all team members to visit/survey the site
- Meeting with a designated community liaison person for client survey practice
- Provision of accurate base maps in a range of scales
- The host community benefits from the participant creative design thinking
- Participants are able to contribute to something that has a possibility of being realised

The completed design projects, as well as Social Enterprise presentations and the groups Survey and Analysis work ca
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1_uDBZ7i0XWLstu8HWfhH3rSFM5xXXqle

Duneland Phase 2a

*The design brief for this project required the design team to develop housing for 4 family households and 8
housing units on an existing brown field site at The Park Ecovillage. 5 participants collaborated on this proj
design that showed cabin-tiny houses inspired potentially using containers for the affordable housing and
intertwined design for the family homes, that gave them personal space and privacy as well as the capaci
layouts. Alternative heating and energy sources gave the project an v low carbon footprint and option to p*

The team developed an inspiring Well-Being centre as their social enterprise - this taking into consideration

Pineridge Redesign

The participants for this project worked on the redesign/layout of an existing part of the ecovillage. This team did very well considering that most of them had a stronger social and worldview skillset. They were tasked with mapping the site and developing a design to create a carbon neutral neighborhood - with community facilities and social enterprise possibilities. They demonstrated a good grasp of the course content in the way they applied it in their design project.

They took a master plan approach attending to all areas of the site and identifying what types of buildings would be located where.

Through their survey and analysis work they identified conflicting energies in one particular part of the site which they recommended would need clearing prior to any further development.

Central Area Development

The participants for this project worked on the redesign/layout of an existing part of the ecovillage that included the entrance, shop and long term residential caravans. They were tasked with considering the traffic flow as well as giving consideration of the experience people have on entering the ecovillage.

They took a radical approach by changing the entrance to the ecovillage and providing a car parking area for visitors. Traffic management is a topical issue on the community so it was inspiring to have a fresh approach.

They transformed the Phoenix Shop and various offices into one curved building that followed the curve of the sun’s path during longest day of the year. An additional building was a reflection of the first one and was intended to be housing for elders and young guest. Part of this building also housed their social enterprise bike rental project.

Process Skills

For a third year we chose to emphasise the opportunity to develop social and process skills in the context of the Design development in the course. These skills include communication, facilitation, conflict facilitation, recapping content seen, decision-making in groups.

What went well	Learning to apply for the next EDE
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<p>We offered Social modules - early on in the course to support the teams to develop their communication practices.</p> <p>Setting up the design teams to develop team agreements and practice sociocratic organisation provided the structural support for healthy collaboration.</p> <p>This proved essential when team members found themselves in conflict, returning to the original team agreements supported them to find a way through.</p> <p>Giving more time at the end of the EDE Course for design enable better focus and very good outcomes.</p>	<p>A development, already mentioned in evening sessions for communication participants would naturally be apply the case.</p> <p>Early on in the course, facilitate a session have an overview of that before going</p> <p>Introduce the Groups Works card deck elements necessary for holding.</p> <p>Reviewing the Agile and Lean processes Design Teams.</p>
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Lessons Learnt - notes for future benefit

This year we explored a schedule designed to take participants through the steps they would likely encounter when realising an ecovillage project. This pattern took us away from the distinctly themed weeks of the EDE Wheel Sustainability into a more woven sequence of modules. We added a fifth week to give space to additional community panels on Children and Families in Community and Care in Our Community - giving participants the opportunity to connect and learn from more community members with focus in these areas.

We were concerned that breaking out of the weekly silos might be confusing for participants, however, this was not the case and our colour-coded schedule helped them to follow what dimension we were working with on any given day.

We continued prioritising content in design methodology & skill building for collaborative processes. The design teams provided an action learning context where participants were able to dive deep into the experience of collaborating in teams of people with diverse life experience.

This year as mentioned earlier we found we had a broad range of participants - many highly knowledgeable in the material we were offering. We also found that as there was a broad range of experience there was also a broad range of expectations for the course. While it is clear that everyone who attended the course underwent some form of personal transformation - to some degree, we also realise that a stronger application process - clarity about what the course is and that they are committing to an intense learning process - will help people understand if this is the course for them.

We also want to review our online written application questions and want to make sure we include -> Why are you choosing the Findhorn EDE?

We are aware that and EDE begins the moment we say yes to hosting and organising it and we want to do more to holding the energy and container for the course in the months preceding the actual course. A practical aspect of this is having pre-course materials that people will get access to once they have paid in full.

Our Community Panels were a great success and we plan to do them again. Giving the panelists some prompts for them to develop their introduction around will help them to convey their passion succinctly giving more time for questions and answers.

We introduced an optional Skills Self-assessment which was given to participants at the beginning, mid-way through and two weeks after they left the course. We used Google Forms for this process. Next time we need to use an online solution that makes it easy to separate each participant's responses so we can provide them with a document at the end that shows at a glance their development.

Key trends - from the Gaia Education Survey evaluations

The Gaia Education survey for the whole course was given to the participants in the middle of Week 5, just after their final presentations and before we held our completion activities of Group Transformation Game and the building a labyrinth.

The trends therein confirm our sense of the course cohort, in that a few were somehow resistant/ not engaging/ not meeting; while most participants were benefiting and marking their survey to indicate this.

We offered weekly surveys and the discontent was not so evident there in; we did not do our own survey for week 5 as we assumed that taking part in one (The Gaia Ed one) was sufficient. It might have been useful to ask questions directly related to our course.

Based on this survey and our own experience, we will ensure that next year co-weavers /co-facilitators are in the room at all times to pick up on any dissonance in the cohort -- as the lead presenter or content providers can not always integrate an individual's off-topic distress in their sessions. We are also considering how to bring in more group sharing time into the schedule.

Projects and activities participants intend to engage in, inspired by their attendance in the course

Participants intend to engage in a range of projects that include seaweed farming, developing an ecovillage, developing a land-based social enterprise to support a nearby village in job creation, continuing on the journey of looking for an ecovillage or community to put down roots, continuing the path of gaining skills for regenerative design and living, career transition from the global growth sector to the restorative, regenerative sector, and bringing new ideas back to an existing community.

Participant Quotes

A whole new way of being and living in this world is possible, only through deep will and awareness may change take place, spirituality as the basis of creating a community is possible and may provide good results for economic, personal, and spiritual development. FR

wk 1

I was remembered to be aware of prejudices and the effect they have on me and others. I opened myself for sacred space in myself and sensing the outside of me with more than 5 senses. I was remembered to question how I am when I am authentic and how I can feel safe enough to share my authenticity CK wk 1

3 learning experiences I enjoyed/loved this week were: *

Discussions on the subtle realms (or different forms of energy & consciousness); the dichotomy of caretaker/conservationist vs. when to “do nothing;” modeling Sociocracy GB wk 1

All content providers came across as authentic experts in their field. Styles were very different but I thought all were effective. CB wk 1

3 learning experiences I enjoyed/loved this week were... *

1. The financial dimension of eco-villages and how social business can be very connected to them
2. Having a moment in the Cullerne Garden and learning about composting.
3. Having an embodied experience of how to observe nature differently with Dan. FR wk2

What I learned as a result of the Social Enterprise design project is...

that I can learn a lot with other people and that real deep listening opens to different perspectives and ideas as well as adds more value to the common project and to my own learning experience as an individual and part of a group/community. FR wk 2

As a facilitator and trainer I can speak with a bit of experience and I believe that Ariane is doing an awesome job. She has been flexible and very accessible through some challenging situations. CB wk 3

As a facilitator and trainer I can speak with a bit of experience and I believe that Ariane is doing an awesome job. She has been flexible and very accessible through some challenging situations. KK wk 3

Anything else you'd like to let us know about your experience of week 4.

the beauty of experiencing collaborative learning, emphasising the process and having pleasure learning ALJ wk4

What I learned about myself as a result of working in the Design Team is...

(Here we are looking for a response related to you in the context of process and relationship)

that a good conversation and process within the group can be very worthy if people have in fact the willingness to see their shadows and transform it with humbleness and no hard feelings. FR wk 4

Design team work

.....start with love,

build the trust, it's the

process not the

product.. JP wk 4 That

collaborative learning is

actually more effective

and pleasurable! ALJ wk

4

Photos

Group photo



Week 1 Collages



Week 2 Collages



Week 3 Collages



Week 4 Collages



Week 5 Collages



