



Ignites Ethical Individualism  
in Social Initiatives through  
Anthroposophy-in-Dialogue



## Ignites Ethical Individualism in Social Initiatives through Anthroposophy-in-Dialogue

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with us: Helmy Abouleish, Massa Ru Ando, Jean-Michel Florin, Sundeep  
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Jean-Michel Florin, Sundeep Kamath, Daisuke Onuki, Henry Saphir, and  
Andrea de la Cruz | And our heartfelt gratitude to our Founders: Ute  
Craemer and Truus Geraets

**WORLD SOCIAL INITIATIVE FORUM 2020**  
Goetheanum, Postfach, CH-4143 Dornach, Switzerland



"What makes us prepare for this challenge?  
How can I work inwardly to create this space  
for another?"

**Bart Vanmechelen**

Leadership team - Anthroposopic Council for Inclusive Social Development

WSIF Web Seminar 3

# Index

Message from the Project Team Leader	05
Message from the Advisory Board	06
Message from the Founders	07
What we stand for	09
How we started / Who we are?	10
What we envision the World to be in 2050   VISION	13
What we envision WSIF to be to reach our World Vision in 2050	13
What changes in the world do we aim for to achieve   MISSION	15
How will we achieve the changes we want to see in the world   GOALS	17
What we do   PROJECTS	19
What did you gain from the Forums and other WSIF projects?   REFLECTION	23
How to be part of the WSIF Network	25
ACTIVE CO-WORKING	25
FORUMS	27
ONLINE ACTIVITIES	29
CIRCLES OF ABUNDANCE	30
What we have done   ACHIEVEMENTS	31
What's ahead   FUTURE PROJECTS	33

# Message from the Project Team Leader

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The human being knows itself in relationship to others.

Dear Friends,

The World Social Initiative Forum is a network of individuals and organizations who devote their life and energy to social well-being in the service of social justice within local groupings as well as in the diversity of a global multicultural society.

Such a world society depends on the participation and shared responsibility of individuals in co-shaping a communal whole.

The social health in modern times is determined by the well-being and freedom of its citizens. The self-aware individual in constant transformation grows in motivation and responsibility for the well-being of the Self and its social, natural, economic, and spiritual surroundings.

The World Social Initiative Forum designs and facilitates spaces of encounter in which individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds can explore the challenges and possibilities of being human - with the aim of Self and societal transformation.

The goal of the Forums is to empower individuals to actively engage in maintaining a fluid society, capable of transformation and adaptation in accordance with a changing world.

This is based on the foundation of trust and empathy.

We believe that each individual plays a vital role in the health of a relational society and needs to be acknowledged in its uniqueness. It is our intention to celebrate Otherness in the service of diversity in a cosmopolitan world society.

On behalf of the WSIF network,

Joan Sleight [South Africa]  
World Social Initiative Forum Project Leader



# Message from the Advisory Board

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Together we can make dreams  
and visions come true!

Being a member of the WSIF Advisory Board is a wonderful opportunity to support an initiative which I consider as contributing towards a beautiful future characterized by sustainability.

We at SEKEM could witness the foundation and development already of WSIF and we have been always a supporter and friend since then. Now, we are glad that we became an active member and for being able to promote together also our Vision for 2057.

We see how the world went through a major social transformation within the last decades, which enabled people to feel motivated and responsible to shape their societies and future. Realizing this vision can only be achieved together with others and in a network of like-minded dreamers.

We find such like-minded dreamers - but also activists - in the WSIF family and feel thankful and confident being part of this community.

Helmy Abouleish [Egypt]  
SEKEM Initiative

# Message from the Founders

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The human being is a  
bridge - Rudolf Steiner for  
Ita Wegman Christmas 1924

Why do we need a Social Forum with a spiritual approach? On the threshold from the 20th to the 21st century, Truus and I were inspired by our life experiences in the slums and townships of Latin America and Africa - addressing the social needs through Anthroposophy.

Bridge-building was and continues to be our motto - bridging between the grassroots and the financial worlds; bridging between Anthroposophy and indigenous cultures; bridging between life dreams of young people living in shantytowns and the youth living in gated communities; and bridging between the spiritual and the earthly worlds.

We aimed to understand ever more what is living in the human souls and thus be ignited to work for alleviating this inner and outer misery. We are always trying to dissolve barriers and continue asking the question: how can Anthroposophy connect to the social questions of need and despair?

Ute Craemer [Brazil]  
Associação Comunitária Monte Azul & WSIF Co-Founder

“Let the enthusiasm of those, who -out of Anthroposophical insights- engage themselves with heart and soul with the real social needs of our time, find recognition, and support and thus strengthen the image of Anthroposophy in the world.”



We have been "touched by the Nerve of our Time". And like many, we are compelled to bring hope in socially difficult and dangerous situations.

We also hope for close cooperation with all the sections at the Goetheanum and a few individuals from multi-ethnic projects. It is with this that Ute and I founded the World Social Initiative Forum, to let their voices be heard and a dialogue can take place.

We also invite those who already have forged connections with the world at large to be part of the conversation (ex. Freunde with UNESCO). In this way, "we anthroposophists" will be able to communicate with the world in a broader sense.

Truus Geraets [Netherlands]  
WSIF Co-Founder



# What we stand for

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Due to the drastic changes and polarizing tendencies experienced in the 21st century, we as a worldwide community face challenges in the cultural, political, economic, and ecological spheres.

We at the World Social Initiative Forum (WSIF) envision a world where each individual can create with others a global community that fosters individual unfolding, safeguards human rights, provides a dignified life for all, and nurses the earth as our living home.

Given an understanding of the human being as a spiritual, physical, and social being, we believe that we can address oppression, marginalization, poverty, and ecological destruction through:

- working on freely unfolding individual potential;
- nurturing genuine interest in another;
- supporting economy that serves the needs of all; and
- caring for the earth as a living organism.

To reach this vision, WSIF works with Anthroposophy in dialogue with other frameworks that focus on what is truly human. WSIF organizes Forums and webinars in unfolding individual potential, creates spaces of encounter, and highlights diverse practices pioneered by individuals and initiatives in addressing global challenges through local will.

The World Social Initiative Forum is a global network of spiritually-inspired social initiatives that aim to empower individuals to address the needs of their localities through shared responsibility. Founded by Ute Craemer and Truus Geraets in 2000, it is a project led by Joan Sleight since 2015 associated with the Section for Social Sciences at the Goetheanum.

*“What social arrangements will enable people to have the right thoughts on matters of social concern, and what kind of thoughts must exist so that these right social arrangements can arise?”*

Rudolf Steiner, *The Human Being within the Social Order: Individual and Society*, 29 Aug 1922, Oxford. At the end, add: GA 214.



# How we started

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- 2000** Started by Truus Geraets and Ute Craemer, WSIF created a network of support for anthroposophical and social organizations and individuals involved in social work. Its aim was to empower both grassroots projects and initiative takers as they address oppression, marginalization, poverty, and other forms of injustice at the grassroots level.
- 2015** The founders entrusted the project to Joan Sleigh as project leader under the auspices of the Section for Social Sciences at the Goetheanum with the name Social Initiative Forum (SIF).
- 2020** To date, WSIF has organized 15 Forums across 4 continents in collaboration with the sections at the Goetheanum and different international organizations. The network expanded to 70 initiatives across Europe, North America, South America, Africa, and Asia, and created a strong online presence through quarterly newsletters, features on the website and other online platforms, and a series of webinars.

# Who we are

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## Nicole Asis

(Philippines), Public Relations  
& Fundraising

## Milena Kowarik

(Switzerland), Networking  
& Communications

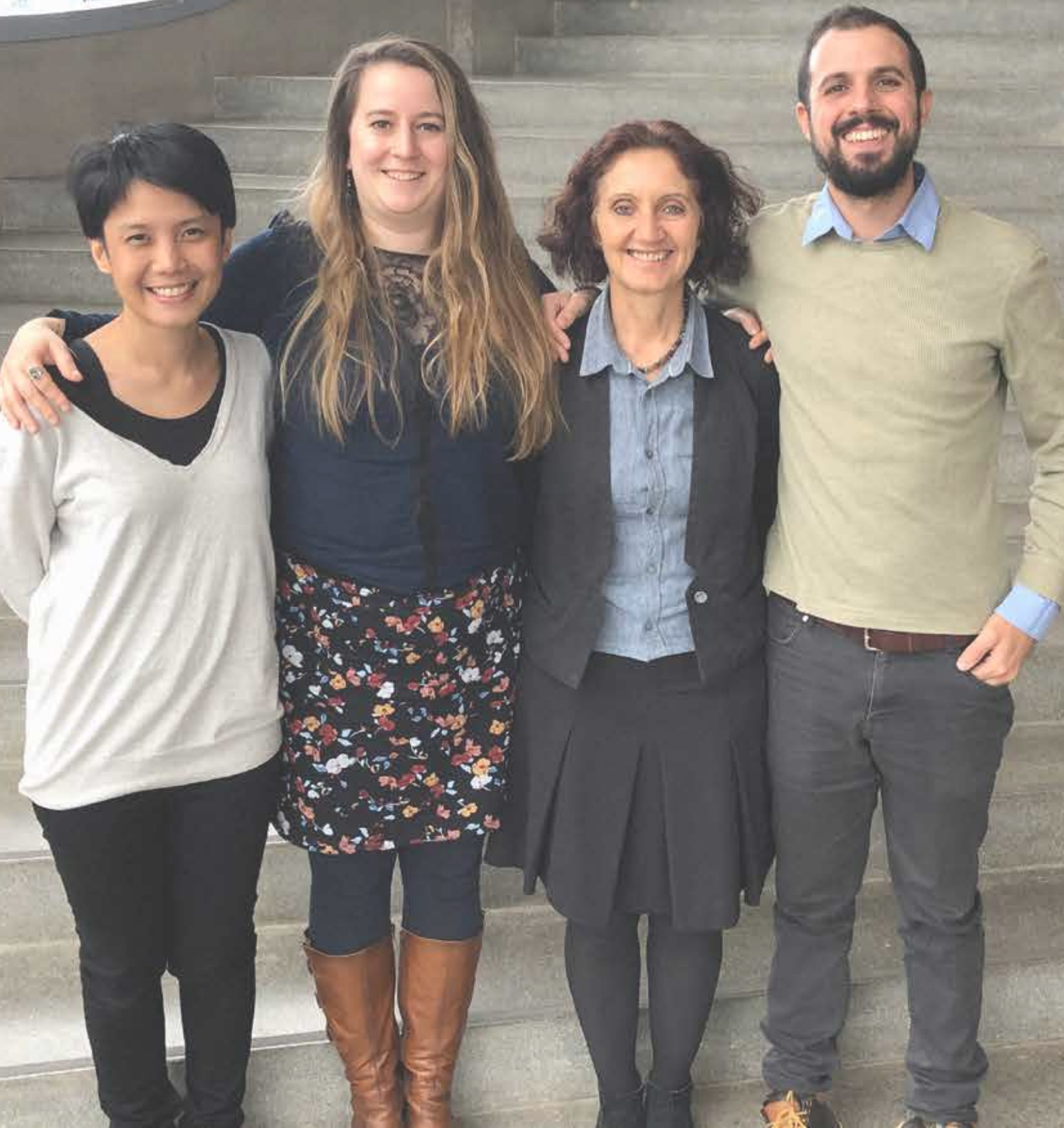
## Joan Sleigh

(South Africa), Project Leader

## Juan Bottero

(Argentina), Project Management







## What we envision the World to be in 2050 | VISION

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Given an understanding of the human being as a spiritual, physical, and social being, each individual creates with others, in shared destiny, a world in which every person.

can freely unfold individual potential;

can connect with others based on equality, empathy, and trust;

can contribute to a sustainable economy in service of the needs of others;

can care for the earth as a living organism.





# What we envision WSIF to be to reach our World Vision in 2050

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As a global agent of transformation, drawing from Anthroposophy and Spiritual Science, the World Social Initiative Forum builds alliances and creates spaces of dialogue with others to:

unfold individual potential freely;

practice empathy and a genuine interest in another;

contribute to an associative economy in service of the needs of others;

and sustain the vitality of the earth as a living organism.



# What changes in the world do we aim for to achieve | MISSION

In alignment with this world vision and the global Sustainable Development Goals, the World Social Initiative Forum aims to contribute an anthroposophical perspective to consciousness development of human beings within four spheres of social practice:



## CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

in which we

- create spaces of human encounter to unfold individual potential;
  - inspire personal empowerment based on an understanding of the human being as given by Rudolf Steiner;
  - design Forums to share models of best practices;
  - enhance holistic research into local culture, art, science, and social context; and
- promote the education and practice of integrative health programs.



## SOCIETAL CHANGE

by

- facilitating encounters for building empathy and deep understanding of others;
- encouraging models of sustainable community development based on love and trust;
- networking with individuals and organizations dedicated to ensuring human dignity and equal rights; and
- transcending cultural differences through encounters, dialogue, hands-on work, and the arts.



## ASSOCIATIVE ECONOMY

to

- develop ethical and social banking systems;
- support the development of sustainable products and holistic services by promoting associative fair-trade practices (Economy of Love); and
- foster an understanding of the concept of work as an essential need for the dignity of human existence.



## REGENERATIVE ECOLOGY

through

- promoting organic and biodynamic agricultural models in support of biodiversity, health, and nutrition;
- supporting sustainable water, waste and energy management and actively reversing the climate crisis; and
- supporting the development of regenerative cities.

# How will we achieve the changes we want to see in the world | GOALS

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By 2050, the World Social Initiative Forum is a trusted and integral global agent in social awareness and Self-transformation:

**TRANSFORMATIVE** To awaken in each human being a self-aware and intuitive Self, who is Self-directed and engages in co-learning and transformative dialogue with others.

Objectives: This will be achieved by:

- highlighting Anthroposophy as a source from which one can draw inspiration and ways for Self and societal transformation through Forums and Webinars that offer an anthroposophical perspective in dialogue with other viewpoints on current global challenges;
- expanding the Network itself, having one initiative per country as an aim, to create a multicultural, intergenerational, transdisciplinary and inclusive community.

**COLLABORATIVE** To achieve that every individual can recognize the value and dignity of other human beings through empathy and solidarity.

Objectives: This will be achieved by:

- featuring different social initiatives and individuals in social work in our international Forums and on our online platforms;
- building bridges which value the dignity of other human beings through empathy and solidarity;
- highlighting different means of upholding human rights and equality based on the local needs and resources; and
- co-working with active partners and networks in all cultures and continents.

**PARTICIPATIVE** To support initiatives, research projects, and Forums that aim to engage in Social Threefolding to radically transform the role of education and cultural life, ethical human equal rights, and moral standards in work and economy, production of goods, fair trade, associative economy, and sustainability.

Objectives: This will be achieved through:

- incorporating training programs in accordance with the current international SDGs;
- adapting constantly to changing needs and crises on a global scale;
- facilitating entrepreneurial programs, hands-on workshops, research presentations, and exchange of sustainable practices in the Forums based on the context of the locality;
- supporting start-up initiatives and encouraging collaborations within the network; and
- promoting an understanding of the 'Economy of Love' and similar frameworks.

**REGENERATIVE** To encourage every individual to engage in regenerative ecosystems, no matter to what degree.

Objectives: This will be achieved by:

- highlighting organizations, start-up initiatives, and research focused on ecological practices in our Forums;
- showing that being conscious of one's carbon footprint is achievable in every locality;
- supporting radical change in areas of education, human rights, economy and regenerative agriculture through dialogue and active engagement; and
- emphasizing that global climate change can be transformed through local will in our Web-Seminars, Forums, and online platforms,

# What we do | PROJECTS

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- Expanding an international network of spiritually-inspired organizations & grassroots initiatives
- Forums as Spaces of Co-Creating and Learning
- *Living In Between Spaces: To enhance co-working in the World*  
— Public Web-Seminars, Online Workshops, and Network Summit
- Circles of Abundance
- Support local initiatives through Regional Forums, Call for Support (Donations) and featured articles and content on the website and other online platforms



# FORUMS: Forum History

- 2000  
Presentation of WSIF at the Goetheanum Michael Conference | Switzerland
- 2001-2018  
Social Initiative Networking Forum | Brazil
- 2002  
Social Initiative Networking Forum | USA
- 2011  
Buenos Aires' V Pan-American Congress | Argentina  
Goetheanum World Social Lab Colloquium | Switzerland
- 2012  
Social Initiative Forum | South Africa
- 2013  
São Paulo Multicultural Festival (Germany - Brazil - Guarani) | Brazil  
São Paulo VI Pan-American Congress
- 2015  
World Social Initiative Forum | Switzerland
- 2016  
WSIF India: Healthy Earth, Healthy Body, Healthy Society | India
- 2017  
WSIF Brazil: Shared Dreams and Hopes: A Cultural Exchange | Brazil
- 2018  
WSIF Japan: Knowing Self through Others: Empathy Towards a Just & Fraternal Society | Japan | WSIF Ethical Individualism: Transforming Self & Society | Switzerland  
Regional Forum: Brazil organized by Associação Comunitária Monte Azul
- 2019  
WSIF Ethical Individualism: Transforming Self & Society Year 2 | Switzerland  
WSIF Egypt: Unfolding Individual Potential for the Future | Egypt
- 2020  
WSIF 7-part Living In Between Spaces Web-Seminar Series | open to the public  
WSIF Network Online Workshops | for partners only

## Regional Forums

Brazil Online Social Forum organized by Associação Comunitária Monte Azul

Egypt organized by SEKEM





The healthy social life is only found, when in the mirror of each human soul, the whole community finds its reflection, and when in the community, the virtue of each one is living.

Rudolf Steiner

The Social Ethic - for Edith Maryon, Nov 5, 1920



# What did you gain from the Forums and other WSIF projects? | REFLECTIONS

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## FORUMS

### WSIF Ethical Individualism 2019

**Freunde volunteer, 19, Germany:** I know where I can find the strength within me, but I don't know how I can start to make social changes.

**Freunde volunteer, F, 20, Germany:** We need to be confident in doing something (because) even the smallest actions matter.

### WSIF Egypt 2019: Unfolding Individual Potential for the Future

**Participant, F, 28, Egypt:** WSIF Egypt 2019 was a unique opportunity to network with amazing people & learn about great educational initiatives across the globe. The formal & informal discussions that took place were stimulating & uplifting. I could feel that the Forum's energy was filled with warmth, openness & curiosity. I am forever grateful to participate in this Forum that revealed the great effort that is being done worldwide inspired by Anthroposophy & the future work needed to continue Rudolf Steiner's legacy.

**Participant, M, 19, Japan:** We can create that space, be together with others even if we all had different backgrounds, views. I think that it is really an effective way to open our hearts to each other, to make us calm...people can open their minds to others, to create that space (that) can transform themselves & the world.

**Participant, F, 31, Germany:** I got really inspired by what is already being done in this field. However, one big question is left & still forms a big question mark inside me. What is the "new" that wants to emerge for the future? What is the impulse of the youth to create a new future? How can we really empower everybody to speak up, to dream, to share their visions & their personal struggles?

**Participant, 21, Egypt:** The Forum was very interactive & filled with experts who provided us a space to explore questions & answers. The intercultural exchange helped me to have a new way of looking at social work passionately. It also helped me know more about social initiatives that are going on all over the world & this really inspired me to contribute to the transformation of the world into a better place.

## WEB-SEMINARS

**M, 59, Germany:** Exploring being human - celebrating multiplicity in diversity, because only this will ensure our long-term survival on the globe

**F, 50, Italy:** The Covid-19-pandemic and the complete lockdown we have experienced in Italy has shown a turning point in (my) life. It has also proven worldwide that everything is possible that we live a historic moment of change and new paradigms. I want to be part of it, serve the bigger self. I feel strongly empowered and want to help make the world more human and sustainable following the Agenda 2030, especially the SDG 5. This is why I was interested to hear and follow the WSIF.

**F, 38, Philippines:** I'm inspired on how these individuals involved are actually dedicating commitments on their initiatives. It is also inspiring how a "spark" at a moment would basically impel a person to make that lifelong decision of commitment.

# How to be part of the WSIF Network

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## ACTIVE CO-WORKING

### As an initiative/organization

In order to showcase their initiative on the website, be featured in the Newsletter, and receive call for funding, partners are invited to commit to the following:

- Uphold vision and mission of WSIF;
- Give yearly update/report on achieved social and community development goals; and
- Attend and support WSIF Forums, web-seminars, and programs.

### As individuals

Individuals interested in social justice and societal change are invited to:

- Co-create local Circles of Abundance;
- Support the Core Team by engaging in initiatives and build the network worldwide;
- Join the network through WSIF web-seminars, workshops, training programs, etc.; and
- Volunteer in WSIF events and the regional Forums.

### As partner organizations

Partner organizations should be:

- Represented on the Advisory Board;
- Commit to and uphold WSIF Vision and Mission as well as further support short and long-term WSIF goals;
- Attend and co-facilitate in WSIF web-seminars, workshops, training programs, etc.;
- Support each other's programs and conferences through publicity and outreach; and
- Co-host events with shared intentions and common target audiences.

## As financial supporters

Join the **Circle of Friends** of WSIF by supporting us in expanding our work and keeping this initiative active in the world:

- monthly and yearly donations;
- support a Forum (ex. Keynote Lecturers); and
- sponsor a Participant.



Ethical Individualism does not mean ‘I live here for myself’. It’s ‘Can I get the right, balanced relations to the others and to the world’...what is good for all of us. What is good for you and for me... It’s finding the other.”

### Gerald Häfner

Head of the Social Sciences Section at the Goetheanum

Ethical Individualism: Transforming Self and Society



# FORUMS

## Agreements with Partners

### A. CONTENT PREPARATION

#### Purpose & Intention

Focus on the context and current social challenge of the place.

Co-responsible with partners in shaping the content & methodology.

### B. GENERAL MANAGEMENT

#### 1. Project manager

**1.a.** The host needs to provide a team responsible for logistics and management on-site.

**1.b.** Both the Social Initiative Forum and partner organizations assign a project manager to oversee the process, provide timelines, and stay in regular communication.

#### 2. Financial team

**2.a.** Financial management is based on common agreements, shared responsibility, and transparency.

**2.b.** The World Social Initiative Forum will be responsible for:

- all costs of the team before, during and after the Forum;
- all costs of key speakers who are experts in the field designated by the SIF team, who will contribute to the given Forum theme.

**2.c.** The Forum Partner Organization will be responsible for:

- all logistics, accommodation, catering, and transport in the host country;
- all costs of the Forum Partner team before, during and after the Forum;
- all costs of key speakers who are experts in the field designated by the Forum Partner team, who will contribute to the given theme.

**2.d.** Both teams shape the Forum price together with allowances made based on participants' socio-economic realities.

**2.e.** Each team is responsible for the extra costs they may incur.

## 3. Documents

**3.1** Documents provided by WSIF:

- Partnership Agreement
- Waiver Form
- Photo Consent
- Evaluation Form

**3.2.** Documents of Common Agreements:

- Invitation Letter
- Program Design
- Brochure & Flyer
- Forum-pack

## 4. Graphic design

**4.1.** All graphic designs and layout to be created and finalized by WSIF in agreement with the partner organization.

**4.2.** All digital documents and social media posts should be coordinated between the teams in accordance with the graphic design of the Forum.

**4.3.** All publicity materials to be approved by both teams.

## 5. 3-step Approach: Shaping Creative Spaces of Encounter & Co-Learning

### Anthroposophy-in-Dialogue

Freely unfolding individual potential and recognizing one's Self as a spiritual, physical, and social being that can co-create a humane world with others.

### Transformative

Seeing the needs of local communities, individuals and initiatives explore different ways of addressing global social issues such as oppression, marginalization, poverty, and ecological destruction.

### Collaborative

Fostering a growing sense of Self and healthy sense of Community, in which initiatives who wish to share a process and shape spaces of co-learning can be supported.

## ONLINE ACTIVITIES

“Living In Between Spaces” aims to host an ongoing conversation about the social issues arising out of the COVID-19 situation, the prevailing systemic racism, the climate crisis, and the oppression of individual freedom and democracy experienced worldwide.

The online activities are also offered as networking and in preparation for the International & Regional Forums - where we meet in person, continue co-learning from one another, and nurture working partnerships.

**Web-Seminar Series**— via FB Live, open to the public

**Online Workshops** - via Zoom, by invitation only for our partners, interactive

**Network Summit** - international gathering at the Goetheanum in Summer 2021  
The WSIF Web-Seminar series sprung out of seeking new forms and ways of

co-creating a world that upholds the freedom of individual unfolding, safeguards the dignity of every human being, fosters solidarity and sustainable practices, and is conscious of caring for the environment.

It is also a call to action - to find concrete steps on how to address the needs of our time through exchange of ideas, collaboration, and initiatives.

## CIRCLES OF ABUNDANCE

Based on the understanding that *'charity starts at home'* and the social contexts are specific to locality, the Circles of Abundance started in Dornach on the 12th of June 2020.

Pursuing the question, *'what are the social needs in Dornach?'* the initiative started with a group of young students and older residents, meeting to explore what each individual could offer the others.

The Circles of Abundance is designed as an intentional meeting space where members contribute to the community by sharing skills, talents, biographical and cultural experiences through presentations and stories.

Transforming a “mindset of need” to a “culture of abundance”, this practice can be implemented in any local community, exploring and meeting the socio-cultural-economic reality with positive engagement and constructive change.



# What we have done | ACHIEVEMENTS

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## Forums

- Yearly Forums across the world addressing diverse social challenges based on the locality
- Regional Forums initiated and organized by local carriers to continue the dialogue
- Active collaborations with the sections at the Goetheanum, organizations, and individuals in social work

## Reach Online

- Web-Seminar Series and Online Workshops

## Initiatives Worldwide

- 80 initiatives from 20 countries
- Nurturing solidarity through “Call for Support”
- Active co-working through Exchange of Best Practices to support each other’s projects

## Circles of Abundance

- Transforming a “mindset of need” to a “culture of abundance”, which can be implemented in any local community, exploring and meeting the socio-cultural-economic reality with positive engagement and constructive change.





"This crisis is bringing us a great opportunity to reflect on how we live our lives - to stop and reflect and make changes."

## Daisuke Onuki

Professor at the International Studies Department of Tokai, Japan

WSIF Web Seminar 2



# What's ahead | FUTURE PROJECTS

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## WSIF Living In Between Spaces

- A. WSIF Web-Seminar Series
- B. WSIF Online Workshops
- C. WSIF Network Summit Goetheanum 2021

## WSIF Nairobi 2021

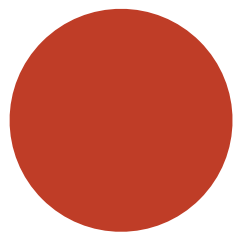
Nairobi, Kenya

Living to Learn: The Art of Learning and Teaching in a Digital Age  
In partnership with Mbagathi Rudolf Steiner School

## Support our work - Donate

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**WORLD  
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FORUM 2020**

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