Eco-versities Network

A GATHERING OF KINDRED FOLK REIMAGINING HIGHER EDUCATION

an invitation
Join us!

10th April 2015

We would love to have you join us as a co-creator at a Gathering of Kindred Folk Re-imagining Higher Education! This is an invitation for you to come around 50 other leading visionary-doers and thinkers at Tamera Peace and Research Centre in southern Portugal. The gathering will take place from the 20th (afternoon) until the 26th of August (this summer!).

As you are aware, there is a knowledge movement slowly building all over the world, an emerging network of Eco-versities; people and communities are reclaiming their local knowledge systems and imaginations to restore and re-envision learning processes that are meaningful and relevant to the call of our times, that cultivate new stories and possibilities, that re-connect regenerate diverse ecological and cultural ecosystems.

We are gathering this group from a variety of learning places around the world - to share experiences, wisdom, insights and challenges to learn about how transformative learning is being imagined and enacted in each place. Our primary focus is to bring together people who are hosting or who are deeply involved with ‘alternative’ places of higher education. Many of these have emerged from different social movements, ecological movements, artistic and cultural movements, indigenous movements, etc.

"It is difficult to imagine a future that is humane, decent and sustainable without marked changes in the substance and process of education at all levels, beginning with the University". Professor David Orr, author of Earth in Mind

About the Convenors

Kelly Teamey and Udi Mandel co-created the Enlivened Learning Project - a journey to learn from and explore higher education places of holistic learning. As well as writing, this involves a series of films and an interactive multi-media website intended to share stories, encourage exchanges between places of higher education re-imagining what it means to learn, and further debate as to the purpose and potential of higher education.

Manish Jain is the co-founder-coordinator of Shikshantar Andolan which has been significant in shaping the larger unschooling movement in South Asia and co-founder of Swaraj University in Udaipur, India. Swaraj University was birthed in 2010 as a two-year learning programme for youth focusing on self-designed learning, regenerative livelihoods, healthy living, and social justice.

Martin Winiecki has been a part of the Tamera community since age 16. He is a peace activist and networker and coordinates the Institute for Global Peace Work and the Terra Nova School network.
Purpose of the Gathering

While together, we hope to be able to explore common emerging themes such as sustainability and social justice; unlearning and decolonizing; indigenous ways of knowing; healing; gift culture; re-engaging community, nature and the built environment; local media; literacies; the question of certification; mentoring; rites of passage; right livelihood and social/eco entrepreneurship, etc.

We feel that 6 days is an ideal minimum amount of time to get to know each other, to learn from each other and to explore new collaborations. We ask that you come participate for the whole time. During this time we will host an interactive process through a structured unconference format where there will be a lot of time for sharing and co-creating with self-organizing sessions and open-spaces. Our intention is to co-create a gathering that can propel this movement forward, where stories are shared, creative sparks fly, and friendships and alliances are woven.

There is a list of invitees at the bottom of this page (we have attached this list as a separate document) and their affiliation. Everyone here is individuals or organizations that we have encountered or heard about that are creating innovative work in this area of higher education. If you have any suggestions for anyone else you strongly feel should also be invited, please let us know.

"It is not an exaggeration to say that Unitierra is one very small space, a component of a very general attempt in Mexico and other places to create a new society, in the womb of the old society. We are convinced that their own society is dying... that old system is destroying everything, the environment, the mother earth, the culture, society, everything. We are part of that kind of initiatives trying to do experiments that can produce [a] new society."

Gustavo Esteva – author, activist and founder of Unitierra, Oaxaca, Mexico
Gathering Details

Tamera has kindly offered to host us the last week of August. At Tamera, 170 people live and work on a property of 330 acres aiming at establishing a ‘Healing Biotope’ – a comprehensive model for a non-violent society. Founded in 1995, Tamera is a community experiment that emphasizes the creation of new social structures to enable the emergence of healing, love and trust between all living creatures. Tamera is experimenting with ecological innovation, technology, inter-personal relationships, peace, food, energy autonomy and education (particularly the Terra Nova School and the Global Campus). See more at http://tamera.org

Costs for the gathering:

We are in the process of fundraising for the event and our hope is to do this on a shoe-string budget and with the help of all participants. We hope to be able to cover at least some travel costs for those who need it (especially for those coming from very far) and will cover the costs for local hospitality at Tamera.

Accommodation:

Tamera has a guesthouse and vegan food that will accommodate everyone. We will share more details on this soon.

Transport:

The closest international airport is Lisbon, Portugal. The closest villages are called Reliquias and Colos (4km). The next locations that are accessible by public transportation are Funcheira (20km, train), Cercal (25km, bus) and Ourique (33km, bus). More information on how to get there is available at http://www.tamera.org/what-is-tamera/visitors3/general-information/

Communication:

As a way of starting earlier to get to know each other and plan activities at the gathering and beyond we thought we could organise a couple of pre-gathering 'meet-ups' online. We are planning to have these on the second Sunday of each month starting on the 10th May at 7pm GMT. We will email details of the meeting platform and details on access closer to the time.

Next steps:

It would really help us if you could fill in some brief information on a form provided through this link - http://goo.gl/forms/4Zb3a8Q5oi to let us know...

- If you are able to come to the event.
- If you cannot come, would you still like to be a part of this emerging network?
- What would you like this network to explore and offer?
- If you need a contribution to your travel costs and if so what these full costs would be.
- Can you contribute to a pool of costs for the gathering which would help others to attend?

Please let us know by the 25th April if you can come and also answer the questions above on funding and attendance through the link provided above. We would also appreciate a brief bio (200 words max) to share with everyone to begin the process of us getting to know each other. We are really excited to be connecting with everyone in what we hope will be an inspiring and nourishing gathering.

With deep gratitude

Kelly, Udi, Manish, Martin
Co-creators / Invited Organizations

Australia
- Yirkala Centre and the Mulka Project (Amhem Land, Northern Territories) http://www.yirkala.com/themulkaproject/about
- Mawul Rom project (Darwin, Northern Territories) http://www.cdu.edu.ac/sikpp/mawulrom

Argentina
- Universidad de los Trabajadores (University of the Workers in Buenos Aires) http://universidadimpa.wix.com/universidadimpa

Brazil
- Escola Popular de Comunicação Crítica (School of Critical Media, Rio de Janeiro) http://www.espocc.org.br/
- Fora do Eixo - http://foradoeixo.org.br/category/unifde/

Canada
- Red Crow Community College (Blackfoot Territory, Alberta) http://www.redcrowcollege.com/
- Freda Diesing Northwest School of Art (Terrace, British Columbia) http://www.nwcc.bc.ca/programs-courses/nwcc-schools/freda-diesing-school-northwest-coast-art

Chile/USA
- Gaia University http://www.gaiauniversity.org/

Colombia
- Universidad de la Resistancia http://www.semana.com/online/articulo/la-universidad-resistencia/72716-3

Holland
- Knowmads (Amsterdam) - http://www.knowmads.nl
- Learning Lab (Amsterdam) - http://www.thelearninglab.nl/

India
- Swaraj University (Udaipur) - http://www.swarajuniversity.org/
- Adivasi Academy (Gujarat) - http://www.adivasiacademy.org.in/
- Bija Vidyapeeth (School of the Seed) (Doon Valley) - http://www.navdanya.org/earth-university
- Barefoot College (Tilonia) - http://www.barefootcollege.org
- Auroville (Pondicherry)
- Auro University (Surat)

Italy
- Free Home University - http://musagetes.ca/project/free-home-university/
Malaysia
- Multiversity (Penang) - http://www.swaraj.org/multiversity/contactus.htm

Mexico
- Universidad de la Tierra (University of the Earth in Oaxaca and Chiapas) http://unitierra.blogspot.co.uk/

New Zealand
- Te Wananga o Raukawa (Otaki, North Island) – http://www.wananga.com

Pakistan
- Institute for Development Studies Pakistan (IDSP) (Quetta) - http://www.idsp.org.pk
- Habib University (Karachi)

Peru
- PRATEC, Proyecto de Tecnologias Andinas (Project of Andean Technologies in Lima, Lamas and Cusco) http://www.pratecnet.org/wpress/

Portugal
- Tamera - http://www.tamera.org/what-is-tamera/

Russia
- The School of Engaged Art

Sweden
- YIP (The International Youth Initiative) - http://yip.se

Thailand
- Arsomsilp Institute of Arts (Bangkok) – http://www.arsomsilp.ac.th

Uganda
- Mpambo University (Jinja) http://www.blackherbals.com/Mpambo_the_African_Multiversity.htm

UK
- Social Science Centre (Lincoln) - http://socialsciencecentre.org.uk/,
- H3 University - http://h3uni.net
- Schumacher College (Totnes) - https://www.schumachercollege.org.uk/
- Transition Town (Totnes) - https://www.transitionnetwork.org/support/education/one-year-transition
- Shift Bristol (Bristol) - http://www.shiftbristol.org.uk/

US
- Mycelium (Asheville, North Carolina) - http://mycelium.is/
- Generation Waking Up (Oakland, California) - http://generationwakingup.org/
- Weaving Earth (Sonoma County, California) - http://www.weavingearth.com/
- Ubiquity University (California) - Ubiquity University