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An economics that serves humanity?

Ambition

We aim to build on preliminary work carried out at the preparatory Higher Education Summit in December 2021 to arrive at a better understanding of the curriculum changes that may be needed or appropriate in order to develop an 'economics of wellbeing' within a context of Doughnut economics. That preliminary work will be augmented with a modest preliminary survey of current education offered to future economists in higher education institutions: where are these programmes along the gradient from being about sustainability to being sustainable?

What we found in December

Participants in the online workshop found that we need economists who *i.a.*

- Dare to challenge dysfunctionality
- Learn along the way together with others, Listen carefully, Inspire others
- Make their professional journey their personal journey
- Integrate individual and collective well-being perspectives
- Understand drivers of change, Are brave to try new things
- Use their skills to think about ways to redesign our economic and business structures more socially and ecologically sustainable, e.g. post-growth economy
- Act socially and in line with universal ethics
- Are willing to live a sustainable lifestyle and act from that
- Act as change agents, Are creative, Whose work brings us happiness, ...are poetic
- Are willing to challenge what they know

Not a bad start! So... what shall we teach them? What is already around?

Approach and process

The Atelier will be highly interactive and results-oriented. It will engage participants in a critical appraisal of current educational practice and in a co-creative exercise to take first steps to visualize the potential in a transformed role for economics and economists in future society: an economics that serves human aspirations of wellbeing, rather than acting as a roadblock to sustainable change.

Transformative potential

The potential for transformation lies in the re-orientation of economics from money or even sustainability, to focus on the potential of economics to contribute to human wellbeing and highest aspirations. It also lies in participation by a motley crowd of teachers, researchers, students, and any others who care about re-orienting the future of higher education towards sustainability.

Marilyn Mehlmann and colleagues