THE YOUTH & ELDERS PROJECT

FOSTERING CULTURAL MATURITY, MENTORSHIP AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT ACROSS THE GLOBE

www.youthandelders.org
We believe that there is an untapped potential in the exchange between youth and elders, and in June we set sail on a Tall Ship in the Baltic Sea, to rekindle this relationship together with 30 diverse individuals.

On our voyage we will help to clarify the unique and diverse value in being human in all stages of growth to honor that only by combining the push for change with the wisdom of maturity can we tackle the challenges of our time.
We have a vision of transcending the paradigm of expansion growth, of creatively maturing as a society and joyfully collaborating across the generations to get there.

“All organisms and systems progress through developmental stages from infancy to maturity. The immature and adolescent stages are characterised by expansion growth: increase in size and strength (and appetite and ambitions), by testing of limits and often by activity for the sake of itself, without reflection or awareness of impacts. At some point expansion growth shifts to growth of finer detail, of complexity and relationships. Activity does not stop and energy exchange continues, but it shifts towards increased resilience, understanding and complexity or relationships.”

We envision a future where we live in mature societies shaped by a mature culture; a tomorrow where individuals help each other step into their highest potential, where Youth act out their passion for shaping the realities they inhabit and where Elders step into their wisdom to hold space for the generations that are emerging.

Are we acting as mature stewards of our planet? And if not, how can we individually and collectively step into our responsibility for each other and for the ecosystems of the planet we inhabit?

The Youth & Elders Project is a space for a series of explorations of these crucial issues, inviting the participation of entrepreneurs, change makers and activists from all spans of life. The first journey of this series takes place on the Baltic Sea in June 2012.

Join us if you are ready to support and be supported in collectively illuminating a better future.
Together we will explore the potential of intergenerational collaboration for sustainability, and seek ways in which we can step into our individual and collective brilliance.

In June of 2012 we will set sail for one week with an intergenerational crew of 30 change makers from all walks of life, forming a microcosm of the world we inhabit. As we come back from the open sea and approach land once again, the boat will become a space in which ideas for collaboration and new ways of embodying intergenerational exchange can crystallize. Being out in the open will inspire our minds, hearts and will to be open - likewise, being confronted with the very real task of sailing the boat will keep us grounded, and inspire us to move beyond concepts and words and into action. It is a journey of self-discovery and inspiration and of coming home with new ideas and concrete steps to take. A journey of playful exploration and deep sharing - where youth and elders mirror and discover each other, and together step into their potential for contributing to a common goal.

The participants will:
- Challenge their assumptions and expand their horizons;
- Experience principles of dialogue and storytelling, of creativity and of decision making;
- Explore mentoring abilities and personal growth;
- Together define next steps into action that embodies the wisdom of all generations;
- Play, perform, create and be inspired

Outcomes from the project:
- Reinvigorating hope for a sustainable response to current crises that affect us all;
- Sparking strong relationships between Youth and Elders, between fresh energy and passion as well as experience and deep perspectives;
- New perspectives on the paradigms of our culture that define how we perceive Youth and Elders;
- A renewed drive for wholeness in our actions;
- New projects and ideas and a strong base for carrying them forward.
Our strategies to widen the impact of the Youth & Elders Project:

The Youth and Elders voyage invites us to look inwards within ourselves and within the group of explorers, but also outwards to our communities, organisations and our society at its broadest.

The impacts of the discussions already taking place are forming ripples which spread outwards, touching friends and colleagues as the conversation expands. The circles so formed are meeting other circles of discussion and action, underway in communities around the world. As circle meets circle, energies and enthusiasm combine and become the bow wave of the boat’s passage in June. Who knows what sparkling insights will shine in the wake of its passage?

To assist in spreading the outcomes and to facilitate the community of explorers forming around the project, we are developing and assembling a suite of communications and narrative tools. Storytellers are joining our circles as well...

- Journalists are sharing our journey to increase our visibility.
- We are inviting a documentary film maker to join us and film the voyage.
- The outcomes of this ‘journey of discovery’ will be recorded and shaped into a booklet.
- Our website will form both an entry point and an outlet to catalyse an ongoing dialogue.
- These inspiring conversations are being harvested to be shared as podcasts and graphic recordings.
- This council will help shape a project that becomes an organism of its own, where future explorations take the questions and lessons of the project forward into local communities around the world.
- Every few weeks we are hosting SKYPE circles with engaged, knowledgeable people from around the world to explore the different facets of youth and eldership.
- A Youth and Elders Council is being formed now to inform, advise, inspire, challenge, support, critique, expand, connect and surprise us... all in turn and as needed.

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The project team is headed by three accomplished social entrepreneurs:

- Benjamin Kafka, Impuls, Germany
- Mark Hessellund Beanland, Denmark
- Erik van Lennep, Tepui, US/Ireland

Supporting the project:

- Valentina Catena, Italy: Project Development
- Anne Madsen, Denmark: Graphic Recording
- Andrew Bateman, Canada: Video
- Dea Cisar, Denmark: Podcasts and Audio

Read more about the project team on our website: www.youthandelders.org

“Exploring the relationship between cultural maturity and sustainability and a revival of the timeless relationship between Youth and Elders”
“Here’s a project I have delight in supporting! We need to heal our circle of humanity and come together with youngers and olders, in purposeful work again.”

Mary-Alice Arthur, New Zealand Originator, Art of Hosting

“The idea is excellent. I think. A little a la The Youth House goes into partnership with the DaneAge Association.”

Uffe Elbæk, Copenhagen, Denmark Minister og Culture and founder of The KaosPilots

“I am SO thrilled to see this coming to life... Your invitation to play is beautifully framed and “right on.” I hope this voyage of discovery will seed a global movement to bring youth and elders together on behalf of our beloved planet and our common futures. It’s happening!”

Juanita Brown, San Francisco and North Carolina Co-Founder at The World Cafe

“I think of the “Passage” the people will go through and of the ideas that will be ignited. I think this is your calling. This is your moment.”

Tim Taylor, *Impacting the System*, Abu Dhabi, UAE

“We the Maori believe in inter-generational teaching and learning. Communication is always across generations because we are all learners and teachers. I would love to link in with you all ...”

Rangimarie Turuki Pere, Waikaremoana, New Zealand Maori Elder and Wisdom Keeper

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Or visit [www.youthandelders.org](http://www.youthandelders.org)
We need your help to get this project out to sea.

We want this project to reach out into the world and spark the imagination across communities, generations, cultures and countries. You can help us by:

- Joining the voyage in June
- Building and extending the network
- Promoting the importance of the questions asked
- Providing the funding that will enable youth and elders from across the world to come together in this shared exploration

Your contribution will make a tremendous difference, as we collectively seek to navigate what may well be the most turbulent time in human history.

In so doing, you will also be seeding new projects, new collaborations and new relationships which will be born through the fusion of elder perspectives and skills mentoring with the fire and idealism of youth. The results can only contribute to restoring balance and creativity to our shared quest for a healthier and happier world.

Contact us to receive a sponsorship package or hear more about sailing along with us in June.

We thank you in advance and look forward to exploring the future of Youth and Elders with you.

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Join the Voyage!

We would like to invite you to join us in our exploration. We are looking for a diversity of ages, experience, focus and gender.

When?  
>> 10th of June 2012 to 17th June 2012

Where?  
>> On the Baltic Sea from Greifswald, Germany to Gdansk, Poland

Cost  
We are asking for a contribution of 1,200,- EUR per person. This will cover your participation on board the Tall Ship Lovis, as well as tuition, accommodation and food.

Having said this, if you feel drawn to this exploration, financial reasons should not keep you from joining us! If you can’t afford the full contribution, please apply nevertheless, and fill in the section requesting a scholarship. When doing so, please let us know how you might assist us in getting the boat out to sea and what skill you can you offer in support of the voyage.

See you onboard!

Click here to apply now!

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“An intergenerational crew of 30 people, youth and elders, leave the German shore to navigate the Baltic Sea. They embark on the exploration of the quest; how might we create a more mature society?”. 

Every new relationship is a seed of hope for a better tomorrow.