

## Academy of Hope

### Scoping pedagogy of hope amidst socio-ecological crisis

Department: Copernicus Institute of Sustainable Development

Research group: Urban Futures Studio

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### Project description

The Academy of Hope is a new educational initiative and action research project of the [Urban Futures Studio](#), building on the prizewinning course [Techniques of Futuring — A Mixed Classroom with Policymakers](#). We have started this project from a point of concern. We observe, namely, that the climate crisis is often met with an attitude of fatalism – ‘all is lost’ – or naïve optimism – ‘there is an easy, guaranteed solution’. However, both these attitudes do not nurture the imagination, openness, responsibility, and commitment that are constitutive of positive change. So, how can we nurture a more generative way of being amidst our ecological predicaments? Our hunch is that in the current day and age, in which we collaboratively become increasingly aware of the climate crisis, we need to look carefully at the notion of *Hope*.

What does a hopeful way of being with the climate crisis look like and how can the University be conducive to it through new forms of education? These questions are central to the Academy of Hope. Our aim is to contribute to a pedagogy of hope for the 21<sup>st</sup> century that brings students together with a variety of other change agents (e.g. policymakers, artists, activists) around wicked socio-ecological challenges. To kickstart our project, we articulated three initial axioms:

- (1) A hopeful way of being starts with embracing the trouble; what are the looming dangers and injustices in today’s world, why and how did they come about, and how are we personally involved?
- (2) A hopeful way of being is fueled by imagination and futuring; what are alternative, desirable futures, and how might we get there? What does a good life look like in the future?
- (3) A hopeful way of being blossoms through collaborative action across boundaries; how and where can diverse agents of change gather around imagined futures and act today toward a better tomorrow?

As a Bright Minds Assistant, we would like to invite you to join our pioneering work in the upcoming academic year. There are two subprojects that we would like to work on in close collaboration with you:

- Conducting a scoping review into the notion of hope in the context of the climate crisis and educational theory.
- Building and analyzing a podcast series in which we enter into conversation with prominent change agents (e.g. researchers, activists, policymakers) to reflect on their commitment to socio-ecological justice and the role of hope herein.

## Project proposal Bright Minds Assistantships September 2022

### Job requirements

- An interest in hope, futuring, education, and socio-ecological transformation and a willingness to explore and synthesize their intersection in academic literature.
- The ability to write in English for an academic audience.
- Affinity with podcasting/interviewing.

### Some key references

Hoffman, J., Pelzer, P., Albert, L., Béneker, T., Hajer, M., & Mangnus, A. (2021). A futuring approach to teaching wicked problems. *Journal of Geography in Higher Education*, 1-18.

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Pikhala, P. (2018). Eco-anxiety, tragedy, and hope: Psychological and spiritual dimensions of climate change. *Zygon*, 53(2), 545–569.

Freire, P. (1995). *Pedagogy of hope: Reliving pedagogy of the oppressed* (R.R. Barr, Trans.). New York, NY: Continuum.

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