



Venice International University International PhD Academy

The Global Society - The Importance of Interdisciplinary Collaboration to Tackle Societal Challenges

**September 18-22, 2017
Venice International University**

Coordinated by Pol Ghesquière, KU Leuven

Theme

The overarching theme of this summer school is the necessity of interdisciplinary research collaboration to tackle major challenges in today's global society. During this 5-day summer school, the participants will experience first-hand the importance of interpersonal, international, intersectoral and interdisciplinary teamwork:

1. **Interpersonal collaboration:** Through personal coaching and peer-assessment the participants will enhance their verbal and non-verbal communication skills. They will become familiar with various aspects of interaction and receive advanced training on how to convey a message in a gender and culturally mixed group.
2. **Interdisciplinary collaboration:** Through reflection on their own and each other's personality, discipline and cultural background, the participants will be made more aware of the challenges and opportunities of working in interdisciplinary teams. During hands-on sessions they will learn to benefit from the richness of various disciplines and to use it as an asset for problem-solving and creative thinking.
3. **Intersectoral collaboration:** Novel collaboration methods and social entrepreneurship will be introduced as concepts to find solutions for societal problems. Using successful business examples as a starting point, the participants will debate tomorrow's society, in which different sectors will be integrating more and more rather than remain as separate entities.
4. **Global insight:** Various experts will equip the participants with the necessary insights to analyse possible solutions to a global problem and take into account the moral and ethical implications of novel technologies.



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Approach

The summer school will allow participants to deepen their knowledge and theoretical understanding as well as to gain hands on experience in developing interdisciplinary and intersectoral collaboration.

At the start of the summer school, the participants will be divided into multidisciplinary teams and they will be given an overall objective, i.e. to build a new society where there was none before (e.g. the colonization of Mars).

This assignment will be the common thread throughout the week and will lead up to a grand finale on Friday, when each team presents the blue print of its new society in the form of a Pecha Kucha presentation. During morning sessions, various keynote speakers will address major topics related to the objective, while afternoons will be used for hands-on training of different skills needed to accomplish the objective (Cf. above) and to work on the objective in the assigned teams. Throughout the week the participants will receive support and feedback from a variety of coaches.

Expected learning outcomes

- Better understand group interaction and ways to influence decision making.
- Communicate values, ideas and opinions more effectively.
- Insight into and appreciation of their own and other disciplines and acknowledgement of the added value of interdisciplinary and intersectorial collaboration.
- Increased self-confidence and strengthened leadership skills.
- Awareness of own behavioural impact within a group and learn to give/receive constructive feedback to/from others.
- Improved skills required for solving multidisciplinary problems in an international and interdisciplinary team.

Participants requirements

PhD researchers from different disciplines are encouraged to apply for this summer school. Candidates should be in an advanced stage of the doctoral program and be highly motivated to work intensively on this project in an international and interdisciplinary team. The participants should be available for the entire duration of the summer school and participate in all events.

Program



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Monday, September 18, 2017

Introduction / problem setting / teambuilding (Pol Ghesquière & Danny Wildemeersch, KU Leuven)

- 10:00: Introduction of participants and organizing team
- 10:30 -12:00: Setting the scene:
 - explanation of the overall mission of the summer school
 - division of participants into teams
- 13:30 -16:30 Principles of organizing a society – relevant aspects of political philosophy (H. De Schutter, KU Leuven)
- 17:00: Team-time: teams work on assignment
- 20:00: Teambuilding

Tuesday, September 19, 2017

- 9:30 – 12:30: Interpersonal relationship and skills (Joeri Wielandts and Stefan Wellens, KU Leuven)
- 14:00-17:00: Presentation skills & Pecha Kucha (Hans Van de Water, The Floor is Yours)
- 17:00 – 18:30: Team-time

Wednesday, September 20, 2017

- 08:30 – 10:30: Linking humanities, research and technology (Bieke Zaman, KU Leuven)
- 10:45 -12:30: Humanities, science and technology (Victoria Szabo, Duke University)
- 14:00- 16:00: Entrepreneurship (tbc)
- 16:15 -18:15: (title tbc) (Daniele Archibugi CNR - National Research Council of Italy)
- 18:15 - 19:00: team time

Thursday, September 21, 2017

- 09:30 – 12:30: Role and impact of SSH in the big societal Challenges
 - Science and Technologies (tbc) (Diana West, European University at St. Petersburg)
 - Sustainable development (Vincenzo Atella, University of Rome Tor Vergata)
 - Ageing (Vincenzo Atella, University of Rome Tor Vergata)
 - Global Warming (Carlo Giupponi, VIU and Ca' Foscari University of Venice)
- 14:00 - 16:00: CV writing and Collegial Feedback (Joeri Wielandts and Stefan Wellens, KU Leuven)
- 17:00 – 18:30: Team-time

Friday, September 22, 2017

Closing day (Pol Ghesquière & Danny Wildemeersch, KU Leuven)

- 09:30 – 12:30: Pecha Kucha presentation of assignment by every team and feedback (based on the principles learned on Thursday)
- 14:00 – 16:00: Closing remarks



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