

Intensive training in futures literacy for Deep Demonstration leaders

Empower others
to question and to re-think
to shape tomorrow.¹

EIT Climate KIC Deep Demonstrations are multi-dimensional, multi-stakeholder processes which are situated in complexity and mobilized toward transformation. Leadership teams from the Deep Demonstrations attended a Futures Literacy training led by Hanze University of Applied Sciences.

The leading Futures Literacy training program in Europe is arguably the one offered by the UNESCO Chair of Futures Literacy at Hanze University of Applied Sciences (HUAS) in The Netherlands. This UNESCO Chair team brings leading-edge pedagogical practices to the teaching of Futures Literacy through a combination of advanced conceptual knowledge and action-learning. These expert trainers, as part of the FLxDeep consortium, customized an intensive futures literacy training program for 20 EIT Climate KIC Deep Demonstration Leaders. Due to COVID-19, the program was delivered via six online sessions in 2020.

Purpose

The objective of the training was to teach concepts and skills needed to design and facilitate Futures Literacy Labs. The expert trainers have high familiarity with this workshop format, and have worked closely with UNESCO to lead several of them around the world. Because a lab's goal is to introduce the new skill called *futures literacy*, it is not enough to follow the steps without knowing the key concepts and design principles behind those steps.

The Hanze futures literacy team has experience accompanying learners on a challenging voyage of discovery and knowledge creation, and EIT Climate KIC is a perfect partner to cultivate and expand the capacity to use futures literacy as an innovation tool for future projects. In three intense modules the participating EIT Climate KIC staff experienced a full Futures Literacy Lab on the Future of Collective Action, dove into the theoretical framework of futures literacy described in *Transforming the Future* (Miller, ed., 2018), and applied the skill by designing and facilitating a Futures Literacy Lab themselves.

Expected benefits

The overall hoped for outcome of this training was to enable greater integration of futures literacy capability building processes into the Deep Demonstrations program.

Along these lines, the intensive training launched four significant outcome streams for EIT Climate KIC:

¹ This haiku was written by a training participant during a creative reflection exercise.

1. EIT Climate KIC staff and their local partners learned the theories and practices of Futures Literacy, equipping them to design and implement Futures Literacy processes when enacting the Deep Demonstration method with Challenge Owners and EIT Climate KIC partners.
2. It started a 'train the trainer' cycle. The attending staff are now prepared to train others within Deep Demonstrations program, across the KIC and beyond, so that an increasing number of people are familiar with futures literacy and are able to apply it in their daily innovation work.
3. It helps position EIT Climate KIC as thought leaders in the advancement of futures literacy, a key skill for the 21st century. From this leadership position, it is able to foster enabling environments for their mission to address the climate emergency through transformative innovation.
4. The people who attended learned skills for reflecting on their own futures literacy learning journey, their own futures literacy skills, and their new sense of agency. This reflectivity, when discussed with others who are learning the capability can lead to the formation of a community of practice across EIT Climate KIC.

What participants said after the training

"I am able to think much more creatively, to embrace complexity by seeing of these diversity of futures to see that future and present are very interlinked."

"I now see opportunities in uncertainty. You can be proactive; it is not a wave that is coming over."

"There are more than just probable and desirable futures. I notice it in my decision making. The question is: how do we bring it forward?"

"Futures literacy is a great tool to imagine and get out of this passive mode that people feel. Not only imagining for your self but as a collective. The sense that I am not alone and we can shape something together. It is very exciting!"

Advancing futures literacy in EIT Climate KIC

This training focused on key actors in the Deep Demonstrations program. It occurred in parallel to several other actions to introduce futures literacy into the program. It is clear from the feedback of the students that the capability of futures literacy is synergetic with the ambition to enable system-level transformations to address climate change. As futures literacy spreads beyond the Deep Demonstration into the other programs of EIT Climate KIC, more trainings like this one could prove valuable.

About Hanze University of Applied Sciences

Hanze University of Applied Sciences is a highly entrepreneurial institution that works in close collaboration with professionals, industry and society. The main focus of the university has always been the workplace and how to ensure that students are capable of being innovative and creative. The university champions change agency: the ability of professionals to set transition in motion and to guide transformational processes. Futures Literacy is a strong component of this proposition and is currently being integrated into several Masters programs.