
How to learn

The way participants learn in transdisciplinary education is through, for example, experimentation, sharing ideas, practical workshops, personal reflections, and group discussions. Students and other participants learn and develop skills, attitudes, and competences that will help them face the complex challenges of society and life later on. Instead of another course where students learn a particular set of theories, transdisciplinary education is a place for students and other participants to develop crucial learning competences for the future.

Learn through Collaboration

The learning is focused on wicked problems, in which a learning team is collaborating to act upon the problem. In that sense, a major part of the learning is collaborating to find an outcome of the wicked problem. Thus, the focus is mainly on researching, acting, and reflecting. To solve a problem, we come to three phases:

- Explore the problem
- Define the problem
- Address the problem

This process will be repeated in an iterative way to come closer to a possible outcome (praktijkgids transdisciplinair leren). Through the process, participants learn about the problem, the necessary knowledge to solve the problem, and the different perspectives from multiple participants on the problem.

Formal Learning

There is also space for formal learning (De Kleine Aarde, Global justice etc.) in which participants are trained in certain skills or gain knowledge from experts. Possibilities on these learning activities are workshops about wicked problems, system thinking, future thinking, or stakeholder mapping. Additionally, reflection sessions should be implemented regularly. Activities such as visits to certain companies or sites that are related to the wicked problem both create a connection between the participants and give an insight into the wicked problem. A collaboration of different universities created a toolbox for teachers with multiple learning activities connected to the Inner Development Goals.

Intense Learning Activities

Literature shows that especially at the beginning of the course intensive learning activities, such as boot camps or field trips, are crucial to create a foundation to learn, work, and research collaboratively in a safe and equal environment (Fam et al., 2018).

Transformative Learning

There is often spoken about transformative learning to mark how learning looks like and what it delivers (Pennington et al., 2013). Transformative learning is a process in which learners are going through a transformation that provides an irreversible change of perspective (Mezirow, 2003).