

CASEBOOK OF IDG IMPLEMENTATION INTO HIGHER EDUCATION

Transition Makers Toolbox: Implementing the Inner Development Goals in Higher Education

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Abstract

The Transition Makers Toolbox represents a pivotal development in integrating the Inner Development Goals (IDGs) into higher education. This paper explores the Toolbox's creation, aimed at addressing the growing demand for educational frameworks that incorporate holistic student development beyond traditional academic outcomes. By facilitating educators' engagement with the IDGs through practical tools including learning outcomes, activities and assessment methods, the Toolbox has catalysed significant curricular innovations. It serves not only as a resource for embedding the IDGs into courses, but also as a hub for ongoing teacher development and curriculum innovation. Challenges encountered in implementing constructive alignment, especially assessment design, underscore the complexities of this integration. Despite these hurdles, the Toolbox exemplifies an effective, step-by-step approach to curriculum enhancement, offering insights and strategies for educators seeking to enrich their teaching with the IDGs. The Transition Makers Toolbox is developed for pioneering educational transformation, impacting both curriculum development and teacher empowerment.

Keywords/key phrases: Inner Development Goals (IDG), higher education, transition making, sustainability education, affective learning, constructive alignment

1. Aims and Objectives

Our world is at a critical juncture, facing unprecedented challenges ranging from climate change and biodiversity loss to social inequality and economic instability. These challenges call for creative solutions and a new breed of leaders who can think and act beyond conventional paradigms, demonstrating wise decision-making skills. This new leadership emphasizes a holistic, integrative approach that transcends traditional leadership models, which are characterized by top-down hierarchical structures, focus on short term results and efficiency, with an emphasis on control and certainty. New leadership advocates for leaders characterized by their ability to foster systemic change, navigate uncertainty, and inspire collective action towards a more equitable and sustainable future. This requires a deep understanding of the interconnectedness of social, economic, and environmental systems and is rooted in both external knowledge and internal growth (Shove et al., 2007; Bowen et al., 2017; Castro et al., 2021; Ives et al., 2023).

This new leadership paradigm underscores the importance of inner development alongside professional skills. Leaders are encouraged to cultivate self-awareness, emotional intelligence, and resilience, enabling them to lead with integrity and compassion (Goleman, 1998). This approach was already introduced at the end of the last century, however, is often still lacking nowadays. This persisting need for new leadership led to the development of the Inner Development Goals (IDGs), which emphasize personal qualities such as empathy, resilience, and ethical reasoning (Ives et al., 2023; Pöllänen et al., 2023; Wamsler et al., 2022).

The IDGs were recently developed by a Swedish non-governmental organization in collaboration with an international group of renowned researchers, experts, and practitioners in the fields of leadership development and sustainability. This comprehensive and explicit framework comprises 23 skills and attitudes distributed across five distinct dimensions: Being (relationship to self), Thinking (cognitive skills), Relating (caring for others and the world), Collaborating (social skills), and Acting (driving change) (Inner Development Goals, n.d.). This framework is quickly gaining worldwide acceptance as it addresses the comprehensive aspects of inner development crucial for individuals navigating the challenges of the modern world.

Higher education institutions (HEIs) deliver our future leaders and therefore have a pivotal role to in equipping students with the tools needed to think beyond conventional paradigms and to address complex global challenges (Brennan et al., 2008; Barnett, 2012). This calls for a reimagined purpose of higher education, one that equally prioritizes the cultivation of values and attitudes alongside academic and professional competencies. Bridging this gap necessitates a paradigm shift in educational practices and curricula, moving towards a more integrated approach that values inner development as fundamental to the formation of well-rounded, ethically conscious individuals prepared to contribute positively to society.

The current landscape of higher education predominantly focuses on the acquisition of knowledge and academic skills such as writing, presenting and research skills. Equally crucial aspects of values and attitudes – such as integrity, perspective skills, connectedness, mobilization skills and perseverance – are often overlooked (Cobo, 2013; Jardim et al., 2017). This discrepancy was already underscored almost two decades ago, emphasizing the need for a

more holistic educational approach that integrates personal and professional development (Cardno, 2005; Mahmoudi et al., 2012).

The HEIs, educational programs and teachers that do want to implement the IDGs – or equal competencies based on comparable frameworks – in their education, are struggling with how to integrate this in curricula. Moreover, many teachers are currently underprepared for this expansive role. The traditional focus of higher education on imparting knowledge and skills has not adequately equipped educators to facilitate the holistic development of students, encompassing values, attitudes, and inner growth (Britzman, 2000; Nies, 2011; Zhu et al., 2013).

Therefore, we define the following hurdles in implementing the IDGs in higher education curricula:

1. From a perspective of higher education, learning activities and good practices are missing, or scarce. The constructive alignment fundament for softer skills requires a different approach compared to theoretical and knowledge-based education. For example, developing empathy may require reflective journaling, coaching dialogues, or experiential learning, which differ significantly from conventional lectures or exams (Biggs & Tang, 2011).
2. There is misconception that soft skills such as empathy, perspective-taking, or self-awareness are innate traits rather than skills that can be trained or developed. In fact, a growing body of research shows that these capacities are indeed teachable and improvable through deliberate practice, reflective engagement, and social interaction (McNaughton, 2016; Morgan et al., 2021).
3. Most teachers in higher education are not equipped for this education, since it is not yet included in teachers' professional development trajectories. As a result, they may lack the competencies, tools, and confidence to foster inner development competently in their classrooms (Cardno, 2005; Mahmoudi et al., 2012).
4. Teachers who are enthusiastic about integrating the IDGs into their curricula often struggle to find peers with the same level of interest. Without formal communities of practice or institutional incentives, they lack peer support and shared resources, which are critical for sustaining innovation in pedagogy. This isolation can reduce motivation and slow the spread of good practices across departments or institutions (Warhurst, 2006).

Our approach to tackling these problems starts with focus on transition-making education. Transition-making education represents a comprehensive interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary approach that transcends traditional academic boundaries, emphasizing the development of holistic, adaptive, and resilient capabilities. Transition-making refers to the process of fostering significant, systemic change through education, research, and community engagement to address global challenges. In our definition, the purpose of transition-making education is to prepare students to take a role in the fast-changing society, contributing to tackling the growing challenges our planet faces. Therefore, it is a collective term for different didactic concepts, such as community-engaged learning, impact learning, community service learning and challenge-based learning. All these concepts aim to equip individuals — students, educators,

and the wider community — with the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values needed to contribute to a sustainable future (Van den Beemt et al., 2023; Gallagher et al., 2023). Furthermore, transition-making education refers to education that integrates inner development within traditional academic learning (Cardno, 2005; Mahmoudi et al., 2012). The IDGs can be integrated both ways: by including transition-making education in courses as didactic concepts, and by including learning outcomes and related activities as parts of a course. Given the status of higher education, including the capabilities of the overstrained teacher body, teachers need to be facilitated in incorporating the IDGs into their education in an easily approachable, user-friendly manner. This resulted in an open-source web-based Toolbox – the Transition Makers Toolbox - consisting of three parts: educational materials, inspiring good practices, and a community of Transition Makers.

With this approach, we aim for two results:

1. Deliver evidence-informed teaching materials as a start of integrating the IDGs into the curricula.
2. Create a growing community of teachers equipped to change the curricula.

2. Context

2.1. The Development of the Transition Makers Toolbox

To effectively incorporate inner development into higher education, it is crucial to employ a structured didactic framework.

We created a new framework by combining two key elements. The first element involves the valuable IDG framework, serving as a foundation for teaching our students the skills and attitudes essential for making meaningful contributions to future society.

We juxtaposed this framework against established benchmarks employed in transition-making education (Trilling et al., 2012; Bourn, 2018; UNESCO, 2017) and the results of stakeholder meetings discussing the skills students should acquire to make meaningful societal contributions during their education. Based on these findings, the IDG framework indeed can be used for our educational purposes. A missed 'skill' was resilience. In higher education nowadays, this is an important student trade related to student well-being. Therefore, in our setting, the IDG framework was enriched by adding resilience to the existing skill "perseverance" into "perseverance and resilience".

Our purpose was to make a high-quality evidence-informed Toolbox that is suitable for education. Therefore, we intertwined the second element of the framework with one of the most essential educational principles: constructive alignment (Biggs, 1996). Constructive alignment ensures that learning objectives, teaching methods, and assessment strategies are seamlessly connected, significantly influencing the overall quality of education. While this alignment is crucial for all educational contexts, it poses a particular challenge in education with a focus on transitions. This difficulty arises because teachers often find it challenging to formulate clear learning outcomes on skills and attitudes, such as complexity awareness or empathy, and struggle with assessing them. Assessing the Inner Development Goals requires a fresh perspective on assessment that extends beyond merely evaluating if students achieved cognitive

learning outcomes, such as the reproduction of knowledge. Besides, there is a common perception that so-called “soft skills” are challenging to assess, and educators may feel unequipped or uncertain about evaluating these aspects of student development. In this context, it is important to view assessment in a broader sense. Instead of limiting its interpretation, the intention is to recognize that assessment serves various objectives or purposes. Assessment is not just a singular process but rather encompasses multiple goals and functions. It implies a need to understand and acknowledge the diverse roles that assessment can play, indicating that it goes beyond a narrow or restrictive understanding. The broader interpretation could involve considering assessment as a tool for learning, self-directed progress, and overall evaluation of achievement (Yan, 2020).

3. Methods

3.1. Approach to Creating the Transition Makers Toolbox

3.1.1. Converting the Inner Development Goals into Intended Learning Outcomes

The Transition Makers Toolbox is designed in a collaboration between education professionals in the Netherlands (see author affiliations), the so-called Toolbox team. The tools within the Toolbox are created in co-creation with teachers from a growing body of higher education institutes in the Netherlands. These teachers bring their own education practice to the co-creation sessions. That way existing education is re-designed within the Toolbox in order to make the education available for other teachers to use in their own educational context.

The initial building block involved converting the relatively abstract concepts of the Inner Development Goals into clearly defined intended learning outcomes (ILOs) appropriate for higher education. ILOs are crucial for education because they provide direction, focus, and a framework for designing, delivering, and evaluating educational experiences (Biggs et al, 2011). They serve as a starting point by setting clear expectations and enabling effective planning and execution of the teaching and learning process (Hattie et al, 2007). These outcomes become the guiding principles for the entire educational process.

We achieved this through the application of Bloom’s taxonomy (Bloom et al., 1956; Krathwohl et al., 1964; Anderson et al., 2001). Utilizing this taxonomy, learning outcomes can be classified into three domains, each comprising different levels. The cognitive domain pertains to the capacity to absorb and apply information meaningfully. The psychomotor domain involves motor skills and coordination, while the affective domain encompasses attitudes and emotions linked to the learning process. This systematic categorization facilitates a comprehensive mapping of diverse learning objectives, forming a complete didactic model. Furthermore, being an internationally recognized model, it employs a refined language, associating verbs with each domain and level, indicating the specific actions a student must demonstrate to attain the corresponding proficiency level.

In addition to clearly specifying what is expected of students and at what level, ILOs also play a crucial role in the implementation of the IDGs in education. Once learning objectives are formulated for the IDGs, they can be included in students’ course catalogues and then become an integral part of both individual courses and the broader curriculum.

3.1.2. Designing the Transitions Makers Toolbox

After formulating the ILOs, the next step was developing educational materials to help achieve and assess these outcomes. However, the developed educational material alone is not sufficient to integrate them into the curriculum. Teachers play a crucial role in this regard. Therefore, we chose to create a Transition Makers Toolbox in collaboration with teachers. The Transition Makers Toolbox is an open-source web application. It consists of three parts:

1. Tools, consisting of educational materials to use during learning activities and assessment;
2. Inspiring practices;
3. A community of Transition Makers. The Transition Makers Toolbox is made by teachers, for teachers.

All tools are developed in co-creation with teachers and all the teachers who have contributed to the Toolbox can be found on the community page as so-called Transition Makers. Furthermore, the body of inspiring practices is intended to grow with many more examples of implementation of the tools from the Toolbox in practice in various educational settings.

All content of the Transition Makers Toolbox is openly available, for teachers worldwide to have access to the educational material and can use this for their education. The material is published under a Creative Commons license.

3.1.3. Designing the Tools

In the design of the educational materials – the tools – we used constructive alignment as the fundament of all tools. Constructive alignment is a fundamental principle of education that seeks to create a seamless connection between what students are expected to learn, how they are taught, and how their understanding is assessed (Biggs et al., 2011). This alignment enhances the clarity of educational goals, promotes meaningful learning experiences, and facilitates a more effective and purposeful educational process, therefore significantly impacting the overall quality of education.

Next to constructive alignment, dual coding was an important design choice. Dual coding theory, introduced by Paivio (1971), suggests that combining verbal and visual information enhances learning and retention. In the context of the Toolbox, this principle underscores the integration of textual and visual elements in educational tools to cater to diverse learning preferences, promoting a more comprehensive understanding of the tools for a great diversity of teachers who will use the Toolbox.

The third design aspect was a five-step approach to designing the learning activities. By designing all tools in a similar format, the tools are recognizable and remain clear and concise.

The combination of constructive alignment, dual coding and the five-step approach led to a user-friendly format of the tools. On top of that, each tool can be downloaded in PDF format to use offline in an educational setting.

3.2. Co-creating the Tools

The tools were created in co-creation sessions with teachers for two reasons. First, a collaborative approach can contribute significantly to diminishing the so-called “Not-Invented-Here” syndrome among teachers (Burcharth et al., 2014). Co-creation enhances a sense of ownership over the educational materials or methods being developed. This involvement diminishes the perception that ideas need to be created exclusively within their classrooms or departments. In addition, when teachers collaborate with colleagues, they gain exposure to different ideas, methods, and viewpoints which demonstrate the value of incorporating diverse insights. Moreover, co-creation fosters a culture of trust and collaboration among teachers. As they work together to develop educational content, trust in the collective expertise grows. This trust diminishes the hesitancy to adopt external ideas.

The second rationale for embracing co-creation lies in the pivotal role that teachers play in the integration of the IDGs into curricula. Empowering teachers to contribute their educational materials and activities, tailored to address specific facets of inner development, enhances the likelihood of practical implementation in their educational practices. This approach acknowledges the unique expertise and insights of teachers, allowing them to align the content closely with the specific needs and educational context of their students. As a result, the co-created educational materials are more likely to resonate with teachers, fostering a sense of ownership and increasing the probability of effective utilization within a curriculum. This collaborative and personalized approach acknowledges the teacher's role as an active participant in the educational process, fostering a sense of commitment to the integration of the IDGs into the curriculum.

In the year preceding the launch of the Transition Makers Toolbox, 24 teachers from within seven Dutch higher education institutes participated in one of three series of two co-creation sessions. The teachers came from different disciplines – from humanities to natural sciences, and from social to life sciences. Moreover, the teachers came from both universities and universities of applied sciences. Beforehand, teachers were asked to bring an educational activity that addresses an aspect of inner development. During the first session, teachers were asked to explore the IDGs and select an IDG-learning outcome they want the students to achieve through the educational activity. The next step was describing and drawing the essence of the activity, after which the five steps of the learning activity were designed in text and drawings. Teachers worked together in groups of 3 to 4 and there were sharing loops and feedback loops included in this first design session.

Between the first and second sessions, teachers sent a preliminary version of the tool to the peer teachers of their small group and incorporated each other's feedback before sending it to the Toolbox team. The Toolbox team – the authors of this paper – is an expert team experienced in designing inter- and transdisciplinary education and Toolbox design and communication. They also provided feedback and tips to improve the tool before the second session.

In the second co-creation session, teachers had the opportunity to finalize their tools. In many cases, the design of the assessment needed extra attention. The second session also included the possibility to test-run the tool. In that case, one of the teachers tested the tool of another Maker, based only on the information from the Toolbox format. The rest of the teacher group and other

invited participants roleplayed as students. This provided the Maker with valuable feedback for finetuning their instructions for the tool.

After the second co-creation session, the Toolbox team made the final edits to the tools, to make sure the tools are consistent, and adhere to the Toolbox format. This is done in close communication with the Maker, who has the final say before publishing the tool.

3.3. Community of Practice

As said, the tools in the Toolbox are only one part of the Transition Makers Toolbox. The Transition Makers Toolbox includes educational material, inspiring practices, and a community of Transition Makers. We aim to have a growing lively community of teachers who are interested in teaching their students to equip themselves to internalize the greater good of the whole in their professional future. Moreover, we aim to create a community of practice that will learn with and from each other how to teach this. Therefore, the web application includes a community page with all the Makers and a page with a growing number of examples of practical applications of the tools in higher education.

To promote the use amongst teachers, we have developed a workshop called 'Unlock the Potential of the Transition Makers Toolbox'. To encourage adoption among teachers, we have designed a workshop titled 'Unlocking the Potential of the Transition Makers Toolbox.' This workshop aims to provide educators with practical insights and hands-on experience in effectively utilizing the Transition Makers Toolbox in their teaching practices. Through interactive sessions, teachers will gain a comprehensive understanding of the Toolbox's features and learn how to integrate it seamlessly into their educational approaches. This initiative not only facilitates familiarity with the Toolbox but also empowers teachers to maximize its potential for enhancing their learning experiences. This workshop has been given throughout the Netherlands and online for an international context. Therefore, we also started an IDG Dutch Higher Education Hub, as a LinkedIn community, where the makers and anyone interested can share experiences using the Toolbox, as well as other information about transition-making or inner development goals in higher education. Next to the LinkedIn community, the IDG Dutch Higher Education Hub organizes community activities.

4. Results

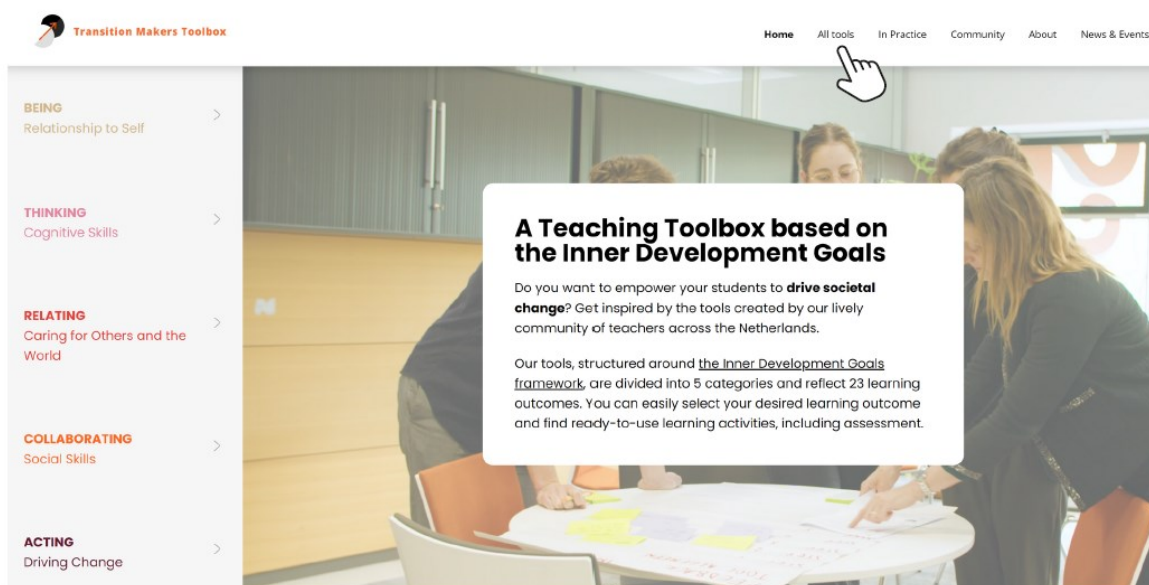
The Transition Makers Toolbox is openly available since June 2023 through the URL <https://transitionmakers.nl>. On the left of the landing page (Figure 1), the visitor will find the five dimensions of the Inner Development Goals, which contain the tools. Figure 2 shows a web capture of the tool overview page with the IDGs and their corresponding intended learning outcomes, including links to the tools related to that IDG. The next web capture is an example of the learning activity within the tool titled 'Inviting non-human stakeholders' related to the Inner Development Goal 'Empathy and Compassion' (Figure 3). Figure 4 is a web capture of the community page featuring pictures of each Maker. Accompanying these photographs are brief biographies, including their motivation for contributing to a specific IDG. In Table 1 the Toolbox and use of the Toolbox are expressed in numbers.

TABLE 1. THE TRANSITION MAKERS TOOLBOX IN NUMBERS

What	Number	Description
Tools	24	A tool is a package of educational materials consisting of an IDG-ILO related activities, and corresponding assessment method.
Co-creation session	6	In two-part co-creation sessions, educators work together to collaboratively develop a tool.
Transition Makers	24	Teachers who have developed a tool in co-creation
Try-out sessions of tools	5	During a try-out session, a teacher tests a tool from another maker, based solely on the information provided in the Toolbox format. All others participate as students. This process offered the maker valuable feedback for fine-tuning the description of the tool.
Workshop “Unlock the Potential of the Toolbox for Your Education”	7	This workshop aims to provide educators with practical insights and hands-on experience in effectively utilizing the Transition Makers Toolbox in their teaching practices.
Members of the IDG Dutch Higher Education Hub	275	Within this community, makers and individuals interested in Inner Development Goals (IDGs) in higher education can exchange their experiences utilizing the Toolbox, along with sharing other pertinent information related to transition making or inner development goals within the higher education context.
Unique visitors to the Transition Makers Toolbox website	56,617 page views / 43,273 unique page views	Since its launch in June 2023, to Sept 2024, the Toolbox has been accessed from every continent. However, the majority of its visitors are situated in northern and western Europe and North America.
Downloads of educational materials	2,718	Within the Toolbox, users have the option to download entire tools as a PDF file, or assessment formats only.

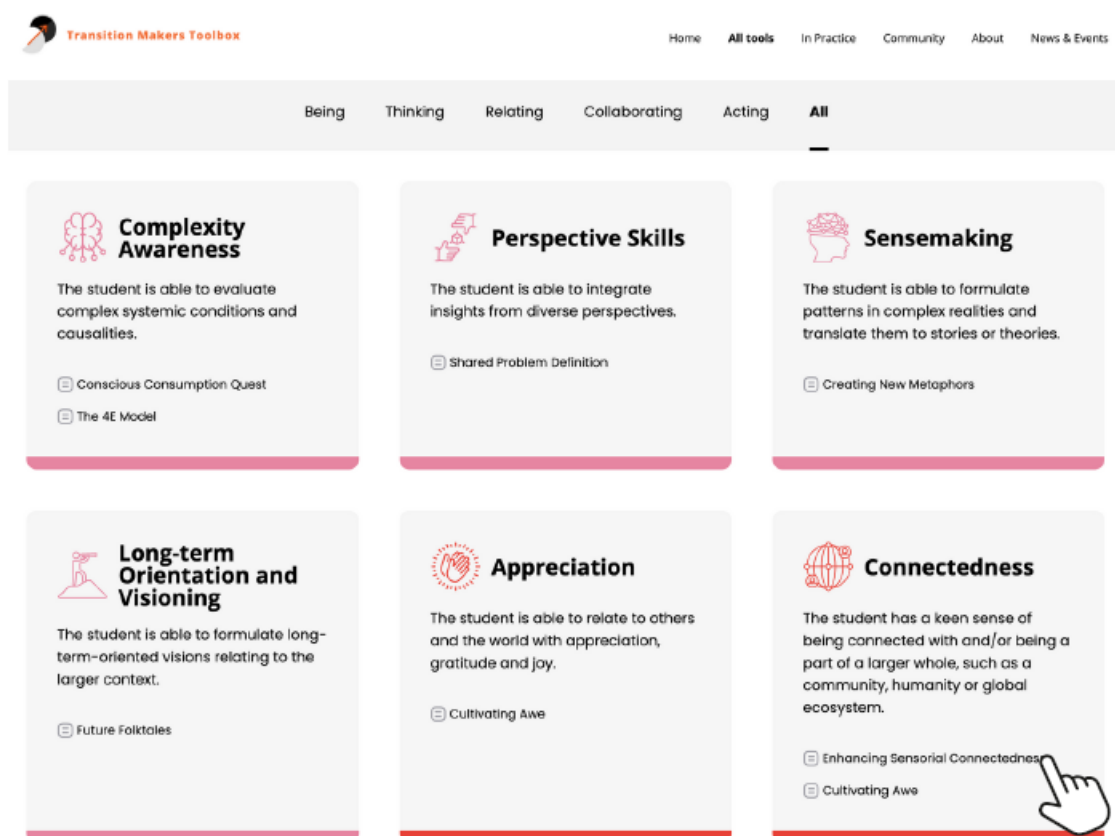
Source: own compilation/calculations

FIGURE 1. SCREENSHOT OF THE LANDING PAGE: [HOME - TRANSITION MAKERS TOOLBOX](#)



Source: transitionmakers.nl 2024

FIGURE 2. TOOL OVERVIEW PAGE: [ALL TOOLS - TRANSITION MAKERS TOOLBOX](#)



Source: transitionmakers.nl 2024

FIGURE 3: LEARNING ACTIVITY 'INVITING NON-HUMAN STAKEHOLDERS': [INVITING NON-HUMAN STAKEHOLDERS - TRANSITION MAKERS TOOLBOX](#)



Inviting Non-Human Stakeholders

Including more-than-human perspectives in a project

RELATING | Empathy and Compassion

Overview | **Learning Activity** | Assessment | Key Advice | References

This activity invites students to embody non-human perspectives when working on a case or project.

1. Setting the Scene 10 mins

Introduce the case to the students, using elements of storytelling.

Read the story of the case and invite the students to listen with their senses: "What do you hear, see, smell, taste and feel?"

End the story with a future-oriented question: "What future do you envision for this place?"

Tip: see [sample cases and tips for storytelling](#)

2. Presenting Non-Human Perspectives 10 mins

Start by presenting several cards to the students, each representing a different non-human character or entity relevant to the case. Include characters and entities with different time perspectives, e.g., a bird, a tree, a river or a mountain.

Then, invite the students to select one of the 'characters' by choosing a card and reading the description of the character's contributions to the local ecosystems and culture, as well as their needs and wants, on the back of the card.

Tip: see [tips on how to create example cards](#)

3. Embodying Non-Human Perspectives 20 mins

Give the students some time in silence to imagine themselves "in the role" of their chosen character. Encourage them to focus on sensory aspects, such as how the chosen character feels, what they notice, what they smell or taste and how they move.

Next, ask the students to reflect individually on their character by jotting down descriptive words, creating drawings or engaging in other forms of expression.

Tip: you can assist the students in this process by providing [guiding questions](#)

4. Embodying your character 30 mins

Form groups of 3 students and provide them with the following instructions:

- Individually, take a look at your free writing or drawings from the previous step. Write down an opening question that will help you engage in a conversation with your chosen character.
- Once everyone is ready, take turns embodying your characters. When a student is ready, the other students in the group will ask the opening question and continue the conversation by asking follow-up questions related to the character's emotions and experiences. Encourage students to connect the conversation to the chosen case.

Encourage students to address each other as their characters instead of their names.

Please note: as part of assessment or learning, students answer [reflective questions](#) in Step 4 or 5.

5. Bringing Perspectives Together 20 mins

Invite the student groups to share the insights they gained from embodying a non-human perspective.

Considering the totality of the perspectives, ask students to write one sentence or statement collectively to summarise their wish for the future of the given case.

Please note: as part of assessment or learning, students answer [reflective questions](#) in Step 4 or 5.

Related Tools

- Deep Listening
- Purposeful Storytelling
- The Power of Storytelling

[In Share your experiences](#)

[Download PDF](#)

Meet the Makers

This tool allows students to empathically engage with non-human beings and entities. To embody a different perspective, students get to work in a creative manner, using imagination.

— [Johanna van Vliet](#)

Source: transitionmakers.nl 2024

FIGURE 4: COMMUNITY PAGE: [COMMUNITY - TRANSITION MAKERS TOOLBOX](#)

Meet the Makers

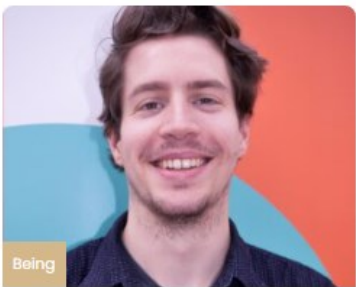
Connect with our lively community of practice with teachers and educational developers across 7 higher education institutions in the Netherlands and discover how you can become part of the IDG Dutch Higher Education Hub.

Being
Thinking
Relating
Collaborating
Acting
All



Rianne van Lambalgen
Assistant Professor at the department Philosophy and Religious Studies and Programme leader of the Liberal Arts and Sciences (LAS) programme Utrecht University

In my research, I combine my expertise in psychology, artificial intelligence, and educational science by investigating how digital teaching methods can support students' learning through interdisciplinary research. In addition, I teach in the interdisciplinary core curriculum of LAS and the humanities university teaching qualification.



Caspar Schoevaars
Policy adviser Utrecht University

Whilst creating Exchanging Perspectives, I worked for the Centre for Unusual Collaborations and as an integration expert for the Da Vinci Master course. Now, I work in the Interdisciplinary Education programme at Utrecht University. Exchanging Perspectives introduces students to new ways of working that open their attitudes to approaches that are not their own.



Michèle Gerbrands
Senior advisor and educator UMC Utrecht

In the past decade, I focused on innovating the Dutch higher education landscape based on the belief that students need more than disciplinary knowledge to become the future problem solvers the world needs. Complex problems require adaptability, as a situation can change rapidly or unexpectedly. Creative thinking helps students remain flexible and adaptable in their approach.

Source: transitionmakers.nl 2024

5. Discussion

The development and deployment of the Transition Makers Toolbox have garnered significant attention and reinforced our hypothesis regarding the heightened interest and recognized need for integrating the IDGs into higher education curricula.

The active involvement of numerous educators, and the number of people worldwide who have visited the Toolbox and downloaded educational materials, suggests a promising avenue for further integration efforts of the IDGs in higher education curricula based on learning outcome-oriented activities with assessments (Biggs, 1996). This engagement not only facilitates the initial steps towards curriculum modification but also underscores the potential of the Toolbox as a hub for ongoing teacher development and curriculum innovation.

Co-creation played a central role in the development of the tools. The collaboration of educators from diverse higher education institutes exposed participants to diverse methodologies—such

as systems thinking workshops, storytelling techniques, and mindfulness-based reflective exercises—which expanded their teaching repertoire and prompted a shift from traditional lecture formats to more experiential, student-centered approaches. This mutual learning process contributed to the development of a collective knowledge base, fostering a national community of educators who were not only open to external ideas but actively engaged in continuous learning from and with each other (Warhurst, 2006). This contributed to an overall enhancement of the dynamism and adaptability of their teaching methods.

Despite these successes, significant challenges remain—particularly in aligning IDG development with formal assessment systems. Constructive alignment, the process of ensuring coherence between learning outcomes, teaching methods, and assessments, becomes more complex when applied to soft skills such as resilience, compassion, and ethical reflection (Biggs & Tang, 2011, Yan 2020). For instance, educators questioned how to assess a student’s growth in empathy without relying on superficial self-reports or overly abstract rubrics. These difficulties are compounded by institutional requirements for standardized, measurable outcomes, which rarely accommodate nuanced forms of personal development.

The underlying assumption of the IDGs is that these qualities can be developed, and therefore progress must be observable and ideally measurable (McNaughton, 2016; Morgan et al., 2021). To support this, the co-creation process emphasized the development of adaptable assessment strategies. These included student-designed rubrics, narrative evaluations, and structured self-reflection assignments. However, many participants still needed expert support to implement constructive alignment effectively. Educational experts proved essential in helping teams clarify learning goals and design assessments that balanced institutional accountability with the holistic intentions of the IDGs.

Further research can be directed to the use of the Transition Maker Toolbox and its impact on integrating IDGs into higher education. Moreover, future research could explore how and in what form the Transition Makers Toolbox aligns with the principles of experiential education, investigating the pedagogical positioning of the Toolbox and informing its further development to enhance its effectiveness as a tool for inner development in higher education settings.

6. Conclusion

The integration of the Inner Development Goals into higher education presents considerable challenges, primarily due to the inherent difficulties in designing curriculum and assessment methods that effectively capture soft outcome measures. Nevertheless, the Transition Makers Toolbox exemplifies a practical and stepwise approach to overcoming these hurdles, serving as a beacon of good practice for educators who aim to incorporate the IDGs into their curricula. By providing a structured framework for curriculum development, coupled with the facilitation of professional development through co-creation, the Toolbox paves the way for a more holistic and integrated educational approach that prepares students not only as professionals but as individuals capable of contributing meaningfully to societal transformation. The grassroots approach (starting with the teacher and their teaching practice) of the Toolbox, in combination with the open availability, can be an effective way to shift paradigms.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors report no conflict of interest.

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Data Availability

No dataset is associated with this work. This proceeds within the open access website: <https://transitionmakers.nl/>. Shown data in the manuscript are the anonymous analytics of this website, dated 1 March 2024.

Ethical Statement

The authors confirm that they have obtained the necessary permissions from their respective universities to publish the case studies included in this manuscript.

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