

**KNOWLEDGE 2 ACTION
ONLINE ACADEMY**

**Applying
Design
Thinking
to advancing
SDGs in
South Asia**



ABOUT THE ACADEMY

We welcome applications for a 3-week online academy aiming to contribute to a better understanding of the Sustainable Development goals (SDGs) with the application of design thinking and of the translation of knowledge into action. South Asia's economic dynamism has triggered fast and deep social and ecological transformations, and uneven development across the region. This has often occurred at the cost of environmental degradation, significantly affecting those at the margins of society. The UN Agenda 2030 – Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) represent a globally negotiated agenda to address the global challenges including those related to poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, peace and justice. To understand what sustainable development means and how to contribute to its advancement in the landscape across South Asia, especially in the post pandemic context, is crucial.

Using key concepts from design thinking in combination with peer to peer learning (across contexts and disciplines) will enable converting cutting edge-knowledge pertaining to SDGs into action. The program will involve essential voices from South Asia, of academicians, decision makers, civil society, and importantly, from the grassroots level.

The objective of the online academy is to build skills enabling the participants to contribute to, and take leadership in, the achievement of the SDGs with special focus on climate change, waste management and biodiversity.

The program is offered by the Clusters of Cooperation in the Global South (CLOC) and is sponsored by Swiss Universities Development and Cooperation Network (SUDAC).



The academy spreads over three weeks and is organized in three- hour online contact modules on three days each week (3 hours/day, 3 days/week for 3 weeks) in April 2021. Selected participants will be based in their home location and will be expected to participate over the online platform of zoom and collaborate in mixed groups beyond the 3 hours of contact classes.

Potential outputs and benefits of this program

The program aims to develop the capacities of early career researchers and professionals in learning and applying design thinking principles, skills that enable converting knowledge into action, work with cross-regional & disciplinary teams, appreciate the voices from the field and the complexities of working with multiple stakeholders.

The key takeaways would be:

- Apply design thinking skills to unlock the creative potential to find innovative solutions.
- Develop particular skills to promote SDG practically based on cutting-edge research outputs.
- Understand, analyse and identify, interconnected challenges imbricated in local and global dynamics in South Asia through multiple disciplinary perspectives.
- Appreciate voices from the field regarding a local issue in teams.



- Build a foundation from which to design inter-disciplinary actions to promote SDGs.
- Network with and learn from diverse faculty, learners from several South Asian countries and local SDG actors.

Pedagogy

The pedagogical approach will be interactive with a mix of: course preparation (app. 6h), lecture interaction, panel discussions, interaction with voices from the field, peer to peer learning, skill training, apply design thinking tools to problem solving, coached group work and interaction, development of learning outputs in various forms (blog, pod-cast, docu-film etc). Lecturers and coaches will provide regular feedback on outputs.

Faculty are from renowned universities across South Asia and Switzerland, experienced resource persons (skills), grassroot leaders, founders and entrepreneurs of unique initiatives.

Means and criteria of assessment

Participants will be assessed based on attendance, timely submission of outputs, engagement with the resource persons and their final outputs. On successful attendance and completion of the program they will receive a certificate of completion. Outstanding assignments will be chosen for further collaboration or curation on platforms of CLOC partner institutions.

Eligibility

Master students, early career researchers (PhD & Post-docs) and junior professionals are encouraged to apply. This course is open to students from all subject areas.

Participants from South Asian countries and Switzerland are eligible to apply: Bhutan, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Maldives; Myanmar and Switzerland.

The academy will be held in English, so proficiency in oral and written English is mandatory. Basic computer and internet skills, familiarity and comfort working with online platforms such as Zoom, other collaborative online tools. will be an advantage.

Certification

Participants on completion of the online academy will receive a Certificate of Completion from The University of Applied Sciences and Arts of Western Switzerland (HES-SO.ch) on successful completion of the K2A program.

Fee

The program has no tuition fees and is scholarship-based to the selected participants.

Timeline

Registration and Application Deadline: 1st March 2021
Intimation of Shortlisted Candidates: 12th March 2021
Registration of Selected Candidates: 18th March 2021
Program Start Dates: April 11th 2021
Program end Dates: April 30th 2021

Duration: 3 weeks
(3 hours/day of contact classes, 3 days/week for 3 weeks).

Inaugural and valedictory events will be held at the beginning and end of the program.

Application Details

Applications must include:

- A complete application form.
- A curriculum vitae.
- A letter of motivation.
- A reference letter from the direct supervisor/professor to whom the applicant reports at university/work, recommending the candidate

Women and minorities, and those working in conflict and fragile contexts are especially encouraged to apply.

Applicants will be selected on the basis of their motivation with the aim of an equitable representation of regions and a diversity disciplinary background. Selection will be based on merit and selected candidates will be notified by email.

Please note that incomplete applications will not be accepted.

Application link: bit.ly/K2A-academy

Selected candidates will then be required to register by submitting the following:

A scanned copy of your passport

A no-objection certificate from your current employer/supervisor (if applicable) or a statement on a letterhead granting time to participate in the online academy.

For the detailed agenda: [click here](#).

PARTNERS



For enquiries, please contact:

academy@swissnexindia.org