

University of Earth

Questing for a more comprehensive dream

(Abridged version – omitting illustrations)

Spirit of the Land Foundation

Union of International Associations

http://www.spiritofland.org/SL_unie.html

Challenges and Opportunities

- Designing an “impossible bridge”
- Possession of the whole ?
- Symbolic dimensions

- Pattern of meaningful dreams
- Design challenges
- Initiatives: different ways of knowing

The “Impossible” Bridge

bridging across very great differences

- Women
- Conservative
- Environment
- Old people
- Indigenous thinking
- Secular thinking
- Wealth
- Men
- Liberal
- Industry
- Young people
- Western thinking
- Spiritual thinking
- Poverty

Possession of the Whole?

learning from a ball game

- Gaining possession -- attacking and tackling
- Keeping the ball -- “its mine”!
- Keeping it moving -- “running with the ball”
- Preventing access of others to the ball
- Passing the ball -- to my team only
- Scoring against the others -- making them lose
- What is a good game?

Symbolic Dimensions

- Architecture
 - buildings
 - institutions and management structures
 - knowledge and information
- Image - Dream - Story
- Personal and social dynamics
- Learning pathways and representation
- Honouring traditional patterns

A Pattern of Meaningful Dreams

- A university *about* the Earth and the Land
- A university *for* People of the Land
- A university *of* planet Earth as a whole
- A university *made of* earth
- The Earth *as a* university of life and learning
- An emerging image of *a potential university*
- A *framework for the diversity* of present dreams

Dream Pattern 1:

A university *about* the Earth and the Land

- Academic study of the Earth and the Land
- Resource management
- Healing the Land
- etc
- Models: “Rural university”

Dream Pattern 2:

A university *for* People of the Land

- For those people attached to the land
- For Aboriginal people
- For wilderness people
- For deep ecology people
- etc
- Models: “Ecostery”

Dream Pattern 3:

A university *of* planet Earth as a whole

- Beyond the “international” university model
- Reflecting the diversity of the globe
- Symbolizing the Earth

Dream Pattern 4:

A university *made of* earth

- Constructed using earth
- In a style blending with the earth
- Integrated into the local environment
- Using, and developing, local skills
- etc

Dream Pattern 5:

The Earth *as a* university of life and learning

- The Earth as the curriculum
- Living as learning
- Relating to knowledge embodied in the Earth
- etc

Dream Pattern 6:

An emerging image of a potential university

- University of Earth as an emerging archetype
- Relating to an implicit, potential framework
- Embodying the future through dreaming
- Enriching the present with the future
- Clarifying understanding of a future university
- etc

Dream Pattern 7:

A framework for the diversity of present dreams

- Developing a holistic conceptual framework
- Relating conflicting dreams
- Recognizing mutually irrelevant concerns
- Discovering richer frameworks
- Embodying polarities and paradoxes
- etc

Design Challenges

Building the “impossible” bridge

- Embodying traditional understanding
- Relating incompatible understandings
- Comprehending the architecture of the whole
- Blending science and art
- Wealth and Poverty
- Politics and Personalities
- Perfection and Imperfection
- Working with paradoxes

Design Challenge 1:

Embodying traditional understanding

- Honouring learning from the past
- Embodying living insight
- Creating bridges to alternative perspectives
- Expressing cultural identity

Design Challenge 2:

Relating incompatible understandings

- Recognizing different perspectives
- Facilitating transition to other modes
- Ways of understanding such transitions
 - Dancing between paradigms
 - Tethering for decompression
 - Stepping stones across a river
- Bridges between different languages

Design Challenge 3:

Comprehending the architecture of the whole

- Allowing for future creativity and insight
- Pragmatics of present opportunity
- Relating the incompatible appropriately
- Learning from past architectural exercises

Design Challenge 4:

Science and Art

- Ready answers may be part of the problem
 - Scientific rationality
 - Artistic elegance
- Marrying “Beauty” and the “Beast”
- Involving both hemispheres in a solution
- “Music of the hemispheres”

Design Challenge 5:

Wealth and Poverty

- Building anew with few resources
- Sustaining initiatives with limited resources
- Managing use of funds

Design Challenge 6:

Politics and Personalities

- Conflicts and disagreements are in the dream
- Creation needs the tension of opposites
- Leaders also carry conflicts
- Leaders are also learners
- Leaders in conflict are part of a learning pattern
- Real diversity requires real disagreement
- Design is a power play

Design Challenge 7:

Perfection and Imperfection

- The ideal does not encompass the real
- Need to work with real limitations
 - resources
 - people
 - knowledge
- Harmony
 - of perfection
 - of imperfections

Design Challenge 8:

Working with paradoxes

- Part explaining the whole
- Local vs Global
- Frail connections vs Massive contradictions
- Dancing with paradoxes
- Design as a constraint on future freedom
- Relating antagonistic skills & insights

Different Ways of Knowing

7 complementary initiatives

- Lifestyle initiative
- Healing initiative
- Information initiative
- Arts & culture initiative
- Adventure initiative
- Retreat initiative
- Research & educ. initiat.
- Bush camp experience
- Healing camp
- Songlines and computers
- Artists' camp
- Adventure camp
- Retreat camp
- Research & educ. camp

Initiative 1: Lifestyle

Bush camp experience

- Intentional community
- Eco-tourism facility
- Eco-village
- Alternative lifestyle
- Cultural interaction
- Eco-tourism
- Semi-permanent places
- Developing friendships
- Keeping tradition alive
- Awareness of the land
- Learning western ways

Initiative 2: Healing

Healing camp

- Desert sanatorium
- Alternative therapies
- Counselling
- 'Dry-out' centre
- Hospice function
- Camphill community
- Desert healing centre
- Traditional remedies
- Counselling
- 'Dry out' centre
- Terminally ill
- Sickness of spirit

Initiative 3: Information

Songlines and computers

- Studying oral culture
- Adapting interfaces
- Representing knowledge
- Visualization techniques
- Rural networking
- Tradition onto CD & Web
- Adapting game technology
- New ways of learning
- Kinship patterns on CD
- Recording song & dance
- Developing insight
- Artistic possibilities

Initiative 4: Art, design & culture

Artists' camp

- Encourage art & culture
- Artist colony model
- Desert architecture
- Art in context
- Art and the land
- Art and knowing
- Art as part of life process
- Sharing approaches
- Art and kinship
- Continuous creation
- Learning to listen

Initiative 5: Adventure

Adventure camp

- Eco-camping tours
- Eco-trekking
- Graded experiences
- Management education
- Survival trails
- Vision quests
- Survival together
- Respect for sacredness
- Reading the land
- Creating survival songlines
- Listening to the land

Initiative 6: Retreat

Retreat camp

- Desert retreat centre
- Contemplation centre
- Secular retreat
- Shared or isolated
- Personal growth
- Place for peace & quiet
- Time alone
- Spiritual renewal
- Different practices
- Honouring the land
- Celebrating kinship

Initiative 7: Research & education

Research & education camp

- Relationship to the land
- Ways of knowing
- Different paradigms
- Resource management
- Strategic thinking
- Mytho-poetic dimensions
- Cultural boundaries
- Ways of knowing the land
- Indigenous knowledge
- Ethno-botany studies
- Earth architecture
- Cosmology and mythology
- Low-resource development.
- Exploring imaginal reality
- Language teaching

Implementation Phases

- Develop imaginative presentations
- Interact with potential partners
- Build in partner insights and modalities
- Develop multi-thread feasibility study
- Initiate design competitions
- Develop and test initiative programs
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Phase 1: Imaginative presentations

- Develop a variety of presentations
- Make available on website
- Provide for feedback
- Build imaginative appreciation

Phase 2: Partnership building

- Interact with potential partners
- Incorporate partner concerns
- Distinguish variety of partners
- Develop modes of partnership
- Develop modes of sponsorship

Phase 3: Incorporate diversity

- Build in partner insights and modalities
- Protect socio-cultural diversity
 - complementarity
 - incompatibility

Phase 4: Feasibility study

- Develop multi-thread feasibility study
- Build in complementary resource structure

Phase 5: Design competitions

- Initiate complementary design competitions
- For a part, or for the whole
- For features
 - Personnel
 - Financing
 - Management and decision-making
 - Promotion and image building

Phase 6: Testing programs

- Develop and test initiative programs

Phase 7: ?????

- ?????