



Travel Grants Available For Ecovillagers

This year's Global Ecovillage Network general assembly took place on 11 July 2009 at Keuruu ecovillage, Finland.

There was a 5-day 'European Ecovillage Network – Training and Research for Sustainability' course following the general assembly and thirty participants received grants to fund their travel and participation.



A successful grant applicant.

The funding came from GRUNDTVIG, a part of the European Commission's Lifelong Learning Programme.

These grants are available for people and organisations involved in adult education. So, if your ecovillage runs courses you are probably eligible. A variety of activities are supported, such as: travel for training and conferences, hosting workshops, work placements etc.

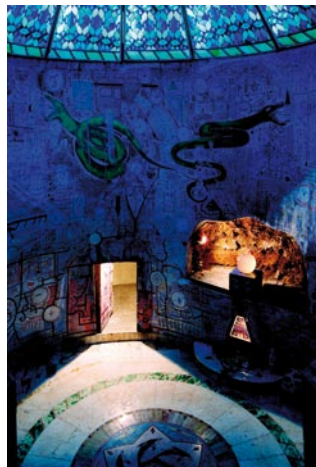
The paper work involved can be quite formidable but the GRUNDTVIG staff are very helpful and patient.

This is a great opportunity to develop training programmes. All it takes is a little time and effort to get through the paperwork and there you are on the way to events and courses.

For more information see: www.grundtvig.org.uk or other national GRUNDTVIG agencies via the website: http://ec.europa.eu/education/index_en.htm

Around The World In Eighty Faiths

The BBC TV series 'Around the World in Eighty Faiths' has aired a show about Italian Ecovillage Damanhur. Peter Owen Jones, a Vicar of the English Church, travelled around the world visiting and learning about the many different faith cultures still intact on our planet.



Inside the cave at Damanhur

The stunning underground New Age temple, excavated by hand into the rock by the citizens of Damanhur, has been called the 'eighth wonder of the world'.

Further details: www.bbc.co.uk/80faiths/locations/europe.shtml

PATCH ADAMS: Overcoming Loneliness



Patch Adams plays with children at Tamera ecovillage, Portugal

Patch Adams, the clown doctor from the US, took part in the Easter conference, 'Creating Models for a Future without War', at Tamera ecovillage in Portugal.

Peace workers from many countries came and shared their knowledge and ideas about how to build a peace culture. Ady Gordon, Israel's famous basketball player – today a peace worker – took part; as well as Sami Awad, a trainer for non-violence and candidate for mayor in Bethlehem, Palestine; Arkan, a shaman from Peru; Clinton Callahan and Marion Krause, management trainers for the peace movement; solar energy visionary Jürgen Kleinwächter; and Austrian permaculture master Sepp Holzer.

All of them agreed on one point: We have to change loneliness in society. People need to have contact in order

to be healthy and take care of each other and the planet.

It is this very insight that has guided Dr. Hunter Patch Adams from Virginia for more than forty years. He became famous for the Hollywood movie about him (*Patch Adams*). As a social activist, a clown and a medical doctor he has been travelling throughout the world, taking care of ill, starving, lonely children, bringing them contact, healing, help and laughter.

Patch is a very serious clown. "Very early in my life I found out that clowning was the fastest way to bring love to people," he says.

Patch is currently working to realise his dream of a model hospital, the Gesundheit Institute in Washington, which will be open to every person without money, without health insurance, without hierarchies.

For further details see: www.patchadams.org

Education For Sustainable Development

GEN attended the UN/UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development in Germany this spring and found itself at the centre of interest.

NGOs that presented showed the transformational power of grassroots initiatives. Southern

hemisphere governments in particular are aware they cannot solve problems through policy decisions alone and are increasingly seeking to involve their populations in transforming their regions. For further details see: www.gaiaeducation.net

SUBMISSIONS

DEADLINE
for submissions to
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To contribute to the Global
Ecovillage Network pages
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Permaculture Inspired Desert Wetlands

Kibbutz Lotan, a GEN-Europe affiliated community in Israel's Arava desert, has completed a 3,200 m² subsurface flow constructed wetlands (CW) wastewater treatment facility.

The system was built with the assistance of the European Union's LIFE initiative and developed in accordance with permaculture principles. The CW reed beds attract migrating birds and is at the heart of the expanding Nature Reserve that is to be built.

The CW serves as a research station for the feasibility of

extensive wetland use and as a testing ground for appropriate plants and building methods for dryland climates.

It is open to the public and serves as a demonstration site for visiting groups and participants in the Center for Creative Ecology's College Semester program 'Peace, Justice and the Environment'. It is also the site for the seven week workstudy Permaculture and Ecovillage Design and Training program (PDC & EDE).

Information about the system is at: www.kibbutzlotan.com



An evocative photo of the ground breaking wetlands at Kibbutz Lotan.

Phd Identifies Permaculture As Key

A dissertation on the subject 'Intentional communities and Ecovillages as experimental Social innovations for sustainable ways of living' has just been published.

German researcher Dr. Iris Kunze of Muenster University stayed at Findhorn, Auroville and five German ecovillages to investigate the 'key methods'

leading to their success. She judges that the key areas were mainly in the social organisation of the communities.

All of the ecovillages studied successfully apply permaculture. In her paper Dr. Kunze describes permaculture as a way of interlinking the social, ecological and economic aspects of the communities in a sustainable and cooperative way.

"Tools like non-violent communication help integrate individual freedom and social cooperation" says Dr. Kunze. "If these are based on a democratic land (and real estate) property system with social and ecological aims, then the sustainable construction of space and settlement is guaranteed."

A more detailed abstract of the study is available at: http://egora.uni-muenster.de/ifs/gemeinschaftsforschung_research.shtml and Dr. Kunze is preparing more articles for publication on the subject.



Dr Kunze highlights permaculture.

Zone 00 At Belgian Ecovillage



The gates to the Kasteel Nieuwenhoven, Belgium are open to visitors.

This summer a new ecovillage at Kasteel Nieuwenhoven, Belgium, opens its gates to welcome visitors to a wide range of activities.

Among these is a programme titled 'Zone 00 – Natural Consciousness'. Zone 00 is a permaculture concept, indicating the innermost circle – your self. The programme will invite participants to dive deeper into just 'being' as a source of inspiration and creativity for natural living. This is done with a unique blending

of permaculture principles with reflective exercises.

Under the motto 'Gateway to Inspiration' a week long festival is scheduled in the second week of August 2009, with permaculture workshops, natural arts and crafts, stalls from local conservation organisations and lots more (and of course it will include a Zone 00 mini-workshop).

For further information on this programme contact: info@kasteelnieuwenhoven.be

MSc Design Course

Findhorn College will begin providing experiential modules in Ecovillage Practice and Community Design Practice.

These will form part of the curriculum of the new MSc Sustainable Community Design run by the Herriot-Watt University, Edinburgh.

Students will complete a three week residential at Findhorn in their first year. They will follow a programme of first-hand experience and lectures about the ecovillage and various dimensions of a sustainable community including practical skills and group work.

Students will gain a thorough grounding in classical engineering services issues as well as gaining a holistic understanding of design vital for creating sustainable communities. The course can also be studied online.

For more details see: www.findhorncollege.com/postgrad/msc_modules.php

Findhorn 350



The global 350 campaign to promote a mass mobilisation of people to lobby for binding CO₂ emissions to no more than 350 parts per million, at the UN Climate Change negotiations in December, continues to grow.

The campaign is an opportunity for activists and artists to communicate this message to the public via artworks, gatherings and exhibitions. For example, US students on the Living Routes programme have distributed stones painted with 350 messages around Findhorn and its surrounding communities.

See www.350.org or contact: jonathan@gen-europe.org