

ETH sustainability

Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule Zürich
Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich

A Founding Partner of the Alliance for Global Sustainability (AGS)

Presents



The Challenge of a Sustainable World

**A two-week course for upper-level undergraduate
and graduate students of all disciplines**



The sustainability challenge:

Planet Earth is facing a severe global crisis. Economic and social development are putting an unbearable strain on our environment. Can young people begin to move our society towards the ideals of justice, equity and sustainability?

Our goal is that after you participate in YES you will be able to say:

YES, we can,
YES we will,
YES, we MUST!

Young people of today constitute an important group, the cradle of tomorrow's leaders and thinkers. Our decisions will have a growing influence on markets and styles of living. We are aware of global initiatives such as Agenda 21, „adopted“ in 1992 during the United National Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro-Brazil.

Agenda 21 calls for all nations to „develop and put into effect their own national strategies, plans and policies for sustainable development, and to be prepared to deal with the common challenges facing human kind“. The tenth year anniversary of the Rio Conference was marked by the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Still workable solutions to the environmental and economic imbalances are yet to be devised and global conversations about sustainable development continue to wrestle with how to put the vision of Agenda 21 into action.

YES is inspired by a set of questions arising from the gap between the principles in Agenda 21 and the

potential for putting these into action in the 21st century:

- What do the individuals pursuing careers, raising families, and leading lives in the 21st century have to say about issues of sustainable development?
- What are the views, concerns and fresh approaches of tomorrow's leaders to these problems?
- How realistic are the Agenda 21 principles and how can we reach these goals?
- What progress has been made in making sustainable development a reality and what remains to be done?

Together, participants of YES will examine the issues that comprise those challenges and the state-of-the-art research to address them. They will explore economic, social and technical complexities in meeting the sustainability challenge and gain better understanding of the need for multi-disciplinary perspectives for problem solving. This two week interactive course provides ample opportunity for participants to share their experiences in sustainability issues, identify common challenges, share cultural and disciplinary backgrounds and do group work in a relaxed atmosphere with colleagues from all over the world.

Origins of YES

To develop the leadership capacity for a viable future, the *ETH*sustainability, founding partner of the Alliance for Global Sustainability (AGS), created in 2000 the course concept originally named the Youth Environmental Summit, and currently labeled the "Youth Encounter on Sustainability-YES". The program has been very successful during 5 years in attracting a highly diverse group of students, more than 400 up to date, from 71 countries, to discuss global challenges and opportunities for sustainable development.

The Alliance for Global Sustainability (AGS) is an international partnership created in 1997 between the *ETH*-Zürich, MIT, the University of Tokyo and Chalmers University of Technology. AGS brings together hundreds of university scientists, engineers, and social scientists to address the complex issues that lie at the intersection of environmental, economic and social goals. Read more about the AGS at: www.globalsustainability.org

*ETH*sustainability provides a platform to intensify the endeavors of the *ETH* Zurich in the area of sustainable development and functions as an open forum and service center, with experimental character in the areas of dialogue, services and education on sustainability. Please read more about *ETH*sustainability at: www.sustainability.ethz.ch



Elements of the YES program

The two-week YES program incorporates academic coursework with field experience and training, as well as having fun in one of the world's great natural settings. With faculty from the university members of the Alliance for Global Sustainability (AGS) students benefit from:

- Discussions on the role of science, industry and public institutions in moving societies toward sustainable development
- A "values and responsibilities" component brings the global community of students together to discuss the role of individual behavior and ethics in promoting sustainable development
- Lectures and workshops on the environment and sustainable development including topics of Agenda 21
- A unique opportunity for close collaboration with an international multicultural and multidisciplinary group of peers in small working groups on specific projects
- Field experiences in the form of excursions unique to the Swiss location and learning from the approaches to address sustainability challenges in these locations
- Trust building activities among the participants
- Possibility for various exciting outdoor, mountain activities and excursions
- The opportunity to offer feedback and suggestions with regards of future YES course planning



Outcomes for the participants:

- Enhance your understanding of the principles of sustainability in a dynamic world, across geographic and disciplinary boundaries
- Promote your awareness of cutting-edge research on global sustainability
- Provide you with methodological, system thinking, and fresh approaches to address sustainability challenges
- Develop your interdisciplinary, intercultural, and leadership competences
- Stimulate your creative thinking about local, regional, and global issues on sustainable development so that you become catalysts to overcome these problems
- Access to the YES alumni, a strong international network of young scholars and professionals committed to applying the principles they learn and share at YES to their careers.
- Lots of fun!



“**YES** provides an extraordinary opportunity for young people from all over the world to come together; to learn from one another and to set the stage for a better world. It has shown us that we really are a global community and that the way to a healthier planet is to get people communicating more closely”.

“The **YES** experience generated a sense that I am capable of making change”

YES definitely opened my eyes to all types of issues and concerns all around the world. It also provided insight into the types of jobs and opportunities that are available to get involved in, and it was nice actually to meet people who are taking active roles in solving such important questions. I think that I reaffirmed my desire to enter into the sustainable development field”.

“**YES** is very unique...so many elements, interesting topics, surroundings, different people from all over, with different views. This makes such a strong impact, it is great while you are there, and I realize even more what an amazing trip it was after getting back home”.



Come and join us for a unique experience in sustainable learning and living – in the beauty of the Swiss Alps.

Participation

The YES program is aimed at upper-level undergraduate and graduate students of all areas of study. The number of possible participants is limited. Basic requirements include:

- Good English-speaking skills (all presentations and discussions will take place in English)
- Interest in questions of sustainable development and environmental management
- Willingness to actively participate in group work, discussions, and presentations
- Respect for fellow participants in a multi-cultural environment
- Sufficient preparation beforehand which includes reviewing pre-reading materials, completing possible web-based assignments, and sharing results in group discussions
- Participation in follow-up activities such as status reports and potential group projects



Participation Fee

ETHsustainability and sponsors financially support the majority of the course costs. As a contribution participants are asked to pay the following:

European participants:	950 US\$
International participants:	1500 US\$

Scholarships are available on the basis of a demonstrated need. The participation fee covers the following:

- Roundtrip travel from country of residence to Zürich
- All local transportation from Zürich Airport to Hotel Alpenblick, Braunwald
- Full board and lodging in the Hotel Alpenblick, Braunwald
- Documents and materials for the course
- Field trips and activities

Participants are fully responsible for their own health and travel insurance (mandatory to participate in the course), visa expenses and additional activities outside of the course program.



The location in Braunwald, Switzerland

Braunwald offers YES participants a unique sustainable living experience. The sunny, automobile-free mountain village, approximately 90 minutes by train from Zurich, is ideal for hiking, mountaineering, biking, horseback riding, and simply enjoying the natural beauty and the rural life of the Swiss Alps. Participants will be staying in the seminar Hotel "Alpenblick", a family-run, three stars hotel, equipped with comfortable rooms, restaurant, cellar bar, seminar facilities and internet access.

Come and join us for a unique experience!!!



Hotel Alpenblick, CH-8784 Braunwald

Phone 055 643 15 44, Fax 055 643 19 75

Scholarships are available in selected cases (please make scholarship needs clear in your application).

For detailed information on dates, cost and registration form, please see the inlay page.

Contacts:

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Youth Encounter on Sustainability – YES 2006

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Course Details

Course Dates 8th to 24th July 2006
 12th to 28th August 2006
Place: Braunwald, Switzerland

Application Deadline: 31st March 2006

Please complete the application form and fax, email or mail (by priority mail) it and the requested documents to:

Mail: Ms. Michelle Grant
 Project Manager
 ETHsustainability
 Center for Sustainability at ETH Zurich
 Bolleystrasse 9, CH-8006
 Zürich, Switzerland
Email: michelle.grant@sl.ethz.ch
Fax: +41-44-632-1597
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Applications received after the deadline will not be considered.

For further information contact **Ms. Michelle Grant** at ETHsustainability on the information above.

