

# ANNUAL REPORT 2021



## 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

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We are pleased to present our 2021 Annual Report and take this opportunity to showcase our accomplishments of the past year. This report gives an insight into the work of oikos Graz. Despite the current circumstances, we are looking back at a year full of projects and events that helped us raise awareness on the subject of sustainability and make an impact, while also growing as a team, both in terms of members and community sense.

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## About oikos

### **oikos Graz**

oikos Graz was founded in 2002 and is a Graz-based chapter of oikos international, a student-led non-profit organization for sustainability in economics and management. Currently, we are about 30 members working on different projects and events that promote sustainability awareness and academic transformation, such as talks, workshops, webinars, movie nights, Design Thinking Challenges, and many more.



### **oikos International**

oikos Graz is part of oikos International, an international, student-led non-profit organization for sustainability in economics and management. Founded in 1987 in Switzerland, it empowers student-change-agents worldwide to embed sustainability in academia and from there into day-to-day business, government, and personal activities.

# About oikos

The programs of oikos International integrate environmental and social perspectives in economics and management education to equip members with the necessary tools to become today's and tomorrow's responsible leaders. They comprise local and international conferences, webinars, workshops, simulation games, and other initiatives that provide platforms learning, creating, and sharing solutions.



At the heart of the organization are our student volunteers who turn ideas into action and tackle local sustainability needs in over 49 chapters around the globe. They collaborate with a wide network of alumni, advisors, faculties, and partners, and are supported by an international management team based in Switzerland. oikos builds and empowers a global community to solve the challenges of the 21st century.



With oikos Talks we created an educational platform through lively discussions. Our talks take place regularly throughout the year and cover a variety of topics, current ecological challenges, and social issues. Each talk benefits from a professional set up of experts from different fields and academic backgrounds. The aim is to inform, educate, and create awareness. Through online and on-site events we are able to connect with like-minded people all over the world. So far, we successfully hosted the following talks:

### REconomy - A Brave New Business World

oikos Talks started this year with a new format. In a series of talks we covered different perspectives concerning one main topic. With the series on 'Reconomy' - A Brave New Business World we shed a light on new business models, alternative economical approaches, innovation, and discussed their challenges and chances.



### Reconomy A brave new business world

*"Our world is under strain. Poverty continues to plague communities and families. Climate change threatens livelihoods. Conflicts are raging. Inequalities are deepening. These crises will only worsen until we change course."*

- Ban Ki-moon, former Secretary-General of the United Nations

## Social Entrepreneurship

We kicked off this series with our talk on Social Entrepreneurship. Indeed, a sustainable future of business does not only comprise a focus on the environment. Also, the social dimension of sustainability is increasingly important. It is crucial that entrepreneurial activities aim at finding innovative, pragmatic, and long-term solutions for social problems. Thereby we can achieve positive change in our society.



PROJECT MANAGER AT TAG.WERK

TANJA TIEFENBACHER



CEO - SOCIAL BUSINESS CLUB STYRIA

RÜDIGER WETZL-PIEWALD



CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY MANAGEMENT  
AT FAU ERLANGEN-NÜRNBERG

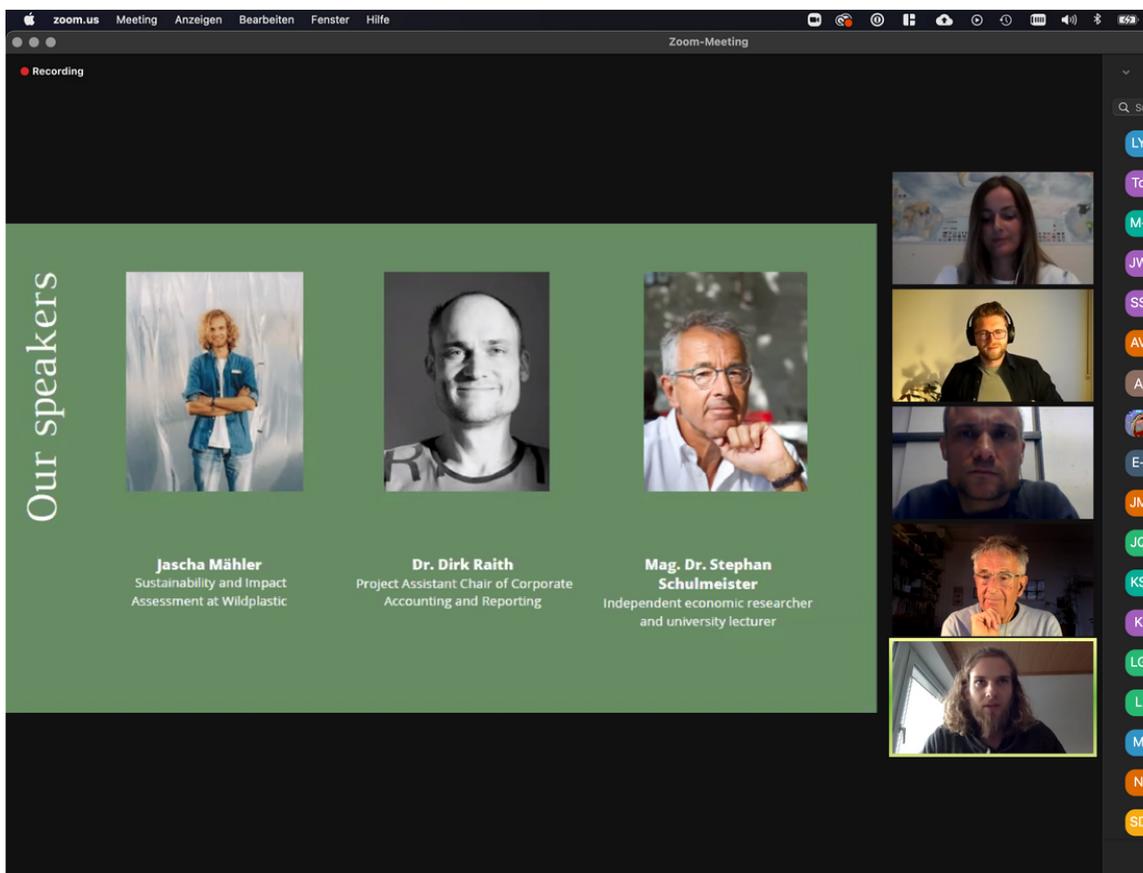
MARKUS BECKMANN

- **Date:** 22. February 2021
- **Speakers:** Rüdiger Wetzl-Piewald (Board member of Social Business Club Styria), Markus Beckmann (Professor for Corporate Sustainability Management), Tanja Tiefenbacher (Project Manager at Tagwerk)
- **Partners:** Business Club Styria, Tagwerk, TU Graz
- **Moderator:** Michael Winter, Antonia Pohlmann
- **Format:** Zoom
- **30+ participants**

## (De)Growth!?

When we think of our economy we think of growth, right? Our welfare is measured in GDP and capitalism is the system that brought us all the wealth we know today (at least some of us). Is that really it? Together with our experts we discussed if there are other alternatives to capitalism. We discovered the world of degrowth and its advantages. As usual in oikos Talks we always talk about the disadvantages, the challenges, and what it would mean for the consumer. Our speakers informed equipped us with some practical knowledge that we can implement in our daily lives to support the degrowth thought.

- **Date:** 29.March 2021
- **Speakers:** Jascha Mähler (Sustainability and Impact Assessment at Wildplastic), r. Dirk Raith (Projektassistent Lehrstuhl für Unternehmensrechnung and Reporting), Mag. Dr. Stefan Schulmeister (Independent University Researcher)
- **Moderators:** Elisabeth Obermann, Michael Winter
- **Format:** Moderated online panel discussion followed by an open audience Q&A session
- **25+ participants**



## Sustainable Finance

More and more banks are offering investment opportunities for their customers with a binding promise to invest their money exclusively in sustainable organizations. The burning question is, however, what does sustainable even mean? And how would such an investment even look like? For most of our audience, the jungle of labels and abbreviations is so dense, that it is almost impossible to gain certainty about one's investment. Apart from that, why should we even invest in sustainable assets? What's the benefit for my wallet, the companies, and in the bigger picture, the sustainable transformation? We had the pleasure to discuss these questions with extraordinary speakers from the investment and finance field. All of them are experts in the field of sustainable investment.

- **Date:** 17. May 2021
- **Speakers:** Fritz Fessler, chairman of the Genossenschaft für Gemeinwohl (GWÖ), Larissa Kravitz (Investment Consultant as Investorella), Dominik Benedikt, MA (ESG Expert and Product Manager at ERSTE Asset Management)
- **Moderators:** Julia Kramlofsky, Elisabeth Obermann
- **Format:** Moderated online panel discussion followed by an open audience Q&A session
- **30+ participants**

### Our speakers



**Larissa Kravitz**  
Investment Consultant as  
Investorella



**Dominik Benedikt, MA**  
ESG Expert and Product Manager  
at ERSTE Asset Management



**Dipl. - Ing. Fritz Fessler**  
Managing Board of  
Genossenschaft für Gemeinwohl

## AI and Sustainability: Challenges and Chances

When we talk about sustainable change, we can't move past innovation. And what would be innovation without a discussion about Artificial Intelligence? Most people, however, think about some sci-fi-like robots when they hear the word AI. We don't automatically connect the term with sustainability and the chances that this technological progress brings along. In this talk, we invited experts who explained how exactly AI could and already is, contribute to creating a more sustainable future economy. We shed a light on the term 'Artificial Intelligence' and what it really is while talking about the challenges and chances for our future economy. Our experts' panel was made up of researchers, entrepreneurs and experts from the field of AI.

- **Date:** 28. June 2021
- **Speakers:** Clemens Wasner, AI Austria
- Harald Nitschinger, Prewave (StartUp for Supply Chain Risk Intelligence)
- Raul Glavan, CAIA
- Prof. Georg Jäger, Institute of System Sciences, Innovation and Sustainability Research, University of Graz
- **Partners:** AI Austria, TU Graz, Prewave, CAIA
- **Moderators:** Lilia Yang, Michael Angele
- **Format:** Moderated online panel discussion followed by an open audience Q&A session
- **30+ people reached**

## Our Speakers



**Georg Jäger**  
Assistant Professor



**Clemens Wasner**  
Enlite AI, AI Austria



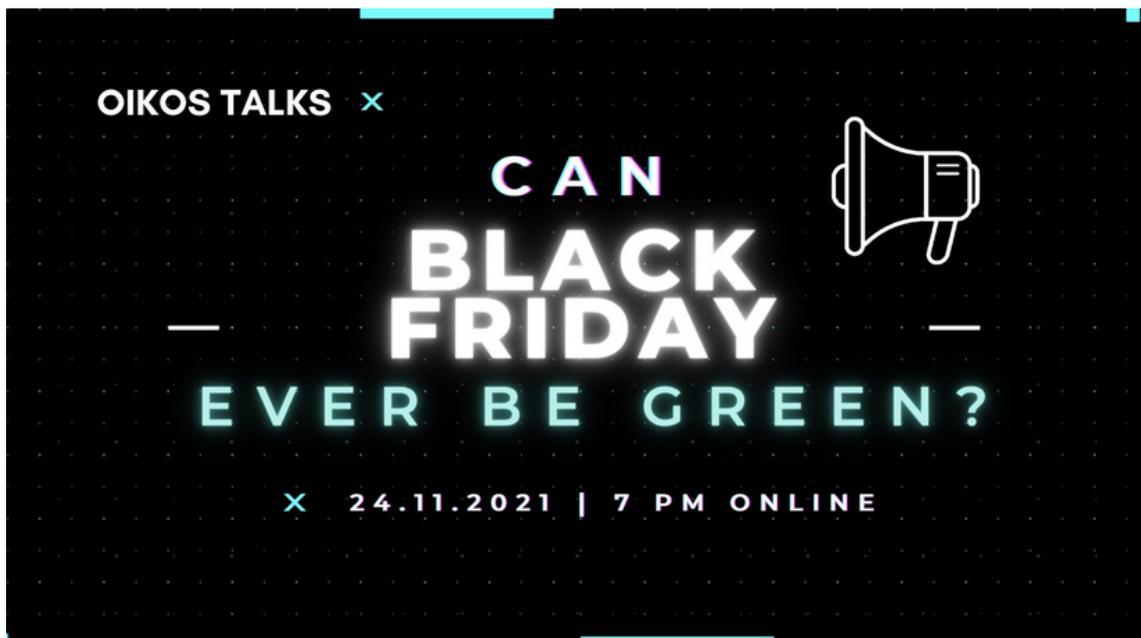
**Harald Nitschinger**  
Co-founder Prewave



**Raul Glavan**  
CAIA

## Circular Economy - Ready to take the loop?

New Semester, new Challenges, new Talks series. This time we shed a light on the different aspects of the circular economy. With the growing complexity of contemporary challenges, it is time to become creative and innovative, especially in terms of resource management. Therefore, it is high time to shift away from the outdated linear economy model and close the circle. This seems obvious to those who are already familiar with the field of sustainability; however, how does it work in practice? How can we shift from linear to circular, what are the challenges there, and what has already been achieved will be the focus of this semester's talks series.



## Black Friday: Can it ever be green?

How can we make our economy circular? Three speakers with different perspectives helped us come to a conclusion. Michael Schmetana, managing director at HP gave us a glimpse at the problems and barriers of a global tech giant trying to switch to a sustainable value chain. Josef-Peter Schöggl gave us an insight into academic research, showing us that there indeed is a trend towards a circular economy in many businesses in Austria. Hans Schnitzer, a circular economy veteran called for businesses and governments to put stricter rules and standards into law, to make sustainability a competitive advantage on the open market. Together the speakers agreed that reducing consumption is the first and most important step towards a circular economy. But since there are still products that need to be produced it is not only up to the consumer. The conclusion was, that we all have to work together - government, businesses, and the individual.



- **Date:** 24. November 2021
- **Speakers:** Michael Semanta (Managing Director fo HP Austria, Hans Schnitzer (Scientific Advisor StadtLabor Graz, Josef-Peter Schöggl (Researcher and Expert in Circular Economy)
- **Partners:** HP Austria, StadtLabor Graz, TU Graz
- **Moderators:** Michael Angele, Antonia Pohlmann
- **Format:** Moderated online panel discussion followed by an open audience Q&A session
- **40+ people reached**

# Dokuabende

Education and learning are at the center of our work. As students, we are already spending a lot of time doing this during our busy days. Through the documentary nights with Dokuabende Graz, we create a relaxed atmosphere, while learning new things about the world around us. This year, we managed to watch the following movies together which we later discussed with our audience.

## Artifishal

Artifishal is a film about wild rivers and wild fish that explores the high cost ecological, financial, and cultural of our mistaken belief that engineered solutions can make up for habitat destruction. The film traces the impact of fish hatcheries, and the extraordinary amount of public money wasted on an industry that hinders wild fish recovery pollutes our rivers and contributes to the problem it claims to solve. Artifishal also dives beneath the surface of the open-water fish farm controversy, as citizens work to stop the damage done to public waters and our remaining wild salmon.

Since Covid-19 still rules our life we managed to have a room that allowed enough distances and space between our participants. We still provided popcorn as our standard must-have in our documentary series. However, this time our audience was asked to only put down their masks while eating popcorn.



- **Date:** October 20, 2021
- **Director:** Yvon Chouinard
- **Partners:** books4life, KHG
- **Participants:** 15



## Fahrenheit 11/9

Few elections have captured the public attention as much as Donald Trump's election as the 45th President of the United States. As one of the few who predicted the outcome, Oscar® winner Michael Moore reveals the circumstances and mechanisms that led to the electoral success of the controversial candidate. The focus of his criticism is not only the president himself but above all the failure of the Democrats.



Fearless, provocative, and highly entertaining, Michael Moore dissects the political and social processes leading up to Donald Trump's inauguration and denounces social inequality. In doing so, he does not stop at the question of how it could have come to this but calls all Americans to political engagement and resistance. FAHRENHEIT 11/9 celebrated its acclaimed world premiere at the Toronto International Film Festival. This event is part of the project "Dokuabende Graz" and is funded by the EU program "European Solidarity Corps".



- **Date:** November 17, 2021
- **Director:** Michael Moore
- **Partners:** KHG
- **Participants:** 20

# Transforming Education

The Transforming Education team (former Curriculum Change team) as part of oikos Graz was established with the start of the winter term 2021 and currently has eight active members. Our main goal is to integrate sustainability topics in all study programs.

Firstly, we are collaborating with the RCE (Regional Centre of Expertise Graz-Styria) at the University of Graz which supports our common goal: Sustainable Education. Together we established a new free elective module at the university, the “basic module sustainability” which is open to all students and study programs. It aims to educate students in sustainable development and its different dimensions, starting from the basics.

Furthermore, we held the last lecture in the course “Introduction to Business Administration”. Within the course, we teach about sustainable business and economics to first year students.

Another important concern of the team is education in schools. The goal is to bring sustainability education and insights into the school curriculum. This gives us the opportunity to introduce sustainable study programs to students to broaden their perspectives after school.

Beside actions within the oikos Graz chapter and Curriculum Change team, we are in lively exchange with the oikos international community.



We regularly attend the Curriculum Change actions squad meetings to talk about Curriculum Change events and news from different chapters or discuss certain topics of interest.

To promote our activities we hosted a social media campaign on Curriculum Change education and experiences. For example, we created videos in collaboration with other oikos chapters highlighting their achievements in Curriculum Change at their universities (Copenhagen, Lisbon, Vienna, Graz).

# Transforming Education

## This years accomplishments:

- oikos Lecture
- Study Survey
- Short video for the HIGHER EDUCATION SUMMIT: "Daring to transform learning for a future-proof economy"
- Education for school
- Lectures for Future

## **oikos Lecture**

The Transforming Education team was invited by professor Robert Rybnicek (Department of Corporate Leadership and Entrepreneurship) to hold a lecture on sustainability business for the course "Introduction to Business Administration" where 600 students are enrolled. This way we can create awareness on the importance of this topic so that students, when they start their study program know, what possibilities there might be later on. As education is at the center of our efforts, sharing our knowledge with our fellow students is a great opportunity to achieve this goal. We are also grateful that our efforts are recognized by leading professors at the KFU and that we get invited on a regular basis to hold those lectures.



## **Student survey**

The survey *Transforming Education at the University of Graz towards Sustainability* was created by oikos Graz in cooperation with the sustainability team at the University of Graz and the RCE Graz-Styria - Centre for Sustainable Social Transformation. Our main goal was to determine the current state of students in terms of sustainability and see what can be improved at the University of Graz.

These measures in the field of education can contribute to combating climate change and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. The improvement of education, to raise awareness and knowledge about sustainability in universities as well as in schools is the key to getting warming as close as possible to 1.5 degrees Celsius by 2050 to limit.

# Transforming Education

## Short video for the HIGHER EDUCATION SUMMIT: "Daring to transform learning for a future-proof economy"

We have contributed a short video for the HIGHER EDUCATION SUMMIT, in which we answered the following questions: What do we hope the world will look like in the future? How will we expect the world/the economy to change? How will we adapt? and How can Higher Education foster that? It was a great initiative and fits perfectly into the frame of our own project: Transforming Education.



## Education for school

Together with Climate Education for Schools, we set the grounds for new cooperation in 2022. We will join forces and educate future generations on subjects such as climate change, environmental challenges, and alternative systems.



## Lectures for Future

The project Transforming Education has taken a big step this year despite Corona. For the first time, oikos Graz participated in the Lectures for Future. We held a guest lecture on "The influence of digitisation on climate change and possible everyday measures" as part of the lecture series, *Lectures for Future: Climate Crisis and Sustainability* at the University of Klagenfurt.

We are very grateful that Prof. Kirsten von Elverfeldt and Prof. Alice Pechriggl invited us and that this way we were able to share our knowledge with the students.

At the end of the lecture, we had an interesting discussion about the topic.



# ReThink Festival

For organizing the five-day (18.-22. Oct.) ReThink Festival oikos Graz partnered up with Books4Life and the Katholische Hochschulgemeinde in Graz. This year's focus of the young festival lays in food and provides space for experts and companies in this field. As always, there are plenty of interactive possibilities in form of cooking, fermentation workshops, a documentary evening, and a pop-up store.



For our first day we invited companies like "Velofood", "Das Gramm", "Omas Teekanne", and "Das Liebig". In total we had insights of 6 great speakers that are experienced entrepreneurs and shared their knowledge, learnings and expertise with our audience.

Our cooking workshop had a longer waiting list than in the past year. As a result, we provided delicious recipes with saved food.

We observed that documentaries raised a lot of interest since more than 30 participants wanted to see our "Artifishal" documentary. Maybe people are also madly in love with popcorn that we also provided during our movie.

Our fermentation as well as our pop-up store workshop was well received and we got great feedback from the attendees.



Even though Covid-19 challenged the whole planning process and the experience, we are happy to announce that there will be a third ReThink Festival next year according to the big interest and positive feedback of our participants on the one hand and the willingness and openness of our guest speakers and cooperation partners on the other hand.

The basic idea is that we read the same book and have regular (online) meetings for discussion and reflection of what we read together.

The first book we read was: "Green New Deal", written by Ann Pettifor. The Green New Deal requires a radical change in our economy which not only comprises a full decarbonization but also an economy, that is based on social justice and fairness. Ann Pettifor was a co-developer of the concept herself and she clearly describes how the New Green Deal was developed and what will be needed to implement and finance it.

The book is very informative and at the same time easy and fun to read!

We started on March 10th and further met every week in the evening. With 5-12 motivated people we had great discussion rounds and could also connect with each other on a deeper level!



- Ann Pettifor - Green New Deal

*"The corona pandemic has shown us that there IS enough money for short-time financing. The government issued so many funds to support people and businesses during the pandemic."*

**- Participant**

*"The financial sector has so much power and most citizens don't understand the complexity of the financial system."*

**- Participant**

*"Having a sustainable bank is already a good first step."*

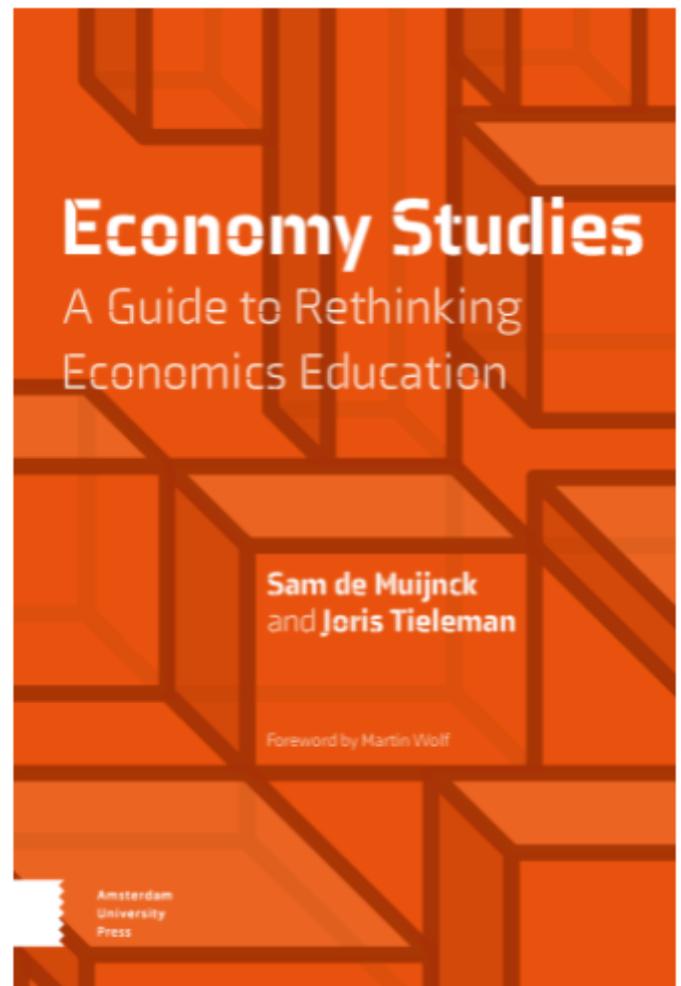
**- Participant**

Since oikos Graz is dedicated to changing the curricula we thought that it would be a great idea to connect this to our book club too. With this *Guide to Rethinking Economics Education*, we are able to use the work and effort that was put into this book to further distribute different pluralistic approaches and slightly drive the change in universities.

Based on a clear conceptual framework and ten flexible building blocks, this handbook offers refreshing ideas and practical suggestions to stimulate student engagement and critical thinking across a wide range of courses.

Drawing on decades of ideas on how to improve economics education and a growing number of available alternative resources, this book helps professors, teachers, and students find relevant teaching materials. It provides a clear menu of options for reform.

Together in a group with around 7 students, we want to read, present and discuss the content of this book and invite the authors in our last sessions to have an interactive exchange.



- **Sam de Muijnck & Joris Tielman**  
**Economy Studies**

# Online Strategy

*This year we, the marketing team dedicated our time and resources to create and provide a whole new Corporate Identity design template for our team. Our goal was to put our content in a simple, on point way with minimalistic features and elegant aesthetics.*

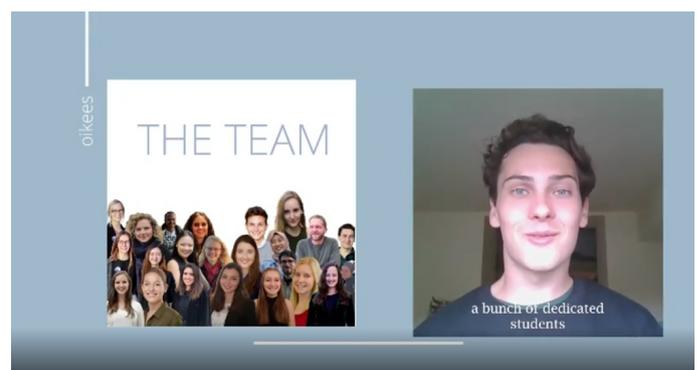
## **oikos Careers in Sustainability**

The goal of this campaign was to introduce different job opportunities that are waiting for students in the sustainability field. Since we observed increasing demand from students and graduates equipped with knowledge on sustainability we wanted to initiate a format where connection to our Curriculum Change campaign can be provided. For that we summarised sustainability job profiles in form of short videos, text or quotes.



## **What is oikos? What are our projects?**

Another project we were dedicating our heart to was to explain what we are doing in a visual, creative, and catching way. Therefore, we decided to make short videos to introduce our team and to share what we are doing under the title "What is oikos?". Highlighted by multiple groups and team pictures we ensured to bring our content to the viewer and furthermore catch their attention and interest for our work and projects. To get a glimpse into what curriculum change is all about we also put that in a short video with a lot of icons and emojis to self-explain.



# LEAP Graz

*Leap Graz is an invitation to start a leadership program for individuals and organizations that want to embark on a tailor-made, self-organised self-development journey. It is a combination of a basic structure, a set of practices & recommendations for designing a leadership program for our environment.*

Our primary goal is to help enable our members to become part of the great LEAP journey on a chapter level. This is particularly relevant as most of our team members have not yet had the chance to participate in a LEAP program. We consider it a great opportunity to gain knowledge on facilitation and project management. With the help of oikos International and Benoît as our coach, we set up a series of sessions featuring selected topics from the regular LEAP program. All online and tailored to the needs and wishes of the oikées here in Graz. Our aim was to create value for our chapter members in terms of leadership skills and team building and strengthen the connection to oikos international.



**We decided on four topics that accompanied us through six months with 4 sessions.**

With questions and tasks like "How do you feel about the LEAP", "Letter to your future self", "Value Tree" and many more we were able to not only provide a safe space to share thoughts in our sessions with each other but also to softly escort our oikées out from their own comfort zone to grow, relearn, deeply reflect, and become more aware who they are and what they want in life. With a certificate in the end we got great feedback for our visually designed slides, miro boards, and creative exercises. Some of our oikées already have a clearer vision of how they can achieve their future goals and the paths they can take to get there. This is one of the most beautiful compliments and a sign for our successful Leap Graz journey together.

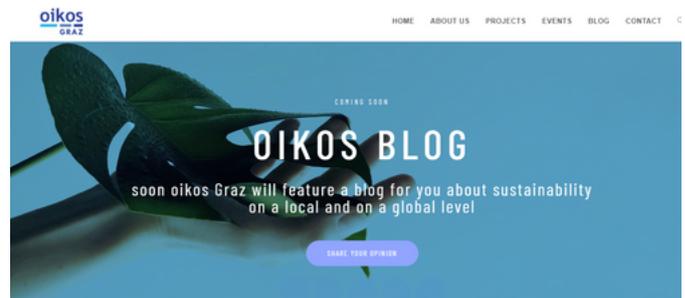
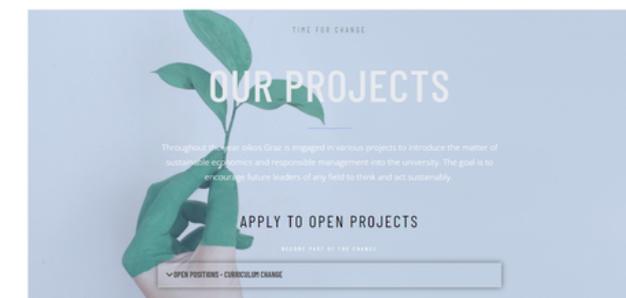
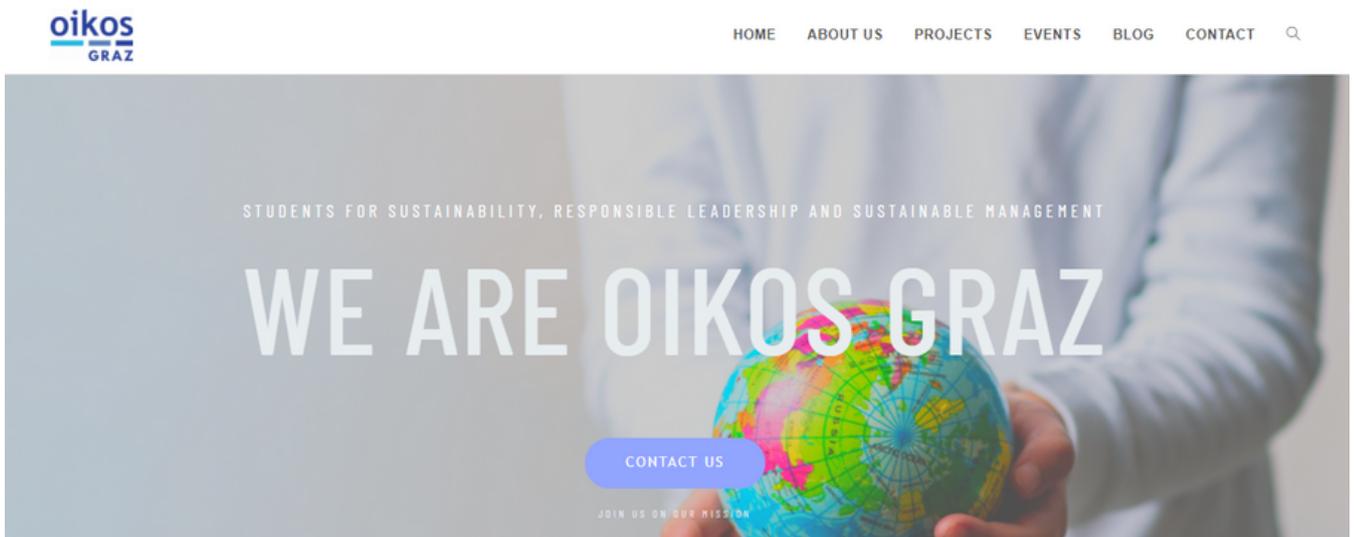
## Website

*We are happy to announce that oikos Graz now has an own website. Over the summer our website team worked on high speed to provide a platform for all our achievements, our projects, and events.*



The website will be another way to connect with the community, as well as present and future cooperation partners. It functions as an information platform for interested students and companies. We dedicate some pages to blog posts and to our partners, as a means of showing our recognition and appreciation for their support.

<https://oikosgraz.org/>

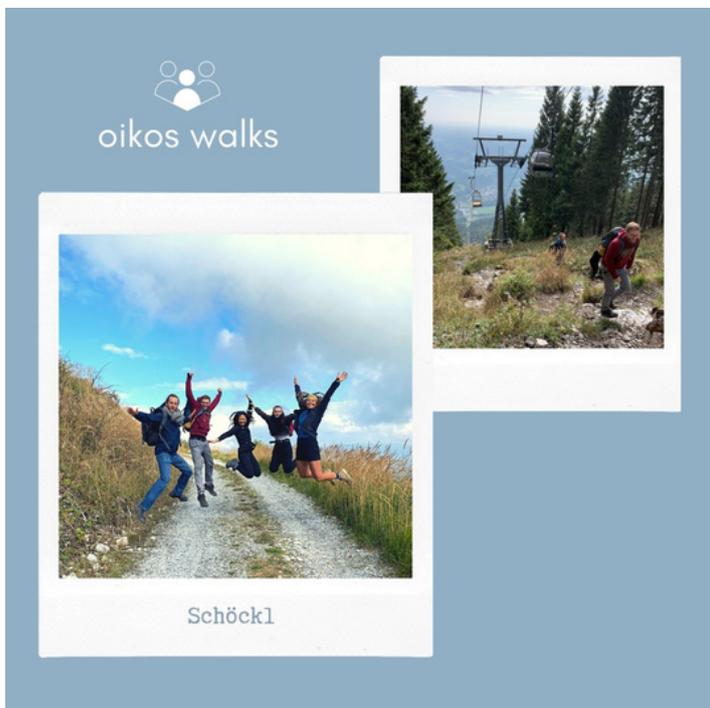


# Teambuilding Events & Community

We care a lot about keeping our oikes together – not only, but especially in times of a pandemic. That is why we initiated a lot of different activities, online as well as in person. This year we were able to host our semester closing as well as our semester opening on-site. which was a great benefit for the oikos community.

A list of events taking place in the year 2021:

- Election/Goodbye Board - April
- Semester Closing - June
- Team Building Event & Kick Off Event- September
- Semester Opening - October
- Online Regulars' Table - May
- Christmas Party - December
- oikos Walks



## Teambuilding Events & Community

### **oikos FIT - Strong together!**

As student-volunteers it is often hard for us to find the perfect balance between, university, voluntary work and our health. Therefore we launched oikos Fit. It is a way to keep in touch with your colleagues while practicing sports together. A big plus - benefit from our oikos network: our sportiest oikees prepared fitness sessions and yoga classes for the team. Really everybody, no matter what fitness level, could participate. This way we share some good quality time and grow together as a team while taking care of our health!



### **oikos Walks**

While most of our meetings were held online, due to the pandemic situation, oikees joined each other for a walk on the fresh air. That way we got to know each other outside of the virtual rooms. This was important to keep our network alive, the community sense growing, and our oikees healthy.



Hosting all of these events also lead to a growth in the number of our members.

# Teambuilding Events & Community

## Christmas Party

Oikees gathered around hot wine and Christmas cookies to end this year together. Especially in times of lockdowns and digital meetings, events like this are very important for us as a team. We meet in a nice atmosphere that gives us time and space to get to know each other better, play fun games, and set the grounds for new creative projects.



## Christmas Donations

As every year, we wish to give something back. This year we decided to collect items for our friends at the Caritas Wintershelter for Homeless People. We are grateful for all the oikees who participated and shared a piece of their Christmas spirit.



# Board Handover

An important annual event is the election of the oikos Graz board. The former board led by Tim Roßa, Lena Kramer, and Klara Jochum was handed over to Michael Winter, Elisabeth Obermann, and Lilia Yang.



Our oikees also attended climate strikes, bicycle demos and other climate action events throughout the year. Taking part in protests like these is crucial for us as a student organization fighting for the environment.



## oikos in Numbers

The pandemic did not stop us from creating an impact in our city and our community. We used the opportunity to grow our online presence through campaigns, events, and other content. Here are oikos numbers in the year 2021.



13 events



9 projects



30 members



500 participants



over 500 followers



over 1.000 followers

As a non-profit student association, we depend a lot on the support of others. Therefore, we are really grateful for the help we got this year. Not only do we want to give our gratitudes to all the motivated oikees. Each member of oikos Graz is an irreplaceable piece and is responsible for the success of 2021. At the same time we would love to thank all our partners, speakers, and collaborators who have worked with us throughout the year. Without your humble and voluntary efforts, our projects would not have been the same.

## **oikos Graz Says Thank You For A Successful 2021!**

Our efforts won't stop here. oikos Graz is looking ahead on a new year full of projects, events, and adventures. If you would like to support us as well during the next year please reach out to us or help us to cover our expenses with a little donation. Either way, your support will be appreciated and we know, we couldn't do it without you!

Bank Account:

oikos Graz - Studierende für Nachhaltigkeit

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## oikos Contact - Get in touch!



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