

WE ARE

MMSLS
2018



Masters of Science in Strategic
Leadership towards Sustainability

msls.se

WE ARE

The Programme

The Masters of Strategic Leadership towards Sustainability (MSLS) is a 10-month master's programme that focuses on advancing student knowledge, skills, and global networks in order to build their capacity to be a strategic leader in the co-creation of thriving, sustainable societies.

The 2018 MSLS students come from countries around the world: Costa Rica, Japan, Germany, Bangladesh, Canada, Indonesia, the Netherlands, Vietnam, Russia and more. Enclosed are our stories, our beliefs, our hopes for the future, and our inspirations.

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WE ARE

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WE ARE

**diverse by nature,
united by our passion
to empower innovative
and revolutionary
change.**

-Class of '18

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Memie Kijtanasopa

Country: Thailand

Contact: memie.kk@gmail.com

Originally from Bangkok, Thailand, Memie studied for 8 years in Canada, graduated from high school in Vancouver and attained a Bachelor's degree with a double major in history and anthropology in Toronto. Prior to her joining MSLS, she was a consultant at Environmental Resources Management (ERM), working in the Sustainability and Climate Change Team. Her work focused on assisting clients across a variety of industries including oil, gas, food and beverages on a variety of sustainability issues. This includes corporate sustainability reporting and disclosure; Dow Jones Sustainability Indices Assessment, CDP and climate change strategy development.

Despite her direct experience in the field, Memie is eager to learn more about sustainability challenges, understand its complexity, and continue to develop skills and knowledge which enable her to become a driving force. She decided to leave Thailand once more to take part in MSLS fueled by her calling to make a difference in the World. Humanity has never faced a crisis this big, but she believes we will never have a better opportunity to solve it than right now. With her wanderlust and the love for nature, scuba diving and trekking have become her passions to enjoy what the world has to offer.

“Do not spoil what you have by desiring what you have not; remember that what you now have was among the things you only hoped for.”

-Epicu



John Vimal Tej Kumar Velpula

Country: India

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John Vimal travelled from South India to become a part of the MSLS class 2018 community. He recently graduated in Environmental Engineering. Vimal also volunteered in an NGO for Public Health and Sanitary Education in the rural regions of South India.

To explore new ways of education and learn more about other cultures he decided to study abroad. The diversity feels like family to him. Vimal's interest in the MSLS program stemmed from the sustainable aspects of clean water supply. In Vimal's sustainable dream for the future he wants to be able to change his city in India, fight air pollution and the pollution of the ocean and beaches. To achieve this goal, he is hoping to learn how to articulate and address his vision and create new thinking structures to approach complex problems. Besides academics, he is interested in sports and is a vocalist. As a child, he always wanted to be a cricketer and he plans to continue playing cricket in the future.

Live, Laugh, Love

-Inspired by Rafael Nadal and Bear Grylls



-Inspired by John Muir- father of the conservation and national park movement

Daniel Villafranca

Country: Costa Rica

Contact: villafrancadani@gmail.com

Daniel has a bachelor in business and administration. He has owned a company since 2008, called Reinventing Business For All. The company's focus is on making business more sustainable and to connect stakeholders.

Daniel chose to join the MSLS program to learn more about escalating social systems thinking projects and the positive impact they can have in society. He was motivated to join the MSLS programme in order to learn about fellow MSLS classmates and form life-long connections.

Daniel's sustainability dreams for the future are for leaders to be more aware of the sustainability challenge and also to be more connected to "real life" - leaders decisions have a big impact on people's lives. A vision is also for individuals to consume more responsibly - then companies will take responsibility to take action and put their money where their mouth is. A final part of Daniel's vision is for businesses to be more creative with their business models and to have more long term goals.



"Sell your cleverness, and buy bewilderment. Cleverness is mere opinion; bewilderment is intuition."

-Rumi (Persian poet)

Lotte Tange

Country: The Netherlands

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Lotte studied International Relations in Amsterdam with a specialization in Transitional Politics in Sustainability. She later moved to completing her thesis in the International food industry and focused on Cacao where she reviewed Sustainability within the value chain process in the Chocolate Industry. Being an avid traveler, Lotte took to the skies and travelled for 2 years, backpacking and exploring the World. It was here, in seeing the diverse landscapes around the globe, the degradation of lands and the poverty in certain countries where she became motivated to pursue her next level of education in Sustainability.

Lotte evaluated her background and realized that she had a view of the big picture from an International Relations background but lacked the framework on how to make sustainable change. Her view was that she wanted to take what she knew and evolve it to a point where she could make that change. With this in mind her approach would be to learn the framework steps to advise organizations on effective Sustainability aspects for future planning through leadership training in the field.

WE ARE trained

Advanced Material Science
Journalism Biology
Environmental Policy Government
Commercial Economics Arts Education
Food Safety. Socioeconomics
Science Architecture
Transnational Politics Business Engineering
Insurance Industry Hosting and Facilitating
Beekeeper Design Sustainability
Mechanical Engineering Healthcare
Social Innovation Environmental Studies
Economy Product Development
Marketing Communications History

with careers from multiple
fields and specialties

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Anastasia Laukkanen

Country: Russia

Contact: laukkana@gmail.com

Anastasia has a background as a journalist and has been working in this same field since graduation. She did her first master in social-culture project management.

In 2010 she launched ECOCUP, a international green documentary film festival. It started as a small voluntary project but now takes place in more than ten cities in Russia throughout the year. It is a platform to gather individuals who are interested in sustainability to get together and talk. With the same team and idea Anastasia started Love.Doc – the first documentary film festival about love (she wishes to continue on with this great project) – in 2016. She firmly believes that to be able to solve a problem, we have to talk about it, her very own journalistic principle.

During MSLS 2018 she wants to learn about engaging more people to start talking. Thus moving from small-scale solutions to change on the level of the system. She witnessed the beauty of the planet while travelling and wants it to be preserved for next generations.

“One who wants searches for possibilities. One who doesn’t – searches for excuses.”

-Unknown



Ted Jan Post

Country: The Netherlands

Contact: tedjanpost@gmail.com

Ted grew up in Baarn, in the Netherlands with his parents and two siblings. He has had the opportunity to travel through Europe which enabled him to experience each country. He says “When travelling you should use the public transport, get a haircut and explore the nightlife” to get the true experience of life in any country.

He studied Commercial Economics in Amsterdam and was able to live there for the last two years of his studies. This is where he discovered that he was interested in a career that involved more than just economics. In the past year Ted took on an internship with an NGO that focused on helping consumers make healthy, sustainable food choices, it also functioned as a homeless shelter in Amsterdam. These positions amongst other projects encouraged him to explore Sustainability Programs globally, this is how he discovered the MSLS program and how it was the perfect fit for him.

Ted is interested in learning more about how business and economics can contribute to sustainable solutions. He believes that his generation has the unique opportunity to create positive, long term contributions to The Sustainability Challenge.

“It’s better to light a candle than curse the darkness”

-W.L. Watkinson



Bastian Lehmann

Country: Germany

Contact: bastian.lehmann@posteo.de

Bastian has been working as photovoltaic engineer for two years in Germany. He brings in present challenges currently faced in society, especially from his experiences in the business context.

He believes that the key to sustain as society on earth is to make decisions as a person, a company or a politician prioritising ecological and social sustainability. Therefore he joined the MSLS program to look for an answer to the question: How to guide these decisions in an effective way?

Bastian believes that through optimism and inspiration there are ways for humanity to sustain on earth. Thus, he wants to learn how to inspire current leaders towards an intention of sustainability. And if there is one, he wants to be able to provide long term strategies to achieve this intention.

Beside the sustainable interest Bastian enjoys judo. When he's fighting, he dives into the present and puts all his physical and mental energy to that moment. He also enjoys the feeling of freedom of kite-surfing.

“Manche Schriftsteller schreiben nur ab und zu, vor allem ab“

-Heinz Erhardt



Putri Sari Suci

Country: Indonesia

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Putri studied media, communication and cultural studies in Newcastle in the North of England before joining the insurance industry. Most recently she was a strategic assistant to the CEO of Zurich Insurance Company in Jakarta, Indonesia.

Putri always has a strong interest in social sustainability. She was a volunteer teacher for children in marginal communities and a traditional dance teacher for people with disability (visual impairment). She was awarded as the Regional Winner of Zurich Community Champion Awards 2017 and will be the chair of one of the regional judging panels for the Zurich Community Champion Awards 2018 at the new Zurich North America Headquarters in June 2018.

She wants to combine her insurance industry experience and her personal passion for social sustainability to create a system in which organizations, as well as individuals, consistently consider sustainability in their decision making. Her vision is to create a school which embeds sustainability into its curriculum and pedagogy to promote sustainability awareness through education especially for younger generation in Indonesia. Her aspirations for MSLS includes learning how to apply the FSSD to a real world organization and to learn a lot of possible actions and solutions to achieve all Sustainability Principles.

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world”

-Nelson Mandela

WE ARE

motivated humans
who are creators of
change

-Class of '18

MSLS 2018



Tina Jönsson

Country: Sweden

Contact: tinaaajonsson@gmail.com

Tina Studied Environmental Economics in Sweden and most recently worked as a Bee Keeper. Before that she lived in New Zealand for a year, and in Australia for 2 years doing administrative work in engineering companies. While living in Melbourne, Tina realized that she was uncertain about her professional development. She later met a New Zealand MSLS fellow who shared the concept of the MSLS Program with her which led her to join the class of 2018.

Tina grew up on a farm but she has also lived in a lot of big cities. She experienced the gap between both contexts and feels that connection is missing between them, which in turn results in some of the degradation problems we face. Her future goal is to connect the farming lifestyle and cities to create awareness. In order to achieve this vision, she wants to be able to communicate better to create effective engagement. Tina is sure that if people who live in big cities understand and interiorize where food comes from, it will affect many of the systems we live in.

-Inspired by Paul Simon and Jack London



Jos Sienknecht

Country: Germany

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Born and raised in Buxtehude on the Este River in Northern Germany, Jos studied Industrial Management and Engineering in Hamburg, Germany. With a great passion for sports and his interests in economics and marketing, he pursued a career in the Sports Industry, landing an internship with Adidas in 2013. He chose to stay with the company for four years, working in various positions ranging from Brand Project Manager, Merchandising Manager and Product Manager. Through this experience Jos has realized the unsustainable flaws in capitalist society, especially with overconsumption and excessive use of materials. This realization brought conflicts to one of his core values, responsibility, which led to his dedication in becoming a change agent, making a positive impact towards a sustainable future.

“Real change starts with recognizing that we are part of a system we seek to change.”

-Senge

Jos is thrilled to be a part of the MSLS program, hoping to broaden his horizons on sustainability and understanding its complexity. With his goal to raise awareness and bring about changes to sustainability challenges, he wants to build the skills that will enable him to play a role in creating it.



Jennifer Martel

Country: Canada

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Jennifer completed a Bachelor of Science in Biology with a concentration in Cellular, Molecular Genetics with the dream of going to medical school which she felt was a good way to combine her love for helping people and her interest in science. However, after graduating, she had become increasingly frustrated with issues including increasing inequality and the lack of action on climate change. This led to a significant change in her plans. If humans continued to live in an increasingly toxic environment, she felt that she would simply be bandaging the situation through medicine. Jennifer decided that instead of helping humans, she wanted to help humanity.

This new path led her into politics where she ran for Member of Parliament. This journey gave her invaluable experience, but she felt she needed to gain more knowledge and skills to continue working towards implementing effective change. MSLS was the perfect opportunity for her to learn from one of the most forward-thinking and sustainable countries in the world and be able to look at Canada through a new lens. Her goal is to motivate others to become part of the change and work towards a sustainable society for all. As she puts it, "You can't just stand on a podium and talk to people; you have to empower them."

"Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not."

-Dr. Seuss



Jasmin Stueve

Country: Germany

Jasmin's academic background is in Medicine. She used to work as a Gynecologist in Germany. As Jasmin has always been interested in human relationships and interactions within human groups, she participated in an Art of Hosting Training in Karlskrona. There she heard about the MSLS program. Feeling the need to try something different, she got inspired to participate.

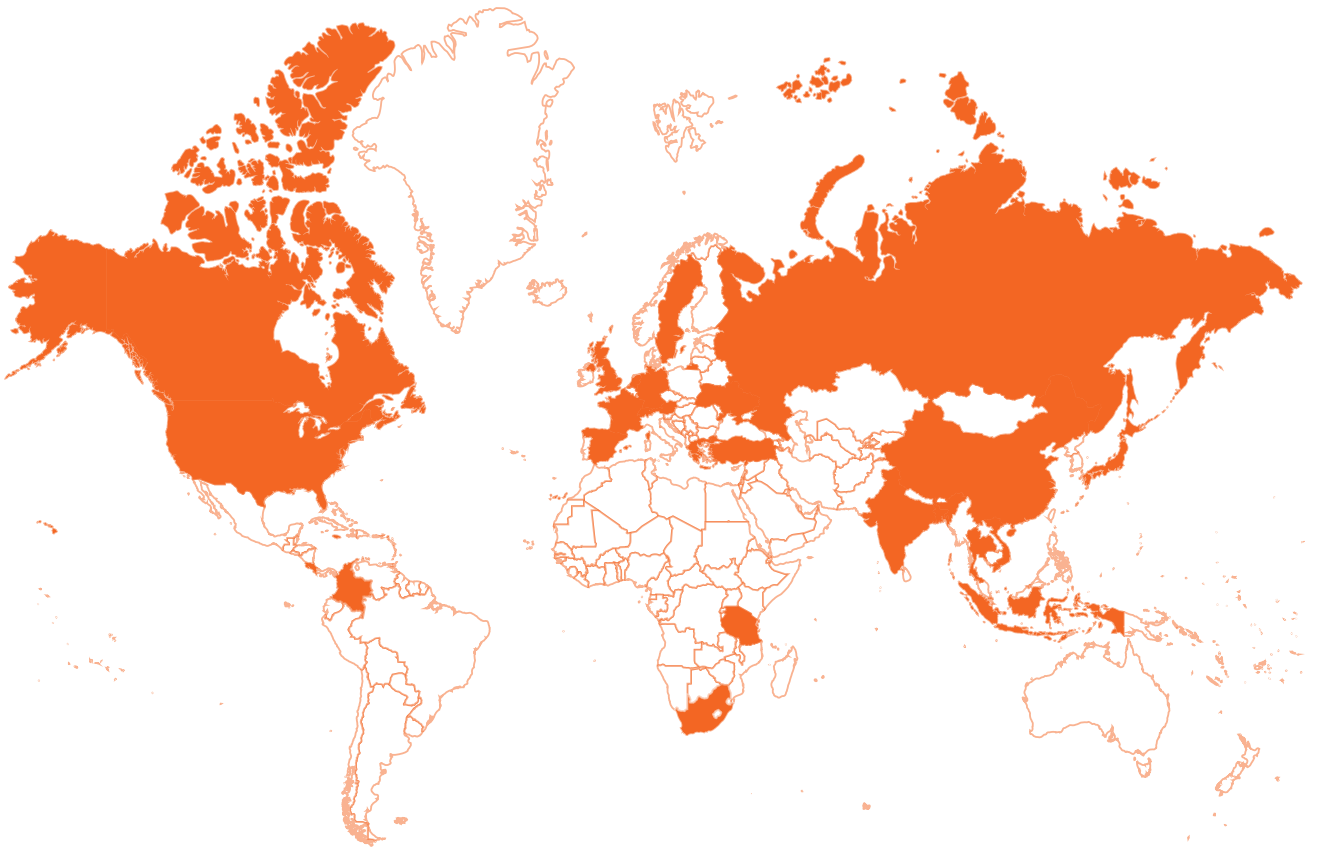
Jasmin's sustainability dream is to be a part of a community, sharing life and knowledge. She is very passionate about Permaculture and would like to maintain a piece of land herself.

Jasmin wants to learn more about inter-human relationships and group dynamics, how people interact within communities and how to build up successful communication skills.

"Love is patience, and patience is love"

-an old Buddhist monk

WE ARE diverse



spanning 27 countries
and 5 continents

MSLS 2018



Simon Damstra

Country: The Netherlands

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After studying Environmental Sciences & Environmental Economics, Simon has listened to his natural inclination to explore next-stage, self-managing organizations, as this is what he believes is the type of organization, fitting for the internet age. As a Teal coach & facilitator, he works on the minimum structure as a means to create maximum results. Teal organizations are organizations that strive for self-management, wholeness and evolutionary purpose. Simon is all in for creativity, freedom and revolutionary ideas. How can we reinvent organizations to liberate the energy and true potential of all those involved?

The master holds a lot of promises for Simon, as it teaches the most systemic and strategic framework for realizing sustainable development (FSSD) he has met. The framework has proven itself very effective in many corporate environments such as IKEA and Phillips.

Simon has a love for looking at organizational structures and exploring how we can make these more fitting for the 21st century. His intention is to integrate both Teal practices and the FSSD in organizations that want to transition towards a future proof model of operating. His goal is thereby contributing to creating a sustainable world where everyone can thrive.

“People should pursue what they are passionate about. That will make them happier than pretty much anything else”

-Elon Musk



Johanna Maria Winterhalder

Country: Germany

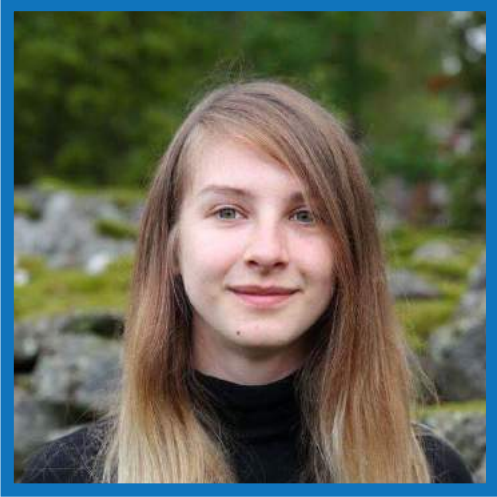
Contact: johanna.winterhalder@gmx.de

Johanna grew up in the Southern part of Germany and has so far spent her life within the country borders. Johanna holds a Bachelor in Economics Education and Material Culture: Textile from the University of Oldenburg. Through her education and internships she was afforded the opportunity to work with the sustainability area within the textiles industry. Johanna wanted to delve deeper into the field of sustainability, this is where she opted to complete her Masters in Business Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility Management at the TU Dresden. She was intrigued by the subject and felt that she needed to learn more in order to get a full view of how to implement sustainability, this is why she chose to join the MSLS program.

Johanna wants to make the world better, starting with herself, but also by inspiring others. Even small actions moving in the right direction are important in order to move society towards sustainability. Johanna wants to be able to empower people to not be afraid of the change but to start taking steps in the right direction.

“More than the past, it is the future that interests me, since that is where I intend to live”

-Albert Einstein



Iuliia Solodovnik

Country: Ukraine

Contact: iuliasolodovnik@gmail.com

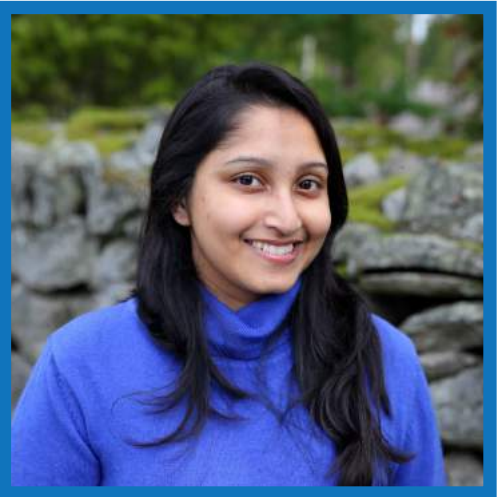
“Passionate” is the word coming to your mind when you meet Iuliia Solodovnik. Shortly before Iuliia was born the dissolution of the Soviet Union led to Ukrainian’s independence. Iuliia grew up in a new state and she became used to a constantly changing environment. This encouraged her to go to the United States during her high school and after her graduation. The time overseas shapes Iuliia’s thinking even until today.

Back in Ukraine, Iuliia did her Bachelor’s degree in Economics and her Master’s degree in Economic Theory. Iuliia became driven by the wish to improve her surroundings and the Ukrainian society. Therefore, Iuliia started to work in the sustainability department of a corporation and soon she was hooked by the ideas and ideals of sustainability. After working for the Ukrainian parliament, The Hague Centre for Strategic Studies and helping displaced people within the Ukraine, Iuliia finally decided to pursue her goal of creating a more sustainable world and moved to Karlskrona to do the MSLS program.

When she is not traveling or studying she is probably on a hike, doing sports or reading “The Stranger” by Albert Camus. Whatever it is, you can be sure of one thing: she does it with great passion.

“Don’t ask what the world needs, ask what makes you come alive and go do it, because what the world needs is people who have come alive!”

-Howard Thurman



Christina Swarna Sarker

Country: Bangladesh

Contact: sarkerchristinaswarna@gmail.com

Christina grew up in Bangladesh and is best described as a passionate teacher. She loves children, loves to interact with her students and get inspired by them. She completed two bachelor degrees in English Literature and Education and did her teaching job in a Bangladeshi school before moving to Karlskrona.

Christina realized how socially unsustainable the education system in her home country was and searched for a program that can help to enrich her knowledge in sustainable development, as well as to hone in her skills and experience in leadership. Coming to MSLS, her goal is to spread sustainability knowledge to people in her country, and inspire them to join the “force”.

When Christina is not busy working or taking care of her little family with two kids, she loves to practice classical Indian dance known as Kathak. Through years of dancing, it has become a tool for her personal reflection.

WE ARE

an engaged community,
creating space for
energy and authentic
conversations

-Class of '18

MSLS 2018



Lennart Stam

Country: The Netherlands

Contact: len_stam@live.nl

Lennart grew up in a small village in the countryside of the Netherlands. He holds a BA in Business and Engineering gained at the University of Applied Sciences in Amsterdam. During his studies in Edinburgh, Scotland, Lennart found himself confronted with inner change, returning to the Netherlands to realize that his global journey had only just begun. Lennart wanted to meet and interact with a diverse range of people and learn more about business, especially the ecological aspects of sustainability in organizations.

His sustainability vision is to behold the understanding of creating a fair and just sustainable society, without compromising the beautiful privileges we have created in the past centuries. His learning objectives for the coming period cover a true spiritual understanding of himself and learning to shape a day-to-day vision for a striving sustainable future. With this knowledge, he believes he then has the ability to change business into sustainable enterprises, thus making him a change agent for sustainability.

"We did not inherit the earth from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children"

-Native American Proverb



Gül Ulu

Country: Turkey

Contact: gululu1919@gmail.com

Gül is a teacher from Istanbul, Turkey. She loves her son dog and daughter cat.

The reason she is at MSLS is that she felt a personal calling to contribute to a goal bigger than herself. Her ambitions are focused on having an impact with people and aren't aiming for an impersonal high position. Her sustainability dream is to help Turkey with its values and tools for a transition to a higher level. Her focus is on helping younger generations, whom she appreciates because of the wisdom they get from education. Gül wants to learn developing a metalanguage to understand what others are going through and thinking during her year at MSLS, and the great diversity in people here will help her in doing that.

"To understand the immeasurable, the mind must be extraordinarily quiet, still."

-Jiddu Krishnamurti

She is very good at keeping an open mind and loves to learn and grow while staying open to the perspective and ideas of others. She comes from a warm family where she was stimulated in her confidence and motivated by both her mother and father to become a life-long learner. She has a very good relationship with her younger but wiser sister.



Iris Nekeman

Country: The Netherlands

Contact: irisnekeman@gmail.com

Iris has a bachelor degree in Organizational Science, is focused on optimizing human resource and both create and implement business strategies. Her professional career path is characterized by entrepreneurial behavior and an aim to develop people and therefore organizations. She participated in various social projects and has worked as a freelancer in online marketing strategy, offline sales and accountancy. In 2015 she was offered a position in which she was responsible for the finance and execution of the business strategy and coaching a team of 5 people in implementing a marketing strategy.

She is passionately driven to change contemporary status quos that are not contributing to sustaining our world. She applied for the MSLS program because the program offers deeper insights in two things that she believes are key to improving current status quos; developing knowledge regarding the complexity of our contemporary times and environment and how she can develop leadership skills that will help her to encourage others to think outside their box and comfort zone.

She believes that there is a future in which organizations and societies co-create a more positive perspective for generations to come in a compassionate and understanding manner. She wants to learn about possible strategic frameworks that help create effective sustainable opportunities for companies and how she can optimally use her skills to contribute to and facilitate creation of these solutions.

“A real superhero has the ability to create more superhero’s.”

-Iris Nekeman



James Vierling

Country: United States of America

Contact: j_vierling@msn.com

Jim has a Bachelor’s of Science degree in Marketing Communications from the University of Wisconsin - River Falls, a school known for agriculture and education. Here he found his interest in the cultural perspectives on our environment and on what “being green” means. He then continued forward into his profession where he was a store manager for America’s largest pharmacy, Walgreens, as well as a certified pharmaceutical technician in the industry. It was during this period where he realized his need to bring change into the world and left to pursue marketing at Daimler’s Car2Go Twin Cities car share and later at Nice Ride Minnesota bike share. After his pursuits in the industry he decided to delve deeper in the sustainability issue and to pursue a Master at BTH in the MSLS program.

Jim is a true believer that change needs to happen with regards to sustainability within societies. He wants to implement change that is of excellent quality and believes good leadership skills and successful marketing are imperative to this. What motivates Jim in this path is that sustainable change should be intertwined within the large urban fabrics and be a normal way of life. He would like to see future generations thrive off of a world which nourishes them to enjoy their lives.

*“You have brains in your head.
You have feet in your shoes. You
can steer yourself any direction
you choose. You’re on your own.
And you know what you know.
And you are the guy who’ll
decide where to go.”*

-Dr. Seuss

Oh the Places You’ll Go

WE ARE

multilingual



speaking 30 languages
(and learning more)

MSLS 2018



Florentina Kolb

Country: Germany

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Florentina is smart, kind and extremely giving. Those who know her well have been touched by her delicious Ayurvedic cooking and subtle humor. She is a strong willed person, and a supportive friend with contagious laughter. A significant theme in the personal and professional development of Flo has been to “look past the rim of her plate”-to view the larger and more complex landscape that exists beyond the immediate surroundings.

After leaving her small village in Germany, Flo studied in France and Germany in International Management and Finance. She then Coordinated a Sustainability Campaign for a luxury hotel in Tahiti. Always expanding, Flo also worked for a sustainable chocolate company in Amsterdam, where she eventually took on the position of lead product developer, known company wide as 'The Chocolate Alchemist'. While this work was formative, it was in Jamaica where Flo found her passion. While volunteering with the Jamaica National Commission for UNESCO, Flo fell in love with the culture and community and holds a vision to bring the MSLS spirit to Jamaica to address the ecological and social sustainability challenges there. With her strong spirit and soothing nature, Flo is certain to catalyze symbiotic relations throughout her life.

-Inspired by the artist Frida Kahlo



Adriana Colquechambi Zea O'Phelan

Country: Bolivia & Spain

Contact: adriczea@gmail.com

Adriana is a facilitator of intercultural dialogue and has positive experiences working with communication and marketing projects for the profit & nonprofit world. She holds an Ms in International Relations and Trade as well as a BA in Commercial Engineering. Adriana's key focus is a strategic human-centered worldview, identifying motivating factors and strategies that inspire change. She developed these skills through her experience as an actress and facilitator in the theater of the oppressed in Barcelona. The focus and trust in her instincts took her to work for a year in “Maison d'artistes” in France. Here she witnessed the artists' creation process, and how these moments of transcendence inspired their audience.

“Three things will last forever--faith, hope, and love--and the greatest of these is love.”

-1 Corinthians 13:13

Adriana strongly believes that the time has come for society to move from vision to action towards Sustainability. All the world should gather together to take action, co-create a better world and live a life of balance with all of God's creations. In order to stand up for her beliefs and put her talents in service of society, she decided to join the MSLS community as it was filled with fearless spirits who believe in defying the status quo with innovation and optimism to co-create a social and ecological world. Her sustainability dream is to have people become aware of their nature and realize that we are all interconnected.



Yasinta Willibard Kayoza

Country: Tanzania

Contact: seiftyso@gmail.com

Yasinta has a master's degree in Education, Administration Planning and Policy Studies, with a bachelor's degree in Education. Before attending MSLS, she was a geography and mathematics teacher in her school, in addition to being the Head of the Department of Education at Kigamboni Municipality for ten years, which includes 79 schools in her region including around nine thousand children.

Yasinta believes that her area back home lacks the leadership skills in education and wants to gain knowledge to lead change. She wants to use tools from MSLS to change the situation, focusing on illiteracy and lack of knowledge of their unsustainable path. "I want my country to be sustainable. I want to change myself first and I know I can help others to change too. We learn about sustainability challenges and sustainability principles - and I think it is very important. I'd like to master the processes (so I can) take it back home in my organization."

In her spare time, Yasinta likes reading, traveling and sports - like netball!

I like music from Tanzania (such as Diamond Platnumz or Harmonize) because it helps me to stop overthinking and live in the present.

-Yasinta



Lisa Ohlander

Country: Sweden

Contact: ohlander.lisa@gmail.com

Lisa is Swedish and she lives in Helsingborg with her husband and their two children. Returning to Karlskrona means coming back to her roots, since Karlskrona is the city where she grew up. Lisa is trained as a mechanical engineer. She has been working as a product developer, making hearing protection equipment for the past 10 years. In the realm of business she experienced very little focus on sustainability and a lot of focus on generating profit. This was demotivating for her and led her to get in touch with the MSLS program via the distance online course.

Lisa joined the MSLS program because she wants to be a part of the solution, instead of a part of the problem. Lisa also wants to broaden her world view through the international setting of the class. Her dream after completing MSLS is to be able to get a job that feels more meaningful. Changing herself and others towards a more sustainable way of life is the ideal image of that dream.

"A journey of a thousand miles begins with a first step"

-Lao Tzu

WE ARE

respectful of each
other's diversity in a
playful way

-Class of '18

MSLS 2018



Konstantinos Koukouvetsios

Country: Greece

Contact: koukouvetsiosk@gmail.com

Konstantinos has a bachelor degree from the School of History and Archaeology where he specialized in the prehistoric ages. With his colleagues, he discovered a prehistoric village and tried to expose the way of living in that historic time.

Kostas then worked as a senior high school teacher for six years in a private school. He taught History, Greek language and Greek literature. Considering that education has many different aspects, he was involved in the school's theatre group and other voluntary actions. He then worked as a teacher for four years in one of the most deprived areas of his hometown, with students from poor families, "Education can't be a privilege only for a few" so he believes.

For him, sustainability has to deal not only with environment but also with society and economy. He chose the MSLS programme in order to explore new options for the educational system and learn new approaches, methods and tools for creating a sustainable future for the whole society. Finally, Konstantinos is convinced that we should transform the way of thinking of the young generation in order to transit towards a sustainable society.

"True teachers are those who use themselves as bridges over which they invite their students to cross; then, having facilitated their crossing, joyfully collapse, encouraging them to create their own."

-Nikos Kazantzakis



Théo Fischer

Country: Switzerland

Contact: theo@pmfischer.ch

During his undergrad in business administration in Switzerland, Théo questioned the limitless economic growth that was discussed and refuted the concept. During an exchange at Columbia University, he had the opportunity to learn about the connections between economics and society which inspired his Bachelor's thesis titled "The Way Towards a Zero-Growth Society". His thesis empowered him to radically change his lifestyle and professional career.

He started producing his own goods and worked as a leadership consultant for top managers in Switzerland. During this transformation, he felt that he was lacking a dimension of depth in his life. He was searching for different ways to not only change himself but to encourage others to change themselves. The MSLS program seemed like the ideal program as the leadership approach, the diversity of the students, and the teaching methods strongly appealed to him. By learning to pull back the layers of sustainability and delve deeper into the issues, he hopes to then learn to communicate that knowledge to the rest of the world, especially those with differing world views. He envisions a future where richness isn't simply about wealth and where more emphasis is put on using local supply chains and markets to recreate diversity and culture.

"Tchin tchin, à la tienne: on a tous ce qu'il nous faut pour faire de meilleurs lendemains!"

-Alkapote



Xiaohui "Andy" Yu

Country: China

Contact: andy_yu@newvantage.org

Xiaohui "Andy" has been making his living from the sustainability industry for decade. He has worked with non-profit organizations as well as private sector. He chose the MSLS program to achieve a global perspective of sustainability management, especially for sustainability management in the business context. He is inspired by the idea of working in the area of sustainability in a self-sufficient way. His goal is to create a synergy between sustainability on one hand and business on the other, proofed through a direct financial income.

Chasing this goal, he moved with his wife and daughter to Karlskrona to attend the MSLS Program. He has been trying to discover the roots of sustainability characteristics in Chinese culture. Andy is a very open minded and positive person who likes good conversations while enjoying a stimulating deep breath.

"Sustainability is an art of possibilities."

-Simon Zadek



Robin Woolner

Country: United States of America

Contact: squidswillbsquids@gmail.com

Robin's life can be described as that of a modern-day Huckleberry Finn. His adventures took place in different settings: his early education in a free school has equipped him with an inexhaustible curiosity and sense of playfulness. It was at college that he quenched his thirst for knowledge and interdisciplinary learning when taking classes in many different disciplines, varying from anthropology, psychology, history of consciousness, physics, religion and art.

He literally jumped on the environmental bandwagon when, while riding freight trains across the USA, he decided to become a farmer, for its connection to nature and the positive impact he could make on the environment as well as his customers. After having worked at a number of farms and starting an urban garden and bakery project in Kansas City, he decided to take his nursery and landscaping experiences to a new level and enrolled in a program in environmental studies. Not only did Robin open a cooperative clinic for Alexander Technique but also an art space called 'time space'. His latest endeavors brought him to Spain, where he worked on an ecosystem restoration project. At MSLS, his wish is to learn about a framework for organizational development and innovation that puts systemic health in the very center.

-Inspired by Emery Blagdon

WE ARE worldly



having called over 41 coun-
tries “home” during our lives

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Miranda Willems

Country: The Netherlands

Contact: mail@mirandawillems.com

Miranda has a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration with an emphasis on Social Innovation and Creative Social Entrepreneurship from the Academy for Leisure. As a Social Innovator, she proactively hosted and designed social change in societal projects enabling individuals to engage in social sustainability and innovation. After facilitating these participatory processes, Miranda noticed that she missed the knowledge, tools and strategies for sustainability. After five years of working, she reflected on her purpose while traveling and discovering some of the most beautiful, yet degraded, places on Earth. "I wondered: if not learning about leading on this purring edge, what else...? And so the new story began..."

While attending MSLS, Miranda hopes to develop herself as a proactive leader in sustainability, cooperating in the world transition team. She dreams of a world where biodiversity is celebrated and where enabling structures, patterns and frameworks work on a worldwide scale, restoring the Earth's capacity to remain thriving well beings. "I dream of a world in which we could be self-sufficient thriving individuals, feeling alive in thriving relationships with Nature, the world, ourselves, and each other. Well beings in a social and environmental just world."

-Inspired by Russell Brand,
Abraham Hicks and
Polly Higgins.



Cisco Armstrong

Country: Canada

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Cisco is a storyteller and a traveller. He considers himself to be an experiential (un)learner, seeking uncertainty as his preferred method. He unlearned a lot by wandering the world during the better part of ten years. Cisco holds a Bachelor's degree in Development Studies with an emphasis on Agricultural and Rural Development. During his studies, his passion for community engagement sprouted. He is a practitioner of participatory leadership through the Art of Hosting. Cisco has worked in diverse fields (literally) from permaculture farms, to social work, as a youth program coordinator, and in leading a project to provide fresh food to a disadvantaged suburb of Toronto, Canada. He loves to find himself working at the harmonious intersection of people and nature, embracing diversity in both.

"Out beyond ideas of
wrongdoing and rightdoing
there is a field. I'll meet you
there."

-Rumi

The journey has led Cisco and his wife to Karlskrona. He is here to engage himself, to explore his shadows and gaps, and to shift to a creative life stage, beginning with fatherhood. His dream is to be part of a regenerative and participatory community that offers an inclusive space for people to enhance their own well being, where the social and environmental meet and are no longer separate.



Mari Nakamura

Country: Japan

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Mari is from Tokyo, Japan, and this is her first time in Europe. Sweden is very different to Japan, but it is not a complete culture shock. Japanese and Swedish cultures do share some cultural similarities, however, there are a lot more trees and open space in Sweden.

Mari has a Bachelor Degree in Policy Management from Keio University where she then completed a Masters in International Public Policy at the University of Tokyo. Since graduating, she has travelled around Africa and the Middle East countries and worked as a journalist including time at the Fukushima disaster in 2011. Mari has also worked as a coordinator supporting local enterprise and rejuvenation of rural areas and the Japanese countryside.

In her spare time, she would like to freelance or setup an NGO to help social business enterprise and sustainable community development. Mari is undecided on her future plans and, upon completion of MSLS, may remain in Europe or perhaps will go back to Japan.

She loves traveling, especially to new cultures and trying new craft beers (specifically IPAs and pale ales.) "I have a wild dream of one day of starting a small sustainable craft beer company."

"In being love, I give love
In being joy, I give joy
In being happiness, I give happiness
Everything I am searching for is within me."

-Note on a toilet wall



Paul Leistra

Country: The Netherlands

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Paul was born to a family with a "troubled adventurer" father and a loving and "caring-for- those-around-her" mother. He is from the Netherlands, his first "home," along with New Zealand - the place he felt deeply connected to after a holiday, and Sweden- his wife's motherland. Unsurprisingly, he is a polyglot speaking Dutch, English, German and Swedish. After dabbling in shipbuilding studies and many other jobs including music theatre, sports instructor, health care and working in Ikea, he chose to be an industrial designer.

Before arriving to Karlskrona, he wanted to live in Sweden for a year with his Swedish wife and kids, but he found his calling at MSLS in order to learn theory and practice of both leadership and sustainability in an engaging way. He wants to become a better change facilitator towards a healthier future instead of a change "nagger"; which he thinks he has been perceived as at times.

Paul likes making and flying kites, snowboarding, running, hiking, biking, being out in nature, reading, cooking, photography, playing with his kids, having nice dinners with his family and friends and much more.

"You can observe a lot by watching."

-Yogi Berra

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inspirational leaders of
positive change,
bringing hope for the
future

-Class of '18

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Juliette Ténart

Country: France

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"When you knew that change needed to happen, what did you do?" This is a question that drives Juliette and her work in the world. Inspired to change, willing to learn, wanting to grow, she strives to be a force for good in the world, to help uncover the change which wants to emerge.

With two Bachelor's degrees in Business Language and Business Administration and Economics, Juliette admires the courage of social entrepreneurs who redefine the business landscape. She is captivated by the authentic power, strength and confidence of innovative action that contributes to the world. Having worked with an accelerator for such social entrepreneurs, Juliette is inspired to dive deep into her own journey of leadership and discovery.

The seed for MSLS was planted after falling in love with Sweden during her studies in Lund. She is here with an open mind, open heart and open will. Juliette hopes that MSLS will help her realize a dream of contributing to a world where those who commit no wrong no longer need to suffer.

*"Even the darkest night will end
and the sun will rise."*

-V. Hugo



Keigo Arai

Country: Japan

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Keigo has a bachelor in English literature. He worked as a public officer for ten years in his hometown, Yamanashi. During this period, he established a foundation in order to support and facilitate non-profit organizations. He was responsible for administrative and economic issues.

He has chosen MSLS because he believes that the programme provides a great opportunity to do something meaningful not only for himself, but also for the society as a whole. He has a great interest for the scientific background of sustainability and the global view concerning the main problems of our time and a vision for the future.

Keigo wants to use his knowledge to get involved in the training of other public officers regarding sustainability. His dream is to enhance the awareness regarding environment and society. Another ambition is to get involved in local policy. He wants to show to people of Yamanashi that besides economic growth, they should search for a more sustainable future within society. Finally, he hopes MSLS could be his compass in order to learn more about how he can affect decisions of companies and organizations.

*-Inspired by Yamanashi, a local
Japanese artist from his
hometown*



Michael Fellner

Country: Austria

Contact: michi_fellner@yahoo.de

Michael comes from a small village in Southern Austria - so small, that there were only 9 children in his school. Nonetheless, Michael is nothing like a typical farmer; he is more like a representative of the intelligentsia, given that for his university studies he moved to such a cultural center as Vienna. Michael's professional background is in business administration. Simultaneously with his Bachelor's studies, he started to work, so by the end of his university studies, he had 3.5 years of experience in headhunting and event-management.

After working in the corporate sector with Red Bull company and an Austrian startup, Michael felt a need for a more influential job, where he would be able to improve his community. That is why he joined an initiative 'Teach for Austria'. After teaching up to 70 kids a variety of classes, Michael decided to come to the MSLS program. He wants to find ways to improve the educational system in his country, especially to achieve equal educational opportunities for children from poor families. Michael is quite adventurous. He has founded and closed a company, did a jump with the parachute, and visited such distant countries as Singapore and the Philippines.

-Inspired by Luis von Ahn



Trang Nguyen

Country: Vietnam

Contact: ng.thutrang.11@gmail.com

With a basis in Software Engineering Trang has ventured into a myriad of working experiences namely IT engineering, event organizing, graphic design, working for an NGO, fundraising and participatory process facilitating. Before embarking on her newest journey in Karlskrona as a part of the MSLS program, she worked in a unique non-formal education program for four years called Knowmads Hanoi. It was while working in this environment where she became inspired by the great impacts human beings have through working in harmony and creating a collaborative open culture for mutual growth in order to deal with complex situations. This was something that had already been sparked in her when she first learnt about the concept of open source software and open knowledge back when being an IT student.

"Your car goes where your eyes go."

-Garth Stein,
The Art of Racing in the Rain

Being an avid reader, Trang has a never-ending thirst for knowledge to better understand the world around her. Looking to further develop her education on sustainability, Trang connected with a colleague who has an MSLS degree. She reviewed the program online and applied to be a part of the 2018 MSLS Program.

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in our mission to be great
sustainable leaders

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Adrian Zhou

Country: China

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Originally from Shanghai, Adrian holds a Bachelor's degree in Mechanical & Mechatronic Engineering from Shanghai University. He first came to Karlskrona last year, then as an exchange student at BTH, and decided to stay for another year and join the MSLS program.

He wants to take the chance at MSLS to dive deeper into the field of Sustainability and in the future combine this with his engineering background. Back home in China, where development is going on rapidly, the risks and drawbacks of developing an economy at the expense of the environment are becoming ever clearer. It is becoming evident that both the environment and people's health are paying the price for the industrial development that has been going on for many years, and Adrian wants to be part of reversing that trend. At MSLS, he hopes to broaden his horizons and foster leadership- and communication skills in order to be able to do so.



Meera Chita

Country: South Africa

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Meera toyed with the idea of joining the medical profession to make a difference in the world but instead chose to be an architect by profession, allowing her to follow her love of science and art simultaneously. Finding passion in designing green architecture, Meera was introduced to many business leaders who wanted to build sustainable environments for their companies. Becoming well known for her skills, she and a partner started their own company: Turn Key Architecture Interiors & Branding. This led to her developing brand and sustainable strategies for multiple organizations including large-scale projects for a financial corporation across South Africa. Seeing an opportunity to expand sustainability across more of her society, Meera applied for the MSLS program.

"I want to be a part of the decision-making process and to create a society of self-sustaining people and urban structures. I want to teach people that sustainability is simple and can be a part of everyone's lives. South Africa is so young in this field. It's important to implement systems where (sustainability is) integrated into how industrialization develops." Meera sees sustainability not as a luxury for the wealthy but a necessity for everyone.

Fun Fact: Meera has met Nelson Mandela several times, describing him as a tall, powerful, loving and interactive man who loved to dance.

"Today you are you! That is truer than true! There is no one alive who is you-er than you!"

-Dr. Seuss



Sophia von Petersdorff-Campen

Country: Germany

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Sophia, who considers herself as a global citizen, made her way from Hamburg to Karlskrona. She is a life enthusiast, food lover, sports and outdoors fan and the next wave of wanderlust is always just around the corner. While packing and unpacking her backpack and volunteering in many parts of the world she has been exposed to a plethora of different life styles and economic conditions that gave her insight into the 'bubble' she grew up in. Since then the curiosity and the concern to understand how our complex world works and develops has never left her.

*“Lass dich nicht unterkriegen;
sei frech und wild und
wunderbar.”*

*(Don't let them get you down.
Be cheeky, wild and wonderful!)*

*-Astrid Lindgren,
Pippi Longstocking*

She graduated in Socio-Economics and explored working life in some larger corporations. No matter how fun or demanding her work was, she always felt a lack of purpose. Being alarmed about the ongoing sustainability challenges in society, she decided to become a change maker and has started this journey at MSLS. Her wish for the future is to inspire change and raise awareness in society by becoming an expert in the field of sustainability. In her future jobs she wants to contribute positively to a transformation towards more sustainable consumption patterns and help to create effective business models.



Frank Swinton

Country: England

Contact: frankswinton@gmail.com

Frank is a hospital doctor and anaesthetist who is concerned about sustainability. For the past 10 years he has been trying to reduce the environmental impact of health care in the UK by introducing recycling in the operating room, developing campaigns and working closely with Centre for Sustainable Health Care and Sustainable Development Unit of the National Health Service. Despite his best efforts, Frank is keenly aware that there is a lot more work to be done, and he wants to have a greater impact on the sustainability of health care in the future.

“Never waste a good crisis.”

-Winston Churchill

He believes that the credibility and network of MSLS, and the skills he will learn, will help him to achieve his vision of a more sustainable health system. Frank moved to Karlskrona with his family to share the experience of living abroad with them. In the future, Frank wants to have some time in his job which is specifically allocated for sustainability. His sustainability dream for his environment is to reduce the environmental and social harm that health care causes. Through MSLS, Frank wants to learn about the Framework of Strategic Sustainable Development (FSSD) and structures for organising sustainability in a way which is cohesive.

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one



armed with goals and strategic tools to change the world

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Roy Straver

Country: The Netherlands

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Shifting from his electronic engineering past, Roy started his company in lighting technology, based on his hobbies in music and experimental arts. He continued his bachelors in Business Engineering, during which he did multiple research projects in thermo-chemical heat storage, heat transmitting, business-technology alignment, an international business course in Beijing, and he graduated with a focus in after-merger business synergy.

Whilst starting a master's degree in Technical Innovation Science, he learned about a Kenyan project in water purification which inspired him to volunteer on entrepreneurial and logistic work towards off-grid clean water supplies in rural Africa. "During this period, I realized the technology we need in order to achieve sustainability is already available: we just need to put it into practice".

Roy heard about the MSLS programme through one of the previous years' alumni, and his realization during the water project prompted him to apply. By being part of MSLS, he wishes to learn how to implement the desired change within society, with his background in technology as a tool for achieving sustainability. At the same time he dreams about influencing business and government decision making towards a more sustainable outcome. "I want to be part of the sustainability solution, to feel confident about the future."

Annika Löwgren

Country: Sweden

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Originally from Sweden, Annika studied at Lund University where she got her degree in Nanotechnology and Biomedical Engineering. Besides that, she has worked as a ski guide and with outdoor tourism around the world for many years, and studied Italian in Siena.

She then stumbled upon MSLS, and realized that many of her interests converge here in this program: how people function, how we communicate, and how to approach sustainability in a strategic manner. At MSLS, she feels like she gets the chance to develop and stimulate many aspects of her character and learn more about the things that she values. Her heart beats/passion is for human health and the environment, and she hopes to work at a strategic level to build bridges between these fields so they can thrive together. This year, she really wants to learn how to collaborate and engage in creating sustainable strategies in different contexts, and also how to communicate sustainability in a way that empowers others to take action make better choices more easily.

"I just try to think about the future, and not be sad"

-Elon Musk



"Let yourself be silently drawn by the strange pull of what you really love. It will not lead you astray."

-Rumi



Eike Schmidt

Country: Germany

Contact: eike.schmidt@posteo.de

Eike has been curious to understand how and why people behave in such a destructive way on earth. Coming from the northern part of Germany, he studied Environmental and Sustainability Sciences with a Philosophy minor in Lueneburg, Germany.

In 2014 his journey led him to an 'Art of Hosting' training event in Karlskrona, where he met people sharing his attitude towards work and socio-ecological change. This helped him define his purpose and led him to MSLS, where he hopes to learn more about training effective leaders – taking his purpose out into the professional field. He chose MSLS due to the diverse program design, the great network of people and the deep friendships beyond the classroom, plus it has allowed him to live in Sweden, an ambition he has had since he was at school.

Eike's vision for the future is a world where people have more time for their families, where they can dance with abandon, laugh fully, shine, and work with a purpose, where they are able to truly connect with one another and experience the real beauty of nature. His hopes are that his grandkids and all generations to come will be able to enjoy the beauty of life as well.

"Don't ask yourself what the world needs. Ask yourself what makes you come alive. And then go do that. Because what the world needs is people who have come alive."

-Howard Thurman



Sara Hoy

Country: United States of America

Contact: sarahoy03@gmail.com

Sara studied Integrative Arts at Penn State University in Pennsylvania, USA where she followed her passions and generally focused on taking courses in photography, arts, entrepreneurship, communications, and pottery, including a dance minor. After her studies, her career path involved sales, communications, marketing, graphic design, tourism, and IT management.

About 9 years later, Sara decided that she needed a life-change. This decision led her to Moldova for three years where she volunteered with the Peace Corps as a Community & Organizational Development Advisor. This experience led her to working with different people, organizations, and projects focused on building skills, capacity, and sustainability.

As Sara applied for MSLS she carried many questions on the sustainable aspect. Sara's sustainability vision for the future is to make a meaningful contribution to the world we live in – to leave it better than we found it. She asks: "How can we live and work in a meaningful and sustainable way – and how can we make a living doing that?" Sara looks forward to taking with her from MSLS a set of tools to lead the world to a more meaningful and sustainable way of life and work.

"Sometimes you will never know the value of a moment, until it becomes a memory."

-Dr. Seuss

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many



with a common goal to be
the change the world needs

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Johannes Kronenberg

Country: The Netherlands

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Johannes grew up in a so-called Camphill Community in The Netherlands, where ecological and social sustainable values were at the core of daily life. At the age of sixteen, a visit to Israel where he witnessed global and political conflicts first-hand, stirred a desire to transform the system we have created. At the same time, Johannes was fascinated by the natural urge of individuals for meaning-making. To pursue his goals, he studied a Bachelors in Visual Arts in the city of Arnhem. Afterwards he worked for two years in transformative social and educational programs spread over the Netherlands and Europe. Johannes strongly believes that we need to develop a spiritual understanding of what the human being actually is. A sustainable society striving for self and collective awareness are cornerstones of his vision.

Despite today's major problems, Johannes is a positive person with a great sense of humour. It is his optimism that brought him to study MSLS. He wants to learn a direct approach and gain an academic understanding of the challenges the world is facing. A main part of his vision is his interest in empathy and selflessness: how we can overcome our 'small desires' to get more in touch with our true being and the ecological environment. One of his strengths in terms of achieving this vision that he is a leader by example.

"There are two things children should get from their parents: roots and wings."

-Wolfgang von Goethe



Fernanda Pia

Country: Costa Rica

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Whilst Fernanda was studying Law in Costa Rica, she decided to go to Taiwan to study Chinese Language, where she ultimately finished her bachelor in Communication. When she went back home six years later, she started working for an advertising agency, which led her to Dubai in order to work within the Hotel Business and explore the Arab Countries. Next, she worked for Green Center, a green organic supermarket which had the focus on the – back then booming - Life Cycle Assessments. Before coming to Karlskrona, she was active in cultural development in urban areas, working for the Parque La Libertad Foundation; a project by the the Ministry of Culture and Youth in Costa Rica. In June last year, both Fernanda and her partner Daniel decided to apply for MSLS, after a friend had highly recommended the programme.

By being part of MSLS, Fernanda aims to learn to empower people to actively work on sustainability in an engaging way. "It's hard to convince people without bringing them out of their comfort zone," she says. Her goal is to challenge the majority – particularly policymakers – to practice sustainability; and to bring a sense of awareness to the broader public.

-Inspired by Alexander von Humboldt & Nelson Mandela



Sarah Lamb

Country: Canada

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Sarah grew up in the breathtaking Canadian Rocky Mountains and is therefore constantly in pursuit of her next adventure, powered by her hiking boots, her skis and her paddle. Sarah enjoys photography and she can't get enough podcasts!

Sarah's everlasting love for the outdoors motivated her to do her Bachelors Degree in Environmental Biology. She has since worked on a variety of biology outreach and research projects, in the field, in planning and in policy. Although these were all excellent experiences, Sarah often felt that they were missing the larger picture on Sustainability. She also wanted to experience more of the world and the people who inhabit it, both of which brought her to the MSLS program.

Sarah hopes to share her appreciation of nature and encourage others to go out of their way to preserve it. In addition to Sarah's ambitions in the field of sustainability, she is equally as determined to spread laughter everywhere she goes.

"it is the deepest of ironies that we find the greatest uplift in places least touched by our own species"

-R. Girling



Francisco Tobón Serna

Country: Colombia

Contact: franciscotobons@gmail.com

Francisco is like a brave Jedi Knight, holding back the dark forces of the Colombian coal mining industry. As an environmental engineer with a Master's Degree in ecological restoration, he has been working for a coal mining corporation for more than 12 years, patiently pushing for "Geomorphological Restoration" to reduce the destruction of the local ecosystem caused by coal mining and to bring back life to destroyed areas. In Colombia, there is not yet a law that obliges companies to do so. However, even though, Francisco has proposed a restoration method that reduces maintenance costs for the corporation, change occurs very slowly.

Francisco is eager to learn more about how to bring sustainability further up the agenda in a corporation that prefers "business as usual" and how to overcome its fear of change. Another question is: what role and responsibility does the coal mining industry have in the transition to a sustainable society? Francisco would like to learn more about "real" sustainability in comparison to the commonly used buzzword.

The MSLS-programme marks a break for Francisco for reflection and personal development. His vision is to contribute to a better world, to enable a healthy life for all living beings of the biosphere that we are all part of.

"The boundaries of my ego-self, which distinguish me from others, would simply dissolve as 'my mind' was realized to be not something separate from the world but a 'focal point' of the world. It would be a loss of all dualist tension and effort, a relaxation of the whole being. Letting go of all those things previously clung to, one would become the everything that in fact one always was."

-David Loy



Robin Dirks

Country: Germany

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Robin is a free-minded spirit, eager to design spaces for transformation. Guided by an open heart, his work and past activities reflect on his curiosity to discover and understand human endeavours in the 21st century. Since he first came across the destruction of rainforests as a child, Robin has a strong urge to understand its root causes and bring forward change in the world. Most recently, he worked at a rural development project in Paraguay that tries to bridge the interests between government and rural farmers and reinvent the way “development interventions” works. Bridging different diverse backgrounds was also his motivation to become the co-founder of a beautiful intercultural gardening project called Kulturgarten Lüneburg, where refugees, students and local gardeners can learn from each other while working and celebrating together.

During MSLS, he wants to learn more about how to organize teams and diverse groups in a way that every member can thrive and bring in their fullest potential. The MSLS programme will be a perfect chance for him to develop professional skills to take a lead on sustainability challenges to create a world where intact nature has a higher value than money.

*“Let yourself be silently drawn
by the stronger pull of what you
really love”*

-Rumi

This biography book is a class project including every student’s collaboration to produce. Bio Book team includes Meera Chita and Juliette Tenart for content, Robin Dirks and Ted Jan Post for photography, and James Vierling and Johannes Kronenberg for layout. Special note to Alex Swinton, partner of Frank Swinton, for assisting with the creation of this book.

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