



AMAZON

Summer

SCHOOL



REPORT 2018

A person is seen from behind, sitting on a balcony with a wooden railing, looking out over a wide river at sunset. The sky is filled with orange and yellow light, reflecting on the water. The background is a lush green landscape with trees. A semi-transparent green overlay covers the right side of the image, featuring a white geometric pattern of overlapping lines. The title 'letter of inspiration' is written in a white, cursive font at the top right.

# letter of inspiration

This publication is the story of the **Amazon Summer School 2018** - a three week immersion course into the Amazon rainforest to cultivate sustainability leaders. International, multi-cultural and multi-talented people from many different sectors come together with a shared passion for sustainability and social engagement as well as a desire to be part of a community of thinkers and practitioners in this field.

The Amazon Summer School is hosted in **Tumbira**, a community within the **Rio Negro Protected Area** in the **Brazilian State of Amazonas**. The blend of a rich and powerful natural environment, traditional riverine knowledge and innovative social technologies from local and global leaders provides a fertile soil for learning, exchange and growth. The hope is that learning during the course inspires positive action towards sustainable development in the community of Tumbira, and in the communities and networks participants are connected to around the world.

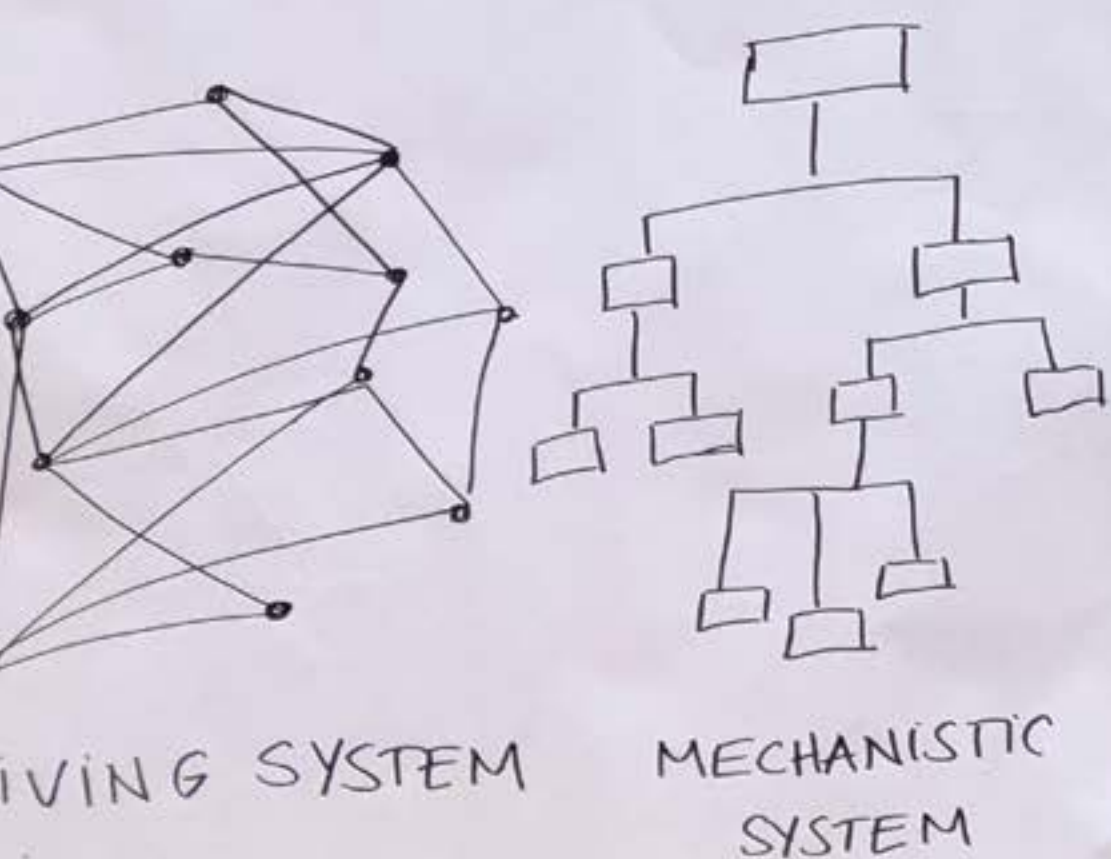
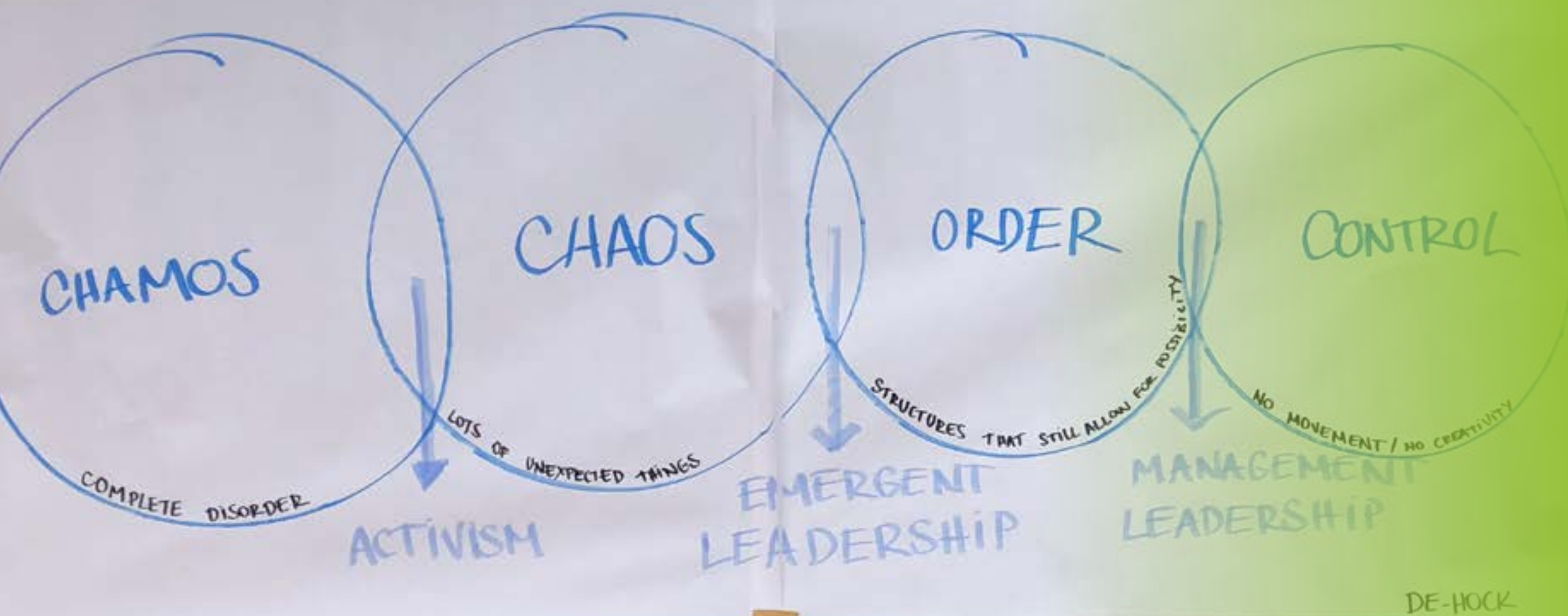
# 2018 edition



The third edition of the Amazon Summer School marks a new iteration in design and content based on learning from the previous editions. The course aspires to grow and learn with the experiences and feedback of each participant year. Some of the major shifts and additions include:

- A focus on self knowledge and personal inquiry
- Morning movement practice each day before the course to support embodied learning and integration through physical action
- A day of Ajuri - A local example of self organizing, collaboration, and community spirit. In this event, community members invited participants to join them in a day long working session.
- Fewer formal speakers presenting lectures and more reflection and group processes to uncover collective knowledge
- Inviting youth into the process through their involvement in the Ajuri and having the Bravery mission called and designed by them
- Involving new communities by including a Bravery mission in Santa Helena do Ingles
- Expanding the core organizing team from four people to eight people. The four new team members allowed for greater production capacity, enhanced and extended collaboration with local community members, supported translation and gathered insights from an Amazonian leader.
- Increasing the number of classes in the forest for connection with natural world and experiential learning
- Growing support from community members, with new people offering classes in agroforestry, cooking, fishing and colours of the forest

# methodologies used during the course

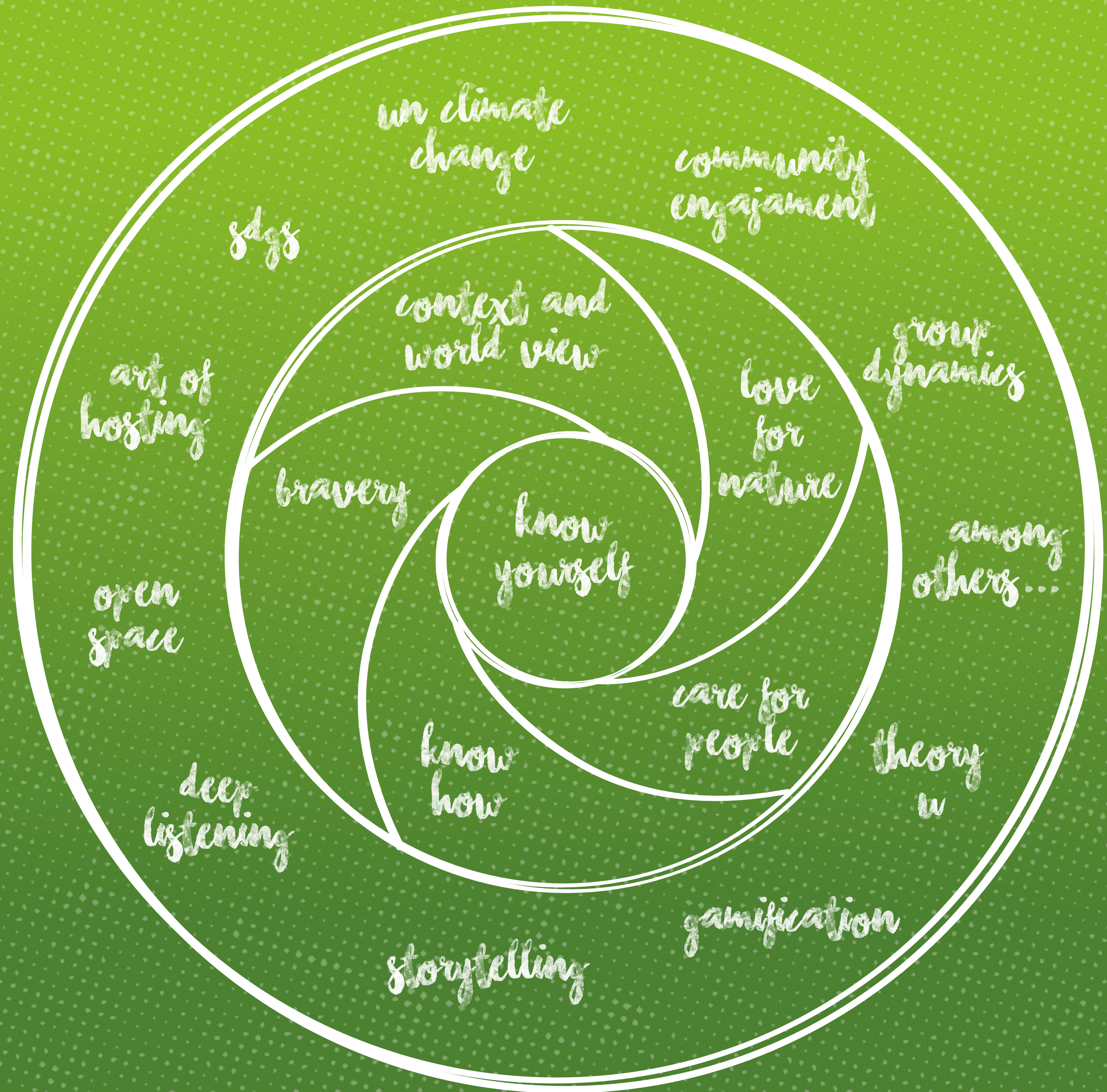


- Theory U
- The Art of Hosting
- Disruptive Design model from the Unschool
- Systems Thinking
- UN Sustainable Development Goals
- Sustainable development from the FAS perspective
- Amazon natural system biology and dynamics
- Collaborative Leadership methods
- Social impact evaluation
- Gamification
- Story telling
- Habits, Patterns and Mental Models
- Community Leadership in traditional riverine perspective
- Community engagement, mobilization and activism
- Theory of Change
- Project Planning and Frameworks
- Elos Institute - Oasis Game
- Circular dances
- Activities from community and celebration: soccer, traditional party, food and handcraft.

# circular model

## THE DIFFERENT PHASES CAN BE EXPLAINED USING A CIRCULAR MODEL

The Amazon Summer School is designed as an experiential learning journey that leads participants through five modules: Love for Nature, Care for People, Know yourself, Know How, and Bravery. Each of these topics and the interaction between them are intended to challenge and increase knowledge about sustainability, sustainable development and the leadership required to work in this field.





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people

# participants

The Amazon Summer School 2018 edition welcomed a group of fifteen participants between 19 and 67 years old from nine different countries.

The program was hosted by an organizing team of eight people (four women and four men) from three different countries: Brazil, Canada and Lithuania. Invited speakers from Brazil, Portugal and the traditional communities of Rio Negro Sustainable Development Reserve added key content and inspiration to the course.

These are the faces and stories of the 2018 participants. They come from nine different countries, with nine identifying as men and six as women

Please [Click here to find out more about them.](#)



Neeshad • India



Andrea • Mexico



Aynur • Azerbaijan



Carlla • Brazil



Fernanda • Brazil



Flávia • Brazil



João • Brazil



Luana • Brazil



Manuel • Peru



Nauman • Bangladesh



Odenilze • Brazil



Paul • England



Stina • Sweden



Teresa • New Zealand



Thales • Brazil

A man with a beard, wearing a white polo shirt with a small logo on the chest and a brown hat, stands in a lush green forest. He is gesturing with his hands as if speaking to a group of people. The background is filled with large tree trunks and dense foliage. The overall scene is set in a natural, outdoor environment.

# invited speakers

Invited speakers contribute essential inspiration, support and guidance for participants during their learning journey. The Amazon Summer School is extremely grateful for their commitment of time and offering of knowledge.

The group of invited speakers for the 2018 course were: Valcleia Solidade (FAS), Lauren Barredo (SDSN), Gabriela Sampaio (SDSN-Amazonia), Raquel Rosenberg (Engajamundo), Eduardo Taveira

(FAS), Artur Sgambatti (FVA), Maria Cristina Pereira (REUSA), Paula Gabriel (FAS), Ademar Cruz (FAS), Emerson Pontes (FAS), João Rafael (AMBEV - New York), Maurício Curi (Comover), Virgilio Viana (FAS), Ramon Mourato (Idesam), Marcelo Castro (FAS), Leandro Pinheiro (Fundação FEAC), Tulio Notini (Yunus).

[Click here to learn more about them.](#)

# hosting team

The hosting team is led by facilitators and program designers with experience organizing learning journeys and community development projects across South America, North America, and Europe. Each one brings their own unique talents as well as experience working together for three or more years. This year we welcomed Arthur, Bruno, Gabriel, and Severas to the hosting team.

[Click here to learn more about them.](#)

During this edition the host team was formed by:

RAQUEL LUNA



ARTHUR GOERCK



LAURA CANDELARIA



SEVERAS SVEDAS



GABRIEL OLIVEIRA



BRUNA VIAPIANA



ISABEL CHENDER



BRUNO MANGOLINI



# speakers from the community


The speakers and teachers from the community share their homes, community, forest and knowledge with all of us. They teach participants about tradition, culture and local knowledge. Their stories are inspirational and mindset shifting. The Amazon Summer School is extremely grateful for their commitment of time and offering of knowledge.

The speakers from the community were Roberto Mendonça, Vera Garrido, Izolena Garrido, Messias, Edvaldo, Manuel Garrido, Juliete, Marineuza, Jean Sena, Teresinha Macedo, Adinamar, Patricia Macedo, Anne Macedo, Renato Garrido, Eliene Macedo, Geisy, Maria, Nadia Garrido, and all the youth from ColetivAção.



context and  
worldview





# context and worldview

The first days of the course are a moment to welcome participants, create common ground around key themes and to set pace of the course. The journey begins before participants arrive with online video lessons about the Amazon. The welcome circle provided a chance for the team and participants to share what brings this group together and why each one chose to be there.

The first session by Valcleia Solidade presented advancements and challenges faced on working with communities in the Amazon, bringing some reflections about acknowledging that local reality is completely different and the importance of trying to see and feel their perspective and where they are coming from.

In the open session panel, Lauren Barredo (SDSN), Gabriela Sampaio (SDSN-Amazonia) and Raquel

Rosenberg (Engajamundo) brought stories from their challenges on engaging civil society. The participants were invited to watch the panel listening to different aspects of the stories, to help reflect back to the speakers what they perceived and how the stories connect to each other.

Raquel Rosenberg led an exercise to bring up the collective ideas of leadership and the causes that move people into action.



# context and worldview

The second day was focused on exploring Amazonian urban areas. Eduardo Taveira guided a bus tour through Manaus talking about the relationship between city and forest, overviewing the positive and negative aspects of the current development model.

In a visit to the MUSA (Museum of the Amazon) observation tower with a presentation by Artur Sgambatti of the plans to integrate

environmental practices with the urban planning, participants gained an overview of how the metropolis of the Amazon relates to the forest.

The group had the opportunity to visit a slum in Manaus which is leading an innovative waste management and community engagement project. Maria Cristina Pereira, the community leader who started this initiative

told the story of REUSA group, that is growing bigger and giving new opportunities to the economically poor region.

Paula Gabriel shared a bit of the secrets of co-creating big civil society movements such as Virada Sustentável, a collective event for sustainability initiatives around the city. To celebrate, the participants attended the launch of Virada in the city center.



# context and worldview

The third day was a transition from the city to Tumbira. The community is a hub for the Rio Negro Sustainable Development Reserve.

The boat stopped in the Rubber Tappers' Museum on the way. The participants were able to see the traditional activity of rubber

extraction and hear from Ademar Cruz about social movements led by the Rubber Tappers to fight for their rights and the creation of Protected Areas in the state.

When arriving in Tumbira, the group was welcomed by the community president, children and community representatives, who

made special bracelets for them. The hammocks were hung and the participants were now at home. There was a session to present the space and area. The day finished with a moment to present the agenda of the days ahead, reflect about the previous day and share a bit of the course pillars and foundations.



# Love for nature

In a classroom inside the forest the group was guided by Emerson Pontes through the complexity of Amazon natural cycles: water, soil and nutrients. Emerson's class brought the moto "all stories matter", including all animals and living beings that function in an interconnected way to sustain life. It had a powerful effect of linking humans history to the history of the leaves that can be found in the forest.

On the way back from the classroom participants traveled by boat, navigating through the Igapós (flooded forest) back to the community. The mirroring effects of the calm waters, combined with so many forest sounds created an illusion that people were flying instead of in a boat.

To add to the forest experience, the participants were invited to experience the forest with other senses and some twists to the common perception.

The activities in the forest generated powerful insights among the participants that were carried with them during the following days. Other spontaneous experiences in nature were initiated by participants during the following three weeks, such as canoeing during sunrise, alligator observation at night, forest walks and so on. The rhythm of nature is one of the main sources of learning during the course.

A man with a beard, wearing a green t-shirt, is leaning over a large globe. He is looking down at the globe with a focused expression. In the background, several people are visible, including a woman in a white t-shirt and a headscarf, and a man in a white t-shirt with 'AMAZON SUMMER SCHOOL' printed on it. The setting appears to be a classroom or a community center with wooden walls. The text 'care for people' is written in a white, cursive font on a green background that overlays the right side of the image.

# care for people

To understand the Amazon it is important to see it from the local people's perspective. In order to work together with communities, it is crucial to build relationships and develop an empathic point of view.

This is why a whole week of the course is devoted to experiencing the environment with the community. Participants hear stories from their point of view, learn from their practices and work together hand-in-hand.

In most activities of this module, community representatives were the teachers. Manuel told the history of the wood production in the region, Edvaldo invited the

group to a farinha (manioc flour) making experience in his farm, Izolena taught about local plants used as colors for painting and Messias took a group fishing. In the final session, Odenilze presented the view of the youth for the future of the region.

João Rafael, co-founder of The Amazon Summer School and invited teacher for this edition, led a class called "Dancing with Dragons" that inspired the participants to look at the community with appreciative eyes and build relationships. He also led classes about impact measurement in social projects and how to build and facilitate projects.



# care for people

One morning small groups had breakfast hosted by different families in their houses. This was a chance to connect beyond language around food in a relaxed atmosphere.

In the afternoon the participants were challenged to put what they had learned into practice. They were asked to offer a gift to the local school students that should be something fresh (that has never been done before), have an epic calling, make a difference in their day and include a celebration ritual.

Everyone in the group worked together to share stories from their countries and some special gifts. After a musical warm up

and a game about countries and curiosities from around the globe, they heard an indigenous Peruvian legend about forest and animal protection. At the end, each spoke their dreams and sent them into the sky as they were captured by an aerial picture.

What struck the group as they reflected about this activity was how they were able to organize themselves. They were able to use each one's talents and abilities to create something more than the sum of the individual parts, more than what they could have done alone. This was an unforgettable experience for the students who left with smiles and curiosity.



# care for people

One day of the course was devoted to inviting and facilitating a traditional collective working methodology called Ajuri.

Ajuri is how families used to collaborate among themselves to plant, build, and harvest. The owner of the land provides good food for the guests that come together to help the host prepare his land and plant.

The Amazon Summer School's Ajuri was called by the youth group ColetivAção and focused on the school garden area. Students,

their families and the participants helped to clean and plant an area that will serve as a "food forest" for the school. It was a chance to learn a bit about the Agroforestry system and to have a good time together with the students. Hard work became light and fun.

The end of the module was celebrated with a night sleeping out in the forest, with amazing dinner and an special art performance by Uyra Sodoma.



# know yourself

In the middle of the 21-days, Mauricio Curi guided the group through a self reflection journey. He invited the participants to tap into their sense of presence, go deep into one's own story and reveal the integral individual within.

Storytelling tools were used to access turning points in their lives, and each one had the chance to share in small groups. They were then able to tell the stories in a group event hosted in the forest classroom.

To go deeper into the individual stories he hosted a self biography exercise to allow participants to look into their trajectory and important moments of life. Through the biography, they identified aspects of their life they wanted to leave behind while moving forward. A silent fire ceremony ritualized this intentions.

After the silent night, the day started with an art and movement activity to invite people to return from silence. A group reflection was also part of the morning session.

Mauricio brought an important aspect that leaders and changemakers have the courage to bring their personal experiences, their stories and learnings into professional environments. He shared that a process of learning should move from experience to perception, passing through sensations, emotions, feelings and thoughts. This process of learning is a key element to tell powerful stories.

The closing moment of the workshop was self-organized TEDx style event in the forest classroom where participants were invited to step into this courage and publicly share personal stories.



# know how

The Know-How module is an opportunity to examine real case studies in the field of sustainable development in the Amazon. This phase prepares the group to move to the Bravery module by presenting the main issues that need to be considered when working with community projects for sustainability in the region.

Virgilio Viana hosted a question and answer session about the Amazon and FAS' mission, objectives, and ongoing work.

Two supply chain projects were presented to share learnings and challenges. Ramom presented the story of Apuí coffee which is sustainably produced in the South of Amazonas state. The coffee is a way to generate income for communities while at the same time regenerating degraded forest areas.

Marcelo Castro presented the example of pirarucu fishing management to showcase a successful community-led monitoring project. This project was able to revert the predictions of pirarucu extinction due to overfishing in some of the lakes in protected areas. At the same time, this added value to the product.

Following the cases, Leandro Pinheiro led a provocative workshop about community development practices. By bringing a hypothetical community problem, groups were challenged to work together to present proposals for investors. Participants worked to present their proposals using a Theory of Change model, demonstrating the relationship between proposed actions, their causes, and their intended changes. It was intended to be an opportunity for the participants to practice group work and reflect about it.



# bravery

The final module of the program always comes with a mix of excitement and apprehension. It is the moment to connect learning and experiences from the course to co-create something together with the community.

The organizing team is tasked with finding where participants can effectively contribute to challenges that community groups are currently facing. For the participants it is the time to practice and give back to the community what they have been learning. The actions should have a sustainable outcome, with concrete steps towards a long term plan that can be taken forward by someone from the community.

Tulio Notini guided the group through some methodologies that could be of use for the challenge.

The Oasis methodology from Instituto Elos and the Yunus Social business model guided the group into action.

Three “missions” or group challenges were developed and presented by the school youth collective - ColetivAção. All of them came from ongoing youth-led movements that the participants could actively contribute to.

The purpose of the mission is to develop capacities of community engagement, empathic listening, collaborative work and experience a quick mobilization of resources to design, refine, test and present a prototype.

In the following outline each of the challenges and their results.



# mission 1: agroforestry system and trail

## GOALS

Encourage young people to reconnect with and take care of the forest in Tumbira and its nature trails to create social, economic, environmental and cultural resources that can be shared with others.

## RESULTS

Together with ColetivAção, children, and people from the community, the group designed a map of all the plants in SAF, opened a path to connect the community trail with SAF, created signs and distributed them throughout the community to invite people to go visit SAF and the trail. They created the SAF community space and distributed some leaves on SAF soil to protect the baby plants.

## FUTURE

The engagement of the youth with SAF and trail can promote the growth and development of the Agroforestry system, while becoming a potential source of food and medicinal plants for Tumbira and surrounding communities. In the future SAF can create income generation through community engagement and provide environmental benefits to everyone.

# mission 2: connection with nature

## GOALS

Support ColetivAção to develop environmental educational activities in the community and school for children and young people feel more connected to nature.

## RESULTS

Together with ColetivAção and with children from school the participants hosted an activity about natural colors from the forest, using flowers, plants and seeds. They held an astronomy class for the High School students and developed a medicinal garden in SAF with students from primary and middle school.

## FUTURE

Youth can continue to promote environmental education in a fun and interactive way, using local materials and knowledge to boost the connection between young people and nature. They can raise awareness about the interdependence of people and nature. In partnership with elders and teachers, the young people from ColetivAção can become empowered to keep promoting environmental activities with the schools from Rio Negro RDS.

# mission 3: waste management

santa helena do ingles community

## GOALS

Improve community care related to waste and environment, encouraging sustainable alternatives for waste management and supporting income generation through tourism in the community.

## RESULTS

The first result of this mission was to create a banana circle in the school to filter the graywater. Through a collective process they collected the waste in the community and split it into specific trashes collection bins that were designed and created by the participants and ColetivAção. They hosted a workshop with children and community members to bring awareness about the importance of waste management for the future of the community and introduced how to create eco-bricks.

## FUTURE

By sparking a new system of waste management and implementing banana circles in all the houses of the community, Santa Helena do Inglês now dreams to become a sustainable community. They hope to reduce the waste generation, especially of plastic. Using the ecobricks produced in all the houses they want to build a sustainable square in the community.

# reflections and evaluation



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# reflections from the team

The end of each edition is an opportunity for the organizing team to learn from and integrate positive and negative feedback for future programs. Each group of participants bring different qualities and value different aspects of the course. It is important to learn from and growth with the perspectives raised in each year.



# recommendations for next year

## PROGRAM

- Spending more time in the forest due to the forest classroom and a deeper engagement of activities in the trail was a definite plus to this edition. This can be strengthened by having more scientific classes about the Amazon biological aspects.
- Two full days in Manaus added new perspectives and introduced the participants to a variety of projects and initiatives. At the same time, this information did not directly support the learning goals of the program and proved to be very intensive and tiring. It is recommended that for future editions that participants spend less time in Manaus and more time grounding in Tumbira.
- The addition of physical movement practice in the morning was appreciated by the participants and supported a healthier learning process during the course.

## MISSIONS

- A highlight of the course was the close participation of youth from Tumbira and nearby communities. Due to their initiation and participation, ideas sparked during the course have been taken forward.
- To act in other communities beyond Tumbira such as Santa Helena do Ingles was a positive experience that widened the impact of the program. These two elements will be included in future editions.

## PLANNING, SELECTION AND BACKSTAGE

- Regarding the planning and selection process, the organizing team realized the importance of launching the course with scholarship spots already funded. It is clear that not all of the top candidates have adequate funds to participate in the course. Creating scholarship funds to support these candidates is crucial to guarantee diverse representation.
- During the course, it was fundamental to have a bigger production team. This made production smoother, translation possible, and added new elements such as physical movement.

# evaluation from the participants

*methodologies*, examples, reflections,  
connection to people, connection to nature,  
understanding, analysis abilities, deepness.

*i was expecting* a course about sustainability,  
with topics related just to that. It was amazing  
to live sustainability through actions and  
experiences, not just lectures.

*amazon summer school* provided me  
important resources when it comes to grassroots  
work and community understanding, as well as  
participatory leadership methodologies.

*i was not expecting* to learn more about  
myself and what are my career interests.

*ways to reflect* about myself; Methods of how to  
work in group and for a purpose; Perfect dynamics  
of how to start and finish a meeting; Complete  
process with clear beginning and ending.

# evaluation from the participants

*links to like* minded people. I hope to keep as many connections alive as possible. Tools and methodologies exploring and expanding concepts around systems thinking.

*i feel i learnt* by the diversity of us all. We all have hidden depths and layers that may not be seen until a specific scenario creates a place.

*having morning* practice everyday have been critical for my journey and highly important for my self. I've learned to be integral and more caring with people around me.

*overall i think* is an incredible and very unique course. I have never been part of a process that leads and deals with education in the way it was deal: with a open, creative, caring and non- authoritarian form. However, the only thing I would add is a little bit more of academic knowledge about sustainability and the forest it self. But, overall, thank you for this life changing experience.

# economic impacts in rio negro rds

- During the 2018 edition of Amazon Summer School R\$ 13.654,50 was distributed to 46 people from 6 different communities from Rio Negro Sustainable Development Reserve.
- This income was administered by Pousada Garrido (Tumbira) - responsible for all the food during the course, who bought from different people. This also includes payment for local teachers.



A group of about ten people are sitting in a motorboat on a river. The background is a dense tropical forest under a sunset sky with soft, colorful clouds. The water in the foreground is calm, reflecting the boat and the people. The overall mood is serene and adventurous.

# backstage

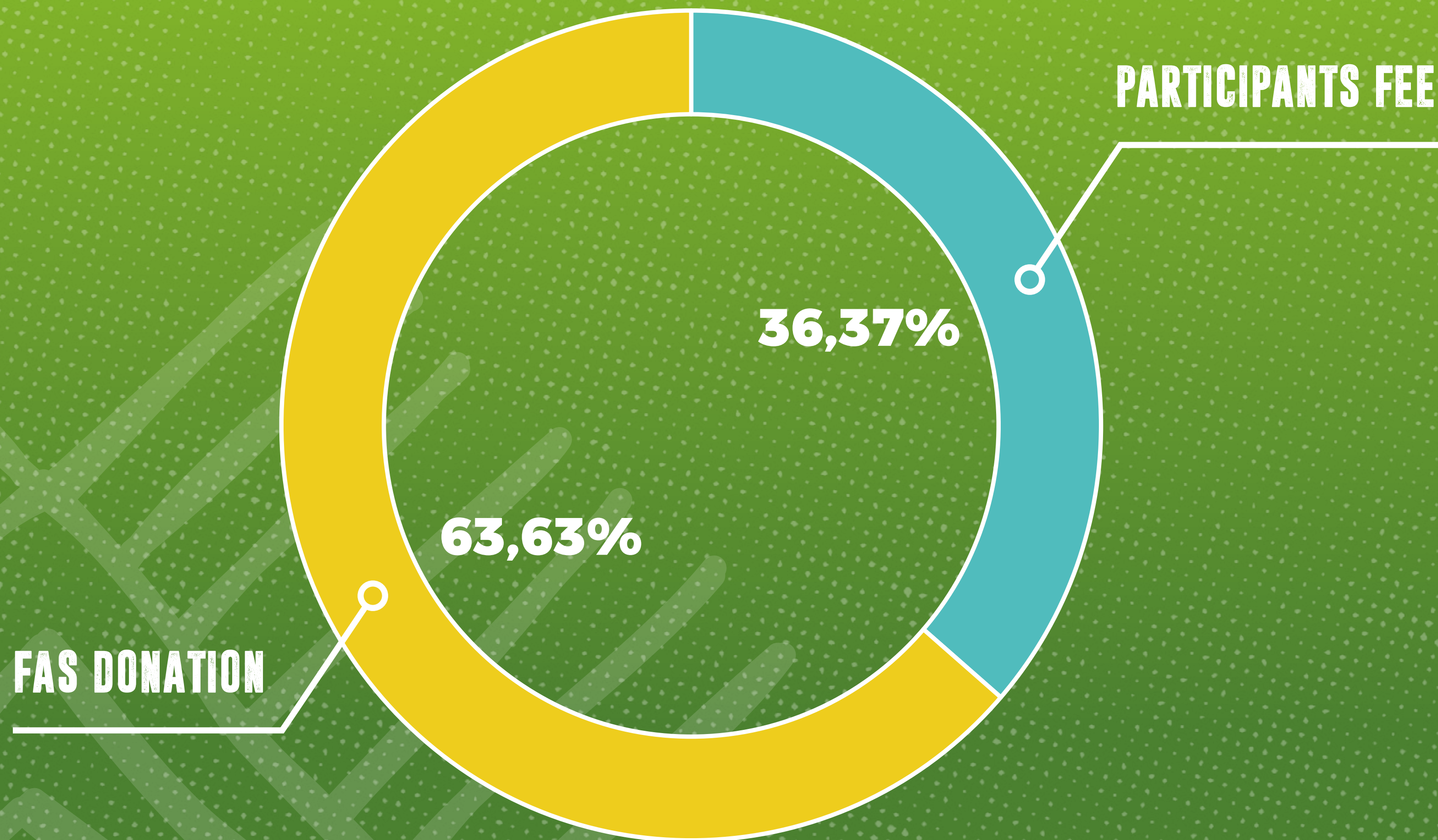
## SELECTION PROCESS AND APPLICANT CRITERIA

- Applications opened on December 17th and remained open until April 1st. During this period the team organized two open calls for those who were interested in applying. The organizing team received over 100 applications from xx different countries.
- To process the applications, each one was reviewed and candidates who met the application criteria were invited for a skype interview.
- Approximately 65 people were interviewed by skype with the purpose of identifying and clarifying the applicant's intention to join the course, understanding and reviewing the background and skills of each application, and inquiring into what each hoped to learn and accomplish by being part of the course.
- April was the final application analysis and Skype interviews. On May 1st: Announcement of final selection. In June the course materials will become accessible to participants and the pre-learning phase will begin. On July 1th all participants will meet in Manaus to begin the journey.
- Intention, willingness, ability, language, potential, diverse, local.

# backstage

## FUNDING SOURCES

The course is not yet financially viable and its operating in a low cost mode, with a lot of volunteer work involved. To be able to make the 2018 edition happen, FAS donated R\$60.458,00, in addition to the total and partial fees paid by the participants.





# backstage

## TEAM ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Since the beginning of the program, a strong base and alignment about purpose and intentions was created by the coordinating team using the strategic planning and leadership tool called the [chaordic stepping stones](#). The team had check-ins and shared roles of facilitation, organization, teaching and mentoring. The coordinators believe the way they worked directly influenced the way the course was designed and organized as a whole, nurturing the spirit of the teachings from within the operating process. It was a constant exercise of learning, revisiting ideas and trusting people, the process and the purpose.

This year, as previously mentioned, four more members were added to the core team one week before the course to support with production, logistics, and communication. This support proved invaluable for the field activities.

The team feels they were able to model the core view of the program itself - working with participatory leadership methods in a complex field. This allowed for emergent and creative strategies and insights to be brought into the course throughout its development. In decision making moments, the team worked with multiple points in order to gain a full sense of possibilities and boundaries.

thank you

## WE EXTEND A HEARTFELT THANK YOU TO

All the participants that hear our call and trusted the process.

The people of Tumbira, a supportive and loving community.

Arthur, Bruno, Gabriel and Severas who voluntarily joined the team to provide support in production and holding the learning environment, sharing their knowledge and work to make activities happen.

All speakers who came voluntarily to share their knowledge with the group.

The kitchen team of Pousada Garrido who fed us with delicious homemade food.

The FAS team, who supported us to make this edition happen.

This program would not be possible without everyone's support and contributions.



# organizers

## SDSN GLOBAL

SDSN Global aims at promoting transformative quality education for sustainable development. This program is supported by the network as part of its global Agenda through its local representation SDSN- Amazonia. SDSN-Amazonia encourages leaders imagine solutions to the Amazon guided by the 17 SDGs.



## SUSTAINABLE AMAZON FOUNDATION

A leader in community led sustainable development in the Amazon region, FAS - Sustainable Amazon Foundation has 10 years experience of field work with and for community residents of protected areas in the State of Amazonas, involving global partners. The mission of FAS is to make forests worth more standing than cut.





*This initiative is part of the educational platform:*

**A M A Z O N I A - E D U . O R G**

**EDUCATION FOR THE PLANET'S SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**