

ETHsustainability – Center for Sustainability at ETH Zurich  
A Founding Partner of the Alliance for Global Sustainability (AGS)

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Presents

# Youth Encounter on Sustainability YES

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The Challenge of a Sustainable World – Living for 10 Billion People

Courses for upper level undergraduate and graduate students from all disciplines

## The Sustainability Challenge

The world is facing a severe global crisis – current patterns of economic and social development are putting an unbearable strain on our natural environment and cultures. Can young people begin to move our society towards the ideals of justice, equity and sustainability? Our goal is that after you participate in YES you will be able to say: YES, we can, YES, we will, YES, we MUST!

## The Vision for Our Future

In June 1992, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development adopted “Agenda 21”, calling for all nations to “develop and put into effect their own national strategies, plans and policies for sustainable development and be prepared to deal with the common challenges facing human kind”. The ten-year anniversary of the Rio Conference was marked by the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa. The Rio Conventions, signed by 150 countries, and other such global initiatives, were supposed to help us chart a course for the 21st century. The reality is that workable solutions to the environmental, social and economic imbalances in our world are yet to be devised and global dialogue on sustainable development continues to wrestle with how to put our visions into action.

YES is inspired by a set of questions arising from the gap between the principles in Agenda 21 and the potential for putting these into action in the 21st century:

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

Young people of today constitute an important group, the cradle of tomorrow’s leaders and thinkers, whose decisions will have a growing influence on markets and styles of living. YES brings together such young leaders from all around the world to explore the challenges of sustainable development and the state-of-the-art research developed to address them. They explore economic, social and technical complexities in meeting the sustainability challenge and gain better understanding of the need for multi-disciplinary perspectives for problem solving.

## Origins of the Summer Institute – YES International Braunwald

In 2002, ETHsustainability, a founding partner of the Alliance for Global Sustainability (AGS), created the concept for the “Youth Encounter on Sustainability-YES” course, with the aim of developing the leadership capacity necessary for a viable future. Since then, the course has been held bi-annually in Braunwald, Switzerland and has attracted a highly diverse group of students to discuss global challenges and opportunities for sustainable development. As of 2006, more than 550 students from over 81 different countries had been trained in the YES course and form the strong and active YES Alumni network. Building on the resounding success of the YES courses in Switzerland, the ETHsustainability, along with local partners, are pleased to announce the expansion of the concept to various other world regions and subject specific themes.

## Feedback from YES Alumni Students

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

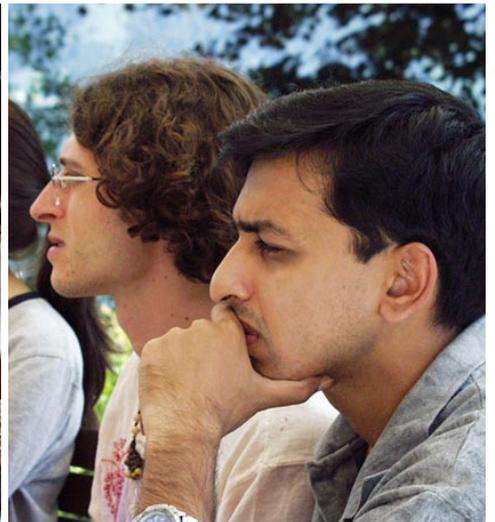
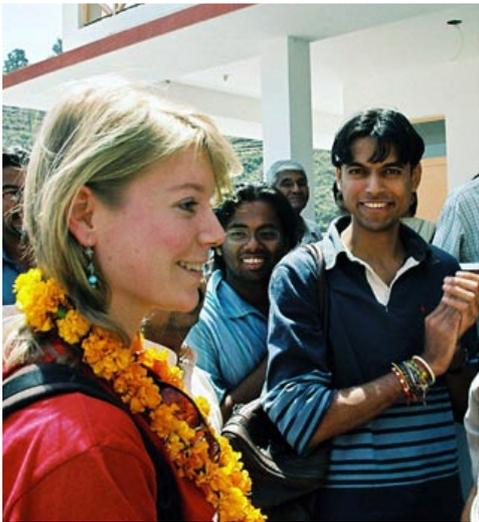
“The YES experience generated a sense that I am capable of making change.”

“The best educational experience I have had- the fact that there were so many different countries represented made the whole experience priceless.”

“An inspiring experience that offered real tools and varying perspectives to take home.”

“YES gave me direction, connections and valuable resources for my future career.”

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



Come and join us for a unique experience in sustainable learning and living!

## Types of YES Courses

Building on the framework and experience of the YES courses in Switzerland, a number of courses have been developed for specific world regions and particular subject themes. The types of courses on offer are:

### YES Basic Courses

The YES basic courses include the original YES International course held bi-annually in Switzerland, and the courses with a regional focus. The framework for the courses is based on the basic framework developed over the years of successfully running the YES International course in Switzerland. Typically 2 weeks in duration, the course trains a maximum of 40 students per session with a focus on basic sensitization to the multifaceted concepts of sustainable development. The regionally focused basic courses aim to connect regional priorities and specificities to the global context. Regional courses are developed with a thorough understanding of the regions culture, history and social development in order to effectively prepare students to take effective action. Participation in the courses is open to upper level undergraduate and graduate students from all disciplines. In both the international and regional courses a multicultural and multidisciplinary mix and gender balance of participants is maintained.

### YES Special Courses

The YES Special courses incorporate many of the pedagogical and didactical approaches of YES Basic, however have a subject specific content. The courses are typically 2 weeks in duration and involve upper level graduate and undergraduate students who have experience in the focus topic of the course.

### YES Course Programs

The “Sustainability Leadership Education” programs typically involve an initial basic training for the core faculty and teachers, a YES Basic course, individual student case studies and then finally a YES Special course focussing on Leadership for Sustainable Development.

The YES Special course programs focus on a particular theme and involve the introductory 2 week YES Special course followed by a case study and a final one week course on leadership and project implementation.

The aim at the end of the course programs is for participants to have the knowledge and skills necessary to implement concrete projects in their home communities. The final course in each program will have time allocated to allow the participants to develop and fine tune their project proposals with the guidance of faculty, facilitators and guest experts.

## Elements of YES Courses

A typical course incorporates academic work, field experience, training, cultural and social activities in some of the world's great natural settings. Students participate in:

- Discussions on the role of science, industry, civil society and public institutions in moving societies toward sustainable development
- A “values and responsibilities” component where students debate and discuss the role of individual behavior and ethics in promoting sustainable development
- Lectures and workshops with an in-depth investigation into key issues in the sustainability debate
- A unique opportunity for close collaboration with an international multicultural and multidisciplinary group of peers in small working groups on specific projects
- Field experiences in the form of excursions unique to the location in order to learn from local approaches
- Trust building activities among the participants
- Optional extracurricular activities and excursions
- A focus on the priorities for the region within the global context of sustainability

## Outcomes for Participants

- Enhance your understanding of the principles of sustainability in a dynamic world, across geographic and disciplinary boundaries
- Promote your awareness of cutting-edge research on global sustainability
- Provide you with methodological, systems thinking and fresh approaches to address sustainability challenges
- Develop your interdisciplinary, intercultural and leadership competences
- Stimulate your creative thinking about local, regional and global issues on sustainable development so that you become catalysts to overcome these problems
- Involvement in the YES alumni group and associated communication platforms – a strong and expanding international network committed to applying the principles they learn and share at YES to their careers
- Involvement in ongoing programs and projects of ETHsustainability
- Unique cultural and social activities

## Collaborating Institutions

The YES courses and programs are directed by ETHsustainability, in collaboration with local institutions who form part of a network of cooperation in different regions of the world.

ETHsustainability provides a platform to intensify the endeavors of the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETH) Zurich in the field of sustainable development and focuses on the areas of dialogue, services and education on sustainability. More information is available at: [www.sustainability.ethz.ch](http://www.sustainability.ethz.ch)

ETHsustainability was a founding member of the Alliance for Global Sustainability (AGS), an international partnership created in 1997 between the ETH Zurich, MIT, the University of Tokyo. The AGS brings together hundreds of university scientists, engineers, and social scientists to address the complex issues that lie at the intersection of environmental, economic and social goals. Read more about the AGS at: [www.globalsustainability.org](http://www.globalsustainability.org)

### For more information on the AGS Partner Institutions

Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT):  
<http://lfee.mit.edu>

University of Tokyo (UT):  
[www.globalsustainability.jp](http://www.globalsustainability.jp)

Chalmers University of Technology:  
[www.ags.chalmers.se](http://www.ags.chalmers.se)

Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich (ETH Zurich):  
[www.ethz.ch](http://www.ethz.ch)

**Faculty for the YES courses are drawn from the ETH Zurich, the AGS partner institutions and various other world renowned academic institutions. Regional courses are developed and delivered in collaboration with various regional organizations and institutions.**

**For application details and further information please see the enclosed inlay on specific courses. Alternatively visit our website: [www.sustainability.ethz.ch](http://www.sustainability.ethz.ch) and apply online for the next course of your choice!**



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## Youth Encounter on Sustainability – YES International Courses in Braunwald 2008

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### Course Details

There will be two sessions of YES International, The dates are:

Session 1:	4 <sup>th</sup> to 21 <sup>st</sup> July 2008
Session 2:	8 <sup>th</sup> to 25 <sup>th</sup> August 2008
Place:	Braunwald, Switzerland

### Eligibility

The YES International Programme welcomes applications from upper level undergraduate (4<sup>th</sup> year minimum) and graduate students that demonstrate dedication to sustainability issues. You do not need to be a sustainability expert, but bear the potential to become a change agent in academia, business, governmental and non-governmental organisations.

### Programme

The YES programme is recognised as a fore-runner in sustainability education, comprising state-of-the-art teaching methods, such as interactive lectures, working groups, guided art sessions, role plays, games, poster sessions, company visits, case studies, movies, debates and presentations combined with unique social and cultural activities. The courses are very intensive, fun and provide extensive opportunities to learn about the host country, this time Switzerland, and its specific sustainability challenges. From various perspectives, participants explore the concept of sustainable development and create a holistic understanding of the trends and challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Crossing the boundary of natural and social sciences, students contribute their perceptions and ideas on the critical issues of our time. By bringing 30 to 40 students from all across the globe together, this programme goes well beyond traditional educational training: it allows growing mutual, cross-cultural understanding and by experience, creates long lasting networks of friendship and collaboration. The main modules of this programme look into: natural & human systems, energy & materials, water, health and nutrition, economics, psychology, sociology and policy. Excursions might include for example visits to different locations in the Valley of Glarus; to learn about direct democracy and the history of industry of this province.

### Faculty

A unique feature of YES is its international faculty: the experts involved in YES have joined the programme since years and do well understand and relate to their peers, which results in a truly trans-disciplinary learning experience for the students. Expert international faculty for the course will be drawn from ETHsustainability, ETH Zurich and other institutions in Switzerland, MIT Cambridge, University of Tokyo, Hosei University, Technical University of Vienna, Humbolt University Berlin along with renowned guests from the private sector, government and NGO's.

## Youth Encounter on Sustainability – YES

International courses **Braunwald 2008**

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### Participation Fee

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

European participants: 950 USD

International participants: 1500 USD

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

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

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

### Application Procedure

Applicants **MUST** apply for the course online. Visit the YES International page of the ETHsustainability website for more information and for the link to the online application form:

<http://www.sustainability.ethz.ch/en/activities/braunwald.cfm>

**Application Deadline: 08<sup>th</sup> March 2008**

**The application requires you to submit additional supporting material, which includes:**

- A short Resume or Curriculum Vitae (limit 3 pages). This **MUST** include a photograph.
- One essay (maximum 400 words) explaining why you are interested in participating in YES, and why you would be an ideal person to take the lead in the sustainable development debate.
- One letter of reference (professional or academic) which explains your skills, abilities, experience and suitability for the program.

### More Information

For more information please contact:

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