

# TRUST

BOOKLET OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS' CONFERENCE  
2021



Youth Section  
at the Goetheanum



GOETHEANUM

**WALDORF SV**

Bundeschülerrat der Freien Waldorfschulen





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This Booklet was created by the team of the International Students’ Conference 2021 “Trust” to document the path of planning and realizing this project.



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C H A P T E R O N E

PREPARING  
*TRUST*



## Preparation of the #ISC21

The topic of the International Students' Conference 2021 was "trust" - just this word and still so meaningful. Getting there wasn't an easy path, and it took the team and us three months to finally set this topic. In January 2020, we met the first time with the team - board members of the WaldorfSV, the Youth Section team, and volunteers - in the Goetheanum. We started this meeting with the question to everyone there what they are currently concerned with, what they experience in their lives, and what questions appear in their daily life. With this round of answers to the question, Vincent and I (Tim) hoped that we could sense the variety of what in the mind of young people is, what questions and topics they think about. After 30 minutes, we met again to share the results we got. There was a great variety of words and thoughts we collected back then. We start from society's expectations in ourselves and the things we do and how we get influenced - especially at our young age. *Especially in the time when we grow up, there is an enormous amount of impressions that are about to influence and manipulate is. [...] Who am I?* (Out of the text *"Who do I want to be?"* - Vincent Eichholz, Elisa Scheller)

We had questions and thoughts about our identity and the sense of our lives and thoughts about the future - about visions and decisions we - as young people - face.

*"With the increasing age in adolescence, the number of decisions to be made grows, which also becomes increasingly valuable and significant" (out of the text "Inner certainty/self-confidence" - Elisabeth von Pilsach, Tim Bauer)*

In this first meeting, in this first round of sharing thoughts, trust got mentioned by seven people.

After this round of sharing and discussing the thoughts, we met again to work with these concrete thoughts. The result was four texts: "Inner certainty/self-confidence", "The power to create", "What is my task in life?", and "Who do I want to be?". In the late afternoon, we read over the texts and set us a task. We wanted to take the texts with us and talk about them in a phone conference three weeks later and meet again at the beginning of March. With the pandemic situation at the beginning of March, we then canceled the planned meeting and switched to an online gathering. I was impressed by how well it worked to talk and discuss the different thoughts and topics we had until then. The topics' focus then was a lot in the direction of "future" and "trust". But there was one new direction of "consciousness" - which is linked a little bit to the sense of our life (mentioned in the first meeting). Influence also gained one more aspect - the one of virtuality and a parallel life online coming from social media. And we gained one more idea of a theme: "truth".

In a reflection of the meeting in the second week of March, we recognized that truth is present in most topics - searching for the truth in ourselves and our paths with everything we come across in our lives. As a counterpart to "truth", we later thought about "illusion" rather than "untruth". We found that we could divide

truth and illusion into three layers: The past, with its etymologies. The present time with the current meaning and importance of truth and illusion, and their significance and meaning in different world regions. And the future, which is about what will the importance of illusions be with social media. How can we detect the borders between truth and illusion?

Especially the thought about the boundaries between illusions and truth - meaning inner boundaries and not geographical ones - made us think again about trust, about trusting in the truth, and the questions what makes us trust in foreign people, who might - in times of social media - even be an illusion. We recognized that trust is contained in both sides - truth and illusion - and builds a base. We then roughly set "trust" as a topic since it also included most of our initial thoughts from January and even set a base for some of those. Trust as a word stands for a person alone, for a group, and even the whole society. It has importance to one's past, present but also future. It plays a role in the question of who we are, in self-confidence.

The following week, we all took the topics with us and wrote texts about what we think about trust.

"Trust 'is the basis for developing one's own self and going into the world with an open mind. To get to know yourself, to test your limits, and to find your inner balance, you need to believe in your own strength and your power to create. It can help you a lot in difficult situations and strengthen you if other people trust you and believe in you. Trust grows with good experiences and gives you support. At the same time, it can be weakened or even destroyed by polarisation, manipulation, and exploitation.'" - Elisa Scheller, Elisabeth von Pilsach

We recognized even more how strong the word trust is and how much it contains the initial ideas and thoughts. The longer we thought about it, the clearer it was that 'Trust' would and should be the topic of the International Students' Conference 2021. At the end of April, after three months, we then set the topic Trust.

## The Theme Developing

We didn't talk much with the team about the topic from then on, but we all took it with us. We all recognized within these months of Covid-19 concerns how present and essential this topic of Trust went to be. We had some political conflicts that are all linked to trust in a way. For example, the Black Lives Matter movement, where humans cannot trust the police and get attacked by officers. Also, the protest in Hong Kong, where protesters of their fundamental rights couldn't trust their government; or the Covid-19 politics in various countries, like Brazil, where people couldn't trust their government to keep them safe and healthy. Trust developed even more to a very fundamental human need. In the (Re)Search project of the Youth Section, we followed this path of how the importance of the topic changed. We also recognized how Trust is linked to Courage, the topic of the previous International Students' Conference. Constanza

Kaliks describes this evolving of topics in her lecture. Starting at 2017 with the conference topic “challenges of our time”, where we recognized the global challenges we are facing, to “courage” in 2019, we need to face those challenges. And finally, the trust to be courageous to face those challenges. Looking back on finding the topic, it seems obvious that Trust was the next, logical theme. But we realized all the correlations and contexts mainly after setting Trust as our topic.

## The Layers of Trust

In our first talk about how we would describe the topic in a short text with all the team’s input, Vincent and I sketched a text that focuses on different layers. Those layers aren’t fixed but are floating into each other. We experienced Trust on a personal and interpersonal, and societal level.

*From our personal sphere, trust can be summed up as “self-confidence”. From the interpersonal level, trusting each other, as well as the belief that loyalty and responsibility are related to each other. From a social perspective, as is reflected in politics, the personal meets the interpersonal level. Only through a balance between one’s contribution to society and the individual possibilities arising from said contribution can a harmonious-functioning community be created. It is important that we question trust but not doubt it in order to enter the future path with confidence. (Out of the ISC21 invitation text)*

We also wanted to have those layers represented at the ISC21 itself and thus decided to give the different days a subtopic. On the one hand, we needed to look for lecturers with a connection to Trust and maybe even refer to it in a specific way and to one of the layers we found during the process. Soon, in the calls with the speakers, we recognized how perfectly the lectures fit the subtopics. We were lucky that also the order we wished for worked for all of the speakers. On the other hand, we needed to shape our planned impulses that we wanted to give with the team to align with the subtopic and the lecture.

The first impulse was “What is Trust?” paired with the lecture of Constanza Kaliks explaining the path the Youth Section went from the last International Students’ Conferences to this year’s conference and going after the question if we can learn to trust. On the second day, the impulse given was “How is Trust built between us?” with the lecture by Rodrigo Rubido under the title “Building Trust in communities”. Rodrigo, an architect and social entrepreneur from Brazil, said in our first call that the first main task of a new project is to build an interpersonal trust within the community they are working with. Arizza Nocum’s lecture of “Books Not Guns: Building Trust and Peace through Education” was paired with the impulse “How is Trust rebuilt in society?”. Our last day’s lecture of Ha Vinh Tho described trust as something “that has to be nurtured, developed, and experienced. It cannot stay just a theoretical concept.” This last lecture set perfectly with the impulse of “How do we regain Trust?”.

*Tim Bauer:* Born and grown up close to Nuremberg, Germany. After his graduation at the Waldorfschool in Wendelstein, Germany, in 2019, he started, together with Vincent Eichholz, working for the Youth Section in October 2020 as project manager for the ISC21.

Throughout the whole planning process, we experienced how fragile this construct of Trust is, how narrow the line between Trust and broken Trust, how vulnerable we get with trust towards other people. Over the whole conference, this losing and breaking trust to another person, a society, and oneself was as present as the main topic. Just as we experienced it in all our conversations about the theme in advance of the conference. Therefore, it was ideal to end the conference with the idea of how to regain Trust and fix a broken, fragile construct of Trust - not only to another person but also to oneself and society.

Constanza Kaliks described a perfect image of this circle of Trust, where we trust that the sun will rise again. Paolo Avila, a team member of this conference, extended this picture.

“There are certain delicate qualities that both the sun and trust share; both reveal and shed light to everything they touch. Both encourage growth, and both—with no doubt at all, will always come out. Just like the sun, trust rises and sets. And as it does, it carries with it different degrees of intimacy and weight.

The trust we have with ourselves, and our capability to understand what trust is, can be likened to the sun before dawn. While darkness still envelopes the world, there— lives within us, is the trust and understanding that the sun has not disappeared, and is simply hidden.

As the first rays of light peaks through the darkness, like the light beams, slowly touching the earth, it paints a picture and allows us to see clearly. The same is true when we interact with another person; as they are revealed by light, the building of trust between one another begins.

At dawn, as the sun’s light shines down onto the earth and everything is revealed, it allows us to see how connected we are. It gives us the ability to see all our similarities with one another, and with our community. But with the sun’s arrival, the knowledge of eventually saying goodbye to it at dusk is brought to us, serving as a reminder that losing trust is possible too.

And at sunrise, when the sun finally spreads its beams across the heavens and reclaims its seat at the sky, it shows us that though we may lose trust, it is possible to regain it as well.”

- Paolo Avila

We can and did experience Trust in such a versatile way, in a way that represented all our initial ideas. During this planning process, I recognized how fragile the construct of Trust is and how meaningful and vibrant this word is.

Tim Bauer

## The Planning Process

In October 2020, we worked for ten months on the topic, the theme, and ideas the whole team and we had. With us moving to Dornach and starting to work for the Youth Section at the Goetheanum, the process of planing the International Students’ Conference changed a lot. The conference was then at the point

where most of the content aspects were shaped during these ten months. We started to focus now on the technical process of the conference. The first step was to shape the International Students' Conference to also work with the current circumstances, which works in a global pandemic. In numbers, that meant that we wanted to gather 300 participants on-site at the Goetheanum with a strict hygiene concept. Back then, it seemed reasonable since no one knew how the Covid-19 situation would develop within the following months. In addition to the participants on-site, we wanted to have a digital platform, where participants could join from wherever they are in the world at that point. We also needed to get an idea of what topics we want to have represented in lectures and how we wanted to represent them.

During the process of finding the speakers for the conference, we focused on finding people that worked with *Trust* in different ways during their life. It was essential for us to show both how differently Trust can be understood and how similar it is experienced between us. We had calls with all of the speakers, where we talked about our idea of the conference's topic, about what they are currently doing in their lives, and how they recognised *Trust*. We asked them how they think they can pick up the topic and open it in a multifaceted way.

In our first lecture, we wanted to explain the path of *Courage* to *Trust* we experienced from the International Students' Conference 2019 to the one we were planning. We saw how closely those two words are linked to each other. Constanza Kaliks explained this path in her lecture and how we see the topic.

Rodrigo Rubido, the second speaker, is an architect and social entrepreneur from Brazil. With the organisation ELOS, he builds social infrastructure in financially poor regions. In the call, he often spoke about *Trust* in relation to his work. He said that it is based on the mutual confidence they, as an organisation, can build up in the community they are working with. We already found the title for his lecture, "Building *Trust* in Communities" in the call.

Arizza Nocum was our speaker on the third conference day. She is the Co-Founder and President of KRIS, a non-profit organisation that utilises education as a pathway to peace in the Philippines. During the call, she explained how fatal the loss of trust is and, as a counterpart, the importance of having the possibility to regain and build trust and peace. "Books Not Guns: Building *Trust* and Peace through Education" then became the title of her lecture.

Ha Vinh Tho has worked for many years on questions about happiness and *Trust* within society. In the conversation before the conference, we experienced that we have a similar idea of dividing *Trust* into different layers. It didn't take us long to decide to work together for the last day of the conference. We focused on the question for his lecture on how to regain *Trust* on the different layers, personal, for others and society and the planet.

In these calls, we soon recognised how the lectures can build on each other and how they link to the different spheres of the topic.

In October, we also searched for performances to have a

variety in the program of the conference. The Youth Section team recommended Bê Ignacio, one of Constanza Kaliks' former students, who is a singer and songwriter. She was happy to join us for the conference with a musical performance from the first contact on.

The second artistic performance we wanted to have at the ISC21 was a eurythmy performance by the Goetheanum Eurythmie Ensemble. In the beginning, we were still thinking of a performance in the Main Hall of the Goetheanum. Later it turned out that we might want to film and stream parts, or even the complete performance.

During this time, we also set the catering through the Speisehaus for those 300 participants on-site and organised the school to accommodate the students. Coming closer to the end of 2020, we started to have calls with people volunteering at the Youth Section to organize the International Students' Conference 2021.

In November, we started requesting financial support from many different foundations to let the conference happen. We started sending our applications with a draft of the ISC21 that included all possible options. We were uncertain at that time if the conference will take place in presence, hybrid, or fully digital. Throughout the whole time, we received requests from students worldwide to support them with their travel expenses to attend the ISC21 on-site.

In December, we finalised our program, which was accessible for most time zones, and worked for both an on-site conference and a digital one. That means we were inventing a program that would also work for a hybrid conference. In January, we experienced how the Covid-19 restrictions are making the planning of the conference more and more difficult and unpredictable.

Paolo Avila, who planned to start working as a volunteer from February on, unfortunately, didn't get a visa to travel from the Philippines to Switzerland due to Covid-19 restrictions. This also made us question how and if traveling will be possible for participants.

At the beginning of February 2021, Christella from the Netherlands arrived in Dornach. She came here for two months to be the third coworker for the ISC21, and we became a great team for the next two months working together.

A few weeks later, Gabriele from Belgium also came to Dornach to do an internship at the Youth Section. Before coming to Dornach, she was already part of the ISC21 team.

From February 11 to 14, there was a digital conference the Youth Section and the Section for Agriculture organised together. The 'Climate Conference' took place on the same platform we planned to host the International Students' Conference 2021. Fortunately, we were involved in the technical organisation and running of the conference. We were perfectly prepared to host a conference together with our team on the same platform with the same film- and livestream crew through the experiences we made.

At the end of February, the Swiss government released new Covid-19 rules, and we finally needed to cancel the on-site part of the conference and focus on a fully digital conference. We saw a big challenge there with giving the participants a comparable experience of the conference and the encounters with other students. With the decision of the conference being entirely digital, we could also re-edit the program to make it more accessible for most time zones. We shortened the conference to four days since there was no need to plan the half days on the first and last conference day for traveling. To align the conference to the local times, we split up the Workshops into two sessions. One group in our evening, for participants from South and North America and Europe, and one in our morning, for students from Asian countries and Europe. We planned the lectures and Conversation Groups to be in our noon and afternoon, which is the most attractive time in the time zones, we were focusing on.

By the end of February, we had a meeting with the whole team. We always had calls with the team of volunteers on the one side and worked together with the Youth Section team on the other side. In this meeting at the end of February, the two teams got to know each other. During this, we discussed the decision of making the whole conference fully digital and talked through all the different formats to make them the best for an online gathering. It was great to merge the teams and become a more extensive group being responsible for the conference.

Having a digital conference results quickly in the thoughts if and how the contents should be accessible after the ISC21 is over. We thought that having an archive was a good idea, but we wanted it to be restricted that only participants can access it for free. This led us to the idea that it would be quickest and easiest to organise the ticket sales on our own and not as usual through the Goetheanum's infrastructure. It also gave us the possibility to have incredibly flexible pricing, especially for groups and classes.

The impulses for the days were an essential part of our side for the conference. They were our primary input of content and thoughts. Of course, we were responsible for inviting the speakers and the whole idea of the conference and the topic, but the Impulses for the Day were the parts we, as a team, could shape. We worked on them for a few of our weekly team calls and divided the whole team into smaller groups to be more focused and make it a bit more personal.

## The Final Steps

At the beginning of March, we met digitally with three volunteers to plan what needed to be done right before the conference, when every one of the team is at the Goetheanum. From March 26, the team members arrived in Dornach after a negative Covid-19 test. In the last few days before the ISC21, we had to prepare the whole venue. The way was new for us this time since it was our first digital conference with full responsibility. We had to prepare the stage,

and get the whole streaming set-up on the stage, install the cameras and make the scene good-looking, but we also had to prepare the digital venue. Therefore we needed to finish all the graphics, texts, and descriptions on the platform where we hosted the conference. All the digital rooms needed to be prepared as well as for an on-site conference. It might seem to be less work than putting chairs and tables into rooms, but it takes almost the same amount of time to prepare a virtual venue.

At this year's conference, we needed to be way more precise than usual in planning the plenums and what we wanted to be said on stage. We needed to have a program prepared for the film crew, the sound-, and light technicians, every detail needed to be in there when we wanted to show or present something on stage. The process of the streams and the production were very similar to TV live productions.

The digital conference platform didn't have the possibility of importing our Workshop and Conversation Group attendance lists. Since we did the registration process through our own infrastructure and not the third-party platform, we needed to insert the participants in the Workshop chosen and the Conversation Group they were planned to be in.

Unfortunately, on March 30, we had fewer registrations than expected and needed to cancel Workshops and Conversation Groups. We think this is because the students spend most of their time in front of their screen now and that they are not willing to spend even more time in front of it. After the conference, we received feedback, saying that the conference differed significantly from their online classes. The students, and the teachers who participated, were inspired by the way encounters were possible in the conference context.

With the last briefing before the first stream of the conference, our time for preparing general parts was over. We all met on stage and talked through the next two hours. Everything we were working on for the last six months was supposed to get real in an hour. We were very excited and nervous and happy that we had the opportunity to welcome students from 24 different countries.

Vincent Eichholz, Tim Bauer



*The first physical meeting of the whole team*

*Vincent Eichholz:* Born and grown up in Schleswig-Holstein, Germany. He graduated from the Waldorf School in Flensburg in 2020 and started working for the Youth Section in October 2020.





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C H A P T E R T W O

# THE CONFERENCE



## Starting our First Conference Day

The conference started at 3:30 PM in Dornach, and until then, the whole team was busy doing all the final preparations. There was a part of the team preparing the stage schedule, planning into detail the times for every part of the stream. It included all information necessary for the technical team of the live stream, such as the times people entered the stage if they need a presentation on the screen, and, of course, how long they would talk. With this plan, every minute of the whole stream was prepared and set. A part of the team checked that everything on the conference platform was ready. A part of the team prepared different sorts of graphics for the digital venue (like cover images of the booths) and the stream, like lower thirds (the lower third is a graphic element informing the viewer throughout the stream with the name of the person talking) for everyone being on the stage throughout the whole conference. A part of the team started with tech support for participants who had difficulties signing up and purchasing tickets. And there was the film team setting up the stage area with all the technical equipment necessary for the live streams.

We set up until 2:30 PM, when the entire team met in the Main Hall, going through the whole stage schedule and clarified the last questions. At 3:30 PM, we then started to stream, and the conference went live. At first, we properly opened the ISC with Vincent and Tim,

explaining how we came to the topic *Trust* and how it developed within the planning process. In the next part, the WaldorfSV and Youth Section introduced themselves and their work and how they are connected to each other. Two team members who were not present in Dornach, Paolo and Leonie, explained the letter project via a video call. We sent letters to all the participants. These included a wristband, a beautiful postcard sponsored by Stockmar, a blank postcard, and a printed ticket. Each of these objects connected to the conference. For example, the blank postcard, where we asked the participants to paint, draw, or write on and

send them back to the Youth Section, or the Stockmar postcard the students should send to each other. In this way, our digital conference was physical in some way. Barbora guided the participants through the program and explained the different interactive formats of the conference, like the Conversation Groups and Workshops. We had impulses for the days prepared and presented by a part of the conference team for each day. The impulses were meant to build a connection between the different topics of the days. They were picked up in the lectures and the main topic. We asked the participants to discuss the Impulse for the Day in their Conversation Groups. On the first day, the impulse was: “What does *Trust* mean to you?”. This



Stage briefing right before the first livestream

impulse then built the bridge to the lecture.

### From *Courage* to *Trust*

The International Students' Conference started with a lecture that emphasized the different languages gathered digitally. Constanza Kaliks spoke in two tongues while she was still simultaneously translated to Spanish and German. She always started a part of her lecture in English, and then, after one section, she repeated the same part in Portuguese.

At first, Constanza explained how the past themes of the International Students' Conferences built upon each other. With the topic *Challenges of Our Time* in 2017, she felt that the students were experiencing the different challenges young people face, like social, economic, and ecological difficulties. She described that we then need to gain the courage to face and deal with those challenges. *Courage* was then the title of the International Students' Conference in 2019. We need the courage to claim for the challenges we - as young people - face and will be facing in our future, like the climate crisis.



Vincent and Tim opening the #ISC21

Constanza now asked the participants to think about where they experienced real trust in their lives and what happens if trust gets disrupted and broken. As Constanza said, probably everyone has experienced moments of trust but also moments where trust was broken. The most profound trust that we can experience, she said, is “the deep trust that the sun will rise again”. At first, it might appear evident that the sun will rise again. It is precisely this, she explained further, what emphasizes, that there is trust - because of the belief that the next day starts, that the sun will rise again. Furthermore, we can't even imagine a world without the sun. The verse every Waldorf student recites in their school morning contains this profound trust: “I look into the world, wherein there shines the sun”.

Constanza asked if “we [can] learn trust” - if we can develop trust. To understand if learning to trust is possible, we looked at four pillars for worldwide education by UNESCO from 1996. Those were: learn to learn; learn to be; learn to do; and learn to live together. In 2015, UNESCO clarified and emphasized that those four pillars are absolutely valid. Though now being looked at in a new way, we share a world and reality.

The first pillar UNESCO describes is ‘Learn to learn’: learning and gaining knowledge will stay with us throughout our lives. We learn to trust understanding ourselves and the world.

The second pillar is ‘Learn to be’: having trust in our destiny, that there is our unique path in life for each of us.

For the third pillar, we have the sentence ‘Learn to do’. We are



Dr Constanza Kaliks holding her lecture  
"From Courage to Trust"

able to do and thus to create. For that, we need to trust in our creation and our power to create.

The fourth and final pillar is 'Learn to live together'. We could say that learning to trust is equal to this. The first foundation for us to trust, the substance of trust, we can find in the reality that we share: our common good. This common good is defined by the fact that we are not alone in this world, making it full of variety and plurality. Constanza continued with a question to the participants what we can do to trust ourselves.

She closed her lecture with a story of Paulo Freire, a Brazilian author and educator, where he asked a peasant to imagine a world without human beings and if this then is a world. "No", the answer he got was, "it is not a world, because there is no one to say 'This is the world'".

After the lecture, we could then see and recognize that *Trust* is - in a way - strongly connected to *Courage*.

Do we need courage to trust or do we need trust to be courageous? It is trust we need to achieve to face the challenges of our time with courage.

## In Between the Streams

As the conference started, a part of the team present in Dornach was helping participants in case of technical difficulties. That was for the sign-up process, but especially during the Workshops to ensure everyone was in the right place and could enjoy their time. Being in that team started relatively easy, as there were only a few participants needing help during the welcoming and the first lecture. Then as the Workshops of that evening started, there were many questions about difficulties with the sound or the Workshop leaders having trouble sharing their screen. That was as well a moment where the team showed how well they could work together. If someone had a question they couldn't answer, no matter how busy the rest of the team was, another person came to help solve the problem or swap the conversations so that the team answered all questions as fast as possible. This moment of hectic work was during the start of the Workshops, but later it relaxed somewhat again as everyone was set up. That was the day that the participants needed the most technical support, as the following days, the technical issues were much less.

After our first stream ended, a so-called 'Workshop Assigning Session' was in the Conference Room. In less than half an hour, the names of all the participants joining the Workshop Group I needed to be assigned to their correct Workshop in the session area of our digital conference platform. The extra challenge: Workshops with breakouts required the same process for every breakout room.

The energy and notable teamwork during this rather technical part of the conference were remarkable.

And the result of this stressful task did not disappoint: all the Workshops and breakout rooms were assigned in time, so everyone participating could have a wonderful experience during their first Workshop session.

Simultaneously, the stage saw a change of decor: in the evening, we would welcome Bê Ignacio with her daughter and husband on stage for the first performance of our conference. Musical instruments were carried in, mics were tested, and the sound was checked.

Then, at 8:30 PM, the performance started. Bê Ignacio, an ex-student of Constanza Kaliks, contributed, together with her husband and daughter, a musical performance. In the planning process, we thought it might be nice to have music at the conference since it is easy to connect through music. Bê brought a wonderful Brazilian vibe into the Goetheanum, where we streamed it from into the whole world. It was impressive to read all the fascinating messages in the event chat and see how music still has such a strong meaning and impact, even though the performance was streamed.

With this, our first day ended. Some of the team still worked until late in the evening, mainly on the digital venue.

Christella Janse van Rensburg, Gabriele Nys, Tim Bauer



Bê Ignacio performing with her husband and daughter

## The Formats of the ISC

It wasn't easy to shape the conference in a way that we could ensure real encounters in a digital space.

### Conversation Groups

The three Conversation Group sessions were meant to create a safe space, where the students could share their thoughts about *Trust*, what they took out of the lecture, and the Impulse for the Day. There was also a space to talk and discuss. These groups with up to 17 participants took place two and a half hours after the lecture and lasted for one and a half hours each time.

### Workshops

With the Workshops, we wanted to give the participants one more possibility to get to know the other students in smaller groups

*Christella Janse van Rensburg:* Was born in South Africa where she grew up until the age of 12. Then moved to the Netherlands and graduated in 2020.

*Gabriele Nys:* Living close to Leuven, Belgium, she attends the Waldorfschool in Wijgmaal and will graduate in 2021. In 2019 she volunteered at the Connect Conference in Zeist, The Netherlands.



of up to 25. We had three sessions of Workshops with an hour and a half per session. To make them easier accessible for participants all from different time zones, we decided to do two groups of Workshops (one in our evening, one in our morning). Both groups had three sessions, and the participants could choose which group they want to attend.

The Workshops balanced the theoretical parts — either being practical, like making music, yoga, clowning, and photography, or following a topic adjacent to *Trust*, like “Tracing the Structures of the Cosmos”.

This time it was essential that the Workshops were possible to do in the room the participants were in at that moment, due to lockdown restrictions in some countries. Some Workshops presented results in the Reflexion/Closure stream on the last day of the conference.

## Open Activities

The Open Activities took place on the second and third day for an hour and a half hours after the lecture. With the Open Activities, we wanted to give the participants a space to distance themselves from the topic, which will play a significant role again during the Conversation Groups. We also gave the possibility to get other participants to know in a “Networking Area”, where students got randomly connected in pairs of two.

This format was strongly influenced by the lunch break of previous International Students’ Conferences, when the students sat in front of the Goetheanum talking, playing volleyball, and dancing. You get to have a social experience, forming relationships at the conference. The students could create their session in our digital venue, and other participants could join those. We had spaces of people singing, just rounds of students talking and playing games. It was impressive to see how much the participants enjoyed sitting with the other students in our virtual Goetheanum and connecting in this way.

Tim Bauer

## The Second Day

The second day of the digital International Students’ Conference was all about the question “How is *Trust* built between us?” from the Impulse for the Day until the presentation in the evening.

The day started with the second Workshop group for the attendees, but even before that happened, some members of the ISC-team had already stood up early to assign all the participants to the Workshop they had chosen. Our daily meet-up with the whole ISC-team ended up after our breakfast, although we had planned them to take place in our conference room. These meetings helped a

lot with creating togetherness because everybody was often working on their own tasks. It also gave you a short overview of what the plan for the day was and what the focus was laid on.

While all participants were at their sessions, like Workshops or Conversation Groups, we needed to keep up the technical support. We always had one or two team members assigned to it, but in the end, it was mostly Christella and Till, who were always ready and available for any technical questions or problems. Although it slowly settled down because the students started to understand the platform themselves.

The actual start for us as a team was the first stream, which has been placed mid-day in our time zone. Before that, the whole ISC-team prepared for presentation, warm-ups, or impulses they had to give that day. This preparation mostly happened on the terrace of the Goetheanum. You could see people doing jumping jacks, running around the Goetheanum, or just sitting in the sun.

The warm-up was basically just a little session of ten minutes before the stream that motivated the participants to move a little before sitting down for two hours again.

Two team members organised the movements and choreography, while there were a few others in the back of the stream just trying to follow their instructions. After a short break, the day was introduced by Noël, Elisabeth (Elli) and Alicia.

“How is *Trust* built between us?” was the Impulse for the Day. It refers to the interpersonal level that trust is built between you and another person.

What is the actual process of building trust? Is trust even built, or does it simply exist?

The Impulse for the Day shaped the impulse with a few other questions and pictures like comparing trust with water. It always finds a way, but you cannot really carry it without drinking it, and if you do not trust in being carried, you won’t be.

Rodrigo Rubido held the lecture of this day. Rodrigo is an architect and social entrepreneur and part of an organisation that helps social education and community development, empowering communities to become protagonists of their own development. Over the last 20 years, he has dedicated himself to developing methods and learning processes for collective action, such as facilitating training for personal and community development, together with diverse groups and organisations from the social, public, and private sectors.

In his lecture, he let us be part of a journey through his personal photo album. He showed different scenarios of the communities he worked with, referred to their method of mobilising communities and spreading hope, and pointed out how important trust is in his work. In his seven-step method from “The Gaze”, which is all



*Warm up before the lecture starts*

*Alicia Reinkemeyer: Born and living in a small village close to Minden. She visits the Waldorf School in Minden (Germany) since 2009 and got elected as a board member of the WaldorfSV in October 2019.*

about not judging and seeing the beauty and potential that each community brings, to “Re-evolution”, trust is the base everything is built on in some way.

They build trust in a very natural and beautiful way. Rodrigo first saw the beauty in people, their way of community, their potential and wealth. He also pointed out that it is especially important to celebrate the different talents that the people bring with them and not only that, also to listen to their values, wisdom, and showing appreciation towards the individual in a community. These interpersonal interactions are only a tiny part of the whole process of mobilising and empowering communities that Rodrigo reported about. After his presentation, the participants were allowed to ask questions through the chat, and shortly after, we said goodbye to Rodrigo with a positive, hopeful, and trust-strengthened good feeling.

Now the participants had a thirty-minute break followed by the Open Activities. The participants themselves could offer a session to do things together, like singing, talking, or anything else. We, as the ISC-team, gave no restrictions for these sessions besides the length of it. We also did not know or could not assess if the attendees would really use this time to interact, but our worries were unjustified. There were many different sessions. We as the ISC-team, joined one and sang along with the participants, although we could not sing with our microphones on because of the technical delay. It was nice to have a response from the participants and to see that the people take the chance to interact and are motivated.

After the successful Open Activities, the Conversation Groups and Workshop Group I followed. During that time, the ISC-team focused on preparation for the evening stream, which included figuring out which videos are going to be shown in which order, the content of the presentation, and clearing up who is doing what during the stream. While everybody out of the ISC-team was working on something for upcoming streams the whole afternoon, the stage was not accessible. The Goetheanum Eurythmie Ensemble recorded their performance for the third day, so the stage crew had an exhausting second day.

Our program split the evening stream time into two presentations. The first one was from Ryland Engelhart, who talked about his organisation “Kiss the Ground”, the same-named film, and the message that they are trying to spread worldwide: working with nature and helping the soil to recover and improve for better agriculture.

The second presentation was held by Elizabeth Weydt, a German journalist whose main topic is radicalism in all sorts of ways. This presentation was more difficult to handle because she brought up critical topics that nobody from the ISC-team was



Ryland Engelhart presenting live on stage

prepared for. The main question she tried to focus on was, “How do you know that you can trust your own truth or perception?”. This stream was accompanied by tension, stress, and nervousness. It just

“ *I found the lectures very interesting, but what made them so inviting to make one listen were the speakers, and it felt heartfelt. Aside from the lectures and sessions, something I really enjoyed was getting to meet new people in networking [...].*  
- Mika James, Manila Waldorf School Class 11

did not go the way we thought it would. And although the whole team feeling was agitated and not great afterward, it brought us all closer together and showed that we could trust each other even in critical situations. And even though the stream ended at about 10 PM, nobody felt like going to bed. There was still a lot to talk about. For me personally, being one of the people doing the presentation, it was a turning point of not only my relationship with the ISC-team but also with myself.

Alicia Reinkemeyer

## The Third Day

Having previously attended the International Students' Conference (2017 and 2019), the experience of attending virtually as a co-worker and in a different time zone was definitely new. One main difference was that the conference day would start at 8:00 PM on my time. After already having a whole day done, I (Paolo) would start a new one at night, where I would sit in front of my computer, talking to people who are nowhere near me and waiting to be called for the morning meeting.

For the third day of the International Students' Conference 2021, as Leonie and I introduced the Impulse for the Day, we joined a video call that would allow us to be “on stage” 30 minutes before the conference day opened. On this call, we were briefed and given instructions on how things would unfold and on what sequence of events would be taking place until we ourselves, are live on stage.

As the previous days have, the third day started with a warm-up led by the team on-site. For me, this was always entertaining; it both set the energy for the day and helped ease any tension I felt by providing a sense of comic relief.

After this warm-up, we had a short break in the stream, and a rundown of activities followed. Here, the flow of the whole day was introduced from the warm-up that already took place, to the Impulse of the Day and the topic of the lecture, to the Workshops, Open Activities, and the performances at the end of the day. Once



this was over, it was our turn to take the stage, and introduce the Impulse for the Day.

“How is *Trust* rebuilt into society?”

For the third day of the conference, the impulse was rebuilding *Trust* back into society. Being on the third “layer” of *Trust*, or the “social” aspect of *Trust* by this point in the conference, paired with the lecture topic being *Books Not Guns: Building Trust and Peace through Education*, this impulse felt very much alive during the day.

It took a while before the team got to this impulse, though. In preparation, there were several discussions that were had before we landed on this question.

We first started by looking at this whole theme more like a journey rather than individual days. This was to allow ourselves to understand further the interconnected nature of the levels (or layers) of *Trust*. We then had the conversation regarding

societies and communities and the relationship of *Trust* within them. We discussed how in a community, you are already dealing with all three layers of *Trust* (one with yourself, one shared with another, and one shared with the whole community), which can make *Trust* very dynamic in nature. We talked about how this kind of *Trust* can either be strengthened or, in the opposite extreme, lost.

This then led us to talk about how one can go about rebuilding *Trust*. It also gave way for us to ask ourselves if there is a specific source for *Trust*, and if there is, would this be where *Trust* goes back to when we lose it? Integrated with this thought process was the idea of rebuilding *Trust*. We thought about how perhaps, just as we build things physically, there is a similar behaviour to rebuilding *Trust*. As we saw it, one cannot make a skyscraper without first providing reliable resources and a stable foundation; the same goes with *Trust*.

We also came up with other virtues, such as “Faith” and “Hope”, and tried to juxtapose their behaviours to trust. One of us asked about the difference between faith and trust. Though they have similarities, we concluded that faith is uni-directional, moves in one direction. Very much like how one gives their faith to a god, they do not expect their god to return this faith onto them. With trust, it behaves more like an exchange between two parties. When you give trust, you expect to receive the same trust that you shared. With hope, we saw this as a more universal experience. It can live within you, can be shared with another, and experienced by a whole.

From this, we saw similarities between these virtues and the layers of *Trust*. With faith, it mainly concerns one’s self. As it goes in one direction, it does not expect anything else from the others. It



Paolo Avila presenting a part of the Impulse for the Day

also felt very much a virtue that resides within us, something that grounds and anchors ourselves. With *Trust*, there is an expected exchange between two parties. When you give your trust, there is an expectation for it to be returned. Finally, with hope, as we felt that much like the third layer of *Trust*, having a more developed trust for yourself and the other allows for a better sense of trust for the community; hope behaves in the same way.

Leonie and I summarized this whole process as we introduced the impulse following this, we also brought in Arizza Nocum, the speaker of the day, who was giving her lecture digitally.

Arizza was one of the youngest nominees to the list of 100 Most Influential Women in the World and is one of the recipients of the Ten Outstanding Students of the Philippines Award. She is also the Co-Founder, and President of KRIS, a non-profit organization that utilizes education as a pathway to peace in the Philippines. Through this organization, she aims to rebuild *Trust* and hope through educating the youth.

Arizza’s lecture was— as the others have been, very inspiring. She spoke about how education moulds us to be the person we are now, which allows us to be the person we are meant to be. She also shared her experiences as a working student in the Philippines, her home country, and how it was a struggle for her to balance education and work. She felt as though she was losing trust in herself, as the people who were supporting her did as well. I remember listening to Arizza and sympathizing with her; as a working student myself, I also felt the pressure she did; the sense of despair, and that slow, long drawn out trust from those who supported your decisions, slowly ebbing away. She spoke about the country’s struggles, of the children left orphaned due to war, and the increasing number of broken families as calamities and catastrophes struck.

But she also spoke about hope. About how with our twisted present, it is possible that we can do something about it. She shared how she couldn’t create an impact significant enough to cause change or action as a single person. But together— she realized, we can stand a chance. So this is exactly what she did. She paved the way for people to come together, create opportunities for change, create spaces where she can nurture hope and trust; a place where she can reintroduce hope to her country and create trust between each other. She said that only through understanding what the cause of the conflict is, can we truly begin to untangle it.

The Workshops and the Open Activities followed the lecture. While the Workshops went on, I was thankful to have some time for myself. At this time, I was alone in my room (on stand by in case



Arizza Nocum holding her lecture digitally

*Paolo Avila:* Lives in the Philippines, and is a Manila Waldorf School Graduate. Before joining the organizing team for the International Student's Conference 2021, he was able to attend the ISC17 and ISC19. From this, he was inspired to join the team.

*Leonie Lindinger:* She was born in Switzerland and grew up in Salzburg, Austria. At the age of 17 she did a student exchange to a Waldorf School in the Philippines which had a great impact on her life. After graduating from the Waldorf School in Salzburg, she is currently studying a course in Art Education, Design and Russian.

anyone in the team at the Goetheanum called me), collecting my thoughts. It allowed me to truly reflect on the subject of the lecture and allowed myself to see how I can take action. It gave me time to digest all that was said during the day, as well as allow me to string together the ideas from the two previous days of the conference so far. During this break, I was also given the time to look back at the theme we have worked on the past few months and see how intertwined the idea of trust was with hope and education.

During the Open Activities time, I was able to discuss further the thoughts I have collected on my own. It was refreshing to be back in a scene of fruitful discussions intertwined with fun and good energy. During this time, I hopped around the different conversations and enjoyed hearing people's thoughts from all over the world; in this time, I truly missed having the conference in person. The insights these young people had was genuinely astonishing. The difference in cultures and upbringings shone brightly, and each conversation brought new insight to the table. Despite our screens and the physical distance separating us though, these conversations allowed us to break through them and have us feel as though we were together.

Finally, after the whole "day" was had, we all gathered again to the main stage. There we watched a Eurythmy performance. It was a nice wrap-up for the day; the calming lows and energetic highs pushed and pulled like a visual lullaby. The colours and movement seemed like a visual song that sent my mind at ease. The dance truly translated the sounds they were playing, and as though I had synesthesia, I was able to see sound and hear colours. After the performance, the team on-site made a few announcements regarding the events that would take place on the next day. They then shared their thanks and appreciation for everyone who has participated throughout the day and bid everyone goodbye. And as they all said goodnight, I then closed my device and said my very own farewell to the third day.

Paolo Avila, Leonie Lindinger

## Livestream

The International Students' Conference 2021 was held digitally. As the Youth Section, the WaldorfSV, and the Goetheanum, in general, are used to hosting conferences where the participants are on-site, this was a difficult task.

To make sure the participants could have had a good experience, we worked with a video producer from Berlin, Germany.

We wanted to allow the students to listen to content that was happening on stage, have an appealing picture, and enable them to come to the Main Hall of the Goetheanum, even if it was only digital. Another question for us was how we could translate

everything simultaneously in high quality. The most popular online meeting tools didn't provide this streaming at the time of the conference.

Thus, we decided to use a platform where we could do both, having live streams in high definition but also virtual meeting rooms to do the Workshops and Conversation Groups. The software we used still required a complex setup on-site in order to grant a high-quality stream.

We were using four cameras. The first showed the whole stage from a side perspective out of the auditorium, the second one gave a wide shot of the scene, the third and fourth were movable.

These two cameras had to be operated by professional staff. The video team we had booked included three people. The three were connected via a radio network so that the video director could give precise instructions to the two camera operator.

To ensure the translation, we also worked with the Goetheanum sound technician. He got the audio signal through our translators, who translated all the lectures simultaneously into Spanish, Portuguese and German. We then created with these audio tracks four unique streams, one for each language that the participants in their preferred language could then watch.

We are happy with how it all worked out, even though we were almost the first to do it this way here at the Goetheanum.

Fortunately, Tim and I were involved in another conference one and a half months before the ISC21, where we worked with the same production team and practised well for our conference.

Vincent Eichholz



Technical setup backstage



Camera setup on stage

## The Last Day

The fourth and last day of the conference featured a lecture by Ha Vinh Tho.

As in previous days, the conference team gave the Impulse for the Day. It was Barбора's and Vincent's turn to introduce and present the fourth day's impulse. The question was: "How do we regain *Trust?*"

Barбора presented the idea that we all had a pure and



unquestioned trust when we were born. We trusted our parents, our environment and everything around us. She asked all the participants if they could remember the first time they started doubting trust.

The second idea she shared was the image of a cube. She said that everyone can be seen as living in their own cube. The walls of this imaginary cube are formed by our surroundings and they can protect us, but can also limit us in the way we live and interact with our environment. The first step to regain trust is to become aware of this cube. We need confidence in ourselves to realise the walls of this cube and to step outside it.

Vincent shared the following, “I was trying to come closer to this pure trust, we had when we were born. I divided my perception into three layers: thoughts, emotions and vision. I tried to understand my environment and get a conscious relation to it.

Thoughts are rational and calculated. Emotions are feelings, but they are still consequences of situations where I brought myself.

The third layer, vision, faith or trust — I cannot control what’s happening there. I was trying to get closer to this deep and pure trust.”

Vincent said that he tried to get there by understanding what was going on around him through thinking. But he emphasised that it is essential that everyone finds their own way to get there.

Barbora closed their contribution with the question:

What do I need to do or change now to get back to the pure trust I was born with?

After the Impulse for the Day, we introduced Ha Vinh Tho. The title of his lecture was *Trust*.

In his lecture, Ha Vinh Tho shared his belief in a threefold foundation on which trust can be built. When introducing the topic he said, “Today is an in-between time. We’re not exactly sure what’s going to happen. There is something a little bit dark behind us and we hope for light, but we are not there yet. In a way, it feels like it reflects pretty much the situation we are in right now, we are in a kind of unknown situation, not knowing exactly where we are going and what will happen. So there is an uncertainty which is, a contradiction with trust. Trust is something in which you feel a certain security, certainty, confidence. We are in a phase of transition with a lot of unknown uncertainty. The good side is that it is a time to slow down, reflect and look inward, and I think it’s a good start when we want to reflect together on trust that we take this time to slow down, reflect and look inward.”

He explained that trust must be nurtured, developed, experienced and that it cannot stay just a theoretical concept. He explained that



Paolo Avila joining the team meeting digitally

it is good to trust, but how do we get there?

“And so,” he started defining his idea of building trust, “I would like to show three dimensions of how we can cultivate and nurture trust and where we feel the limitations. The difficulties to access an experience of trust where we come to our own limits and maybe how we can overcome these limits.”

The first layer he explored was the cultivation of self-care. He said that part of cultivating this kind of trust in yourself involves getting into a closer relationship with your destiny by saying that even if we don’t know what will happen, it will be ok. Another major part of getting closer to oneself is acknowledging and recognising emotions. He defined two extreme ways of dealing with emotions, “suppressing, negating, pretending they’re not there, and brushing them under the carpet. The other extreme is to be identified with it.”

“When you learn to recognise emotions when they are just popping up, just emerging, it’s quite easy to transform them. When we wait they become so strong that we are overwhelmed by them, it is a bit late. We might do and say things that we might later regret. So stopping, looking, recognising, acknowledging, admitting: yes, I have anger or sadness, or I have depression or jealousy or whatever disturbing emotions I have. Not negating it, accepting it and realising it is quite normal, it is part of being human.” Ha Vinh Tho compared our emotions to an inner child. He said that we need to learn to deal with our inner child in a way that is full of care, of tenderness and that we have to be gentle with ourselves, to accept that having difficult emotions is part of who we are.

Another essential part of coming closer to ourselves is understanding why certain situations trigger strong emotions in us. Once we understood that, he said, “then it’s not that the emotion is gone, but I can handle it differently because you understand where it comes from; what has triggered it. So I would like to encourage you to observe what is for yourself the kind of situation that triggers a strong emotion in you?”

He closed his explanation of the first pillar of building trust with the words, “Trusting in ourselves is a process that we can learn to consciously cultivate through inner observation, inner transformation, inner work.”

The second foundation he gave was cultivating care for others and society; trusting others and society.

Ha Vinh Tho asked, “You are in the age where maybe the most important thing you feel you need to explore and learn to master is friendship and love. How do you create good, trusting, lasting relationships on which you can then build your life?”

Another important step for his picture was that it doesn’t depend on how much we receive from the people around us. What makes



Dr Ha Vinh Tho holding his lecture in the Main Hall

a difference is what we can contribute. “Be convinced that you can bring about change”, he said, “Never believe that you’re powerless. You have the power in your own mind, in your own consciousness, in your own ability to transform what needs to be transformed.” We can project this onto almost any situation around us. As long as we can share something which has a positive impact, we come closer to the cultivation of trust in society.

“The third dimension of *Trust* is trust in the planet, trust in nature, trust in the environment.” The fundamental element of what we need to change to get this deep trust in our planet is perspective. He said we need to be careful not to get overwhelmed by all the negativity we face nowadays. All the data and statistics, temperatures are rising, all the ice is melting, of course, these facts are reliable. Still, as we learned in the first part, we need to control our emotions and not lose trust in our planet by becoming overwhelmed by all this negativity. He said, “We need to change the perspective of what is the planet. [...] Believe in science, yes! But science alone is not enough. [...] The planet is a being.”

“So again, I would really encourage you to get mobilised for ecology and climate change, and do your best and challenge the system and the misbehaviours of many people but most importantly, make positive contributions, create this connection of love and care and trust in the earth as a living being.”

He came to the end and summed up his lecture, “that was basically the message, [...] the reflection I wanted to share with you. I wanted to share with you how trust is built on a threefold cultivation. Cultivation of self-care, cultivating care for others and society; trusting others and society, and caring for and trust in nature and the planet.”

“

*The experience I had during the ISC was memorable and fun even if it was virtual but I do wish it really happened in real life. I feel more at ease from meeting more like-minded people who want to make the world a more breathable place. Something that I certainly had to listen to was the talk of Doctor Ha Vinh Tho, I wish I could have thanked him personally for his important and inspiring words. Also making connections with people from different places of the world felt like more puzzle pieces coming together, feeling more “whole”, it is exactly what I and other people needed. I am so glad that I was able to be a part of it.*

*- Martha Strugar, Manila Waldorf School Class 11*

After the lecture, the last Conversation Group session took place. The participants were invited to reflect on their experiences during the conference, on the topic, and how their view on trust has changed.

In the afternoon (Swiss time), we all met again on the stage, although only a virtual stage for the participants. We were speaking about the whole conference together with the participants, Conversation Group moderators, and Workshop Leaders in the closure. Some of them were part of the last conference in 2019 and could beautifully compare their experiences and said that it was different. However, at least they could meet and connect even in this

digital way.

Besides the participants who shared their experiences, Ioana and Andrea, who are co-workers at the Youth Section, explained the Research project of the Youth Section.

At the final end, the conference was closed by Tim, Vincent and Constanza. She concluded the conference with the words, “Trust has a lot to do with continuity. With that, would you continue doing in the sense of the sun rising? There is continuity and we can rely on that, but of course, you are all young and the world is constantly changing. It is good that there is change. But finding yourself this thread of continuity in the relations with the others may be in the relationship with yourself in your search for something because continuity will also give to the world what is so needed: that we have the possibility to start the birth every day. With every sunrise to be there and stay there to continue; to have this continuation. I think this will build trust, and I hope this will also build trust to our next step.

Hopefully, in two years, we will be together — maybe here, with some of you and with many others who may be at the next conference. I ask myself what will be in two years the main question of you - young people all around the world. As with this, I really want to thank you deeply again for sharing this moment in this is not easy way and easy moment that, we are all living together.

Let’s trust that we will meet soon again.”

Barbora Ansorge, Vincent Eichholz

*Barbora Ansorge:* Comes from the Czech Republic, graduated at Waldorf school in 2020 and currently is studying university in Prague. She attended the ISC19 and 29BST (German Students’ Conference) which inspired her to want to make a contribution.



# 3

C H A P T E R T H R E E

AUDIENCE  
REFLECTION  
ON THE  
CONFERENCE

## Workshops

### “Playful Music: unmuted exploring, singing, creating”

In this Workshop, we went on an exploration: what if we try to make live music together in an online space? An exploration that asked for courage, willingness, and some craziness.

For the duration of the three Workshop sessions, we discovered new practices and approaches in two fields: that of the voice and of instruments. A strong aim was to celebrate the possibilities rather than be saddened by the limitations.

Just like any ‘normal’ music session, we started off with warming up our bodies, voices and brains. Then we entered our singing field, in which we established knowledge and application of five pitches linked to a name and a hand sign. These are from the Kodaly methodology, originally a practical approach for sight-singing. This allowed us to sing together: in one big group, in two groups, with echo games, sing a text we had never seen before and finally some solo melodies. Some truly magical moments and powerful harmonies!

The field of the instruments gifted new, exciting melodies every day. Everyone brought along any instrument they had at home, and we used several improvisational techniques based on subjects such as minimal music, the alphabet and rhythm. The extraordinary music that arose featured violin, flutes, guitars, keyboards, some drums and string instruments from home-countries. At our final little virtual concert for each other, we performed short pieces in smaller groups, and they were incredible and diverse.

But most of all, there was a certain joy and excitement that lots of us had not experienced in a while: the joy of making music together! Over the three sessions, we built up a safe space where creativity and contribution were encouraged, and listening was strongly present. We all left with a sense of gratitude and excitement, what a wonderful time it was!

Dorothee Nys

### Photography

The Workshop was lead by Iasmina Petronia from Romania. The participants took photos of their surrounding that were then discussed together in the Workshop. In these three days they discovered what kind of qualities one needs to do this kind of art.

*Dorothee Nys:* From Belgium; currently living in the United Kingdom. She hosted the Workshop “Playful Music: unmuted exploring, singing, creating”





## Conversation Group

I came across my lack of trust during the process of moderating this Conversation Group, where I was afraid of my questions regarding the theme and, at the same time, the possibility of not being able to answer them.

The internal enigma of each individual at the ISC21 led us to wish for a “change”. Each Impulse for the Day unfolded a collective feeling when facing humanity’s issues. In a complete appreciation offered by the elegance of the word *Trust*, the discussions were moved by the desire for change where the standard path that connects us activated an internal portal of collective consciousness, an invisible phenomenon but essential for the evolution of the youth.

My intermittent desire was to listen to the different, but I also knew in a way that our stories were connected through time and the different contexts. By understanding that, I was capable of opening up so we all together could provide an environment full of identification and belonging between every sentence.

Perhaps the differences that we found throughout the *Trust* theme were not as new as we imagined. After all, we ended up experiencing trust as if we were talking about the nostalgia of humanity, each one remembering a fragment of what was such feeling. And not only a feeling, but trust also proved us to be a form of reason or seed that tends to grow in encounters like this, full of purpose and diversity, where the ground has been regularly nourished and prepared by hearts and hands that trust the human potential of every being.

A sense that, for us, was present during several moments of our exchange, taking different forms and different paths until it reached us.

When we looked back to the roots of the word trust, we found in its etymology the meaning “be firm, be solid, be steadfast”, which we promptly associated with the rhythm of the natural processes. Trust is not only necessary but intrinsically flourishing in the human being at an external and internal level of our relationships.

At first, we established trust between the members of the group by answering and thinking about questions as: What keeps you moving? When did you last cry in front of another person? Before opening your mic on a call, do you ever rehearse what you are going to say? Why? And so on. By that, little by little, we broke down our walls, step by step.

Another major point of our conversation was about the environmental issue and our task as the newest and probably one of the last generations. We understand that we want to listen to each other and trust our ability to work together towards a better future, we want to carry the next generations, and we have no other option other than to trust them, not by pressuring but allowing them to make their own decisions in consonance with the climate emergency. We don’t want them to feel obligated to solve everyone’s problem and sit to watch. An open conversation with all the generations needs to happen, but we already trust their sense of humanity.

*Isadora Tortella*: From Brazil, hosted a Conversation Group

The disclosure of our reflections went with a Brazilian saying that goes like “to close with a gold key” when one of us prepared an artwork that represented our discussions. We finished by inviting each other to come to our country and stay at our homes on better days cause we were able, after all, to build a trustful bridge between our hearts and soul.

Isadora Tortella

## The Treasure’s Path

The first time I attended an ISC was in 2019. The subject was *Courage*, and I was with a group of fellow students and some teachers. It was a highly fulfilling and enriching experience, not only because of the conference itself but also because of the trip and visit to Europe.

After our experience at the ISC19, we were determined to participate again in 2021, and I, personally, wanted to become part of the organization team. Then came the pandemic, but we went on with our plans to attend the next conference, despite travel restrictions that prevented us from moving around even within our own area. Finally, when it was decided that the conference would have to take place online, we made up our minds to work as a group. And although we remained within our familiar surroundings, this experience also turned out to be very rewarding.

There were obvious differences between the two conferences, which may have influenced my perception of them, but I feel that it was mainly my expectations and attitude that differed and made me experience them differently. When I arrived at the conference 2019, I had no idea what it was going to be about or who the organizers and lecturers were. For the 2021 conference, on the other hand, I was fully informed beforehand, I had watched the videos, read the newsletter, and had been getting acquainted with and reflecting on the subject for some time, and I had even written down my thoughts about it. In the 2019 conference, emotion and feelings prevailed in me, while in 2021, it was reflectiveness and thinking. In the first case, I was overwhelmed and mesmerized by the grandeur and beauty of the Goetheanum, while in the second, I found myself within my usual familiar surroundings. In my experience of the 2019 Conference, socializing and interacting with other people gained prominence over the lectures themselves. During the 2021 conference, on the other hand, I concentrated on the lectures themselves and met very few new people. The art performances in the former conference moved me deeply, to the point of bringing tears to my eyes, while those of the latter did not have the same effect.

There was, however, a similarity between both conferences: the way I felt when they came to an end. I found myself at a loss, feeling an empty space inside and asking myself, “what do I do now?”. The

*Xavier Moretti Yrure*: Is a student in an Argentinian Waldorf School. He participated in the ISC19 and ISC21.

conferences were over, and I couldn't spend the following two years waiting to participate in the next one. It was at that moment when I truly realized what they had left in me. I became aware of all the experiences I had gone through, the joy of being a part of them and coming in touch with their essence. It was then when I came to truly appreciate the seed that remained in me of the themes worked on at each conference. I feel that both conferences affected me deeply and will remain in my mind as a very special and treasured memory.

On both occasions, it was a week of total devotion to the conference. In the case of the 2019 conference, I remember being engaged in activities all day long and, at the end of the day, getting together and relaxing at the "Night Café"; and then again getting up very early the next day and walking the distance to the Goetheanum with my companions. In 2021, I also devoted all my time to the conference, leaving aside all other responsibilities. I remember getting up with my brother at 04:44 to get to the venue where we met with the rest of the group in time for the warm-up before the online session. And at the end of the day's session, going back home and making other video calls to exchange ideas with other participants. However, it is not tiring. It's a kind of ritual that extends over the whole period and in which you get totally absorbed. The only goal is to share, to exchange ideas, to talk. This reminds me of the fairy tale by Goethe, "Das Märchen der grünen Schlange und der schönen Lilie" ("The Fairy Tale of the Green Snake and the Beautiful Lily" by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe). At one point, the gold King asks the Snake what is grander than gold, and she replies: light. Then he asks her what is more refreshing than light, to which she replies: "to speak one with the other". That is, I believe, the essence of the ISCs: to talk, to share, to exchange ideas. And that is certainly something that we were able to do in both conferences. I won't deny that I would have liked to be present in person in 2021, but fortunately, technology made participation possible, and, far from being an obstacle, it became a vehicle for talk and interaction. So the essence of the conference was preserved in its online format.

I also think that somehow the challenges presented by the pandemic served to show the strength of the conferences, the resilience and resourcefulness to overcome the obstacles, and revealed the thread that unites them and makes them part of an organic whole. It became apparent to me that the work done and the results achieved in the 2019 conference were indispensable to accomplish the one in 2021. I feel that all that we learned and experienced about *Courage* in the ISC19 became the pillars for the conference in 2021. The latter conference was special in that its theme, *Trust*, was not only addressed during the lectures themselves but was actually experienced and exercised throughout the proceedings. To organize and launch the conference, courage was necessary, and then trust became essential to carry it on and bring it to a successful end.

The ISCs are a path, a path for youth. Every year a number of people set forth on this path guided by a couple of knights, and together they carry a treasure. Along that path, there are stations

where the group is renewed, changed. Each ISC is a station and in each one something is built and added to the treasure that is carried on. In each station, the people change, but the treasure is handed on to the ones that follow. The guides also change and hand over their mission to their successors.

On any path we undertake, we are sure to encounter challenges, pitfalls, difficulties. Thus, after walking the path of *Courage*, when the group was due to set forth on the 2021 stretch of the road, a storm broke out. The road was cut off by a flooding river, and there was no bridge to cross over it. The guiding knights had to build a bridge so that the group could go on along the path. The group trusted them, and they fully succeeded: they were able to complete their path and carry on the treasure.

What is that treasure? I don't know. I think each person assigns it a different meaning. I do know, however, that it transforms those who carry it and leaves a gem in each one. You might say that nothing much can be achieved with just one gem, but the same applies to a coffer full of gems if you have no aim or purpose. So I think that the mission of young people is to carry and pass on the treasure so that it is preserved and doesn't stray from the right path.

Xavier Moretti Yrure





C H A P T E R F O U R

# THE TEAM

## WaldorfSV

The WaldorfSV is the official student board representing all German Waldorf students. We are an institution of the „Bund der Freien Waldorfschulen e.V.“ (BdFWS). The BdFWS is the association of Waldorf schools in Germany with their headquarter in Stuttgart.

The primary task of the WaldorfSV is to create a connection between the students, teachers, and parents to guarantee an exchange between the three parties. Another primary mission is to have an open ear for all the students and listen to their needs and interests, representing their perspective in the development of Waldorf pedagogy. To do this, the WaldorfSV cooperates with most other Waldorf institutes and associations.

To create an open space for the Waldorf students to come together, we usually organise student conferences for German speaking students, twice a year. These enable students to exchange ideas, thoughts, and inspirations, discuss important topics and connect. Additionally, the WaldorfSV collaborates with the Youth Section, especially regarding the International Students' Conference, in Dornach, Switzerland, as well as with other pedagogy-related events in Germany.

But now we are in a different situation, which we recognise in all areas. Some things have changed for the WaldorfSV.

Unfortunately, the last German student conferences had to be cancelled, and we don't know when it will be possible to organise the next one in presence. Most of the WaldorfSV's time has been spent organising these conferences. Our focus now shifted to other topics, which were always important but more in the background of our work. Currently, we are working on what capabilities we also have as student representatives and what else is possible to connect with each other.

The WaldorfSV's concern is not only the work of representing and development but rather encourages students to connect to each other, continue with trust to question, and actively shape the world surrounding us.

In this sense, we are very excited to be a part of the ISC-team and help organise upcoming conferences.

Joseph Abend



WaldorfSV on the stage in the Main Hall

*Joseph Abend:* Lives close to Munich, Germany, since he was a child and attends the Waldorf School for 12 years now. He also enjoys making music and travelling. Since 2018, he is active in the WaldorfSV board and enjoyed being part of the ISC19 and now of the ISC21 team.

## The Youth Section at the Goetheanum

The Youth Section at the Goetheanum – School of Spiritual Science was founded in 1924 to provide a space for young people to explore their strivings, questions, and initiatives. The Youth Section's aim is to contribute to the transformation of the world into a place that values and supports the unfolding of every young person's potential and creativity, in their full strength and brilliance.

Young people have an awareness of the challenges of our time. We can find possibilities for understanding, connecting, and taking actions that may lead to the fostering of an ethical, peace-deepening society and healthy relationship with the Earth.

Anthroposophy allows us to deepen and widen a search for the understanding of what it means to be human today. With this in mind, the Youth Section supports and nurtures each young person involved to develop their inner initiative, acting out of it in cooperation with peers and society to consciously shape and transform the world.

In addition to providing opportunities for human encounters, learning, and intercultural exchanges, the Youth Section also works on youth-led research activities. These give young people the possibility to engage with contemporary social questions that matter to them and their peers. Through this, a space is offered to reflect on the impact that human ideals and actions have in the shaping of the future. The insights obtained inform our other activities, allowing us to continuously enrich our work as a young generation.

The Youth Section organises conferences, research activities, study groups, informal educational opportunities and any other experience that young people today feel worth developing to make their future visions a reality. From intimate gatherings with small groups, to conferences of over 700 participants, we try to carefully listen to every need and offer the best possible space to foster these encounters.

- Ioana Viscrianu, Johannes Kronenberg, Andrea de la Cruz, Constanza Kaliks



The Youth Section in November 2020



## The Conference Team



*missing: Andrea de la Cruz, Paolo Avila, Leonie Lindinger*



## THE TEAM



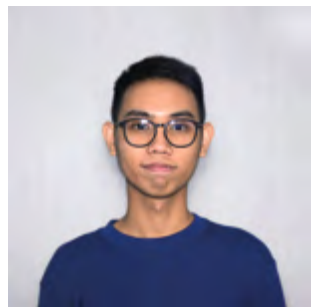
Vincent Eichholz, Germany  
Project Manager of the International Students' Conference. Working  
at the Youth Section since October 2020



Tim Bauer, Germany  
Project Manager of the International Students' Conference. Working  
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Paolo Avila, The Phillippines  
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Gabriele Nys, Belgium  
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## THE CONFERENCE TEAM

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Alicia Reinkemeyer, Germany  
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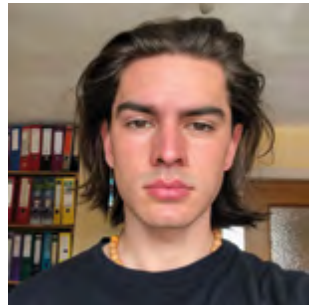




## THE TEAM



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Ioana Viscrianu,  
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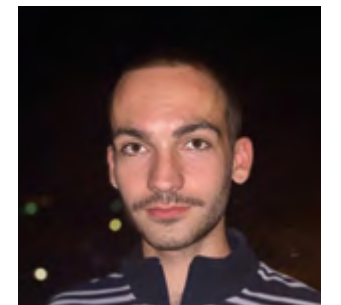
Johannes Kronenberg,  
Member of the Youth Section  
Project Co-Worker



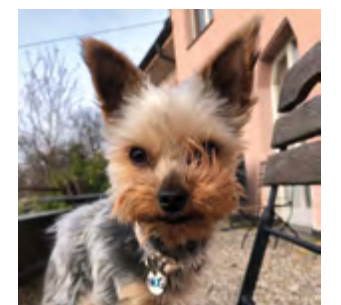
Ronja Eis,  
Member of the Youth Section  
Project Co-Worker



Till Höffner,  
Member of the Youth Section  
Project Co-Worker



Vivi Janse van Rensburg, The Netherlands  
Conference Dog





5

C H A P T E R F I V E

RETROSPECTIVE  
ON THE  
CONFERENCE



## From *Courage* to *Trust*

When did things begin to shift? When we look around us as young people wanting to understand our present times, we cannot help but to draw our attention to the years 2018 and 2019, when a kind of restlessness began to arise amongst youth on a global scale. In 2019 the Friday's for Future Movement was one of the clearest expressions of the tension experienced by the younger generations; in our own project (Re)Search, young people were telling us how they felt that they had to be prepared and awake for what might come to them from the future; and in April of that same year, more than 600 young people came together at the Goetheanum's International Students' Conference to find in the theme of *Courage* an anchor to deal with the happenings around and within themselves.

### A Turning Point in Time

2019 marked a turning point in time for young people around the world, whose voices began to take centre-stage in global events, perhaps even for the first time in history, becoming protagonists with powerful voices and not only spectators of the larger world drama. And even if many could not identify with the dominant-popular ways of expressing unrest, it was clear that there was a universal deeper longing that lived within the younger generations, sensing that things were reaching a tipping point and that all of us would have to play a part.

Within the Youth Section, a question began to arise: regardless of individual standpoint, whichever challenge one might be experiencing in one's own biographical journey - what can be grounding for those who sense this need for being awake and prepared? The answer came from the ISC preparation group, who chose *Courage* to be the key theme for young people in 2019. Through *Courage*, one can experience an expression of one's own agency because to be courageous in the face of such challenges means to assert that "I", that "we" are present in world events as participants who co-shape reality.

### Living with Uncertainty

And yet, what we have learned in the past years and especially since the Covid-19-19 crisis, is that what takes real courage is to learn to live with uncertainty, with questions that might not be answered in one's own lifetime. How can one remain afloat in the sea of the unknown? How can one still strive for ideals like truth, goodness, or freedom when one's own ground is shaken on a daily basis? Uncertainty awakens us to the realisation that we need to ground ourselves in something deeper than what external events offer us; that we need to learn out of experiences that one can —at any given moment— develop actions out of knowledge of ourselves

and the world in becoming.

And thus, from the realisation of courage to deal with uncertainty, trust arises - trust in the potential that human beings can again and again "renew the life of the world from its foundations up".

### *Trust*

Trust is a fundamental gift that we all get at the beginning of life, it's our task to give it forward. This is the task of any young generation but especially of ours today: to not lose on the way the Trust that binds society together through each human encounter in its plurality - the trust to be together in our differences, in our own unique potential to unfold individual deeds that shape our own biographies and history. Trust to not 'judge away' the otherness but to embrace its essential difference.

*Ioana Viscrianu:* Born in 1988, studied international business and psychology, worked in the field of anthroposophical social therapy and intercultural child and youth care. Since 2015 working in the Youth Section at the Goetheanum in youth work and youth research.

### The Youth Section

The Youth Section at the Goetheanum grounds itself on ideals that support the unfolding of a future where an ethical life based on individual human freedom is possible. The very essence of the Youth Section work is, therefore, to foster spaces where participants are not forced to swing from standpoint to standpoint but to foster essential experiences such as those of courage and trust in the potential of each human being to unfold their own destiny in freedom and to find their place in the world. To achieve this, the Youth Section creates all kinds of activities and spaces in which to practice courage, trust, and agency.

The International Students' Conference, which gives complete autonomy to young people aged 15 to 21 to envision, shape, and deliver events for peers from all over the world, is an example of practising what we, as young people, find worth practising today. Activities like the ISC allow us to become agents of our own learning whilst fostering experiences of encounter with the diversity of each other person participating in the events. Thus, we do not only find an opportunity to ground ourselves in our own identities but to use these as springboards that allows us to go beyond ourselves and meet others "I" - to - "I".

*Johannes Kronenberg:* born in Bosch en Duin (Netherlands) in 1991. Studied art in the Netherlands, then sustainability development and leadership in Karlskrona (Sweden). Working for Green Cross, the Institute Amsterdam and for several educational programmes on formal and informal learning. On the board of the Iona-Stichting, Amsterdam. Since 2019 co-worker of the Youth Section at the Goetheanum. Develops perspectives and initiatives around the climate questions.

*Andrea de la Cruz:* Co-worker of the Youth Section at the Goetheanum since 2017, where she facilitates peer-led, participatory research processes that aim to develop self-knowledge and agency in young people. She holds two art degrees and a teacher certificate in Waldorf Education.

### That Good Might Become

In cooperating and collaborating to make conferences like the ISC possible, we meet others who bring unique skills that contribute to the creation of an event that later offers even more young people the possibility to continue co-creating. This is how the Youth Section's activities translate into movement, a wave that expands beyond geographical location and time. The fact that the Youth Section's team includes people at the beginning of their 20s and some in their 30s can lead in the future to inter-generational

bonds. The way of addressing questions can be very different within the same generation, and carrying these questions together can be a great potential. In this case, the trust we place in one another is the foundation of our common work.

“My experience in the online ISC was educational and fun. I was able to meet new people and learn more about trust and what it means for our future.”  
*Juan Carlos Limpo, Manila Waldorf School Class 11*

Whatever the challenges we encounter, we will shape our reality together as a common endeavour. Let us always be able to kindle in ourselves the courage to be together in our differences and plurality and to trust in the potential of each human being walking side by side on Earth, “so that good might become what we together from our hearts and heads will found”.

*Ioana Viscrianu, Johannes Kronenberg, Andrea de la Cruz*

## Continuation of Trust

The International Students' Conference 2021 is over and, with the end of May, so is the time we spent working for the ISC21. However, the topic of trust does not come to an end and never will, hopefully. The way I experienced the conference, among the participants and the team, I am confident that the process will not end soon.

What we have all worked out there together, from all parts of the world, is something special. I am sure the question of trust in ourselves, in the people around us, in society, and the future has always been with us, consciously or subconsciously. That is why I am delighted that we met and worked intensively on this topic. The four days we had together were a great start for this and have strengthened the will to deal with trust more consciously in the future.

The path is different for each individual, but we have a common task: to create a culture in which we can rely on each other.

We all need to establish the courage to ask our questions and create a foundation upon which we can build, upon which we can build a society where everyone feels safe and yet is challenged to contribute, where no one is exploited and used, and upon which we can work together towards the goal of living a life of value.

You, the attendees, have shown how important and necessary it is that we work on trust and send a strong impulse into the world, a call to everyone to deal with it.

I have hope that we will all make use of what we developed during the conference to make the world a better place and to encourage everyone around us to do the same.

Let us transform the world into a trustable place, together!

*Vincent Eichholz*

## Trust – the essence of our common existence

*“Just as love will fire the human hand, the human arm, so that it has the strength for action from within, so the atmosphere of trust will have to flow into us from outside, so that action will find its way from one person to another. [...]. For if human individuality is to meet human individuality in morality, this atmosphere of trust will be necessary above all.”<sup>1</sup>*

Beyond all difficulties, beyond the fact that there is disruption and fear, beyond the fact that things happened differently as expected and wanted, beyond all uncertainty, we all know: there can be trust. It is trust that leads us into the earth: trust that there would be a surrounding for each one to be, a surrounding that would enable us to learn to live and be together in the world.

Trust was the theme of these four days conference – but also the theme for months of preparation, for meetings, conversations, for questioning and also not knowing if it would be possible to make it happen. It was a real journey from courage to trust: from the courage to affirm the will to enable the gathering in the conditions given, to the trust that it would be good, that the aim of finding sources for our own trust would be fulfilled.

Being in so many different places of our earth, during the conference we had sunrises happening all the time – so the gathering occurred in the presence of the constant gift to relay on the certainty that there will be a sunrise, again, every day, for all. Maybe this is one of the deepest certainties that we share in our life.

And then the question arises: Can we learn to trust ourselves, others and the world in similar completeness to the one we have regarding the rising sun?

There are enormous fields for this learning:

- Learning the trust in the capacity to understand the world, know the world, and trust that knowing the world is also participation in the world's reality.
- Learning the trust in the own destiny, the deep trust that we will find and shape our own life path.
- Learning the trust in our hands, our feet, our deeds. The world is waiting for our active creation.
- And finally learning to trust the other. The trust we give to each other builds the substance of our common life.

During the whole conference, in the shared daily beginnings, the “questions of the day”, the lectures, the workshops, all presentations and meetings, and how the whole gathering was thoroughly carried

*Dr Constanza Kaliks:* Born in 1967 in Chile, grew up and lived mostly in Brazil. She was a mathematics teacher Steiner in São Paulo for 19 years and also teacher in the Waldorf Teacher training. Leader of the Youth Section at the Goetheanum. Member of the board of the Goetheanum. Since 2020 she is a co-leader of a General Anthroposophical Section.

<sup>1</sup> Steiner, Rudolf. *Pädagogischer Jugendkurs. GA 217. Dornach: Rudolf Steiner Verlag, 1988, pp. 94, 95. 6. Conference, 8.10.1922.*



we could experience these learnings. Also, in the trust the participants gave to us: in difficult times of excessive being in front of the screen, you trusted it could be a moment of experiencing warmth and connection.

With great gratitude, I look back to this year of common work and especially to the conference days: due to the circumstances, we could all experience that there is trust. And that this trust is and can become more and more an essence of our existence in a shared world.

Constanza Kaliks

## Sponsors

Wholeheartedly we thank everyone who was involved in the conference. From the students who participated in this conference to the co-workers who supported us throughout the whole preparation and the conference, and to all of those who supported us.





*The backstage setup for the livestreams*

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INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS' CONFERENCE.  
A PROJECT OF THE YOUTH SECTION AT THE GOETHEANUM.