

FUTURE PROEF AWARD

SUSTAINABILITY COMPASS FOR FINAL MASTER'S THESIS OR PROJECT

This document can support you in developing your final master's thesis or project and integrate sustainability. You should also use the criteria below to motivate your participation in the Future Proef Award (in the justification form). You can think of it as a **sustainability compass or a kind of guide** to work towards sustainability with your final project. Just remember that it is not comprehensive and that there are different ways of interpreting sustainability.

1. BROAD VIEW ON SUSTAINABILITY

The jury of the Future Proef Award will evaluate to what extent you demonstrate a **broad view on sustainability** in your research or project.

The following questions are meant to broaden your thinking process about sustainability and help you explore various perspectives. However, they are not all-encompassing.

Embodying sustainability values

- Do you consider **ecological** (for our planet), **economic** (for prosperity) and/or **social** (for people) dimensions? Did you analyse the research topic or question as much as possible from these 3 perspectives?
- Do you pay attention **to respecting needs and rights of nature and its species**? Do you work to restore and renew healthy and resilient ecosystems?
- Do you pay attention **to equity and justice** for current and future generations?
- Do you create **social and ecological value** with your research, design or practice?
- Do you identify and incorporate the **values of stakeholders and communities**, including minorities? Do you collaboratively and inclusively seek a sustainable path?
- Do you encourage commitment to **peace and cooperation**, both locally and internationally, as enshrined in SDG 1 and SDG 17? Or do you take them into account in your thought processes?

Systems view

- Do you approach the sustainability challenge from **different disciplines and perspectives** and try to understand the elements that interact within and between systems (natural and human)?
- Do you **involve different stakeholders** in this process?



- In some cases, **positive impacts on ecological, economic and social dimensions go together**, but in other cases, positive impacts on one dimension go together with negative impacts on one or more other dimensions. Do you pay attention to such synergies and trade-offs in your project?
- Do you **analyze and challenge existing power relations**?
- Do you **analyze the evolution of sustainability challenges over time**? Do you use this historical insight to devise better future solutions?

2. IMPACT ON SOCIETY

The Future Proef Award jury will evaluate the potential positive impact of you/your final thesis or final project on **society**.

The following questions are meant to broaden your thinking about sustainability and help you explore various perspectives. Remember, however, that they are not all-encompassing

Contributing to the well-being of the planet and society:

- Does your final project benefit both the planet and society, and which **sustainability challenge(s)** does it address?
- Does your final project have **direct or indirect effects on the planet and society**? Consider the various types of impact your project could have, including concrete changes such as increasing knowledge, understanding, and applications that contribute to transforming systems. Also think about promoting ideas that create awareness and encourage sustainable choices, potentially leading to significant changes.
- Does your final project include **'triggers' or 'stimuli' that challenge current thinking, feelings, and/or actions** and/or contribute to reducing strong oppositions in viewpoints (polarization)?
- Does your final project has the power to change or disrupt existing situations? Does it have the potential to bring about major changes?

Addressing societal needs and/or personal drive:

- With your final project, do you **address a specific question or need of a stakeholder** in the field? Did you collaborate with this stakeholder during the development process, and will the final result be used?
- Did your choice of this final project's topic arise from a **personal perception of a need in society**?



3. CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION FOR SUSTAINABILITY

The Future Proef Award jury will assess the extent to which you/your final project contributes to creativity and innovation for sustainability.

The following questions are intended to broaden your thinking process on sustainability and help you explore various perspectives. Remember, however, that they are not all-encompassing

Innovation for the future:

- Does your final thesis focus on **exploring future trends and developing sustainable futures**?
- Do you look at a sustainability challenge from a new angle? Does your final thesis come up with **new ideas, creations or solutions that are "out of the box"** and contribute to a sustainable future? Do you dare to think outside the norm? Do you dare to experiment?

Creative approach:

- Do you use **imagination and fantasy** to question or shape the future for the sustainability challenge?
- Do you use **art, design, storytelling, or other creative methods** to provide new perspectives or inspire action for a sustainable future?

Inspiring the future:

- Are you contributing to the development of **new research questions** that can inspire future students or researchers to also engage in sustainability?

