

## Global Minds 2.0

### Project vision

Briefly describe your overarching vision for the proposed Global Minds project and explain how it seeks to contribute to Agenda 2030.

With the Global Minds project, Hasselt University wants to give students, employees and other stakeholders a **broad view on the world**, so that they can **contribute to a sustainable and equitable world for people, animals, and the planet**. This broad view on the world is achieved by GM by **bringing UHasselt into the world, but also the world into UHasselt**. Learning from each other and working together (**co-creating**) are necessary to find solutions together for the wicked problems the world is confronted with today. As a result, GM ensures **capacity building at Hasselt University** to better deal with these issues and to engage Hasselt University's students, employees, partners, and other stakeholders as **active global citizens**: global citizens who look at the world in search of solutions to problems and who actively participate in the social debate.

- A broad view on the world: when looking at the world, it's important to not only see what we can see with our own eyes. This can be coloured by our culture, history, origin, race, gender, ... It is important that you have a broad view on the world and take into account underlying assumptions, problems and mechanisms.
- Contribute to a sustainable and equitable world for people, planet and animals: this is the ultimate goal. Hasselt University doesn't only want to inform or sensitize its students and staff, but also equip its students, employees and stakeholders to contribute to a sustainable future by engaging them in the GM activities.
- Bringing UHasselt into the world, but also the world into UHasselt: with the GM activities UHasselt creates a reciprocal project with activities for both UHasselt students and staff as well as activities for students and staff from partner countries. By doing this we have an exchange in both directions and there is an exchange both in partner countries as well as within our own university.
- Co-creating: knowledge should be co-created with relevant partners and stakeholders. Through exchange and working together students and staff can learn from each other. Our partners are working in a different context and there is a lot to learn from them. Next to this UHasselt students and staff can also share their knowledge. Co-creating is essential in establishing sustainable and equitable partnerships.
- Capacity-building at Hasselt University: GM is a capacity-building project. With the GM activities we are aiming at gaining new knowledge, skills and competences (= building capacity) for students, staff and stakeholders. By doing this the results of the GM project are also sustained in the future. Next to this, by engaging staff they can in turn use cases in their regular education and research and so co-creating and working with partners in partner countries is seen as "something we just do" instead of something some of us do. Next to this, by incorporating cases in regular education and research also more students and other colleagues come in contact with cases from partner countries and are therefore reached.
- Active global citizens: the ultimate goal is to create global citizens: students and staff who are aware of and understand the world and the global challenges. However, we focus on the active part. Hasselt University doesn't only want to create awareness but it's the aim to activate students and staff so that they take an active role in their community or in the wider

world to contribute to a more equitable and sustainable future and to influence future generations.

### **Synergy between projects and strategic partnerships**

Due to the decrease in the resources that UHasselt will receive annually within the Global Minds project, UHasselt will focus more on **strategic partners and stimulating synergy between projects** in order to work cost-efficiently. We also try to encourage new staff members at Hasselt University to participate in UDC by initially encouraging them to join existing partnerships in order to lower the barrier to explore new partnerships themselves at a later stage.

We can only achieve this goal by focusing on **partnerships**. Initially, we want to involve our existing/strategic partners. Since the GM budget will decrease in the coming years and stagnate (even when Hasselt University has been growing the last 5 years), we must focus on synergy between projects and make more use of existing partnerships in the first place.

### **Lessons Learned**

In addition, we also want to focus on the lessons learned from GM1. We have gained a lot of experience in the first GM program and want to maintain our best practices and focus on activities that have proven their impact.

### **Agenda 2030**

We will incorporate the Agenda 2030 not only in the general plan for GM2.0, but also in the implementation of the GM project:

1. Leaving no one behind: there needs to be a focus on a socially fair and inclusive GM project. Hasselt University focusses (and monitors) on two aspects: gender balance and focus on integration, inclusion and guidance of international students.
2. Multi-stakeholder partnerships: as stated above Hasselt University mostly focusses on sustainable partnerships and searches for synergy with other projects. One of the lessons learned in GM1 is also to focus more on looking for internal synergies and setting up an UHasselt network to create more synergy. Next to this, there will be a focus on sustainable partnerships, with different stakeholders (HEI, NGOs, private sector, ...).
3. Interconnectedness: as explained before, it's important that UHasselt professors find each other to collaborate. Since all SDGs are interconnected and the problems that the world is faced with today are multidimensional, there is a need to involve experts from all domains and encourage them to collaborate. Hasselt University also seeks for interconnectedness between (VLIR-UOS) projects by focussing on "strategic" partnerships.

## **Theory of change**

### **Narrative description of the change process / pathways and assumptions**

*Develop a Theory of Change which serves as a compass for the project strategy. This narrative description of the change process should build further on the context analysis of Module 1 and explain the flow between:*

- *The long-term objective or dream (=impact) to which the **GM project** wishes to contribute (in line with Agenda 2030, the SDGs and the VLIR-UOS impact areas);*
- *The outcome(s) the project can realistically achieve;*
- *The expected intermediate changes (=results) linked to one or more six standard VLIR-UOS project domains (=domains of intermediate change) and how these will lead to outcomes.*

*When elaborating the Theory of Change, the most important uncertainties / assumptions / risks related to the change process should be identified as well.*

*Make sure to include a description of expected results regarding the uptake of new knowledge, services and applications by external stakeholders.*

### **1) Impact Statement – long-term objective**

*By 2027 and beyond, through the activities within the Global Minds project (how) UHasselt students, employees and other stakeholders (who is changed) will have a broad view on the world and will be equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge (what is changed) so that they can contribute to a sustainable and equitable world for people, animals, and the planet and have an impact on society to guarantee a sustainable and equitable future.*

*With this Hasselt University contributes to the Sustainable Development Goals, and with the projects within GM promoters and students contribute to more specific SDGs.*

### **2) Domains of intermediate change**

*Below the different activities within each change domain are described. With these activities we aim at creating an enabling environment where students as well as staff members are engaged in activities and also inspired to take up their role as active global citizens.*

#### **1. Research programmes and methods**

*The change Hasselt University aims to create is improving methodologies and the quality of research in spearhead domains, in co-creation with relevant partners in order to focus on socially relevant research to be able to tackle societal and global challenges.*

*Based on its DNA, Hasselt University wants to further anchor its civic character and connection with the region, by using it as an asset in spearhead domains and by making socially relevant research resonate internationally with the region as a testing ground. Promoters at Hasselt University aim to set up sustainable partnerships serving societal needs. To ensure this, the international office encourages promoters to focus on co-creation with partners in partner countries.*

*Hasselt University intends to achieve these goals by creating various initiatives at faculty level with a focus on research within its spearhead domains, based on research oriented towards themes relevant for partner countries and in collaboration with partners from partner countries. The following activities will be organized within this domain:*

- **Predocctoral visits** (preserved from GM1): *The international office organises a call for faculties in which they can invite potential PhD candidates from partner countries. This enables faculties to collaborate with their potential PhD candidates on the preparation of a PhD proposal that could lead to new sandwich PhD positions, if possible with external funding.*
- **Sandwich PhDs** (preserved from GM1): *PhDs are very important for universities: not only for the research of the PhD students itself (creating new knowledge), but also in the collaboration with a partner PhDs are a very important 'instrument'. A sandwich PhD is in most cases a starting point in a new collaboration and also an important factor for sustainable partnerships. The results obtained from the sandwich PhDs research projects can also be used as case studies in relevant educational initiatives or sensitization initiatives, and thus influence the wider academic community. The call for Sandwich PhDs within GM is aligned with an already existing PhD programme at Hasselt University, the BOF BILA (Bilateral Scientific Cooperation) programme supported by the Special Research Fund (BOF – Bijzonder Onderzoeksfonds), coordinated by the Research Coordination Office. This means the application and selection process is done together and extra workload is reduced.*

*Since useful knowledge is created during a PhD project, it's important to see if the results of a PhD research can be used also during other activities (for example during the elective course (see further)) or how the results will be used (uptake). This will be evaluated during the PhD project and*

also after the project. Hereby we want to engage the PhD student to also use the results to create a bigger impact on society (uptake).

A PhD project is a project of 4 years. There is a risk that the PhD students will not finish the PhD. However due to the predoctoral visits we want to reduce this risk and let the professor and student get to know each other better to also gain better insight if the collaboration can be sustainable.

## **2. Education programmes and methods**

The change Hasselt University aims to create is improving teaching methods, didactics and digital approaches, and the curriculum content to equip students, staff, and other stakeholders with the necessary skills, competences, and knowledge to tackle global challenges in an interdisciplinary way (transferable skills).

This will be done in such a way that the wider academic community, consisting of students, researchers, staff, and other (international) stakeholders are better equipped with the necessary skills, competences, and knowledge for their future job/work and they have the reflex to look at the world to tackle global challenges from an interdisciplinary perspective. Next to this, Hasselt University focuses on internationalisation in combination with a civic and sustainability perspective. Hasselt University presents itself as a civic university. As civic university we assume our responsibility, commit ourselves and share our knowledge in ways that benefit society.

This goal will be reached through following activities:

- **Extracurricular course "Tackling Global Challenges"** (new in GM2.0): The International Office will collaborate with a group of faculty members (academic and administrative staff) and the education department to develop a new extracurricular course. During this extracurricular course students are taught how to work innovatively in multidisciplinary teams in an international context on topics related to sustainable global challenges. A next step of this course is for students to really implement the project and this can be done during a master thesis for example, where students also get the opportunity to do a part of their master thesis abroad, with the support of a travel grant (see further). Some of the projects will also be implemented during the Interdisciplinary International Internships (INT<sup>3</sup>) (see further). With this course we create an enabling environment and students are motivated to put their project into practice.
- **Elective course "Globalization & Sustainable Development"** (preserved from GM1): This existing elective course allows students to get acquainted with and develop interest in development-related issues. The general theme of the elective course is different each academic year (e.g. Global Commons, post-pandemic future, ...) and also focuses on the interdependencies created by globalization and the different impact of globalization on different parts of the world. Lectures are given by UHasselt and international experts. In previous years international experts were invited at the university for a lecture in person and networking would be encouraged. This was hindered by the global pandemic in 2020 and 2021. However, solutions were found by organising some lectures online and thus international experts joined these online lectures.
- **Interdisciplinary International Internships (INT<sup>3</sup>)** (preserved from GM1): At Hasselt University, there is a believe that our students need to be 'Global Citizens'. An internship in a partner country is an interesting way to get acquainted with the world and the global challenges. The INT<sup>3</sup> internships are special in this way, since students from different faculties are engaged in the same project and need to collaborate in the project. They learn how to

work interdisciplinary and international at the same time, which makes these internships unique. INT<sup>3</sup> was already organised in 2019, but was cancelled in 2020, 2021 and 2022 due to the global pandemic. International mobility is uncertain when it comes to pandemics or other hindering factors (such as conflicts, ...). In the next five years opportunities for INT<sup>3</sup> will be sought at our strategic partners as well.

- **Staff trainings** (preserved from GM1) on relevant topics such as intercultural competences, global citizenship, etc.: By organizing specific professionalization modules at university level on relevant topics, such as Project Cycle Management, project writing, and intercultural competences, UHasselt gives their staff the opportunity to gain the skills and knowledge to work in an international environment on topics related to global challenges. These skills are useful for other activities within Global Minds.

### **3. People**

The change Hasselt University aims to create is to sensitize, train, and engage staff, students, and other stakeholders to strengthen their knowledge, skills, and attitudes in different domains related to decolonization, development cooperation, "North-South" relations, and global challenges.

This also done by activities in other domains such as the staff trainings, the elective and extracurricular courses and INT<sup>3</sup>.

With following activities UHasselt focusses on raising awareness and consciousness of global challenges, sustainable development, and development issues among the wider academic community (students, researchers, staff, and other stakeholders) with a view to stimulating, activating, and mobilizing (parts of) this target group:

- **Travel grants incoming students** (new in GM2.0): A new programme will be created to create more reciprocity in the GM project: travel grants for students from partner countries to do their internship or research for their thesis at our university (reciprocity was a working point from GM1). In this way students that don't go abroad still come into contact with students from partner countries and have an exchange with them. The international office also aims to encourage dual internships/research, where students from UHasselt are matched with a student from a partner country.
- **Travel grants outgoing students** (preserved from GM1): At least 20 annual travel grants will be awarded to students to co-fund research stays or internships in partner countries as part of their academic education (link with education: capacity building on both personal as well as on faculty/institutional level).
- **Intervision sessions for students going to partner countries** (preserved from GM1): The university strives for a solid supervision of its students by offering thorough preparation (cultural sessions in cooperation with ANGC UCOS (Universitair Centrum voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking) and health and safety sessions provided by UHasselt professors) and de-briefing sessions (in cooperation with ANGC UCOS), customized for students travelling to the South (whether or not on a scholarship).
- **Support and guidance for international students** (preserved from GM1): Together with other student services the international office will organize multiple events for international students (some activities are organised together with Flemish students) in order to provide qualitative support and guidance for students from partner countries, in order to facilitate their social integration and academic progress.

- **Sensitization activities** (preserved from GM1): Hasselt University is committed to offer various awareness-raising initiatives throughout the academic year, such as the World Evening, activities during the fair trade week, debates, etc. With this activity links will be sought with existing projects and partnerships. All events ensure that both international and Flemish stakeholders, each with their specific cultural background, are brought together, creating links and similarities to their own environment and interests. The organisation of the various activities is based on the offer of a broad national and international expertise on development-relevant themes (e.g. guest lectures of staff from the South) as well as on a close cooperation with other intermediate actors like ANGCs active in development cooperation (Oxfam, Fairtrade Belgium, 11.11.11, VZW Kattendans, Kisangani VZW, CIFAL Flanders, ...). Hasselt University strives for the participation and involvement of all faculties even so for the sensitization activities. It is therefore also encouraged that faculties organize specific sensitization events, which could relate more to a specific research topic they are working on. Since sensitization will also be reached by sharing stories (lesson from GM1 is to give more attention to communication) from students, staff and stakeholders on their international experience with partner countries. During GM1 a story-project was launched. Within this project a group of staff members from the international office and the faculties engaged themselves to establish a platform to share stories. The aim is not to share some stories in the academic work itself, but to focus on the experience and the personal story of the incoming or outgoing student or staff member. With this project we hope to sensitize and to get people excited to participate in projects or to do an internship abroad for example. The platform will be online, so the work that is done now can be used in the next few years as well.

#### **4. Outreach and policy support**

The change Hasselt University aims to create is to increase the interaction with different relevant stakeholders (public, private, and academic stakeholders) in order to increase collaboration, co-creation, and to share knowledge. Hasselt University also aims to provide a framework for knowledge-sharing.

Hasselt University will use existing, sustainable partnerships to learn from each other and to share the knowledge with new partners. By creating synergy with existing projects not only knowledge will be shared, but also the budget will be optimally deployed. This will be done by organizing the following activity:

- **Global Minds projects** (preserved from GM1): Via this call, the international office funds projects that contribute to the goals of the internationalisation policy plan and/or the Global Minds programme. This call for projects is partly funded by GM and partly by internal funds of the international office. This call aims to offer flexibility in terms of the activities that a project can implement. Projects can thus carry out a wide range of activities. With this call, we aim to stimulate staff (academic AND non-academic) to be active and creative. A list of examples is made available to the applicants (these examples are purely illustrative):
  - Testing and/or implementation of innovative practices in the field of education and internationalisation: e.g. blended/virtual learning; e-modules;

- *Organisation of an international activity at UHasselt: e.g. summer school / workshop / colloquium;*
  - *Student trip initiatives: bachelor or master student grants (max. 10) in the framework of a project and as part of a regular course (ECTS);*
  - *Integration of an international and/or development-relevant dimension in the curriculum: e.g. guest lectures from international speaker, (partial) joint course module, etc. Integration in the UHasselt study guide is mandatory;*
  - *Staff mobility as part of curriculum development or to initiate international partnerships. This needs to be in combination with other activities. When applicants only want to apply for staff mobility, they should do so within the call of the mobility programme (see call staff mobility).*
- ***Networking weeks with international partners (theme weeks)*** (new in GM2.0): *Since communication, networking and finding more synergies is one of the work points of GM1, the international office will coordinate the organisation of a networking week on a specific theme (e.g. environment, sustainable cities, ...). During a theme week strategic partners (focus on partners from other VLIR-UOS projects) will be invited and will participate in organizing parts of the theme week. The theme week will consist of an academic part with academic lectures. Next to this, there will be workshops relevant to all partners, such as workshops on research management, or setting up student exchange programmes, or workshops on intercultural competences. With these networking/theme weeks exchange will take place and synergies can be found. It will be a challenge to invite all partners at the same time. Furthermore, international mobility is uncertain when it comes to pandemics or other hindering factors (such as conflicts, ...). In that case an online alternative could be set up. This could also be seen under the change domain of Networks and Partnerships, however since this is the definition of creating a framework of knowledge-sharing, this activity relates more to Outreach and Policy Support.*

*To create impact, it's important that there is a communication and dissemination strategy in place regarding the GM projects. This is also one of the evaluation criteria during the selection process. A clear strategy is needed so that a bigger impact can be created (uptake strategy). During the theme weeks it's necessary to involve different stakeholders to create a leverage effect.*

### **5. Networks and partnerships**

*The change Hasselt University aims to create is to increase its interaction and the quality of its existing partnerships, while also exploring new partnerships and creating new reciprocal partnerships.*

*This goal will be reached by organizing following activities:*

- ***Call for incoming and outgoing staff mobility*** (preserved from GM1): *Hasselt University aims to strengthen its partnerships and to explore new partnerships through staff mobility to/from partner countries. Since staff mobility has multiple goals and, in most cases, it isn't just for education OR for research, we are now putting it in the change domain of networks and partnerships since we here focus on establishing and/or strengthen partnerships. This*



allows us to indicate that staff mobility overlaps multiple change domains, but above all, staff mobility enhances the UHasselt network and encourages reciprocal partnerships.

- **Networking events (ad hoc)** (new in GM2.0): Communication is an important factor in both awareness-raising in general, but also to engage people in the GM project. We want to lower the threshold for people by organizing ad hoc networking events so that new partnerships (internal and external) can be formed and synergies can be sought. One of the assumptions that is made is that there will be people present at the networking events who aren't yet involved in projects in the partner countries.
- **Internal network of ambassadors** (new in GM2.0): In addition to the previous activity, the GM coordinator will set up an internal network of ambassadors. These people will be the spokesperson for their faculty with regard to international collaboration with partners in the partner countries.

With these activities, Hasselt University will reach more staff members and allow more staff members to become active. As a result of this, they will, in turn, reach students or colleagues with their stories, which will have a multiplier effect to have more students and staff aware of the global challenges and of the possibilities and opportunities to establish sustainable partnerships with partner countries.

### **6. Systems, policies, and infrastructure**

The change Hasselt University aims to create is to increase its management and information systems to improve its functioning in support of the Global Minds project and the implementation of policies regarding diversity, gender, ...

This goal will be reached by organizing following activity:

- **Initiatives to implement SD-related policies and commitments** (new in GM2.0) : By improving the infrastructure and policies at Hasselt University, an enabling environment will be created to encourage students, staff, and other stakeholders to participate in Global Minds activities, to take action, and to be an active global citizen. At Hasselt University there is a steering committee on sustainability. Some accomplishments have already been made since the steering committee on Sustainability started its working (since academic year 2020-2021): the Global Minds coordinator introduced a range of sustainable promotional gifts at the university, in collaboration with local NGO Oxfam Wereldwinkel Hasselt, so that UHasselt staff members can provide sustainable promotional gifts when they have a guest at the university or as a thank you-gift. Next to this, the Global Minds coordinator stimulates more sustainability actions at the university. This is done within the existing infrastructure, being the steering committee on Sustainability. In the future, a Green Office will also be established at the university. For this, the GM coordinator will also be involved in the starting up and the implementation of the Green Office. Next to this, the GM coordinator is also involved in the Enactus (see <https://enactus.org/>) working at Hasselt University, and with this we are stimulating students to be active and involved in sustainability projects with regards to entrepreneurship. This shows that GM is structurally reflected in the policy structure and is embedded in multiple university initiatives as well. In GM2.0 also new initiatives can be introduced as new opportunities rise.

### **3) Uptake strategy: Dissemination and communication**

*Since communication was one of the working points of GM1, we will need a clear communication and uptake strategy.*

*We will use following channels for dissemination and communication on GM initiatives:*

- *communication via UHasselt newsletter, magazine and social media;*
- *dissemination via the internal ambassadors;*
- *dissemination via the theme weeks, conferences and seminars.*

*Within the GM calls applicants are asked to describe their dissemination and communication strategy. Within the call for projects this is also evaluated by the selection committee. New knowledge will be disseminated via the publishing in journals (Sandwich PhDs, staff mobility) and by using new cases in regular courses. This will be evaluated at the end of a project or a mobility. Within certain activities of the GM project there is also a focus on knowledge communication and capacity building. For example, capacity building and sharing knowledge and experiences is the goal of the networking weeks.*

*During the sensitization activities we also focus on sharing knowledge with the wider community, outside the academic context. Events are always open for the wider university community and external partners are actively involved in the organisation and communication of activities.*