

“NOW is the time to change the world—now as we emerge from the crises triggered by an aggressive virus, an aggressive political leader, and the irresponsible ravaging of the ecology of the planet. These are crises that shake the world, and they open the way to a new world.” (Dr. Ervin Laszlo)

The World Upshift Movement

What is the World Upshift Movement?

The World Upshift Movement is a grassroots, international network of people who believe that the world is at a tipping point, who think that love truly has the power to change things for the better and who want to take responsibility for our common future.

Inspired by the writings of Ervin Laszlo, the World Upshift Movement aims to encourage wiser living for a more sustainable world, based on the premise that we have this choice to make:

“Do we want to be the last generation or representatives of the first generation that lives in a new way that can ensure our very survival?”

Together, we will take action to prepare for what Ervin Laszlo describes in his book *The World Upshift Movement* as the global paradigm shift needed to overcome the multiple crises our world faces today and to better prepare us for the ones to come.

We will:

proceed by listening and learning from one another, asking questions, telling stories, developing conversations about how we live now and how this can change. light up the pathways that lead to a wiser future for humanity, with shared experience and a deeper awareness of the challenges we face.

examine the roadblocks to remedial action, including our limitations as agents of change and the factors that stop us seeing how much we can achieve together.

find out how to empower the lives of those who feel traumatised or demoralised by recent events, and how to give voice to the powerless and excluded;

and work to find a way to build consensus about a wiser way forward for our world and how this can be achieved in time to save us from disaster.

Together, we will build a better world and give hope for our common future.

What are the objectives of The World Upshift Movement?

The immediate objectives of the World Upshift Movement are threefold:

- 1) Open a safe space for people to express their compassion, solidarity and concern about what is happening in the world today, whether this be climate change, war, disease, poverty, migration or any issue touching our lives.
- 2) Grow the capacity for critical thinking about both the local and the global challenges we face and how to address them with the power of love, both through day-to-day acts of kindness and through projects and initiatives.
- 3) Generate new thinking and practical ideas about what individuals and organisations can do to put the power of love to work in the world.

Our medium-term objectives are:

- 4) Mobilise the resources needed to underpin a paradigm shift in the way we see our relationships to others, to our planet and to ourselves, so as to avert the catastrophic consequences of the current paradigm. The old paradigm has led to a world that is out of control and on course for disaster.

Our long-term objective is:

- 5) To make the changes brought about under the new paradigm irreversible by means of educating the world about the power of love. The new paradigm and changes will remain open to the incoming future.

How will the World Upshift Movement achieve these objectives?

The World Upshift Movement is a coming-together of individuals and organisations who want to collaborate for the common good and towards a sustainable future for the world.

We see ourselves as a cultural movement, offering the opportunity to express our emotions, reflect on what these mean, and ultimately find a new identity as citizens.

By creating a critical level of awareness and participation, we hope to contribute to the emergence and consolidation of a new global paradigm for the common good.

The new paradigm will have scientific foundation but also speak to the deep need for physical, emotional and spiritual well-being as a precondition for sustainable living.

The initiative will be organised on a decentralised basis with hubs on all continents - Europe, the Middle East, Southeast Asia, Africa, North and South America and Australia.

As the movement takes shape, the positive energy driving it forward will come from the network itself, which as far as possible will be self-organising and self-sustaining with supportive coordination from the centre.

Those of us with responsibility for coordinating the initiative will need to listen attentively and learn how to nurture and sustain this energy and share it with others.

We envisage an outpouring of enthusiasm, hope and goodwill from participants which will inspire others to join and help build the movement from the ground up.

This means that the movement must be rooted in reality - that is, in the lives, experience and communities of those taking part - and not built on ideal expectations.

We are looking for a wealth of self-organised projects and activities, inspired and strengthened by contact with the World Upshift Movement and contributing to its success.

Paradigm shift

The term *paradigm shift* was first coined by the philosopher of science Thoms Kuhn and relates to a fundamental shift in our understanding of the world.

In the World Upshift Movement, we believe such a paradigm shift is necessary if human life is to have a future on this planet, not least because of the reality of climate change.

There are many other areas where a paradigm shift is needed, for example to create a culture in which the power of love can prove itself stronger than hatred and fear.

The World Upshift Movement is not a political project, but we do see the need for a paradigm shift in how our democracy works, towards one focused on participation.

Above all we need a paradigm shift in our approach to conflict prevention. Peace is not just the absence of war; it is a daily endeavour that starts within ourselves.

Whether someone believes that a paradigm shift has already occurred or is working to help make one happen, the World Upshift Movement would like to hear from them.

Perhaps they see and understand that there needs to be a fundamental reorientation in terms of how we think about health and well-being, starting with care of self.

Even if a paradigm shift takes place without us, we still need to be prepared for when it occurs. How we can best do that will also be explored by the World Upshift Movement.

Catalyst

A catalyst can be a person or a material object that precipitates an event or a process without itself undergoing any permanent change.

The World Upshift Movement is a catalyst, we want to engage with the world as we find it and expedite the changes we believe are essential to ensure our survival.

The structure of the World Upshift Movement will reflect this - it will be the minimum needed to carry forward the initiative and it will be disbanded when our work is done.

Our impact will come through example, our influence will be felt through the work of all who have been inspired to make a difference to our world and in our time.

Much of our focus will be supporting organisations working across a range of issues, including peace, democracy-building, climate change and well-being.

We are neither a religious nor a social movement and have no objective other than to mobilise the transformative power of love as a force for good in the world.

The World Upshift Movement collaborates with individuals of all faiths and of none who are sincere in their desire to put the power of love to work for the common good.

We will support all who want to bring about change through the power of love. Meanwhile the core identity of the World Upshift Movement itself will stay the same.

That is what it means to be a safe and neutral space for our participants, as they develop the conversations and experiences needed to help on our shared journey.

The World Upshift Movement is a facilitator, a disseminator, and an educator. We do not direct change. We focus on the process of change rather than particular outcomes.

Participation

The biggest barrier any movement faces is lack of participation. This can mean too much talk, not enough action and too big a gap between promise and delivery.

To overcome this obstacle, the World Upshift Movement has turned the traditional model of a movement on its head to create a non-hierarchical, self-regulating network.

The only lead you need to follow in the World Upshift Movement is the call of your heart.

What we mean by this is that the starting point for the movement is the decision to take responsibility for what happens next and to try to do something about it.

We believe that this light touch, bottom-up approach will unlock energy and potential that can be channelled for the common good and to catalyse change.

The most important step the person or organisation will take with us is the decision to join the movement in the first place.

We ask for a motivation statement, which we will study carefully and discuss. On this basis we can welcome people to the movement and make a start.

There is no participation fee for joining the World Upshift Movement - just that one brings heart, ideas, experience, expertise and a willingness to listen.

Joining the World Upshift Movement will bring people together with like-minded individuals and organisations that are working for a paradigm shift or to prepare for one.

We will work together through thematic groups and activity hubs, in local and issue-based communities, across cities and between continents to deliver change.

The golden thread running through all the projects and activities will be the attempt to transform the world through the power of love for the future of humanity.

Love is the only power that can secure the path to wiser living, sustainability and ultimately survival. Our world always needs love and today it needs it in abundance.

Activity hubs

One of the organising principles of the movement will be the notion of activity hubs, namely that individuals and organisations come together around common actions.

Activity hubs can take a variety of forms, but one of the most important activities we can engage in at the World Upshift Movement is developing the art of listening through organised opportunities - fora.

The idea of listening fora will be to create meetings where the participants have the opportunity to tell their stories, share their experiences and to learn from this.

These meetings can take place virtually or in person as circumstances allow.

Out of the listening fora, knowledge and awareness can emerge which is relevant to the work of the movement and can be shared with participants and the public.

A second activity hub could relate to capacity-building and leadership development, particularly for the next generation who have so much to bring about in so little time.

A third hub could focus on communication, helping participants understand from each other and from experts how to shape and deliver effective messages.

A fourth hub could bring together all those who are interested in well-being, reflection, and meditation, to understand how better to develop inner peace and resilience.

The aim of all the activity hubs is to harness the energy brought to the movement by those of us who have signed up to change the world through the power of love.

This energy is our greatest resource and our driving force. It creates our potential to bring about change. We must look after it well and develop it further.

Issue groups

A second organising principle for the World Upshift Movement network will be the creation of teams that are working on particular areas of interest. We call these *issue groups*.

Issue groups will address the major crises and challenges facing the world today, such as climate change, war, disease and famine, poverty and exclusion.

The groups can also reflect on topics such as the place of science in our society, the future of work, health and well-being, spirituality and the meaning of life. There will be many other suggestions.

Common themes running through all the issue groups will be our responsibilities as human beings and citizens to ourselves, to others and to the future of our planet.

Much of the public discussion about climate change focuses on the big-ticket items that need to be addressed by governments to reduce carbon emissions.

In reality, effective policy action will depend on the degree to which we as citizens change our attitude and above all our behaviour to mitigate the damage we all do.

The fundamental change needed to save the world from climate change is within ourselves, because what is required is a change of mindset at the individual level.

How is this change of mindset to be brought about if not through the power of love?

How can peace be reconstructed and sustained, on the European continent where there is a full-scale war in progress or elsewhere in the world where conflicts rage?

Is not peace a matter of how we live together with civility, day by day in our communities, without fear and hatred, and therefore by definition a labour of love?

Can democracy work well without the participation of citizens, not just at voting time but between elections? How is this possible in a climate of fear and hatred?

What have we learned from the COVID pandemic about our responsibility to take care of ourselves and the need to have regard for the well-being of others?

When will the outsiders become the insiders and when will we learn to celebrate the extraordinary richness and potential of human diversity, if not in an age of love?

How can our creativity and playfulness be harnessed to make our world better, if not by recognising that we are human beings in need of love and able to give it?

Regional groups

A third organisational principle is location. As an international movement, the World Upshift Movement will work across borders and regions to create a global reach.

Regional groups will be established for participants from different parts of the world, so as to develop networks within each region and discuss issues pertaining to that region.

Ideally, participants will join an activity group, an issue-based group and a regional group so that the networks become cross-cutting and mutually reinforcing.

Agoras and Webinars

One of the great joys of the World Upshift Movement will be the opportunity to come together with people from all over the world and share ideas, share the love and caring.

This can be achieved online and, where possible, in person. The help of professional online meeting organisers and facilitators will be required.

Particular emphasis will be placed on the use of breakout rooms so that everyone who takes part has the opportunity to speak and feel energised by the event.

Initially, events will be open to all participants in the network and held at times that respect the diverse time zones. Ultimately, we may need to hold separate events.

Workshops and Seminars

As well as coming together in large, open meetings, participants in the World Upshift Movement will have the opportunity to take part in workshops and seminars.

The workshops and seminars will bring participants together with experts, including academics, practitioners, media personalities and other thought leaders.

Organised around some of the key themes of the World Upshift Movement, the workshops and seminars will give participants the chance to learn and to challenge set ideas.

Seminars and workshops can be organised by any part of the World Upshift Movement network and offered to the whole movement.

Publications and Public Events

The World Upshift Movement will continuously be harnessing new ideas, energy and calls to action and these will be shared with the public through publications and events.

In addition, the movement will have a website, including a members' only section, and social media accounts to help disseminate the power of love.

A YouTube Channel featuring interviews with key personalities and some of the expert presentations is also under consideration.

How is the World Upshift Movement organised?

The work of the World Upshift Movement will be taken forward by an *Executive Team* supported by a *Development Team* and an *Advisory Council*.

The initiative will be administered by *The Upshift Foundation*, which will exist to manage the funds of the World Upshift Movement and pay for staff and consultants (either directly or by means of a grant to the employer) and associated travel, accommodation and business expenses.

Advisory Council

The Advisory Council will be made up of representatives from partner organisations as well as individual members who wish to make a contribution at the strategic level.

The Advisory Council will meet once a quarter online to review progress and discuss new ideas to promote the initiative and make it a success.

The Advisory Council will appoint the Chair of the Development Team and the members of the *World Upshift Movement Foundation*.

The chair of the Advisory Council will be Ervin Laszlo, founder of The World Upshift Movement.

New members of the Advisory Council will be selected by unanimity on a recommendation by the Chair.

Development Team

The Development Team will bring together individuals from The Laszlo Institute and New Europeans International as well as a third group representing outside expertise.

The co-ordinator of the Development Team will be appointed by the Chair of the Advisory Council.

Members of the Development Team will be drawn from New Europeans, the Laszlo Institute and outside consultants at the invitation of the Coordinator.

The Development Team will meet once a month online and at least once a year in person. Prospective members of the team are shown in the table above.

The remit of the Development Team will be to oversee the implementation of the business plan by the Executive Team and contribute to its success.

Executive Team

The Executive Team will be drawn from the Development Team and appointed by the Upshift Foundation on a recommendation of the Chair of the Advisory Council.

The team will be responsible for the day-to-day running of the initiative.

The Upshift Foundation

The Upshift Foundation acts as the legal entity which manages funds on behalf of the World Upshift Movement, administers the project and safeguards its legacy. Systems will be put in place to ensure financial probity.

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