Summary of iACT Competencies & Learning Pathways

The Knowledge, Skills & Experience Needed for Activating Community Transformation through Catalyst Learning & Demonstration Centres & Bioregional Networks
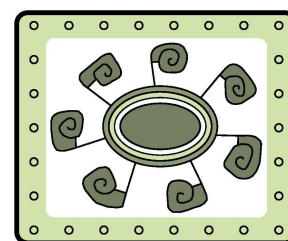
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iACT Project Partners

Lead Partner:

PERMACULTURE ASSOCIATION

Permakultur Danmark

CENTRE for ECOLOGICAL LEARNING LUXEMBOURG
the transition hub

Селище Зелено Училище
Green School Village

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CLOUGHJORDAN ECOVILLAGE
building • sustainable • community

cE3c
centre for ecology, evolution and environmental changes

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Part 1: Introduction & Ways To Use This Guide

The purpose of this summary guide is to define and promote **what you need to know, be able to do or learn** (*i.e. the competencies*) **for setting up, operating and developing learning and demonstration centres** and bioregional networks to **activate community transformation**. The goal is to provide a usable framework for individuals, for **teams, centres and organisations** in particular, and for communities to:

1. Put in place **the ecology of competencies** (skills, knowledge, experience) they need;

2. Identify the ways they will **develop and enrich these competencies over time** - their learning pathways

By doing so, **regenerative sustainability learning and demonstration centres** will be better able to serve their local and regional communities in the drive for positive climate action, regeneration and resilience.

This summary document links to more detailed information that describes the competencies in more depth, why they are important, the benefits arising from them, and the learning pathways that enable the competencies to be put in place and strengthened. This information is provided in a more detailed Competency Framework & Learning Pathways document, and is also hosted on the [Communities for Future Wiki](#).

The intention is to improve this summary document and the overall Competency Framework over time, to enhance its usability and impact. The framework draws on the experience of existing learning and demonstration centres, related disciplines and a deep understanding of what such centres will need to be doing in the 2020's and beyond to catalyse and accelerate community transformation. The framework conveys an understanding of the many roles and activities that centres, their teams, external partners and bioregional networks will need to fulfil in order to respond positively and proactively to the climate and ecological emergencies.

This guide forms part of the iACT support system, comprising four elements to help your centre improve its demonstration features, activities, learning programmes or research:

1. The **iACT Handbook**: an important resource to help you increase your competence;

2. the **iACT Toolkit** of resources;

3. the **iACT Good Practice Guide** of good and emerging practice

4. The **iACT Mapping and Research System** - which helps you see who else you can connect with, learn from, collaborate with, or be inspired by.

This guide is intended to help you in a variety of ways, including:

- To understand and map a) existing competencies, b) competency gaps and c) learning pathways for i) you, ii) your project and iii) your team;

- To plan how to put in place and further develop the competencies your project needs (the skills, knowledge, attitudes, experience, etc that you need);

- To understand and plan how those competencies can act as a catalyst to activate community transformation, locally or regionally;

- To understand and decide how those competencies relate to particular roles and activities of your project, and how to use Competency & Learning Pathway Tools.

The Catalyst Role of Learning & Demonstration Centres

*The role of learning and demonstration centres is normally to work with, or as part of, local to regional communities and networks to facilitate the emergence of increased resilience, climate action and low carbon lifestyles over time - at household, organisational or community scales. This process includes identifying **the learning pathways that enable the competencies to emerge across a community, locality or region** that enable these outcomes to be achieved. Learning and demonstration centres can be vital hosts and catalysts that make these learning pathways accessible, affordable and impactful.*

The iACT project recommends that catalyst centres develop competencies across their internal team, wider partners and bioregional networks that will enable them to deliver **four key functions**, that will in turn enable and activate personal and community transformation:

- **LEARNING**: providing many learning opportunities for diverse audiences of all ages
- **ACTIVITIES:** providing a range of activities, action and engagement opportunities for diverse audiences of all ages
- **NETWORKING** - stimulating, enabling, supporting networking activities for diverse audiences, including among communities of practice engaged in regenerative sustainability, permaculture and other areas of transformative learning and action
- **DEMONSTRATION** - providing a range of demonstrations of physical features, regenerative sustainability activities, ways of working, types of enterprise or organisation, decision making methods and ways of caring for their staff, volunteers and visitors that are relevant to their local community, wider bioregion and particular target audiences e.g. regenerative food growing, low carbon building, renewables.

To achieve this, the people involved in creating, developing and operating these learning and demonstration centres need to develop their own competencies. By doing so they can fulfil **the catalytic role of their centres** in healthy and rewarding ways, and enable a wider range of important competencies to emerge in a community or region over time.[1]

Therefore, the **iACT learning pathways** identified in this document help people to develop the skills, knowledge, attitudes, values and experience that will enable them to deliver learning programmes, activities and demonstration features, which in turn enable communities or organisations to identify appropriate carbon reduction and community resilience goals. The centre can then work with that community to develop the competencies that will achieve those goals over time, whilst also providing access to spaces, activities and networks that support mental and physical health and wellbeing - as hubs for a sane, humane, ecological future.

In this document we often use the term '**catalyst centre**' as a short-hand term for this type of transformative learning and demonstration centres.

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[1] NOTE: the community is wider than the centre, but initially the spread and depth of regenerative sustainability competencies is likely to be greater in the centre than in the community, particularly if the centre is to truly act as catalyst for transformation in the community.

The Primary Roles for Learning & Demonstration Centres

The following six ***primary roles*** cover the five fields of competence for people involved in catalyst centres. They are not a direct parallel to the 5 competency fields set out in Section 2 because, for example, for a centre that is engaging with the general public and many different audiences Communication, Engagement & Facilitation competencies will be needed for most people in any of these 6 primary roles.

These 6 primary roles require ongoing learning and competency development, and enrichment of experience and expertise. They are not mutually exclusive roles, so some people might cover 2 or more roles in parallel (particularly in smaller centres), or evolve from one role to another. So the learning pathways they follow to cover any of these roles could be clearly planned routes or be more of a non-linear learning journey.

The 6 roles are:

1. **Designer:** a role that develops increasing skills, experience, adaptability and expertise in design, including using regenerative and permaculture design methods for physical projects, education systems or the centre's business activity - covering design of the centre as a whole, multiple sub-projects within it, and 'external' projects in the communities and regions that centres live within.

2. **Sustainability / Regenerative Practitioner:** a role that increases experience, skills, adaptability and expertise in applied sustainability fields, such as food growing and green building - these will be used within the centre as well as having a catalytic role in the communities and regions that centres live within.

3. **Educator / Facilitator of Learning:** a role that increases experience, skills, adaptability and expertise in facilitating the learning and development of others, as well as in their own learning about how to further develop that expertise. Again, these skills will be used particularly at the centre, and often will also have an important role in supporting learning-for-action beyond the centre.

4. **Host:** a role that increases experience, skills, adaptability and expertise in hosting and all the people skills that cater for a wide range of visitors, learners, partners and other stakeholders at the centre. This role ensures that the food and facilities match or exceed expectations, that the centres provides well for a diverse range of needs, and ensures that people leave with a positive, and often transformative experience behind them.

5. **Community Catalyst / Facilitator:** a role that increases experience, skills, adaptability and expertise in inclusive engagement, community facilitation and activating community initiatives. As hubs for local networking and events these skills will be used at the centre, and often have a vital role supporting initiatives and collective action beyond the centre, in the local community or bioregion.

6. **Manager / Administrator:** a role that increases experience, skills, adaptability and expertise in the management, decision making, financial and resource planning relating to the centre's team and human ecosystem as well as its physical components and systems. This role is of course critical for the centre itself, and often will play an important role in developing its partnership working with other local and regional organisations and networks.

Part 2: The iACT Core Branches of Competence

This section sets out in detail the five primary **_fields of competence_** that are needed to develop and run catalyst learning and demonstration centres:

1: Project Competencies

2: Organisation & Management Competencies

3: Communication, Facilitation & Engagement Competencies

4: Carbon Reduction, Regeneration, Sustainability & Resilience Competencies

5: Learning & Demonstration Competencies

Each of these fields of competence are described in the following section, with indicators of competence identified for them. Links are provided to more detailed information on each of these fields of competence. In summary they are:

Project Competencies
- Project design
- Project implementation
- Maintenance

Organisation & Management Competencies
- Business management
- Organisational structure
- Monitoring & evaluation

Communication, Facilitation & Engagement Competencies
- Internal communication
- External communication
- Literacy in Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
- Local community engagement
- Facilitating groups

Carbon Reduction, Regeneration, Sustainability & Resilience Competencies
- Systems thinking
- Ecological & carbon literacy
- Key technical & practical fields
- Ethical & low impact living
- Action for personal & community resilience
- Regenerative & permaculture design

Learning & Demonstration Competencies
- Selection and use of learning methodologies
- Selection and use of demonstration elements
- Hosting of learning programmes, activities and events

For smaller projects, these are the main competencies to be aware of and plan for - they are also shown in the competency map on the following page.

For all scales and types of centre, from large to small, a more detailed competency map is available here [insert link to webpage / A3 PDF]
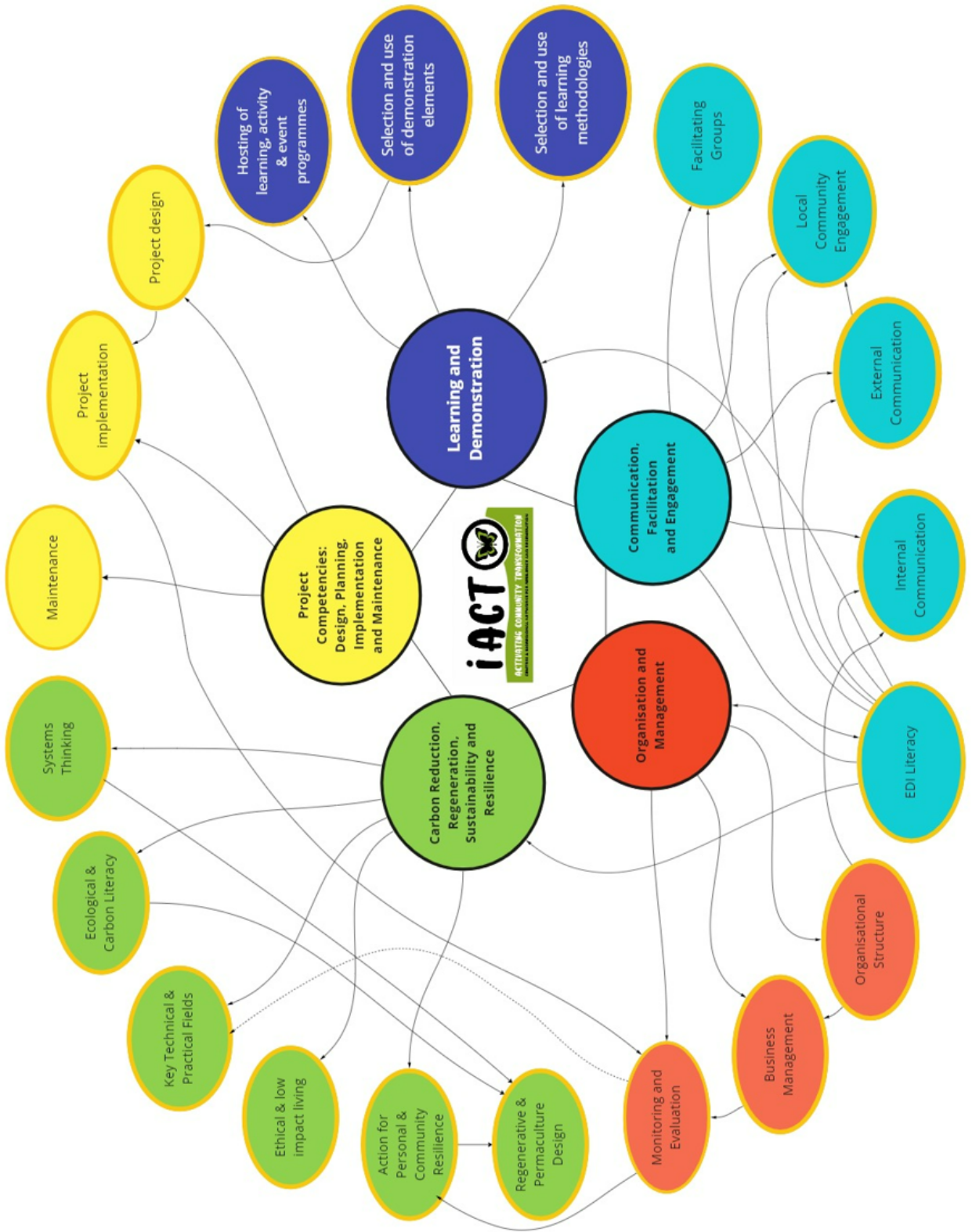
The Five Main iACT Learning Pathways

iACT learning pathways are pathways for activating collective transformation - in the neighbourhoods, communities and bioregions that centres work within. These are vocational learning journeys for *learning more and more about how to generate and support action towards community resilience and healthy, low carbon lifestyles*.

These learning pathways arise from the competency fields and respond to the needs of:

- the individual;
- particularly a) *any team that the individual is part of* and b) the centre as an organisation
- the wider community that the centre is engaging with.

The five pathways to follow for ongoing competency development or enrichment, in the 5 fields of competency are indicated in this document. They are not mutually exclusive paths, so some people might follow them one after another, or in parallel. The indicative learning pathways are set out in each section of the following competency framework.

Many of the competencies that are developed on these learning pathways are common between these fields or highly complementary - such as good communication and interpersonal skills. In considering the pathways we can take to develop our competencies as members of catalyst centre teams, a simple model is to recognise that there are often three key stages to a learning pathway.

The initial **entry stage** is most likely to involve a relatively short taught course or training that introduces the 'Why? What? And How?' of the field in question, such as that of a transformative educator. The **core stage** is the central training that sets participants up to initiate their journey to develop practitioner competencies in that field. The **deepening stage** is likely to involve much more self-directed learning, with significant project-based learning and practice-based learning. In this way *learning arises from the action or practice that the 'learner' / 'practitioner' is involved in within their role at a learning and demonstration centre*, over an extended period of time.

> **Entry stage:** Taster / Foundation learning
> - Introductory level / foundation level workshops, trainings, experiences
> - E.g. from an evening to a 2 day short course
>
> → **Core stage:** Core learning experience
> - Core level course or deep-dive experience
> - e.g. 1 to 2 weeks, as single immersion or in blocks over time
>
> → **Deepening stage:** extended learning journey
> - Advanced learning journey, incorporating learning groups and practical projects that relate to the learner's work, home-life or their intention for transformation in these realms
> - typically spread over at least a year

To help plan your overall learning journey see Appendix 1: *Learning Journey On A Page*

Why Competencies?

Competencies, as a framework of thought, originated in the 1970's as a way to move beyond narrow (often class or power-based) concepts of 'skills' and 'knowledge'. Competency thinking emerged from the recognition that every job or role requires a specific set of competencies to do it well, and focuses on *what a person can learn*, rather than what they can do. So it has become popular in the training sector. Self-knowledge, motivation, behavioural indicators, and desire and willingness to demonstrate effective performance in a role can all be understood as types of competencies.

Competency-based learning focuses on outcomes as well as the learners' real-world performance, whether that is within a work context for a specific job, or in a role as a trainer or catalyst of community-based activity or learning. This approach is of significant value for considering **what people need to learn to enhance their capacity to activate and accelerate community transformation**, whether they are active as individuals, as part of a work team, as trainers or community catalysts.

To develop competencies in balanced ways, this will usually require an understanding of and engagement with the different intelligences, learning styles or modes of learning that most transformative educators will be familiar with.[2]

Catalyst centres are ideal for providing a full range of activities, experiences and facilities that cater well for multiple intelligences.

This variety of intelligences can be expected to be displayed across the diverse audiences and wider communities that catalyst centres will be engaging with. Therefore to optimise learning across these audiences the trainer or centre (individually, or often as part of a team) will need a full complement of competences across multiple domains (self-knowledge, interpersonal and group work, practical and organisation skills), because each is required in different degrees a) to engage with and activate these different intelligences and therefore b) to use the different styles of learning associated with them, doing so with a reasonable degree of equity and flexibility across a group.

As a rough guide, the general learning pathway levels for each competence area that would tend to be appropriate for different types or sccales of catalyst centre are:

- LAND Centre level: Core Experience as a minimum
- iACT Centre level: Extended Learning Journey essential

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[2] Howard Gardner, *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*, 1983.

1: Competencies for Project Design, Planning, Implementation and Maintenance

What are these competencies? A set of skills, knowledge, attitudes and experience that allow the successful realisation of a project.

Why are they needed? Creating and developing the infrastructure of a centre is often done in a project format - so the ability to envision, design and realise a successful project is vital. Much of the learning in land-based centres is also project based. This competency area will usually include considering both a) the development of the centre as a whole as a project, and b) the delivery of a wide range of sub-projects in the process of doing so e.g. a best practice ecobuilding, forest garden project, designing and launching a learning programme as a project, or setting up a community farm or the centre's renewable energy systems. Projects for learning might include an ongoing project (such as a major building retrofit) or using projects as exercises (such as the design exercise for a Permaculture Design or Ecovillage Design course). This allows many of the complexities of a subject to be explored in a realistic and manageable way.

How are these competencies used and developed? Understanding theories and models of project design and project management. Understanding the contrast between projects designed a) for the education of those participating in training, and b) to create an end result. Building up experience in the design, planning, implementation and maintenance requirements of various types of project. The ability to critically evaluate and further develop a project.

Project Design Competencies

- Is able to design physical (e.g. land, buildings, water systems) and non-physical (educational, social, economic) projects in ways that take account of the clients / users needs, priorities and potential, and available resources;
- Is knowledgeable and experienced in a relevant design discipline such as permaculture design, regenerative design or ecovillage design, or technical fields such as green architecture or renewable energy systems design.

Project Planning & Implementation Competencies

- Is able to plan the implementation of the design, including defining financial & time budgets, other resource needs, task planning and phasing / timetable for implementation and allocation of responsibilities.
- Is able to identify and assess the risks that might impact a project and plan actions or strategies to reduce, avoid or adjust to those risks.
- Manages the implementation of physical and non-physical (social, economic, educational) projects, identifying people, financial and material resources needed;
- Is able to respond appropriately to changes that may occur during project delivery.

Maintenance Competencies

- Is able to maintain the facilities, buildings, grounds and infrastructure systems at a quality that reflects the centres' role for learning and demonstration of good practice;
- Plans & implements preventative maintenance plans to minimise risk and deterioration.

Learning Pathways for Project Design, Planning & Implementation

Learning Pathway Options - How competency is learned & developed for Project Competencies		
Design Competencies **Project Management & Implementation Competencies** **Maintenance Competencies**		
Entry level 'Taster' →	**Core 'Experience' →**	**Extended 'Journey'**
Design Competencies Books, or online articles and videos on change themes e.g. TED talks; etc. • Introduction to Permaculture Course • Introductions to different approaches to project management	**Design Competencies** Identify in-person or online Workshops / Trainings on a relevant theme which meets your needs. Project design: • Permaculture Design Certificate (PDC) **Project Management & Implementation Competencies** Learning areas: • Agile project management • Lean project management Preventative Maintenance training	**Design Competencies** Additional trainings and self-directed learning and / or supported learning and reflective practices from applying what has been learnt at prior stages and refining your competencies over an extended time period. For example, Permaculture and regenerative design learning pathways: • Certificate in Applied Permaculture Design (2 projects) / Diploma in Applied Permaculture Design (10 projects) • Regenerative design trainings • Advanced permaculture design • Ecovillage design trainings • Practice in the field from own projects and projects for others **Project Management & Implementation Competencies** Formal training / apprenticeships / learning from experienced practitioners • Project management • Facilities management • Energy systems / specialist technical systems - usually outsourced • Buildings maintenance (especially preventative maintenance)

2: Competencies for Organisation and Management

What are these competencies? These competencies are vital for the business end of the Centre. All the things that need to happen that are outside of the core message.

Why are they important? Even if they are non-profit, most centres operate as commercial / trading entities and are subject to laws, regulations, norms and requirements that vary from country to country. Most centres take and make payments and need a system for that. General administration is vital for dealing with the public, liaising with statutory bodies or companies and internal communications. Recording the work of the centre is important for posterity, grant applications, annual reports, publicity.

> ### _Reality Check:_
>
> _Many people involved in the environmental and social change movement have excellent knowledge and huge commitment - and want to see significant change._ **_Centres will make their biggest contribution to change in the world and in the communities they are part of when they are well managed and have a sound business strategy, with the right set of attitudes and abilities behind them._** _Often the greatest weakness / opportunity for improvement in change-making projects is in their business and organisational management._
>
> _Whatever their size or ambitions, centres and the organisations running them can have excellent facilities and demonstration programmes, or fantastic transformative learning programmes - and a great team of people running them. However, if the business aspects do not work well this will put the organisation and its team at risk of having to put a great deal of time and energy into fundraising to pay for its core staff or running costs, or selling assets to finance losses, and eventually potentially closing or being sold. This can mean a lot of time is spent 'fire-fighting' a series of financial or staff crises, rather than on the activities that they are most passionate about and fulfilled by, and which have the greatest potential to benefit the people, place and the communities that they are part of._
>
> _Having the right business and management competencies in place, or outsourcing them if that is the best option, is essential for the centre to maximise its positive impact in the long term, and to create the stable livelihoods, employment and career development that its staff / team members deserve._

How are these competencies used and developed? Identifying and putting in place the legal requirements for financial, health and safety and employee matters. Outsourcing skills when it is appropriate (e.g hiring an accountant). Identifying and doing the most effective outreach (marketing/publicity/social or other media). Exploring and implementing a suitable organisational structure. Record keeping. Learning from the ethical / regenerative business sector. Bringing in Trustees with significant expertise in relevant areas.

More detail is provided in the following pages to list a full range of Organisation and Management Competencies in order to cater for larger centres or those that aspire to become larger centres, so that they can plan to put these key competencies in place.

For smaller centres the following pages can be used as a checklist for thinking if these competency areas are currently relevant, or when they may be in the future.

Organisation & Management Competencies

Financial Management and Administration Competencies

- Efficiently carries out day-to-day financial tasks such as bookkeeping, pricing, invoicing, making and receiving payments, banking, payroll, tax filings.
- Displays good general organisation skills
- Creates realistic business development plan
- Draws up realistic cashflow projections

Governance Competencies: Organisational Structure & Decision-Making

- Evaluates the structural needs of the organisation, identifies and implements an appropriate structure.
- Understands various governance models (e.g. holocracy, sociocracy / 'sociocracy lite') and how they apply to organisations.
- Sets up appropriate and efficient methods of communication within the organisation.
- Creates and implements policies e.g. Health and Safety, Anti-bullying, Anti-discrimination.
- Understands the legally mandated responsibilities.
- Implements a clear decision making process (e.g. consensus, voting)
- Communicates this to all relevant people.
- Identifies and implements a system for defining autonomy, i.e. who makes what decisions
- Implements an appropriate decision making process i.e. how decisions are made. This can include a process for introducing proposals, discussion and evaluation of information and opinion.
- Understands the various methods for making decisions and where they are applicable (e.g. preferendum, voting, consensus)
- Understands the methods of collecting and communicating information to allow decisions to be made (e.g. Safe-to-fail experiments, trials, community engagement)

Grants & Fundraising Competencies

- Accurately assesses suitability for grants or other funding streams.
- Clearly and concisely provides the required information
- Designs an appropriate, achievable and fundable project suited to a funder's priorities
- Implements the project
- Records and keeps adequate documentation
- Submits the required documentation at the appropriate time

Hospitality & Catering Competencies

- Anticipates the needs of visitors and provides them e.g. food, water, toilets, accommodation, shelter, suitable spaces, rest, time to process.
- Provides for the additional needs of less abled visitors.
- Communicates with visitors on the provision of needs and responds to feedback.
- Shows kindness and care.
- Identifies and effectively deals with challenging characters or situations.
- Anticipates the food amounts and facilities (e.g. seating, tables, shelter, cutlery and crockery) required for catering for a particular sized group.

- Understands various dietary requirements and can accommodate them.
- Creates menus that showcase the local or seasonal produce.
- Plans for cleaning up and dealing with waste and leftovers.
- Demonstrates how food, accommodation & facilities can be a tool of transformation.
- Understands and complies with the necessary local food hygiene regulations.

Legal and Health & Safety Competencies

- Understands the responsibilities, implications and consequences of the Health and Safety Legislation for the relevant country
- Writes, updates and implements a site-specific or organisation specific health and safety policy
- Keeps a file of the relevant documentation
- Fosters a safety culture within the organisation
- Understands the regulatory compliance requirements specific to your organisation, e.g. charities regulator, insurance requirements, tax certification.

Staff, Volunteers & Team Competencies

- Understands and complies with the legal obligations to employees, contractors and volunteers.
- Clearly communicates expectations and responsibilities.
- Identifies and provides required resources.
- Devises and implements a clear and effective communication system (for example regular team meetings, chain of command or open door policy).
- Identifies and utilises a person's strengths, skills and potential
- Identifies what competencies are needed in the team and provides ways to gain that competency e.g. training, recruiting someone to provide it or outsourcing.
- Values and is seen to value the whole person.
- Fosters initiative and creativity.
- Fosters a mutually supportive team culture with shared vision and values.
- Devises and implements effective policies and procedures, for example anti-bullying, conflict resolution, anti-discrimination.
- Understands the intersectionality of the wellbeing of people, the land and society.
- Identifies the team's support and care needs and provides the necessary resources.
- Provides for effective communication and feedback.

Technical, ICT & Digital Competencies

- Evaluates the organisation's technical needs and implements plans to meet them.
- Understands the operation and maintenance requirements of the technical systems that exist to support the operation of the centre
- Evaluates the appropriateness of new or emerging technologies for a) the organisation, or b) learners and visitors.
- Evaluates the ICT & digital needs of the organisation & implements a plan to meet those needs.
- Understands how to use the available hardware and software.
- Updates ICT & digital systems as internal and external requirements change.

Enterprise & Entrepreneurship Competencies

- Is creative in developing new ways of approaching and doing things.
- Identifies emergent opportunities, partnerships and synergies.
- Evaluates the potential benefits and costs (time, resources, implications of failure) of an idea.
- Devises appropriate ways to explore new ideas (For example, Safe-to-fail experiments, trials, research projects).
- Monitors, evaluates and records the outcomes.
- Modifies or discards unworkable ideas.

Monitoring & Evaluation Competencies

- Defines short, medium and long-term goals and objectives.
- Defines ways to determine how successfully those goals and objectives are being achieved.
- Puts in place a system to record the metrics of success.
- Periodically reviews how things are going and modifies systems, resource allocation etc. accordingly.
- Periodically reviews and updates the goals and objectives.
- Seeks and evaluates effective feedback
- Keeps clear and understandable records
- Identifies realistic responses if objectives are not being met and / or is able to adjust objectives where appropriate i.e. if better outcomes are being achieved in some other way.

Learning Pathways for Organisation & Management

Learning Pathway Options - How competency is learned & developed for Organisation & Management		
Competencies for Financial Administration		
Entry level 'Taster' →	**Core 'Experience' →**	**Extended 'Journey'**
General familiarisation with elements of financial administration: banking apps; invoicing systems; filing • Start Your Own Business course	Work experience in different businesses with different financial administration systems • Certificate qualification in financial admin	• Diploma or degree / professional qualifications in financial administration
Competencies for Financial Planning		
Entry level 'Taster' →	**Core 'Experience' →**	**Extended 'Journey'**
Articles or guidelines on good financial planning. • Start Your Own Business course	Learning by doing - work experience as part of a financial management team. Research into sustainable financial models. • Diploma or degree qualifications in Business Management	• Masters in Business Administration (MBA) • Professional qualifications
Competencies for Fundraising		
Entry level 'Taster' →	**Core 'Experience' →**	**Extended 'Journey'**
Articles and guidance documents on how to write funding applications	Experience in writing a variety of successful funding applications • Online or in-person courses on funding applications and administration	Extended work experience in a fundraising role, including various routes for raising funds - grants, sponsorship, donations, legacies, memberships, etc
Competencies for Legal - Health & Safety		
Entry level 'Taster' →	**Core 'Experience' →**	**Extended 'Journey'**
Articles or guidance documents on Health and Safety.	Experience working as part of a Health and Safety management team. • Online or in-person courses on Health & Safety Management	Professional experience of writing and implementing Health and Safety policies and procedures. • Professional level qualifications in Health & Safety Management.
Competencies for Legal - Regulatory Compliance		
Entry level 'Taster' →	**Core 'Experience' →**	**Extended 'Journey'**
Articles or guidance documents on Regulatory Compliance (charities regulator, employment law, directors' obligations)	Experience working in compliance with regulations. • Professional Development courses in relevant subjects - law, directors' training	Experience working in or with regulatory bodies. • Advanced Professional Development courses in relevant subjects.

Competencies for Hospitality		
Entry level 'Taster' →	**Core 'Experience'** →	**Extended 'Journey'**
Articles and guidance documents on people care, event management, and hygiene.	• Experience in the hospitality industry.	Extended experience in a variety of work situations • Diploma or Degree / professional qualification in Hospitality Management

Competencies for Catering		
Entry level 'Taster' →	**Core 'Experience'** →	**Extended 'Journey'**
Articles on food allergies, dietary requirements and nutrition basics. Knowledge of local food systems and seasonal produce. Environmental Health guidance documents.	Experience / hands-on training in the catering industry. • Online/in-person courses on environmental health management systems, food safety, hygiene, allergens.	• Diploma or Degree / professional qualification in Food Safety/Catering Management

Competencies for Technical - IT Systems		
Entry level 'Taster' →	**Core 'Experience'** →	**Extended 'Journey'**
Articles or guidance documents on effective use of IT systems. Experience in the basic operation of various software programmes.	A good, up-to-date, working knowledge of IT systems • Training programmes in specific IT systems (web design, accounting / office packages or programmes) • Training programmes on web accessibility requirements. • Training in GDPR compliance	Experience with open-source or other alternatives to commercial systems. • Diploma, Degree or Masters in IT management • Training in programming, coding, app development, advanced web development.

Competencies for Staff, Volunteers, Team		
Entry level 'Taster' →	**Core 'Experience'** →	**Extended 'Journey'**
Articles or guidance documents on workers' rights, people management. An understanding of the importance of "People Care"	Experience managing staff & volunteer teams. Understanding issues faced by staff, groups of volunteers, the procedures & policies that are needed: welfare, privacy, diversity & inclusion, anti-discrimination, equity, safeguarding, conflict resolution, anti-bullying, workers' rights.	• Diploma, Degree or professional qualification in Human Resources Management

Competencies for Enterprise & Entrepreneurship		
Entry level 'Taster' →	**Core 'Experience'** →	**Extended 'Journey'**
Articles and videos on Enterprise and Entrepreneurship, alternative or novel financial systems and opportunities in challenging times. • Start Your Own Business course	Experience with business start-ups / product development. • Courses in Product Development, Marketing & Market Research	Extensive management experience in a successful business or social enterprise with strong commercial elements. • Masters in Business Administration (MBA)

3: Competencies for Communication, Engagement and Facilitation (people competencies)

What are these competencies? The ability to effectively convey your message, effect change, reach and engage your audience on an ongoing basis, exchange ideas and receive feedback. Good engagement, communication and facilitation creates an environment that allows this to take place.

Why are they important? Communication is at the heart of transformation. You must find your audience, engage them, convey your message and learn from the experience, motivate and inspire - and keep them engaged. Good facilitation is almost invisible. It allows effective communication and engagement to take place, in the moment and on an ongoing basis. Good facilitation enhances the experience which can lead to deeper transformation, it can deal with conflict and discomfort and it can allow for mutual understanding and growth.

> ### _Reality Check:_
>
> _A common and sometimes surprising challenge that many centres face is resistance from the local community. Trying to create a better world and effect change is often interpreted as criticism of what already exists or (by extension) as a criticism of "normal life" or even of tradition. People can be protective of their way of life and often feel threatened to varying degrees by centres that advocate for system change. This can result in resentment and social division and in some cases even acts of sabotage, vandalism or arson._
>
> _This needs to be addressed very sensitively. There is no formula as every location, culture and group of individuals has its own set of circumstances and nuances. **Early positive engagement with the local community is vital**. It may be challenging to win hearts and minds at the early stages, but it is far more difficult to gain support when distrust has taken hold. If local people feel invested in your centre, they will be much more supportive._
>
> _In some cases conflict between your centre and the wider community may be inevitable - and acceptance of this fact may be necessary. There are compromises and concessions that can be made at times and the original vision of the centre may evolve. With time, patience and good engagement and facilitation skills you will become a dynamic part of the local community._

How are these competencies used and developed? This can cover marketing and advertising, social and other media, effective delivery of programs, public speaking, seeking and evaluating feedback, creating stories and narratives, inspiring and motivating change, non-verbal communication, games, experiences, listening, "walking the walk". Group and on-line facilitation skills, non-violent communication, listening skills, conflict management and resolution are all very important, as are how to effectively use spaces and learning environments, breaks, refreshments, variations in learning intensity, workshops to identify issues and priorities in the local community, and to identify how to respond to them in sustainable, regenerative ways that build community resilience.

Communication Competencies

Internal communication
- Selects appropriate media of communication
- Develops and implements codes of conduct
- Fosters a team culture

External Communication - General
- Understands the needs of others - asks open questions and listening to gather insight into other perspectives
- Clearly communicates messages - articulates an easily understandable perspective
- Adapts communication style to the audience, situation and needs of the message
- Uses a range of communication methods - determines which comms mode(s) of will deliver the desired outcome - develops ways of communicating with key stakeholders (e.g. newsletter for supporters, press releases for events, celebrations)
- Identifies and participates in suitable formal and informal networks
- Builds an influential and effective network for communication - seeks to grow their network and extend or deepen the influence of their communication - identifies appropriate affiliations (for example other iACT or LAND Centre projects)
- Is aware of personal impact - is self-aware, manages emotions & respects others
- Engages with and deals with conflict appropriately - facilitates challenging situations confidently, where participants hold different views & want different outcomes
- Records the activities of the organisation (for annual reports, funding applications etc.) and makes this information available (for research or promotion).

External Communication - Promotion
- Identifies target audiences (marketing) and appropriate means of communication with them (advertising)
- Develops a "Brand" - identifies how that brand is to be used (brand mission & identity)
- Creates and maintains a good quality web interface (website/homepage) so that it is easy for people to find you, get the information they want, enquire or make bookings.
- Effectively utilises Social Media

External Communications for Local Community Engagement
- Identifies how your organisation is represented locally and by whom
- Identifies appropriate and sustainable local partnerships (for example helping the local school to develop a food garden)
- Makes efforts to integrate into the local communities and economy
- Discerns what criticism or feedback to act upon.

Local Community Engagement Competencies

- Engages and includes diverse sectors & audiences
- Conveys relevant complexity in accessible ways
- Responds and adapts to specific bio-cultural and values-based contexts
- Creates a group container and supportive environment for community engagement or learning
- Creates safe spaces that can work effectively with discomfort
- Senses and responds to group dynamics in service of learning and action

Competencies for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

This involves seeing, thinking and responding in terms of equity, diversity, inclusivity and social justice.

- Has knowledge of socially just and inclusive approaches to engagement, and to identification and representation of needs
- Uses strategies to meet diverse needs in ways that are inclusive
- Identifies and understands:
    - how sustainable actions are affected by biases about how choices for action are influenced or inhibited by our comparisons with others
    - how humans relate to risk (basic knowledge of behavioural theory).

Engagement & Facilitation and Health & Wellbeing

Health & Wellbeing is a vital cross-cutting theme that needs highlighting in the mind, plans and activities of centres. It relates to other competency areas, particularly organisation and management, but is included here to ensure we consider the issues in relation to external engagement as much as internal organisational issues.

Two key elements of this health and wellbeing theme are:

- Looking after ourselves: Health and wellbeing of the people running centres
- Health and wellbeing of those who are volunteering, visiting or learning at centres and the wider community the centres are part of.

In considering this focus on Health & wellbeing, particularly important areas are:

- Mental health - including risks from work-related stress (e.g. often in the context of very limited resources, when staff identify strongly with the need for the centre to be a success), climate and ecological grief, etc - as well as the positive contributions centres can make to factors that benefit mental health;

Mental health is an area that needs particular awareness. It is recommended that various team members are 'mental health aware' and that centres can work with mental health ambassadors to provide a full range of activities and facilities that support positive mental health and what helps or provides a nurturing environment for those that have mental health challenges or who are on a recovery path.

Competencies for Mental Health Awareness:

- Understanding and awareness of what is meant by mental health and positive mental health, including:
    - how to look after your own mental health (self-care)
    - how to identify those who might be struggling with their mental health
    - awareness and understanding of factors that promote and protect mental health and build resilience
    - able to identify factors that might increase the risk of developing a mental health problem

- Understand the roles and responsibilities, your own and those of others, in meeting mental health needs for all ages
- Consider your own values and attitudes about mental health and how these might influence your work
- Aware of barriers that may exist for minority groups in terms of accessing services
- Know who you should speak to if you identify a person experiencing mental health difficulties (and what information to include within the conversation)
- Have an understanding of safeguarding issues and how to respond in your setting to severe distress / a mental health crisis (including risk of suicide)
- Aware of key local services and resources that can support better mental health
- Able to signpost people (including parents/carers) to sources of support
- Have updated and readily available policies (e.g. mental health policy and anti-bullying policy) that link to mental health and which outline staff roles and responsibilities within these
- Undertake regular mental health refresher training / have completed Mental Health training in the last 12 months

Group Facilitation Competencies

The following summary of competencies for group & community facilitation is sourced from the competency framework of the *International Association of Facilitators (IAF)*.

See: https://www.iaf-world.org/site/professional/core-competencies:

1. **Creates Collaborative Group / Client / Community Relationships**
- Develops working partnerships
- Designs and customises processes to meet group / client / community needs
- Manages multi-session events effectively

2. **Plans Appropriate Group Processes**
- Selects clear methods and processes
- Prepares time and space to support group process

3. **Creates and Sustains a Participatory Environment**
- Demonstrates effective participatory and interpersonal communication skills
- Honours and recognises diversity, ensuring inclusiveness
- Manages group / community conflict
- Evokes group / community creativity

4. **Guides Group / Community to Appropriate and Useful Outcomes**
- Guides the group / community with clear methods and processes
- Facilitates group / community self-awareness about its task
- Guides the group / community to consensus and desired outcomes - NOTE: this sets up for Coaching competencies that can help achieve the desired outcomes

5. **Builds and Maintains Knowledge of Practice**
- Maintains a base of knowledge
- Knows a range of facilitation methods
- Maintains professional approach and standing

6. **Models Positive Professional Attitude as a Process Facilitator**
- Practices self-assessment and self-awareness
- Acts with integrity
- Trusts group / community potential and models neutrality

For greater depth on these competencies refer to the **Community Climate Coaches competency framework Section 2: Community Facilitation Competencies**

Learning Pathways for Communication, Engagement & Facilitation

Learning Pathway Options - How competency is learned & developed for Communication, Engagement and Facilitation		
Competencies for Communication		
Entry level 'Taster' → Communication & Community Engagement	**Core 'Experience' →**	**Extended 'Journey'**
Developing awareness of good communication and engagement techniques and practices Experience of working with others with strong communication and engagement skills and experience Books, Online searches, articles & videos Online Introduction to communication / engagement short courses	Training and practice in a communications role	Ongoing training and practice in a communications role Learning from experienced mentors
	Competencies for Community Engagement	
	Core 'Experience' →	**Extended 'Journey'**
	Training and practice in community engagement methods	Ongoing training and practice using a diversity of engagement methods in a range of contexts Learning from experienced mentors
Competencies for Facilitation		
Entry level 'Taster' →	**Core 'Experience' →**	**Extended 'Journey'**
Read, study and digest the BLAST JEDI Pathway Guide	Equity, diversity and inclusion training	Further training and ongoing development of equity, diversity and inclusion practices
Competencies for Literacy in Equity, Diversity & Inclusion		
Entry level 'Taster' →	**Core 'Experience' →**	**Extended 'Journey'**
Books or Online searches, articles and videos Experiencing expert / professional Facilitation on a number of occasions Online 'Introduction to Facilitation' short courses	Facilitation training accredited by relevant Professional body e.g. *International Association of Facilitators (IAF)* Experiencing expert / professional Facilitation for a set period e.g. 3 months / 10 sessions Completing a number of Facilitator trainings / workshops with expert / professional Facilitators	Engage with and participate in Facilitator Communities of Practice to find allies Ongoing participation in Facilitation Supervision group or Peer-to-peer exchanges Developing your Facilitation practice Undertaking Facilitation CPD or similar development training

4: Carbon Reduction, Regeneration & Sustainability Competencies

What are these competencies? This is the heart and soul of what you are about. It is what you are trying to demonstrate, communicate and help people learn about and become competent in, in order to see it implemented elsewhere. The sum total of the physical assets (the things you have done and can show) and the knowledge and experience of your organisation and the individuals that contribute.

Why are they important? Transformation (as opposed to completing a course and getting a certificate) requires passion, action, and doing things significantly differently.

How are they used and developed? Training in your field of interest. Reading, discussing and debating with others. Creating or engaging with specialist networks, or finding a mentor or motivated collaborator. Experimenting and exploring. Documenting or recording your work. Working in a relevant field.

The following competency areas are detailed in more depth in the main iACT competency document and the Competencies section of the Communities for Future Wiki. For the sake of digestibility we are only including some of the more detailed indicators of competency that apply to three of these six areas.

Systems thinking

The ability to think systemically and strategically includes understanding how elements and relationships work within systems, and that elements, relationships and systems as a whole have both needs and potential. Nature is our ultimate teacher here.

- Sees, thinks and responds in terms of systems, patterns, relationships and interdependent processes, promoting resilience, understanding tipping points and feedback loops
- Understands and conveys the importance of Future Thinking, Visioning and Strategic - backcasting, recognising heritage, intergenerational equity, as well as design, planning, decision making, implementing, addressing challenges, organisational development, use of action-reflection cycles.
- Sees, thinks and responds in terms of local, personal and collective responses to local-to-global solutions and in terms of 'simplexity', as a way of working with complexity in relatively simple (but not simplistic) ways

Ecological & carbon literacy

Critical literacy in sustainability, regeneration & climate action is an understanding of the fundamental issues in these areas. This includes knowledge of the degrees of significance of the wide range of issues involved in any given situation, or how or where to find this out from reliable sources if it is not known.

- Is literate in terms of knowledge of regeneratively sustainable futures (the *What?*) and community-led processes to manifest those visions (the *How?*), and the components and relationships they require:
  - Significant demand reduction i.e. in energy and resource use;
  - Shifts to sustainable / renewable supplies
  - Localisation and regionalisation, shifting from a globalisation-focused imbalance
  - Enhanced equity and inclusivity
  - Enhanced and protected biodiversity and ecosystems

- Sufficiently diverse systems that exhibit dynamic stability, adaptability and resilience to maintain health, and recover from system shocks, which generate mutual benefits for elements of the system
- Is able to identify and balance priorities to generate significant outcomes to address:
  - The 3 core dimensions of sustainability: i) Environmental dimensions (carbon footprint, ecological footprint, biodiversity, etc); ii) Social dimensions (social justice, EDI, health, etc); iii) Economic dimensions (equity, economic structures, ethics in economic activity, appropriate work & career choices, etc)
  - The 7 Key Impact Areas covering homelife, work-life and community life, specifically: a) Energy; b) Food; c) Homes & Built Environment; d) Travel & Transport; e) Consumer & Clothing Choices; f) Technology & Digital; g) Money.
- Knows the role of regenerative / permaculture design for building community resilience and generating meaningful responses to the climate and ecological emergencies that match specific contexts or needs, processes and audiences
- Understands the full range and depth of competencies needed to bring about community-led action across communities - and uses competency-based thinking, methods and strategies for community action, to develop a coherent diversity of individual and collective competencies across a community.

Competence in key technical and practical fields

Has or is able to engage specific competencies in important practical or technical fields

- Harnesses and demonstrates at least one advanced level of practical skill of specific relevance to the goals of climate action e.g. food growing; low impact living; group facilitation / group working; inclusive and equitable engagement; naturally healthy living; green building; complementary health skills; renewable energy; etc.
- Harnesses specific existing technical, professional or organisational competencies in service of community-led action processes and goals in particular areas, including:
  - Energy: energy efficient technologies and systems; renewable energy systems (from household to utility scale - survey, specification, installation, maintenance); energy measurement and monitoring systems;
  - Buildings: low carbon, healthy deep retrofit (survey, design/specification and installation)
  - Food: growing; local-to-regional food sourcing and distribution - for low impact & health-creating food;
  - Healthy Living: for individual & collective 'whole health' covering the physical, mental & emotional health realms in integrated ways;
  - Communication, management, financial, legal and organisational competencies.
- Engages in, develops and supports relevant Communities of Practice in key technical and practical fields, and displays knowledge, attitudes and actions that enable good practice to emerge and flourish in communities of practice
- **Tool / Resource**: **[BLAST Communities of Practice Good Practice Guide](#)**.

Ethical and low impact living

Having knowledge *and experience* of regeneratively sustainable / low impact lifestyles, at individual & collective levels is vital for genuine understanding, rather than a merely conceptual or theoretical understanding.

- Understands the important relationship between 'sustainable living' and 'ethical living'.
- Has knowledge and experience of regeneratively sustainable / low impact lifestyles, at individual & collective levels (Walk your talk) - knows and understands from experience the individual and collective options for shifting from higher impact to low impact lifestyles that are relevant for an audience e.g. shifts in consumption of energy, food, transport, etc; deep retrofit of homes; ecological cohousing projects;

- Has knowledge and experience of health creating lifestyles - knows and understands 'whole health' from experience i.e. lifestyles that create and support physiological, mental and emotional health in the individual, the group and the ecosystem, as well as health-creating economic and social systems;
- Knows and understands from experience of consistently making ethical choices (e.g. addressing: human and workers rights; animal rights; oppressive regimes; environmental impacts; etc) in major areas of *lifestyle impact* i.e. food choices, energy purchasing, consumer goods (e.g. appliances; clothing; digital devices; etc) and financial choices (banks; investment), and in *ethical work-life choices*, and *ethical options for community life* (organic food purchasing coops; car share; local credit unions; etc).
- Knows and understands from experience lifestyles which focus on our human relation with nature, experiencing ourselves as part of nature as a greater whole (e.g. indigenous perspectives; deep ecology or radical ecology), where deeper knowledge (and at times wisdom) arises from the experience of connectedness.

Action for personal and community resilience

Having the ability to initiate or facilitate community-based action for regeneration, sustainability and resilience is essential.

- Designs, plans, facilitates and implements community-based projects and initiatives in the locality, outside of the learning and demonstration centre
- Facilitates processes that address relevant local themes e.g. local food producers marketing and distribution cooperatives; community energy initiatives; repair cafes and makerspaces; etc;
- Initiates or engages in (without overly controlling) a facilitated process of a) project design, planning and implementation; b) 'change management', whether that is individual or collective, organisational (including business) or at the community level; c) building individual, team and community skills for resilience.
- Manifests creativity, innovation and enterprising approaches to facilitate community-led action, to generate new regenerative solutions or to adapt existing forms to become sustainable.
- Is able to demonstrate appropriate emergence, pioneer & leadership qualities and nurture 'leaderful collective organising', ideally building a constructive critique of 'traditional' forms of leadership into practices, language and mindsets.
- Catalyses, facilitates and multiplies collective learning and action opportunities in response to a specific local or regional socio-ecological context.

Regenerative & Permaculture Design:

Having the ability to initiate, lead and facilitate appropriate regenerative and permaculture design processes, individually and with others is essential.

- Knows the importance of regenerative / permaculture design for building community resilience and generating meaningful responses to the climate and ecological emergencies
- Understands and has knowledge of specific design methods, tools and practices that generate regenerative solutions, e.g. permaculture design and regenerative design.

Competencies for Catalysing Community Resilience

For larger centres in particular a fundamental element of their purpose is to provide systems to build capacity to catalyse community-led, participative approaches to resilience and regeneration. The following principles have been defined by the Community Climate Coaches project as being essential characteristics to be in place or to enable to emerge in order to catalyse action that leads to greater levels of resilience.

This emphasises that an ecology of competencies, network leadership and social innovation are essential to bring about wider local to regional resilience.

PRINCIPLE and Definition
1. **Enhancing Sense of Place -** Place-sourced, narratives / stories of place and potential - nurturing a sense of unique identity and belonging - place based - local - dialogue
2. **Developing Cooperation -** Collaboration - bottom up ways of working - co-creation - multi-sectoral integration - networks mutualism
3. **Deepening Participation -** Equality, diversity, and Inclusion (intersectionality) - dialogue - all voices and gifts welcomed (polycentric sourcing) - many voices and one song
4. **Growing Capacity -** Knowledge, competencies, developing essence of the group, learning to learn, reskilling - regenerating cohesion ("spiritualising"), adding-value to greater whole - systems thinking - structure local partnerships - Resilience - inner and community levels
5. **Harnessing the Power to Act -** Motivation, awareness, agency, ability to draw resources, regenerating will, developing ability to optimise available outside resources - multiple voices celebrated - recognising that one collective voice may help catalyse action
6. **Enacting Subsidiarity -** Empowerment, developing ability to optimise available outside resources/subsidiarity and polycentric - Subsidiarity at local level - decentralisation - self organisation - distributed - local decision making
7. **Embedding Transformative Social Innovation -** Nourishing or building common ground - systems change - make the alternative communicable, accessible, and practicable by the general public. Transformative disruptive innovation (https://drift.eur.nl/topics/social-innovation/) - transformative social innovation - rooting/embedding social innovation - adaptation
8. **Unleashing Transformative Imagination -** Creatively responding to the crisis of imagination - from what is to what could be - from needs to potential - generating and expressing co-creativity - learning from and inspiring each other - being brave - 'another world is possible'

Resilience Competencies

The following resilience competencies are used by the Northeast Resiliency Consortium (NRC), formed in 2013 to address the need for resilience in seven colleges and communities in New England and north eastern USA.

1. **CRITICAL THINKING -** Purposeful uses reasoning to identify strengths and weaknesses of alternative approaches in diverse situations.

2. **ADAPTABILITY -** Successfully adjusts to a variety of positive and negative conditions and circumstances.

3. **SELF-AWARENESS -** Clearly understands their own qualities, characteristics, strengths and weaknesses, and how they impact on self and others.

4. **REFLECTIVE LEARNING, PRACTICE & ACTION -** Integrates and applies prior and current learning / practice / action to new situations.

5. **COLLABORATION -** Works with others to achieve a goal.#

Source: https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED602055.pdf

Building the resilience of catalyst learning and demonstration centres is a vital goal:

"The three aspects of resilience (persistence, adaptive capacity and transformability) describe important capacities of living systems: to resist collapse and maintain vital functions, to adapt to changing conditions (learn and self-organize) and in the case of Socio-Ecological Systems to apply foresight and anticipation to 'design for positive emergence' — to transform the system towards increased health and an improved capacity to respond wisely and creatively to disruptions and change."

Daniel Christian Wahl, author of *Designing Regenerative Cultures*
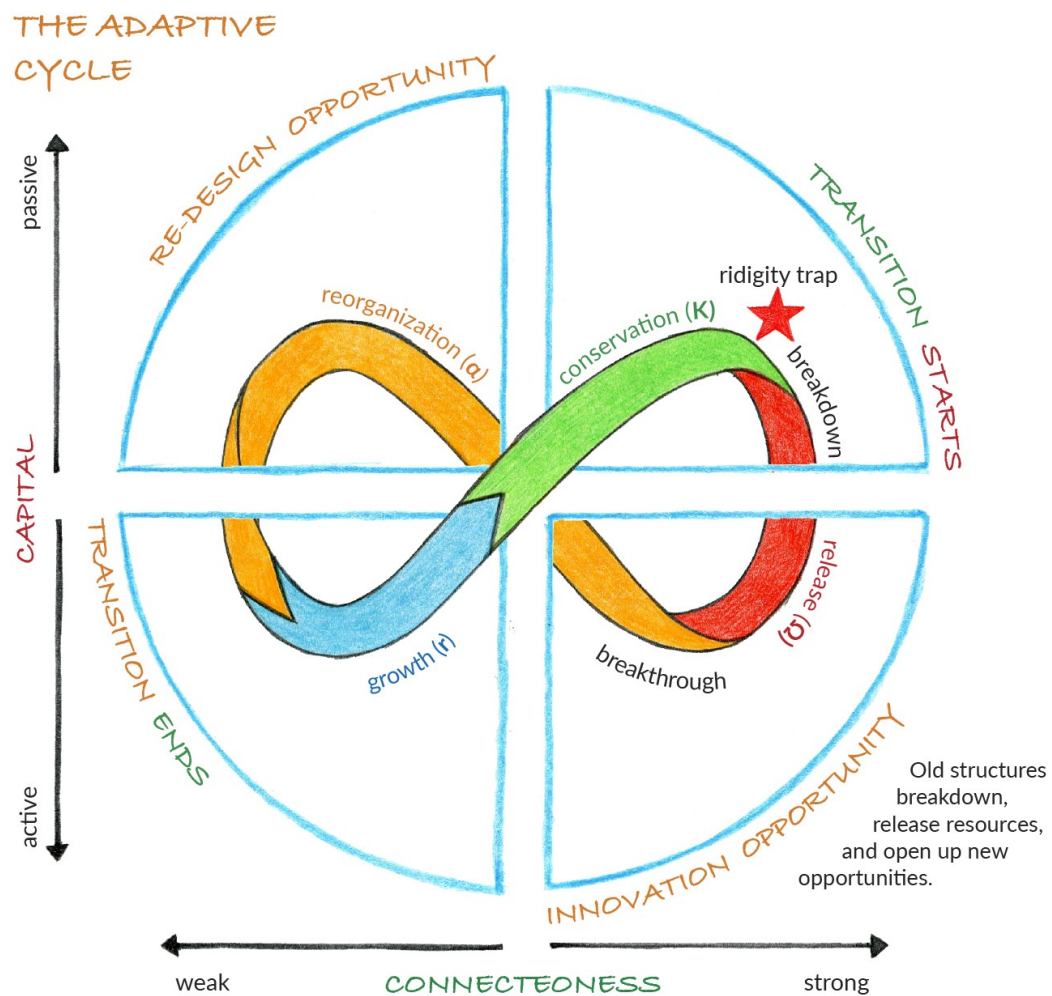
Source: Designing Regenerative Cultures, 2016 - www.danielchristianwahl.com; Graphics: www.flaviagargiulo.com

Bioregional Competencies

Sourced from: https://bioregion.org.uk/

Climate change, biodiversity loss, economic contraction and pandemics reveal systems under stress, requiring a systemic response. Working at the scale of the bioregion – how human societies have organised themselves for millennia – we can see the many ecosystems and human systems alive within our place. Bioregioning is the set of skills and pathways that bring vitality to these connections and enable us to take action at systems scale. Below are the **Bioregional Learning Centre** (BLC) steps for developing a bioregion, each of which include key Bioregioning skills - downloadable assets at: https://bioregion.org.uk/

01 Make a Story of Place - 'Seeing the Whole' is a key Bioregioning skill.

02 Reveal the systems within the region - Mapping for vitality is a key Bioregioning skill.

03 Intervene and demonstrate - Intervening in systems is a key Bioregioning skill.

04 Launch a multi-sector design process - Convening is a key Bioregioning skill.

05 Widen reach and impact

06 Document and showcase your learning region

Learning Pathways for Carbon Reduction, Regeneration & Sustainability

Learning Pathway Options - How competency is learned & developed for Carbon Reduction, Regeneration & Sustainability		
Competencies Systems Thinking		
Entry level 'Taster' →	**Core 'Experience' →**	**Extended 'Journey'**
Ecological systems thinking reading and online videos e.g. Donella Meadows; Fritjof Capra; Jeremy Lent; etc. https://donellameadows.org/systems-thinking-resources/	Short courses or workshops on systems thinking e.g. Schumacher college short courses	Extended training and development of applied systems thinking practices Diploma in Applied Permaculture Design
Competencies for Ecological & Carbon Literacy		
Entry level 'Taster' →	**Core 'Experience' →**	**Extended 'Journey'**
CAT Zero Carbon Britain information (UK-based) 52 Climate Actions website	CAT Short courses e.g. for UK Zero Carbon Britain trainings (UK-based) Carbon Literacy training e.g. for UK For organisations Carbon Literacy Project	Graduate Programme (distance learning or in-person), Centre for Alternative Technology
Competencies for Key Technical & Practical Fields		
Entry level 'Taster' →	**Core 'Experience' →**	**Extended 'Journey'**
Visits to learning & demonstration centres or other projects which demonstrate applied practice in key technical and practical fields e.g. regenerative food growing; sustainable building; renewable energy; habitat creation or rewilding; etc.	Short courses or long term volunteering (if available) in key fields: food growing; sustainable building; renewable energy; etc e.g. CAT Short courses PermaModule - integrated into degree level agricultural / horticultural courses	Graduate Programme (distance learning or in-person), Centre for Alternative Technology Technical training and ongoing development of practice in key fields: food growing; sustainable building; renewable energy; etc.
Competencies for Ethical & Low Impact Living		
Entry level 'Taster' →	**Core 'Experience' →**	**Extended 'Journey'**
Weekend workshop at an ethical, low impact living project or community	At least one month volunteering or working at an ethical, low impact living project or community	At least six months living or working at an ethical, low impact living project or community
Competencies for Action in Personal & Community Resilience		
Entry level 'Taster' →	**Core 'Experience' →**	**Extended 'Journey'**
Initial engagement in community action initiatives	Initial planning and actions to transition to a low impact, healthy and resilient lifestyle and livelihood	Ongoing commitment to develop a low impact, healthy and resilient lifestyle and livelihood

	Participation in or coordination of community action initiatives	Ongoing participation in or coordination of community action programmes
Competencies for Action in Regenerative & Permaculture Design		
Entry level 'Taster' →	**Core 'Experience'** →	**Extended 'Journey'**
Introduction to permaculture course	Permaculture Design Certificate (PDC) Ecovillage Design Training (Gaia Education) Regenerative Design Training	Diploma in Applied Permaculture Design Ongoing and diverse design practice or specialisation e.g. farm scale design; architecture; education systems; etc.

5: Competencies for Learning & Demonstration

What are these competencies?

They are the means by which you activate personal, community and bioregional transformation.

Why are they important?

People learn in different ways. Different ideas or subjects can be effectively communicated or demonstrated to be effective and impactful in various different ways.

How are they used and developed?

Explore pedagogies (e.g. taught, self-directed, self-generated) and ways of learning that can enhance the impact of your message. Seek and evaluate feedback to improve the offering. Form partnerships and collaborations that enable and support mutual learning. Create the living demonstrations of what you want people to learn about, and the opportunities for learning by doing that make best use of those demonstrations. Reflect on and refine what you are doing, to improve the outcomes for learners and to create more meaningful change in their lives and the places where they live.

Selection and use of learning methodologies - Transformative Learning
Develops a range of transformative learning experiences that suit the contexts of the learner and their learning journey, and the centre.

- Is able to design, deliver and support a range of non-linear, non-traditional learning journeys & experiences
- Has a deep understanding of transformative learning theory and practice
- Anchors learning in experience and practice
- Develops self-awareness of thoughts, emotions, behaviours & intuitions in a training and learning context, and their differences in both online and in-person environment
- Has well developed listening skills - especially active listening

- Is adaptable in the role as trainer or catalyst in both online and in-person environment
- Develops clarity in purpose, values, vision, motivation & commitment to enabling learning in others
- Creates a group container and supportive environment for engagement and learning
- Senses and responds to group dynamics in service of engagement and learning
- Is aware of and responsive to a diversity of learners needs and backgrounds etc and uses language, case studies and reference material that encompasses and embraces this diversity, in order to create an inclusive space for all
- Creates safe spaces that can work effectively with discomfort
- Is responsive in their actions to address feedback on learning activities and experiences, both during and after learning activities or completion of programmes
- Builds their own support systems that cater for the needs and the potential of the trainers and catalysts themselves

For more detail visit: Transformative Learning Competencies

Selection & use of learning methodologies - Project-based Learning for Action
Uses a range of learning experiences, activities and processes based on planning, designing and implementing projects, often using real-world examples that learners and / or communities are actively engaged in - so that the projects have transformative outcomes for both learners and the places or communities they are engaged in.

- Evolves action-oriented learning opportunities in response to specific personal, collective, local or regional socio-ecological needs or contexts

- Translates generic climate action goals, processes and competencies a) to specific learning and action opportunities that are relevant to personal, group, local, community, municipal or (bio)regional contexts and b) to a specific system or organisational context

- Generates realistic pictures of personal and collective impacts and identifies relevant goals, processes and competencies to support personal and collective action

Selection and use of learning methodologies - Blended Learning
Uses and can integrate both in-person (off-line) and online learning experiences and resources that suit the contexts of the learner and their learning journey, and the centre. This can offer greater accessibility, flexibility, affordability and inclusivity for learners, and if well-designed can enhance the transformative potential of learning journeys.

- Develops self-awareness & adaptability as a facilitator of learning in online and blended environments
- Nurtures engaging and safe online and offline / in-person environments for participants
- Is aware of and responsive to group dynamics in online and offline contexts
- Knows how to assess & select technology suitable for the context & audience
- Understands and allocates the time and skills needed to enable & manage learning in a blended context
- Knows how to design experiential and participatory blended learning
- Designs, facilitates & manages blended learning environments and pathways
- Facilitates technologically enhanced learning
- Understands how to design blended learning experiences to optimise transformative (inner and outer) learning outcomes
    - set-up and preparation phase online;
    - technologies for community & communication - forums, chats for connection, guild building
    - related technologies for blended learning - Miro, White boards, interactive feedback, confidential feedback, breakout rooms.
- Understands how power & rank, and mainstream & margins, affect groups / learning processes and the effect that different settings have on participation levels of different sub-groups (Leading Groups Online)
- Knows different ways to encourage peer-to-peer interaction and community building online and offline
- Is able to find solutions to needs and technological issues that arise in a group
- Is able to recognise one's own stress or exhaustion from facilitating in-person or online (from screen time, reading the group, delivering content etc). and to resource oneself to support the group to do the same
- Knows the ethical and other impact issues of use of digital tools and technologies and of the ethical options for most used tools e.g. meetings; shared document systems; etc.

For more detail visit: Blended Learning Competencies

Selection and use of learning environments - demonstration features and systems
Uses a range of appropriate and enriching learning environments and situations to give the learner a diversity of learning experiences, both at and outside the centre.

- Knows how to select and use demonstration examples and practical exercises that support transformative learning
- Knows how to select and use a variety and diversity of learning environments that support transformative learning and cater for different needs and learning styles within the learning group
- Understands that demonstration can cover a range of themes including physical & technology elements (i.e. low impact buildings; energy systems; infrastructure), ongoing practices (agroecology; forest gardening), ways of working (permaculture design methods; sociocratic decision making) and organisational models (social enterprise; cooperative; ethical business).

Hosting of Learning, Activity & Event Programmes
Is able to host, plan, manage and maintain an appropriate quality and diversity of experiences, features and activities for learners, volunteers, educators and other visitors to support the delivery of optimum transformative outcomes for them.

Note: the hosting role is very different to the educator role, and is equally important.

- Is able to host or support a range of non-linear, non-traditional learning journeys & experiences

- Has a friendly, engaging and caring manner, that is adaptable to a diversity of characters, situations and individual and group needs

- Analyses, estimates and manages the costs of courses and learning programmes, and effectively promotes, markets and administers programmes and learner / participant support systems in ways that engage and support learners and relate to their needs and potential, and which also maintain the financial viability of programmes

- Is able to manage the logistics of learning programmes and experiences, including food, accommodation etc for in-person programmes, including creating and managing effective welcoming and departure of learners

- Recognises and caters for the diversity of needs amongst learners

- Builds support infrastructure that caters for the needs and potential of both learners and trainers / catalysts

- Can facilitate or support acceleration and expansion in learning, through effective entrepreneurial and marketing skills, setting up and managing online courses and learning systems, or stakeholder engagement to secure endorsement of community-based learning and engagement programmes from key stakeholders e.g. the municipality or regional government, local businesses.

- Is responsive in their actions to address feedback on facilities and hosting, including responding to additional needs or emergency situations during and after learning activities or completion of programmes

Environments that enhance learning

The core purpose of combining 'learning' and 'demonstration' is that this combination will generally enhance the outcomes for learners - often significantly. Therefore, for venues and learning and demonstration centres that are helping to expand or deepen socio-ecological transition outcomes, some key competency areas they will need are:

- The ability to select and use environments that enhance learning in general, and individual and collective action-learning in particular.

- The ability to design, create and develop enhanced learning environments i.e. also covered in part by project competencies

- The ability to provide a supportive ecology of transformative learning experiences that have a symbiotic relationship with the demonstration elements and related learning environments - for example through a range of complementary action-learning programmes, volunteering activities, or mentoring / tutor support programmes e.g. in regenerative horticulture or farming; green building; etc.

Stephen Sterling's paper **Transformative learning and sustainability: Sketching the conceptual ground** refers to some of the key considerations for venues, particularly in terms of how their environment, culture and working practices need to reflect the values and subject matter of the learning programmes they are promoting and hosting.

Key Concepts & Practices in Learning

For those involved in education and learning in the regenerative, community resilience and permaculture movements, the following are important areas for developing the competencies needed to achieve personal goals and the goals of the centres they work with, whether these relate to the journey itself, or the final destination of the journey.

- **Transformative learning** - *Is the fundamental essence of our work*. In the context of socio-ecological transition, transformative learning is particularly focused on an approach that generates transformative outcomes in both the inner and outer world, through both individual and collective transformations.
- **Project-based learning** - key elements of project-based learning include: a challenging problem or question; sustained inquiry; authenticity / real-life challenge; application of learning; feedback loops of critique, reflection and refining of the product. Project-based learning often also involves developing the ability to work with peers, building teamwork and group skills.
- **Messy learning** - Messy learning is "**non-linear" learning** (whereas "clean learning" is like "linear" thinking). Messy learning can be compared to experiencing a network of paths (without the idea there is one 'right' path), with a diverse variety of experiences along the way that force you to look at something from new or different angles, so you develop critical thinking and your perception is broadened and strengthened.
- **Blended learning** - a combination of in-person and online learning activities; often a diversity of styles of learning activity i.e. taught, project-based, practicals, visits to other projects, video, reading, etc using both online and in-person elements.
- **Learning pathways** - a learning pathway is the chosen route taken by a learner through a range of learning activities or learning programmes, which allows them to build knowledge, skills and overall competence progressively. With learning pathways, the control of choice moves to the learner, and away from the educator.
- **Teaching, Coaching and Mentoring** - In simple terms, teaching involves imparting particular knowledge or skills to a learner to achieve a particular learning outcome. Coaching involves supporting a learner to identify the goals that are right for them, and then to support them to achieve those goals through their own learning and reflection, and by asking skilled or insightful questions (and without imparting advice that pulls the learner toward a particular direction). Mentoring

involves supporting a learner to develop skills or competence in a particular field in ways that draw on the mentor's significant experience or expertise in that field.

- **Communities of Practice (CoP) & Networks** - a *Community of Practice* is a group of people (practitioners, such as permaculture educators, or people running learning and demonstration centres!) who share a common concern, a set of problems, or an interest in a topic or field, and who come together regularly to fulfil both individual and group goals. The CoP provides a support network for this group of people, and creates opportunities for mutual learning, building capability, sharing knowledge and reducing duplication of work. For more information on the value and benefits of CoPs, see the **BLAST project Communities of Practice Guide**

  Key resource:
  https://communitiesforfuture.org/transformative-blended-learning-blast/

Coaching & Mentoring for Learning

The EMCC (European Mentoring & Coaching Council) competency framework identifies the following Eight mentoring/coaching competence categories:

1. **Understanding Self:** Demonstrates awareness of own values, beliefs and behaviours; recognises how these affect their practice and uses this self-awareness to manage their effectiveness in meeting the client's, and where relevant, the sponsor's objectives

2. **Commitment to Self-Development:** Explores and improves the standard of their practice and maintain the reputation of the profession

3. **Managing the Contract:** Establishes and maintains the expectations and boundaries of the mentoring/coaching contract with the client / group and, where appropriate, with sponsors

4. **Building the Relationship:** Skilfully builds and maintains an effective relationship with the client, and where appropriate, with the sponsor

5. **Enabling Insight and Learning:** Works with the client / group and sponsor to bring about insight and learning

6. **Outcome and Action Orientation:** Demonstrates an action-oriented approach and uses the skills in supporting the client / group to make desired changes

7. **Use of Models and Techniques:** Applies models and tools, techniques and ideas beyond the core communication skills in order to bring about insight and learning

8. **Evaluation:** Gathers information on the effectiveness of own practice and contributes to establishing a culture of evaluation of outcomes

For those that are interested in the Capability Indicators (CIs) for these eight competence categories, or additional information on the role and competencies of Community Climate Coaches it is recommended to consult the **Community Climate Coaches Comptency Framework [link to CCC doc / comps webpages]**

For more information: European Mentoring and Coaching Council (EMCC)

Learning Pathways for Learning & Demonstration Competencies

Learning Pathway Options - How competency is learned & developed for Learning, Demonstration & Hosting		
Competencies Transformative Learning Methodologies		
Entry level 'Taster' →	**Core 'Experience'** →	**Extended 'Journey'**
Articles, books or webinars on the theory and application of various transformative learning methodologies. Experience of transformative learning through different methodologies.	Online or in-person training in transformative learning methodologies. Substantial experience of Transformative Learning practices.	Deepened and extended experience of theory and practice of *Transformative Learning*
Competencies selection and use of Blended Learning methods		
Entry level 'Taster' →	**Core 'Experience'** →	**Extended 'Journey'**
Articles or webinars on the theory and application of blended learning methodologies. Experience of blended learning through different methods.	Substantial experience of Blended Learning practices and approaches. Training in blended learning methodologies.	Deepened and extended experience of Blended Learning especially through repeated practice of delivering and refining your own blended learning experiences, including as part of a team
Competencies for Demonstration Elements & Learning Environments		
Entry level 'Taster' →	**Core 'Experience'** →	**Extended 'Journey'**
Personal experience of learning with a range of demonstration elements and in various learning environments. Books or articles about how learning outcomes are affected by the learning environment.	Experience of designing and creating learning environments and demonstration elements to achieve desired learning outcomes. Peer-to-peer exchanges on tools, ideas and research into learning environments.	Deepened experience of theory and practice of developing learning environment design..
Competencies for Hosting Learning & Activity Programmes		
Entry level 'Taster' →	**Core 'Experience'** →	**Extended 'Journey'**
Experience as a volunteer or part of a team that hosts learning programmes e.g. hosting an Introduction to Permaculture course Guidance documents or articles on best practice in hosting learning programmes.	Training or experience in financial administration, hospitality, catering, marketing and/or event management. Experience working in a range of hosting environments e.g. hosting a PDC (Permaculture Design Certificate) course.	Ongoing hosting practice and professional development in all aspects of hosting a diversity of learning and activity programmes.

Learning Pathways for Coaching

Learning Pathway Options - How competency is learned & developed for Coaching		
Coaching Competencies		
Entry level 'Taster' →	**Core 'Experience'** →	**Extended 'Journey'**
Books or Online searches, articles and videos Being coached Online 'Introduction to Coaching' short courses, webinars or workshops	Coaching Training Accredited by relevant Professional body e.g. EMCC (European Coaching & Mentoring Council) Receiving coaching for a set period e.g. at least 3 months / 6 sessions	Developing your coaching practice Being coached on an ongoing basis Peer-to-peer coaching exchanges Ongoing participation in Coaching Supervision group
Competencies for Climate Coaching		
Entry level 'Taster' →	**Core 'Experience'** →	**Extended 'Journey'**
Engage with and participate in **Climate Coaching Alliance** events	**3 Module Climate Biodiversity Coaching online course with ongoing reflective practice** Engage with and participate in **Climate Coaching Alliance** regional group to find allies	Extended engagement and participation with **Climate Coaching Alliance** regional group to find allies
Competencies for Nature Based Coaching		
Entry level 'Taster' →	**Core 'Experience'** →	**Extended 'Journey'**
Books or Online searches, articles and videos Peer-to-peer learning on nature-based coaching	Specific nature-based coaching training e.g. Courageous Coaching online training with nature-based learning practices;	Practising and receiving nature-based coaching on an ongoing basis

Key Resource:

Ecological & Climate Conscious Coaching, Editors: Alison Whybrow et al, Routledge, 2022

Key iACT Resources

iACT Resources

- [iACT Competency Assessment Tool](#)
- iACT & LAND Centre Handbook
- iACT Toolkit
- iACT Good Practice Guide
- iACT Knowledge Commons (Research & Mapping System)
- iACT Competencies Communities for Future Wiki pages

Other Resources

[LAND Centre pages](#) of the Permaculture Association (Britain)

[Ecological & Climate Conscious Coaching](#), Editors: Alison Whybrow et al, Routledge, 2022

[The Climate Coaching Alliance](#)

For Your Notes: