

CONFERENCE 2023

# Shaping the Future:

Key Themes in Higher Education

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## Developing Critical Thinkers in the Age of Automation: The Case for Private Institutions

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Can we all agree  
that in 2015  
not a single person  
got the answer correct  
to 'where do you see  
yourself in five years  
from now'.

# Students

# Faculty

# Institution

# What role(s) do/should PDGIs play?



OpenAI

Research Product Safety Company

## Introducing ChatGPT

We've trained a model called ChatGPT which interacts in a conversational way. The dialogue format makes it possible for ChatGPT to answer followup questions, admit its mistakes, challenge incorrect premises, and reject inappropriate requests.

Try ChatGPT

[Read about ChatGPT Plus](#)

“...**change lives for good** by offering high quality and relevant lifelong education”

“...an atmosphere of **scholarly integrity, cultural sensitivity and community engagement**”

“...building competencies for scholarship, leadership, and **responsible citizenship in a global context**”

“...excellence in higher education for **students from many cultural backgrounds and language abilities**”

“...preparation of **world citizens** through global education”

“...graduating **socially responsible practitioners, engaging communities, and advancing social justice**”

“...professional **careers that are personally rewarding** and contribute to the **betterment of society**”

“Home of **Makers, Doers, Inventors, and Innovators**”

“...**responsible global citizens** who can communicate, think critically, and make a positive impact in communities around the world”

“An **Education With Results**. Connecting **people with professions.**”

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# How students see post-secondary education success

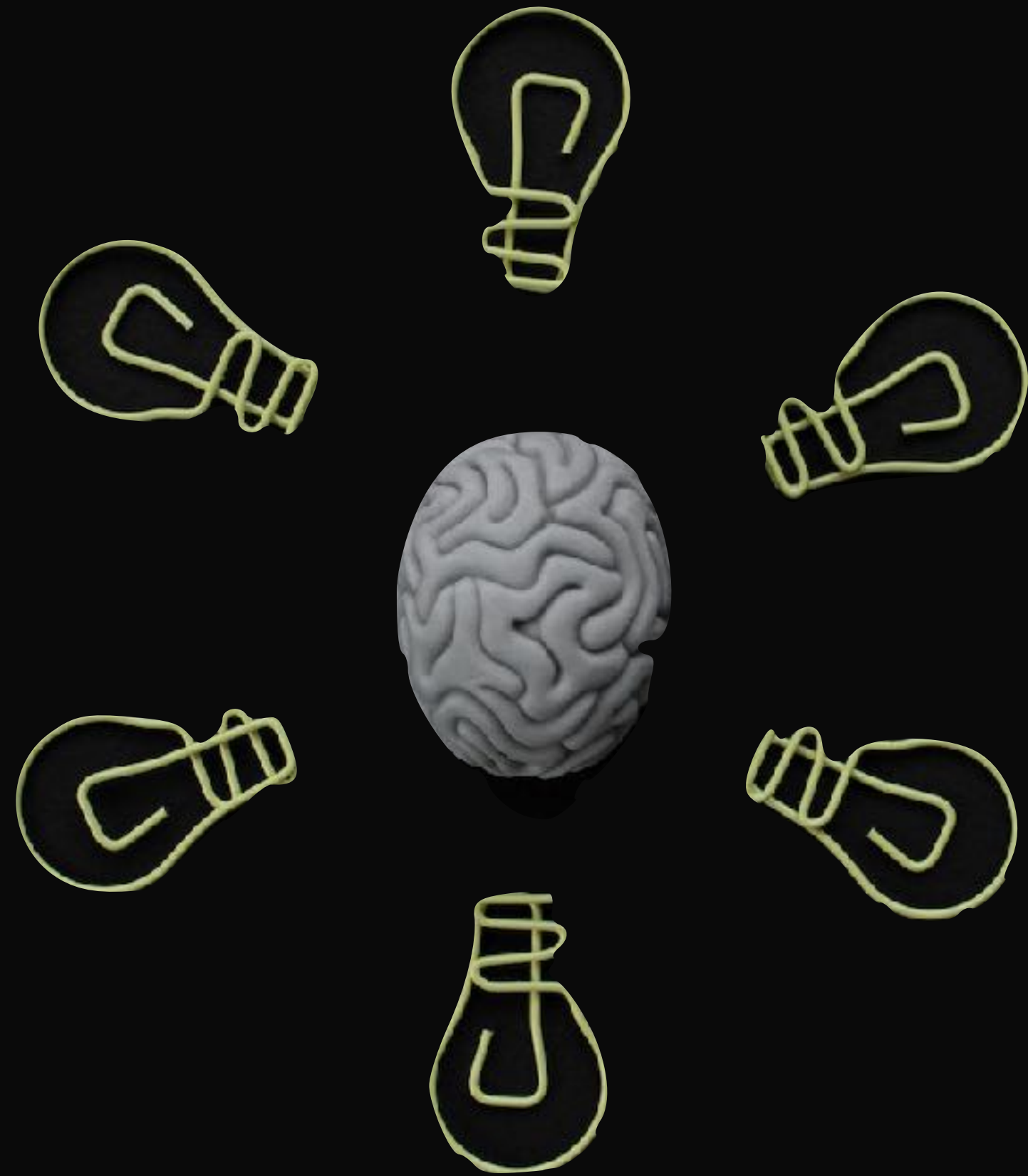




**Students' most important reason to pursue a post-secondary education in Canada?**

**“Give them what they want AND give them  
what they didn't know they need.”**





“A well cultivated critical thinker:

- **raises vital questions and problems**, formulating them clearly and precisely;
- **gathers and assesses relevant information** using abstract ideas to interpret it effectively, comes to **well-reasoned conclusions and solutions**, testing them against relevant criteria and standards;
- **thinks openmindedly** within alternative systems of thought, recognizing and assessing, as need be, their assumptions, implications, and practical consequences; and
- **communicates effectively** with others in figuring out solutions to complex problems.”

(The Foundation for Critical Thinking, 2008)

# Critical Thinking and the SDGs



...plus 169 targets and indicators

Home > Rankings > Impact Rankings

# Impact Rankings 2022

The *Times Higher Education* Impact Rankings are the only global performance tables that assess universities against the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We use carefully calibrated indicators to provide comprehensive and balanced comparison across four broad areas: research, stewardship, outreach and teaching.

The 2022 Impact Rankings is the fourth edition and the overall ranking includes 1,406 universities from 106 countries/regions.

[Read more ...](#)

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH  
**ELSEVIER**



2022

[How to get your uni ranked](#)

## EXPLORE IMPACT RANKINGS FOR INDIVIDUAL SDGS

<p><b>OVERALL RANKING</b></p>	<p><b>1</b> </p> <p><b>NO POVERTY</b></p>	<p><b>2</b> </p> <p><b>ZERO HUNGER</b></p>	<p><b>3</b> </p> <p><b>GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING</b></p>	<p><b>4</b> </p> <p><b>QUALITY EDUCATION</b></p>	<p><b>5</b> </p> <p><b>GENDER EQUALITY</b></p>	<p><b>6</b> </p> <p><b>CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION</b></p>	<p><b>7</b> </p> <p><b>AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY</b></p>	<p><b>8</b> </p> <p><b>DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH</b></p>
<p><b>9</b> </p> <p><b>INDUSTRY INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE</b></p>	<p><b>10</b> </p> <p><b>REDUCED INEQUALITIES</b></p>	<p><b>11</b> </p> <p><b>SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES</b></p>	<p><b>12</b> </p> <p><b>RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION</b></p>	<p><b>13</b> </p> <p><b>CLIMATE ACTION</b></p>	<p><b>14</b> </p> <p><b>LIFE BELOW WATER</b></p>	<p><b>15</b> </p> <p><b>LIFE ON LAND</b></p>	<p><b>16</b> </p> <p><b>PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS</b></p>	<p><b>17</b> </p> <p><b>PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS</b></p>

# Breaking the Discipline/Degree Nexus

**March 29, 2022 | Alex Usher**

Just a quick one today because the expanded HESA Towers opened yesterday and there's been a lot going on. It's about an experiment that I wish more institutions would undertake, upon building a new university (it has to be a new university, for reasons which I think will be obvious): that is, to allow the institution to offer degrees on any basis it wishes *except* that of disciplinarity. No history degrees. No physics degrees. Kill disciplinarity, at least as it pertains to undergraduates, and replace it with programs that focus on themes that interact more directly with how the real world thinks about and solves problems.

For instance, why not have a university which has just 17-degree programs: one for each of the United Nations' **Sustainable Development Goals**? A degree in poverty eradication would necessarily take in courses in history, politics, sociology, anthropology and economics; one in clean water and sanitation courses in science, engineering, and almost certainly political science and economics as well, life below water would require something similar along with more biology, etc. Or, if we're just sticking with Arts faculties here for a moment, why not just thematic degrees that line up ideas along lines of major social problems or issues? Why not degrees in Trust, Persuasion, or Equality, or Cities – all themes to which a large number of different disciplines could offer important and differing perspectives.

Canada's 2030 Agenda National Strategy


# MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER

SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Canada | Prime Minister of Canada  
Justin Trudeau

News ▾ About The Ministry ▾ Connect Photos & Videos ▾

 Prime Minister to co-chair the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals Advocates group

“Things that seem unimaginable today  
will be inevitable tomorrow.”

Professor Albus Dumbledore

# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

provide a powerful framework to help students consider their purpose - a grounding for their career aspirations:

- What is the world that I want to live in?
- What do I see are the global problems or opportunities that need our attention?
- What are my talents and experiences that may help address these problems, and in turn improve the condition of our world?

**What do I care about?**



670000  
 6.500.000  
 10.000.000  
 1.200.000  
 PLAN 750  
 SUBTOTAL 4  
 650  
 710  
 2015  
 2016  
 5000000  
 8500.000 +  
 1600.000 +  
 11.500.000 +  
 16.200.000 + 9200

BUSINESS IDEA  
 CLOUD  
 SUCCESS  
 1500.000.000



Go beyond the 'what' to  
the 'how' and 'why'

Seek evidence: "How do  
you know this?"

Contemplate alternatives

Consider possible  
solutions



**betterment of society**

thinks openmindedly

Final Advice:

Make learning **relevant, meaningful, lifechanging**

gathers and assesses relevant information

**many cultural backgrounds and language abilities**

**responsible citizenship in a global context**

communicates effectively

**Education With Results**

**scholarly integrity, cultural sensitivity and community engagement"**

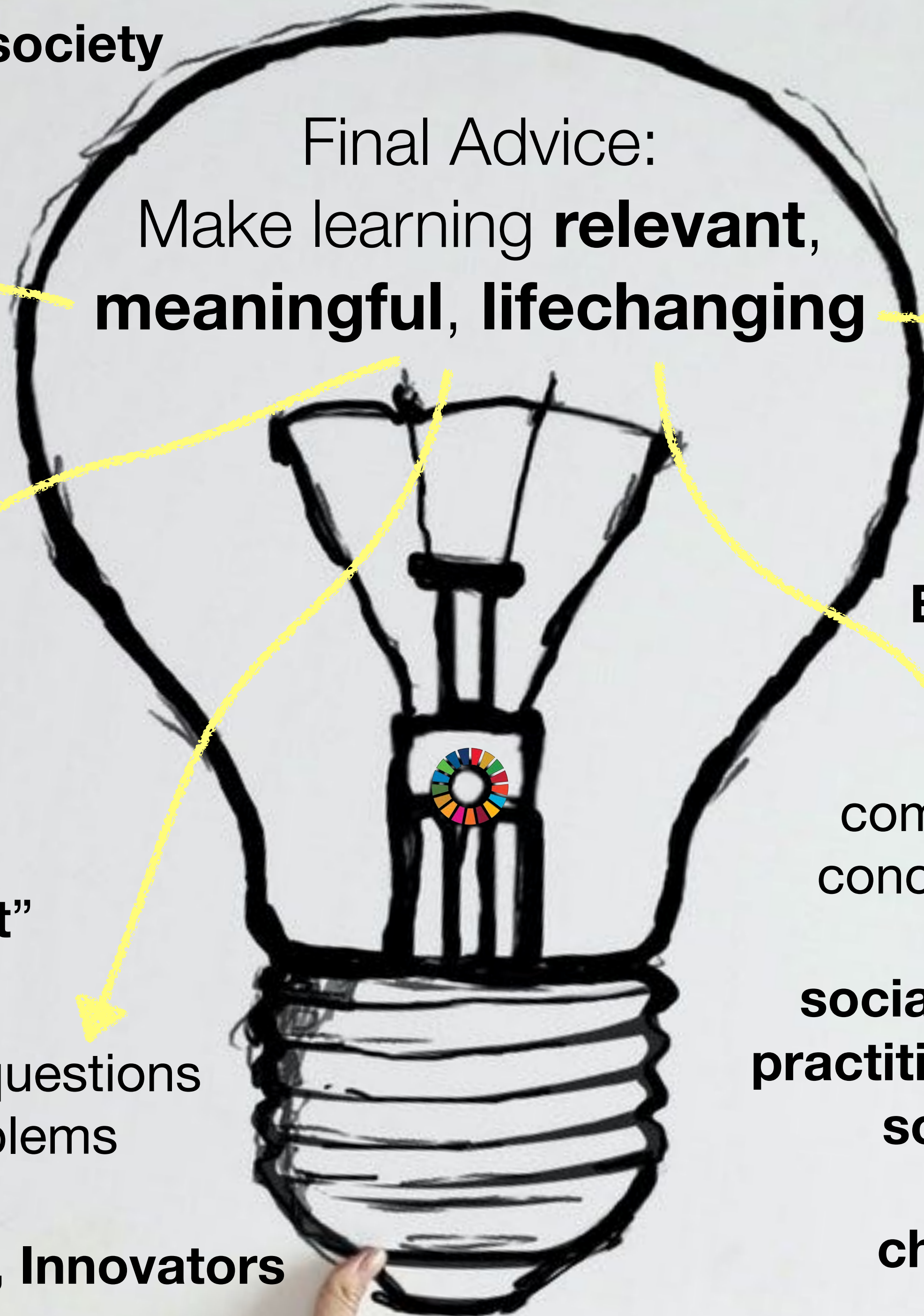
comes to well-reasoned conclusions and solutions

raises vital questions and problems

**socially responsible practitioners advancing social justice**

**Makers, Doers, Inventors, Innovators**

**change lives for good**





“The plain fact is that the planet does not need more successful people. But it does desperately need more peacemakers, healers, restorers, storytellers, and lovers of every kind. It needs **people who live well in their places**. It needs **people of moral courage** willing to join the fight to make the world habitable and humane. And these qualities have little to do with success as we have defined it.”

David W. Orr, *Ecological Literacy: Educating Our Children for a Sustainable World*



**Thank you!**

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