

2020-2021 ANNUAL REPORT

Think.Transform.Impact



Dear Friends,

We live in unprecedented times. While the immediacy of the pandemic and climate change forces us to reconsider all that we describe as normal, we are also presented with an opportunity to transform our behavior and culture, and to rebuild and renew our communities and civic institutions. We will either perish in stagnation and refuse to change, or we will exercise resilience and reimagine our world. Reimagine has been our theme at The Center these past two years. We invited thinkers and doers across disciplines, in private and public gatherings, to help us reimagine a more just and equitable world.

The subject of ethics (or lack of ethics) has garnered a great deal of attention in recent times, ranging from the historical legacy of corruption and institutional biases to the novel issues that frame the design and deployment of technology platforms, including artificial intelligence. We have also witnessed a wide range of virtue signaling from various enterprises, some more sincere than others.

The Center continues to make progress with realistic optimism. In this era of breadth we strive for depth. Our efforts with various partners, including indigenous community leaders, are taking root. Through Power, People and Purpose—our work with law enforcement officers—we continue to make them more responsible, thoughtful and compassionate.

We are grateful for your continued support and participation.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "DMorrison".

Donald H. Morrison
Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tenzin Priyadarshi".

Tenzin Priyadarshi
President & CEO

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR PARTNERS & SUPPORTERS

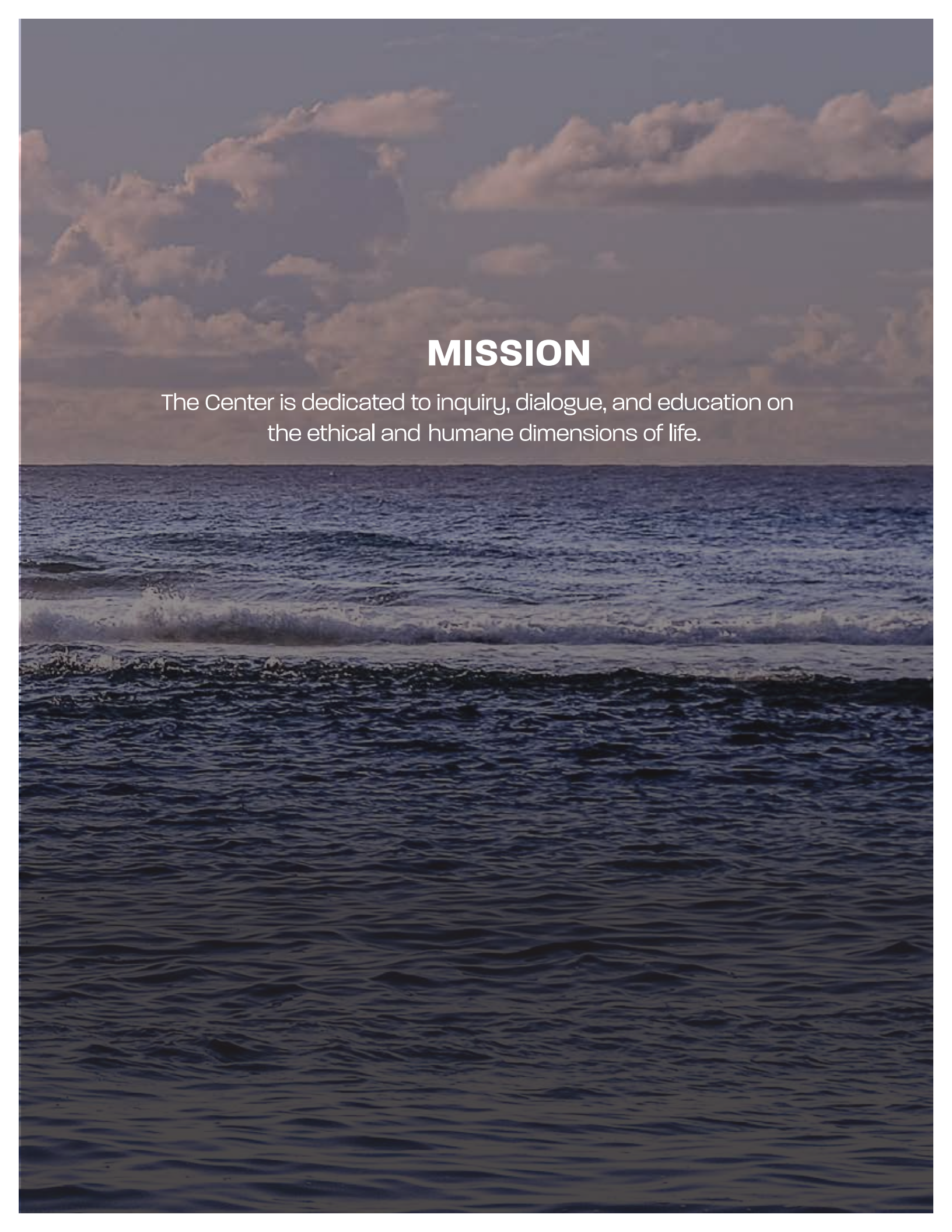
Partial Listing



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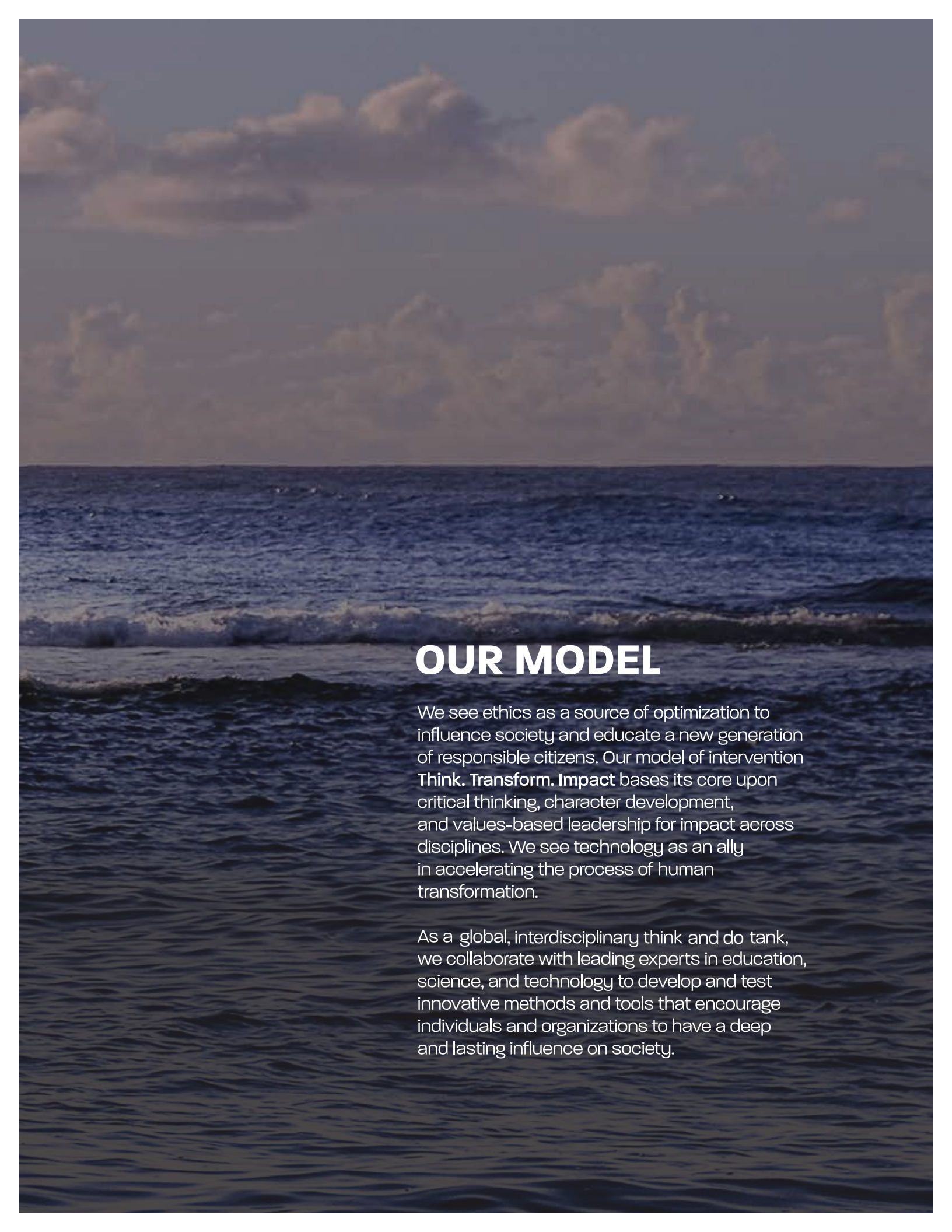
Please consider joining the Patrons Circle and become a Sustaining Member today.

To contribute, please visit us at <http://thecenter.mit.edu> or call (617) 324 6030



MISSION

The Center is dedicated to inquiry, dialogue, and education on the ethical and humane dimensions of life.



OUR MODEL

We see ethics as a source of optimization to influence society and educate a new generation of responsible citizens. Our model of intervention **Think. Transform. Impact** bases its core upon critical thinking, character development, and values-based leadership for impact across disciplines. We see technology as an ally in accelerating the process of human transformation.

As a global, interdisciplinary think and do tank, we collaborate with leading experts in education, science, and technology to develop and test innovative methods and tools that encourage individuals and organizations to have a deep and lasting influence on society.



THE DALAI LAMA

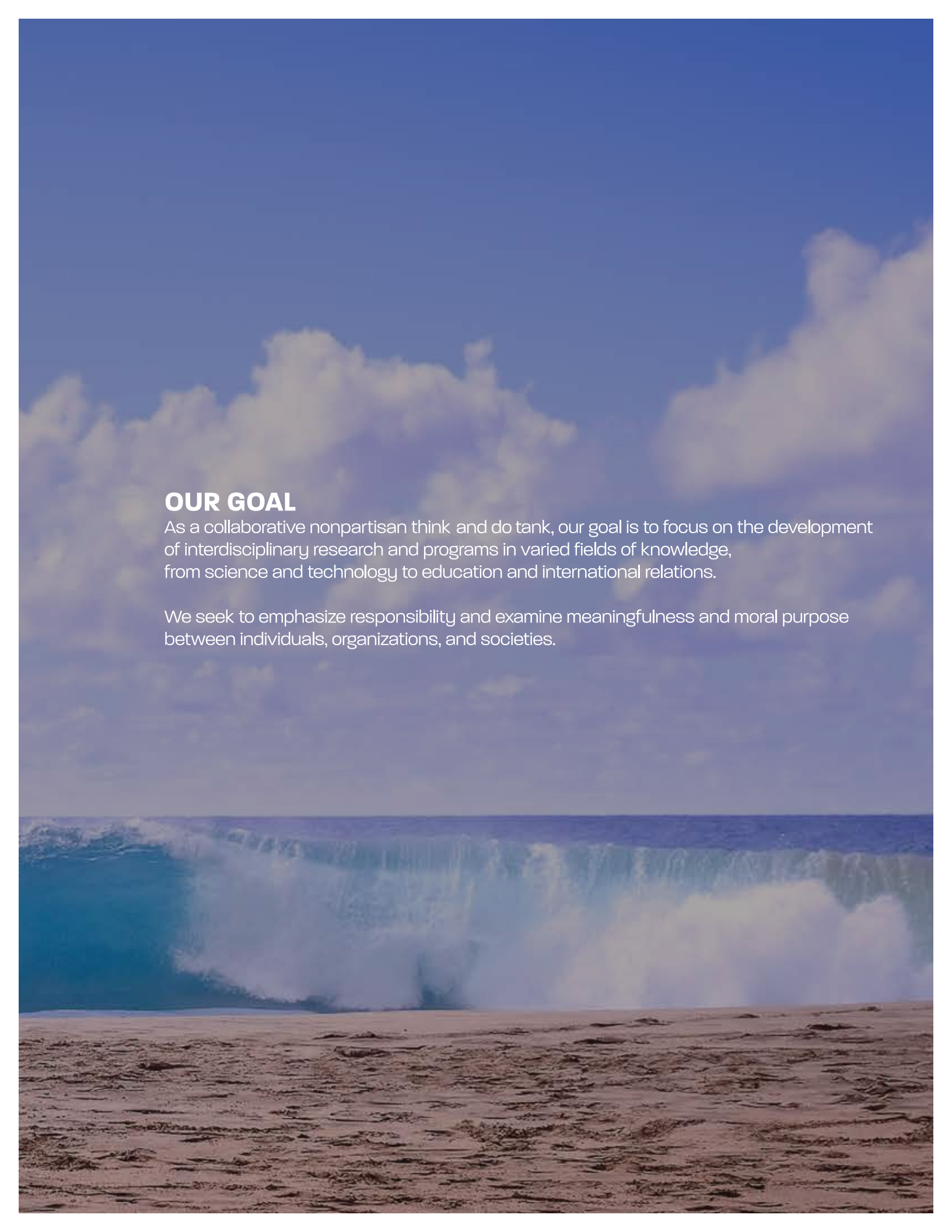
MESSAGE

I congratulate the Dalai Lama Center for Ethics and Transformative Values at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), U.S.A. on the occasion of its 10th anniversary. When we laid the ground for the Center's work, it was done with the ambitious goal of designing and promoting innovative methods for integrating ethics, empathy and human values into our education systems. I am glad the Center has been quite successful in this endeavor.

Our world continues to face complex challenges that require creative long-term solutions. If we are truly striving for the survival of 7 billion humans—as well as the multitude of other types of beings who rely on our ecosystem—we must work together to accomplish this meaningful goal.

I express my appreciation to all those who have participated in and supported the Center's efforts. I also thank MIT for being part of this initiative since its inception in 2009. The Center now leads important conversations regarding ethics in policy-making and in the future of technology. With its programs in several countries, the Center's work is both relevant and beneficial. I hope that our collective efforts will contribute towards bringing about a more peaceful world.

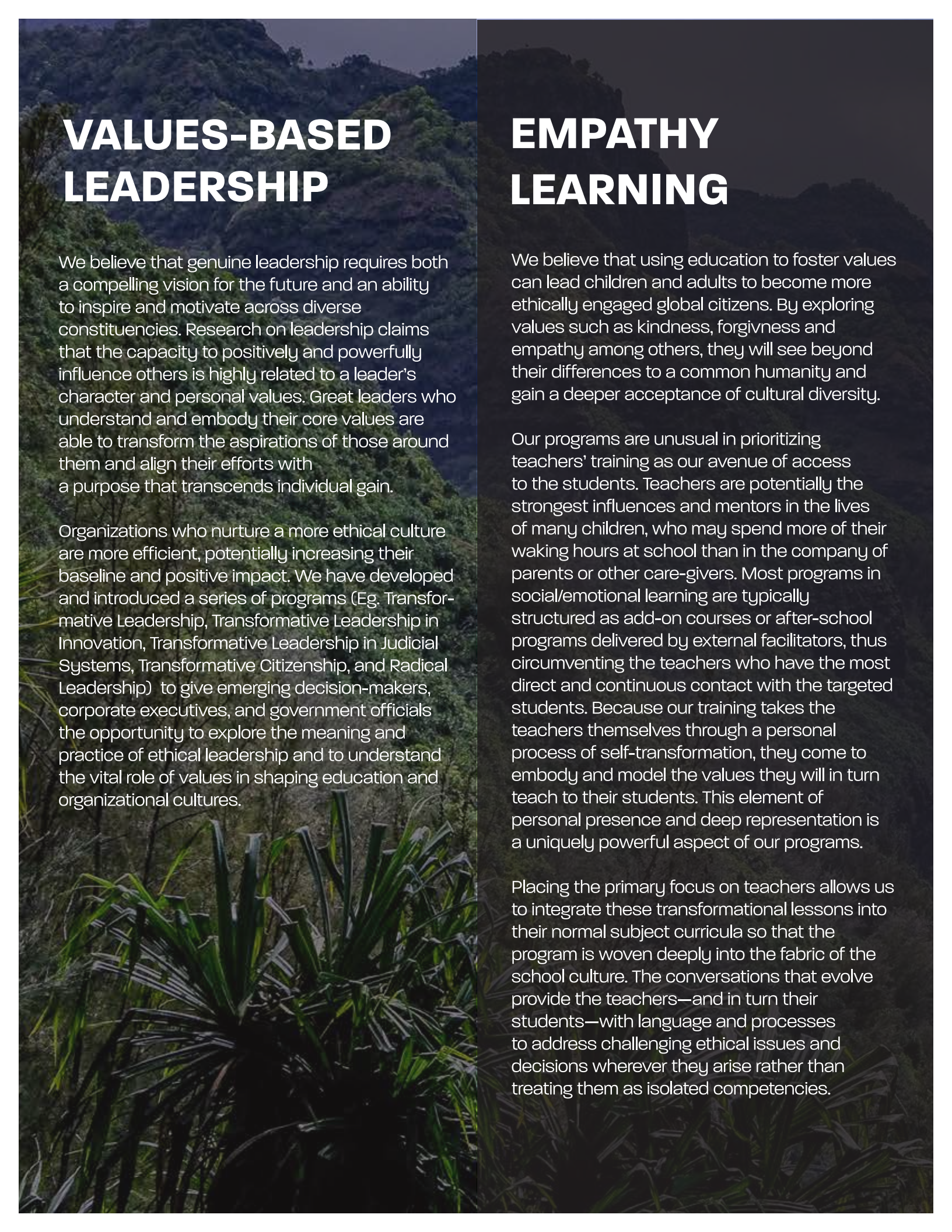
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the name 'H. G. G.' or similar, written in a cursive style.



OUR GOAL

As a collaborative nonpartisan think and do tank, our goal is to focus on the development of interdisciplinary research and programs in varied fields of knowledge, from science and technology to education and international relations.

We seek to emphasize responsibility and examine meaningfulness and moral purpose between individuals, organizations, and societies.



VALUES-BASED LEADERSHIP

We believe that genuine leadership requires both a compelling vision for the future and an ability to inspire and motivate across diverse constituencies. Research on leadership claims that the capacity to positively and powerfully influence others is highly related to a leader's character and personal values. Great leaders who understand and embody their core values are able to transform the aspirations of those around them and align their efforts with a purpose that transcends individual gain.

Organizations who nurture a more ethical culture are more efficient, potentially increasing their baseline and positive impact. We have developed and introduced a series of programs (Eg. Transformative Leadership, Transformative Leadership in Innovation, Transformative Leadership in Judicial Systems, Transformative Citizenship, and Radical Leadership) to give emerging decision-makers, corporate executives, and government officials the opportunity to explore the meaning and practice of ethical leadership and to understand the vital role of values in shaping education and organizational cultures.

EMPATHY LEARNING

We believe that using education to foster values can lead children and adults to become more ethically engaged global citizens. By exploring values such as kindness, forgiveness and empathy among others, they will see beyond their differences to a common humanity and gain a deeper acceptance of cultural diversity.

Our programs are unusual in prioritizing teachers' training as our avenue of access to the students. Teachers are potentially the strongest influences and mentors in the lives of many children, who may spend more of their waking hours at school than in the company of parents or other care-givers. Most programs in social/emotional learning are typically structured as add-on courses or after-school programs delivered by external facilitators, thus circumventing the teachers who have the most direct and continuous contact with the targeted students. Because our training takes the teachers themselves through a personal process of self-transformation, they come to embody and model the values they will in turn teach to their students. This element of personal presence and deep representation is a uniquely powerful aspect of our programs.

Placing the primary focus on teachers allows us to integrate these transformational lessons into their normal subject curricula so that the program is woven deeply into the fabric of the school culture. The conversations that evolve provide the teachers—and in turn their students—with language and processes to address challenging ethical issues and decisions wherever they arise rather than treating them as isolated competencies.



(re)Imagine

(re)Imagine is a series of invited talks and conversations on curiosity, empathy, trust, and what it would take to reform the old or build a new future for humanity and the planet. More concretely, we discuss policy-making, institutional robustness, education, and the health of civic society.

Recent events and the pandemic have increased our aperture for uncertainty. Uncertainty could also mean possibilities. While we try to find the balance between the urge to go back to an old familiar normal, or aspirations to create a new normal, we continue to ask which aspects of being human should drive this new episode in our lives, our communities, and our world.

Spring Conversations



PROBABLE IMPOSSIBILITIES WITH ALAN LIGHTMAN

Novelist, essayist, physicist, and educator. Formerly John Burchard Professor of the Humanities at MIT



COMPASSION AND FORGIVENESS IN LAW WITH MARTHA MINOW

300th Anniversary University Professor at Harvard University



EMPATHY, TRUST, AND RECLAIMING CONVERSATIONS WITH SHERRY TURKLE

Abby Rockefeller Mauzé Professor of the Social Studies of Science and Technology; Founding Director, MIT Initiative on Technology and Self



TRANSFORMING HOW WE LEARN WITH SANJAY SARMA

Vice President for Open Learning at MIT, which includes the Office of Digital Learning, the MIT Integrated Learning Initiative and the Abdul Latif Jameel World Education Lab.



PROMISES AND PERILS OF BIOTECHNOLOGY WITH KEVIN ESVELT

Kevin Esvelt is director of the Sculpting Evolution group at MIT



ANTICIPATORY ACTION AND GLOBAL HEALTH CHALLENGES OF THE 21ST CENTURY WITH JAMES ORBINSKI

Professor and the inaugural Director of York University's. Dahdaleh Institute for Global Health



REACHING DRAWDOWN - A HOPEFUL, SCIENCE-BASED PATH TO STOP CLIMATE CHANGE WITH JONATHAN FOLEY

Executive Director, Project Drawdown

Fall Conversations



WHY TRUST MATTERS WITH BEN HO

Ben Ho is an associate professor of behavioral economics at Vassar College and author of the book *Why Trust Matters: An Economist's Guide to the Ties that Bind Us*.



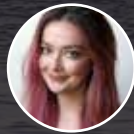
NEEDS VERSUS ASPIRATIONS: SEEKING A POSITIVE APPROACH TO HUMAN DEVELOPMENT WITH KENTARO TOYAMA

Kentaro Toyama is W. K. Kellogg Professor of Community Information at the University of Michigan School of Information, and author of *Geek Heresy: Rescuing Social Change from the Cult of Technology*.



THE MEANING OF LIFE WITH KIERAN SETIYA

Kieran Setiya is Professor of Philosophy at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.



SCI-FI PROTOTYPING AND CRITICAL OPTIMISM WITH SOPHIA BRUECKNER

Sophia Brueckner is a futurist artist/designer/engineer. Assistant Professor, Stamps School of Art & Design



FAILURE TO DISRUPT: WHY TECHNOLOGY ALONE CAN'T TRANSFORM EDUCATION WITH JUSTIN REICH

Justin Reich is Mitsui Career Development Professor, MIT Comparative Media Studies/Writing Director, MIT Teaching Systems Lab



GOVERNANCE FOR HUMAN SOCIAL FLOURISHING WITH JENNA BEDNAR

Jenna Bednar is professor of political science and public policy at the University of Michigan, a member of the external faculty at the Santa Fe Institute, and the Edie N. Goldenberg Endowed Director of Michigan in Washington.



MORAL CLARITY AND THE WORK OF SOCIAL JUSTICE WITH MANISH BHARDWAJ

Manish Bhardwaj is the James Wei Visiting Professor at the Keller Center at Princeton. He is the co-founder of Innovators In Health (IIH) which delivers healthcare to the rural poor in India.

Transformative Leadership in Indigenous Communities

The goal of the Program is the development of leadership skills, and yet it is something much deeper, powerful and authentic. Leadership looks different to everyone, especially for indigenous community members.

Indigenous community leaders are often placed in precarious situations as they not only have to deal with their own insulated community but must do so in a way that is constantly monitored and judged by outside powers. Indigenous community leaders need the ability to make hard decisions that affect the entire community, while both staying true to their personal and native values, and those of the encroaching modern world.

Young Community leaders' continued engagement with wider community will impact organizational behavior cycles and values systems that drive them. Their actions will better inform stewardship of ecological and social environments.



"I learned a lot from my fellow participants, especially since we are from different parts of the world. I enjoyed learning about their culture, oral stories, and how they are helping their community develop. I loved the way we became supportive of one another and our goals for ourselves and our communities."

- Candice Ferdinan, Deline People, Great Bear Lake, Canada

People, Power & Purpose

Transformative Citizenship Program



Transformative Citizenship is a compassion and ethics-based training intervention uniquely tailored for Law Enforcement Agencies (“LEA”) in the US that will focus on empathy, emotional resilience and regulation, and behavioral and cultural shifts.

This interactive program aims to provide the opportunity for transformative leadership within the United States Department of Justice Agencies like the DEA, FBI, Homeland Security, CPB, and police forces in all 50 states by exploring the meaning and practice of compassion and ethics-based leadership. The program consists of reflective thinking exercises that help participants observe and overcome biases, some that may be more deep seated than others, and provide active tools for de-escalation. Through interactive discussion and personal assignments, participants will reflect and become deeply aware of conditionings around personal and systemic values, racial and religious biases, to help promote more reflective and intentional actions.

“I am extremely grateful to the Chelsea Police Department and the MIT Center for Ethics and Transformative Values for the opportunity to take part in this course and include more than two dozen officers from several PAARI-affiliated police departments. This program provided a unique and meaningful opportunity to enhance officers’ leadership skills, especially as they engage in public health and social service oriented community policing programs that support individuals with substance use and mental health disorders, as well as those experiencing homelessness.”

- Allie Hunter, Executive Director of PAARI.



Manish Bhardwaj

Manish Bhardwaj is a Fellow of the Dalai Lama Center for Ethics and Transformative Values. He is the James Wei Visiting Professor at the Keller Center at Princeton where he teaches idealism, and entrepreneurship in the service of justice.

He is the co-founder of Innovators In Health (IIH) which delivers healthcare to the rural poor in India. IIH works through accompaniment, addressing the particular barriers of a particular person in a particular place.

Over the past 11 years, IIH has served more than 100,000 patients. Partnering with more than 800 female community healthcare workers, the organization has doubled access to TB treatment, and cut neonatal mortality by more than a third.



Kentaro Toyama

Kentaro Toyama is W. K. Kellogg Professor of Community Information at the University of Michigan School of Information, a fellow of the Dalai Lama Center for Ethics and Transformative Values at MIT, and author of *Geek Heresy: Rescuing Social Change from the Cult of Technology*. Co-founded Microsoft Research, India and is a researcher in the School of Information at the University of California, Berkeley. He is working on a book that argues that the intrinsic growth of people and institutions should be the primary focus of global development.

Previously, Toyama co-founded Microsoft Research India, where he started an interdisciplinary research group to understand how electronic technology could support the socio-economic development of the world's impoverished communities. The group's projects – including Digital Green, MultiPoint, and Text-Free UI – have been seminal in ICT4D research, even as Toyama has gone on to be a vocal critic of techno-utopian hype in development. Prior to his time in India, he did computer vision research at Microsoft Research in Redmond, WA, USA and Cambridge, UK, and taught mathematics at Ashesi University in Accra, Ghana.

Toyama graduated from Yale with a PhD in Computer Science and from Harvard with a bachelors degree in Physics.



"Toyama's research reminds us that there are few one-size-fits-all solutions. If technology is going to improve the lives of the world's poorest, it must be grounded in a deep understanding of human behavior and an appreciation for cultural differences."

—Bill Gates, co-founder of Microsoft and co-chair of The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation



Sophia Brueckner

Sophia Brueckner is a futurist artist/designer/engineer who researches how technology shapes us. Inseparable from computers since the age of two, she believes she is a cyborg. As a software engineer at Google, she designed and built products used by tens of millions. At the Rhode Island School of Design and the MIT Media Lab, she researched the simultaneously empowering and controlling aspects of technology with a focus on tangible and social interfaces.

Since 2011, Brueckner has taught Sci-Fi Prototyping, a course combining science fiction, extrapolative thinking, building prototypes, and technology ethics at MIT, Harvard, RISD, Brown, and the University of Michigan. Both the class itself as well as the students' individual projects received international recognition and were featured by The Atlantic, Smithsonian Magazine, Wired, NPR, Scientific American, Fast Company, and many others.

Creating new ways to apply science fiction to the design process, Brueckner prototypes alternatives to the tech industry's limited visions for how we live with technology. She makes both physical and digital artifacts combining software programming, digital fabrication, and electronics with traditional media. These projects challenge the norms of the tech community, whose work has enormous impact on our day-to-day lives, as well as translates the problems in ways that are understandable to the everyday user. She invites others to embody an attitude of "critical optimism" and to imagine what technological futures they might prefer for themselves.

Brueckner is the founder and creative director of Tomorrownaut, a creative studio focusing on speculative futures and sci-fi-inspired prototypes. Brueckner's work has been featured by Artforum, SIGGRAPH, the Peabody Essex Museum, Portugal's National Museum of Contemporary Art, Leonardo, Eyeo, ISEA, TEDx, the Bemis Center for Contemporary Art, and more. She was an artist-in-residence at Autodesk Pier 9 and is now an artist-in-residence at Bell Labs E.A.T. She is currently an assistant professor at the University of Michigan's Stamps School of Art and Design. Her ongoing objective is to combine her background in design and engineering with the perspective of an artist to inspire a more positive future.



Empathy Amulet

3x1.25", wood, bronze, heater, electronics

The Empathy Amulet is a networked wearable device that connects many anonymous people through shared warmth.



Embroidisuet

Fabric, electronics, Android

The suit empowers wearers to reconfigure the boundaries of their selves strengthening their connection to the people, places, and things that are meaningful to them.

Reto Urbano 360

Towards a more sustainable and inclusive food system in Colombia

At The Center we are supporting our **Transformative Teachers** in building on diverse strategies in order to engage youth with global issues, from values-based approaches. Professional as well as student challenges are big these days as a platform for participants to grapple with complex problems, while nurturing collaborative, interdisciplinary thinking about possible courses of action.

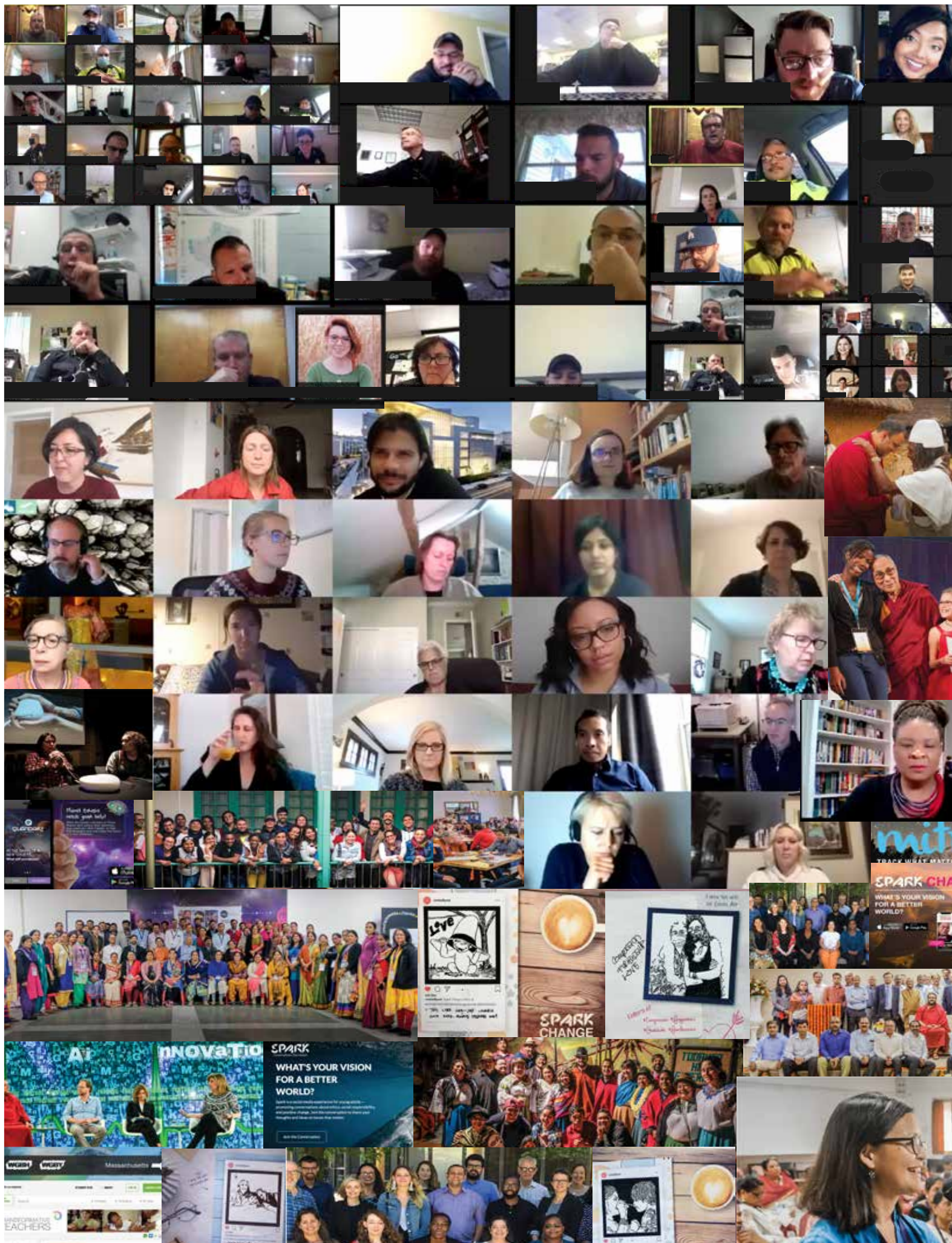
This year The Center partnered with the Universidad del Rosario's LabDTerritorios, to experiment with their Reto Urbano 360° 2021. The challenge was designed to engage students from the International, Political, and Urban Studies undergraduate programs to (re)Imagine how locally, Colombia's food systems might be transformed into more sustainable and inclusive systems.

Inspired by the Spring Re Imagine series' call to action: hope is a verb, students engaged

with faculty, international and local experts as well as farmer co-op representatives, in a three day collaborative work agenda. Several activities were combined to create an experience to develop a critical understanding of the issues and to nurture youth's sensibilities regarding the social and environmental implications of the factors at work in the dysfunctionalities of global food systems.

Student teams faced tasks to help them broadly envision the problems in their own urban and rural local environments, as well as the intricate interdependencies involved, and the multiple levels of possible engagement with transformative impact: global, local and personal. The panel of judges found particularly valuable the new awareness reflected in student's work. Most importantly participants found the experience led to meaningful dialogues, new friends and a sense of their personal agency in offering solutions for ongoing challenges.





HOW WE WORK

DESIGN

We design and deliver tools and pedagogies, fostering the growth of character values to support global citizenship and leadership.

TRAIN

We train in transformative methods to model and foster ethical leadership and character values.

INDIVIDUALS
ORGANIZATIONS
SOCIETIES

COLLABORATE

We partner with local and global organizations to ensure that our program models are grounded in realities, helping to change social, organizational, and corporate cultures.

RESEARCH

Through research, we contribute to the establishment of the baseline for reliable, automated assessments of human development and well-being.

OUR FOCUS

VALUES-BASED
LEADERSHIP

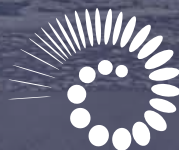
EMPATHY &
EDUCATION

TOOLS
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WITH GRATITUDE FROM THE CENTER AT MIT

THINK · TRANSFORM · IMPACT

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THE DALAI LAMA
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