

GET INVOLVED!

Interested in getting involved with the Sonnenschein Green Initiative?

All that we ask of you, is that you sincerely care about supporting local economic and community development and that you have an open mind to diverse opinions around 'green' strategies and the integrity to follow through with volunteered tasks. We also encourage you to be proactive. We prefer to focus on opportunities and solutions rather than problems.

What is local economic and community development? This means that we strive to support the following areas: local business owners, farmers, artisans and service providers; the creation of quality and long-term local employment opportunities; community networking opportunities and social events; creating an economy that has a total and sustainable economic return; and increasing our goods and services exported rather than imported. We also focus on 'green' development, as we see that creating a 'green' economy and 'greening up' our production and consumption will be the quickest and most effective way to achieve sustainable economic and community development. To us the word 'green' equals efficiency and less waste.

Here's how the Sonnenschein meetings function: The working group leaders report about their group's progress at bi-monthly meetings. Whenever a group is active on a project they get included on the agenda. These working groups all meet separately, some meet monthly, bimonthly, weekly or as needed. After project updates, the group usually breaks out into planning and development sessions. The group decides which topics they want to discuss. Sometimes these discussions are very significant in creating new projects and other times they are useful conversations about a particular topic.

The group makes decisions by a combination of consensus and majority voting. Most decisions are made at the level of working group. All of our meetings are open to the public. We respect the voice and opinions of all who attend our meetings. Any ideas expressed by a new attendee are placed on a *contemplanda*. We do this so that new attendees have a few weeks or months to find out about existing projects before we create new ones. Once a new attendee has been to 5 meetings or primary events they are considered part of the group or working group. As part of the group they can help make decisions, start new projects, request support and funding from the group. Any new idea that supports local economic and community development and brings life to the group - could become a potential project or think tank. We like having multiple working groups and projects because they provide numerous portals of entry for new community members to become active.

We know that many people in our group have different opinions on core issues like politics, religion, climate change and the economy. To us, diversity of opinion is very welcome and encouraged in our group. We also appreciate

diverse demographics of age, gender, level of education and income – plus a wide difference in our shades of green. Our aim is to collaborate with as many types of people as possible. We also seek to bring as many conversations to the table as needed to move forward with our own unique transition efforts. This said, we often look at tools and models used by successful communities from around the world. Our goal is not to mimic other communities, but to learn about working solutions and adapt our findings to our own unique circumstances. This process of design from pattern to detail moves us forward, with occasional trials and errors. With every problem that we encounter we strive to find a useful solution. To stay proactive and effective, we regularly check in with the group to discuss our core vision, objectives and to evaluate our process.

We encourage you to attend one of our meetings or events. We also welcome your feedback and ideas in the form of typed informal proposals. If you have a project you're interested in initiating or some positive or constructive ideas for how we should move forward – then please send us a 100-700 word proposal to info@holisticecology.org or give us a printed copy at one of our meetings. We hope that there is some way that our efforts can serve your family or business.