

WHAT (or who) IS THE PHD FOR?

(Dis)Connections between research and society

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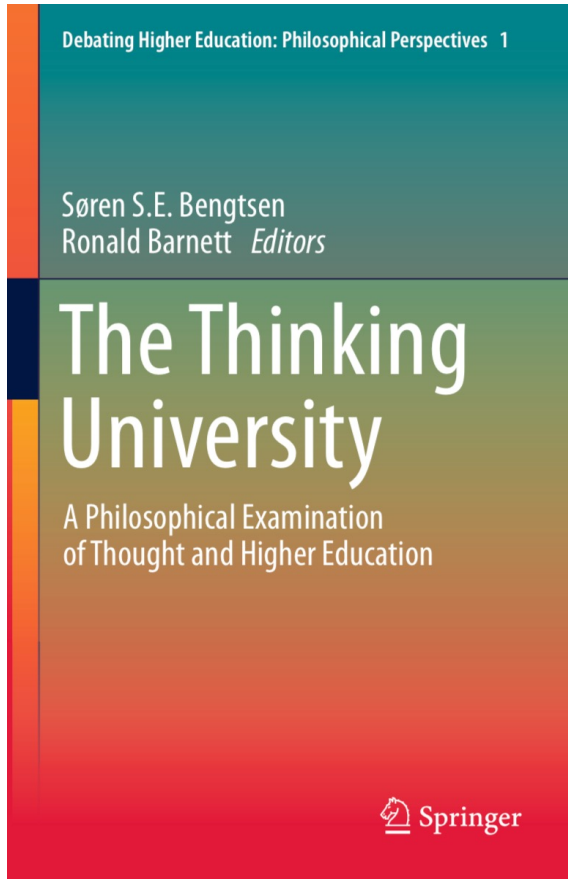


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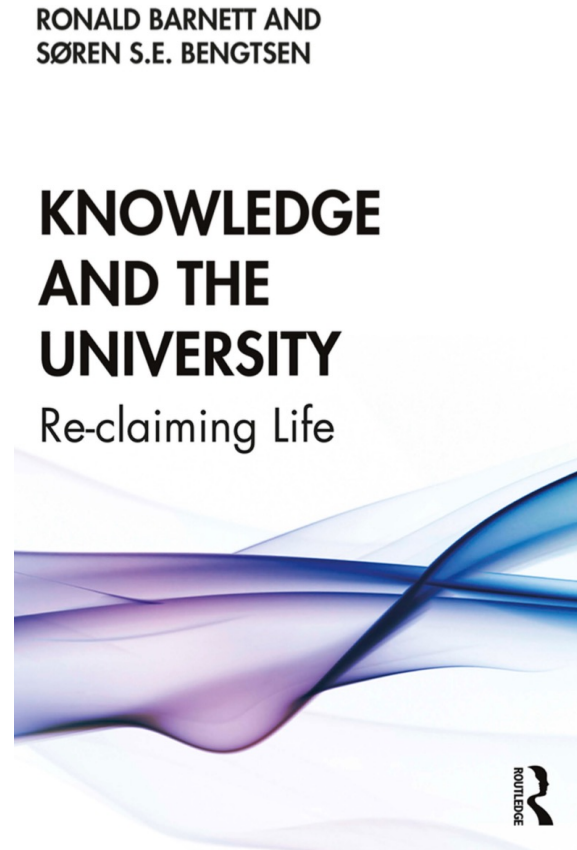
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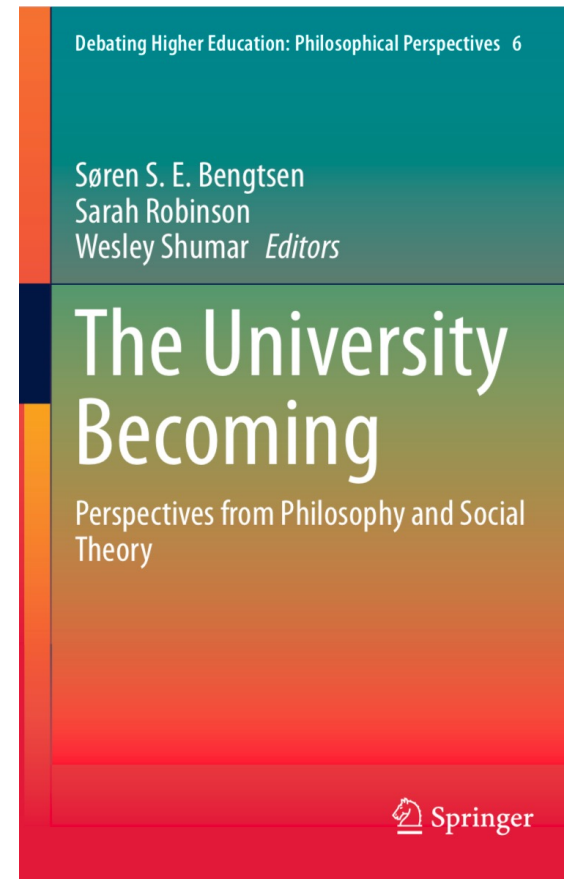




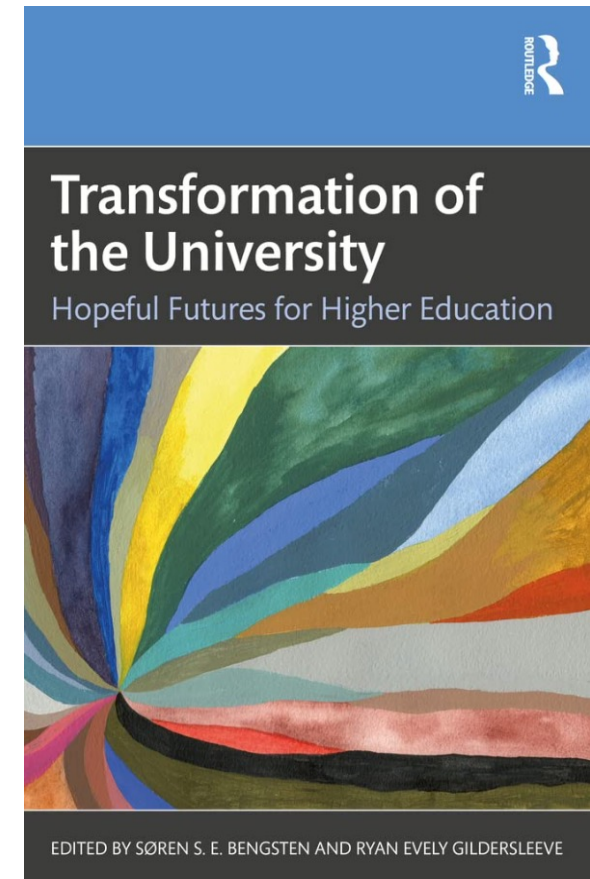
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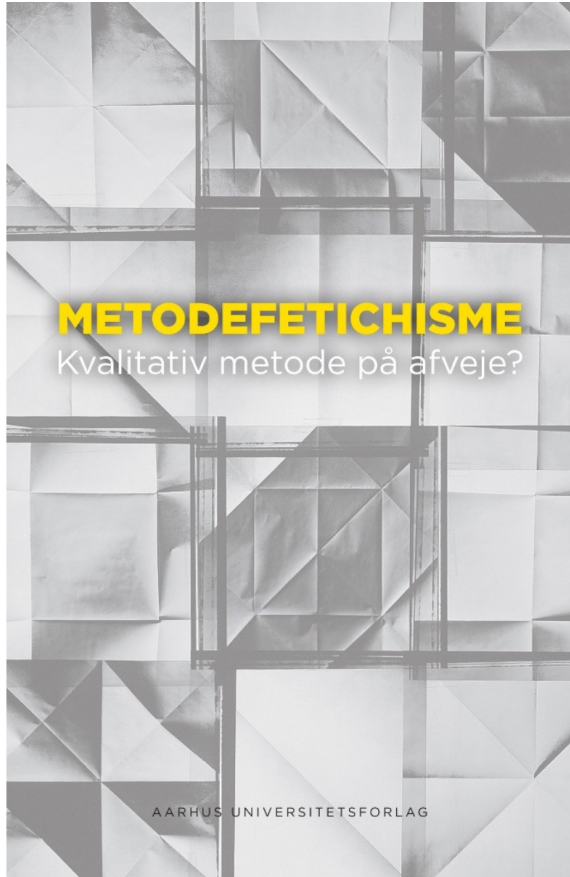
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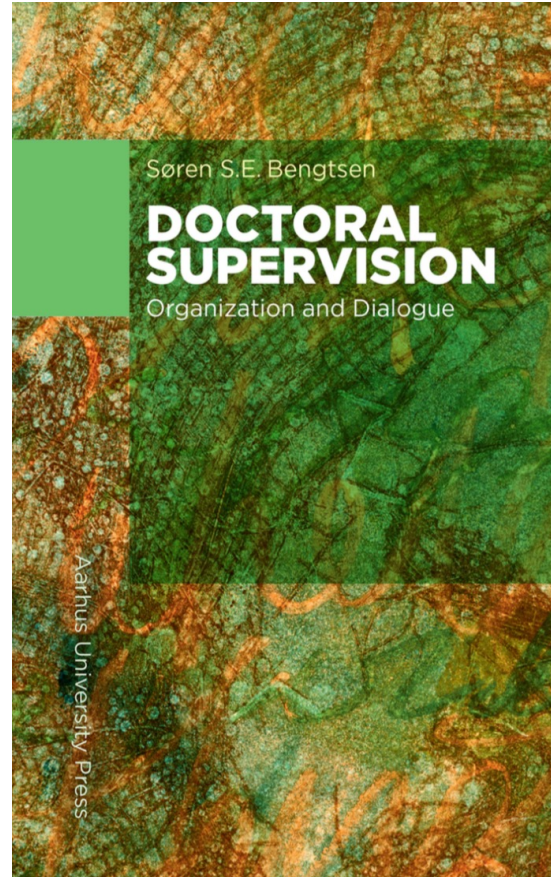
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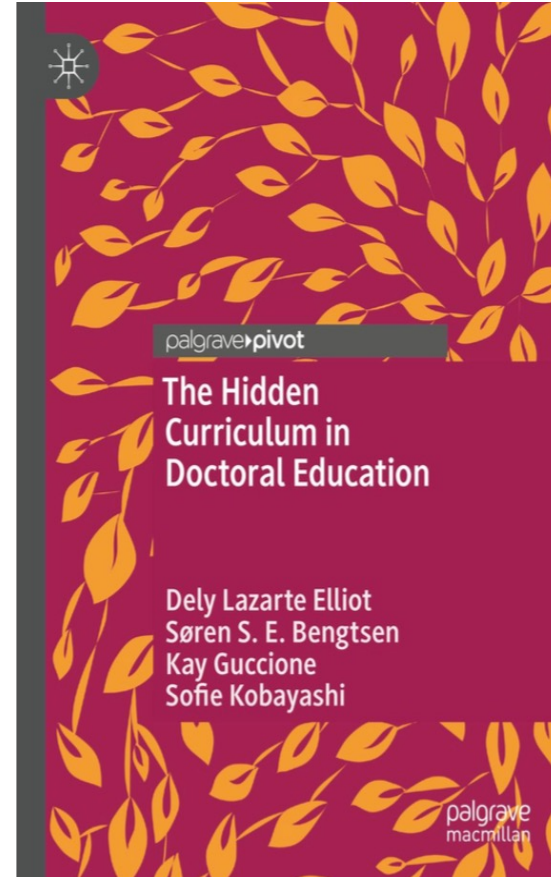
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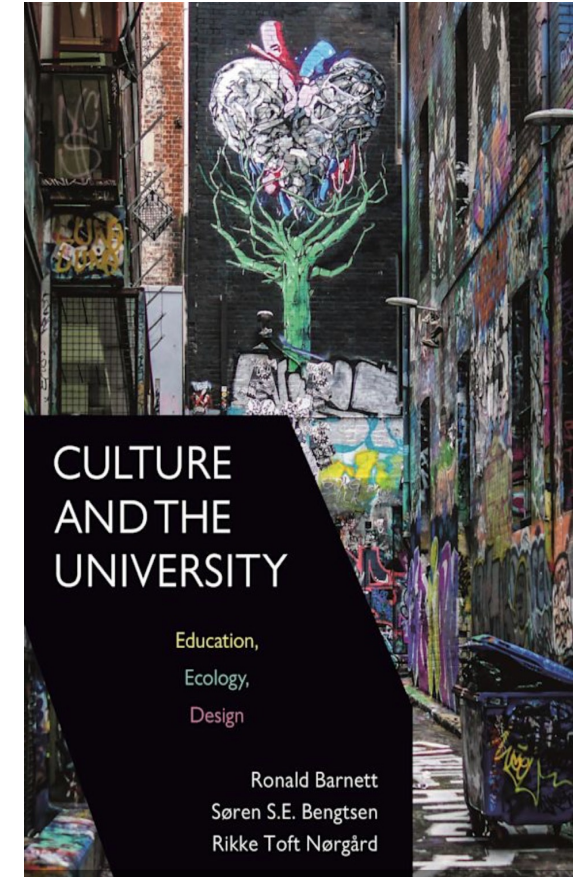
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Research for impact



About the project

Research and research based knowledge is becoming increasingly central to societal and cultural growth, economic competitiveness, health, and happiness. As a consequence, the education of future researchers, has taken on heightened political, institutional, and educational interest with a focus on how research can be used to

Researchers in the project



Partners and funding

The project period is from January 2021 to December 2024

INDEPENDENT RESEARCH
FUND DENMARK

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**CENTRE FOR
HIGHER
EDUCATION
FUTURES**

Grant type: Sapere Aude: DFF Research Leader
Project budget: 6.182.411 DKK (approx. € 831.000)

Project period: Jan 2021- Dec 2024 (4 years)

Project website (AU):

<https://projects.au.dk/research-for-impact/>

Project website (DFF):

https://dff.dk/en/grants/copy_of_research-leaders-2020/copy_of_researchleader-5?set_language=en

**Danish School of Education, Aarhus University
Centre for Higher Education Futures (CHEF)**

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Susan Wright, Professor (Co-Investigator)

Postdoc WP-1 (2021-2023) – Dr Andrew Gibson

Postdoc WP-2 (2021-2023) – Dr Signe Skov

PhD-student WP-3 (2021-2024) – Hatice Nuriler

International team (Co-Investigators)

Lynn McAlpine, Professor, University of Oxford, UK

Gina Wisker, Professor, University of Bath, UK

Barbara Grant, Associate Professor, University of Auckland, NZ

Ronald Barnett, Emeritus Professor, IOE, UCL, UK

STRUCTURE

1. Tensions in doctoral education and the PhD
2. New trends – new horizons for value and impact
3. Discussion: Confused ownership, blurred agency, and dark impact



TENSIONS

- in doctoral education and the PhD



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Torn curriculum (Sonesson & Bengtson; Bengtson, 2019; Grant, 2011)

	Bildung	Schoolification	Projectification
External rationale	Doctorate as intra-academic qualification	Doctoral education as tool for the knowledge economy	Doctoral research as tool for the knowledge economy
Internal meaning	Continuity and development of discipline	Educational provision	Capacity for competitive research production
Power and leadership	The Professoriate	Academic and administrative managers	Principal investigators
Dominant frame (or rules)	Disciplinary norms and traditions	Educational regulations and Quality assurance	High quality publications and successful funding bids
Social context and space	Department	Research school	Research group
Candidate's role	Apprentice, junior departmental colleague	Student	Project member/worker
Supervisor's role	Master, mentor, benefactor	Advisor-teacher	Project leader
Curriculum	Disciplinary Defined by local discipline and practice Student's research = Student's learning	Generic Defined by formal curriculum Student's research one of several learning activities	Project dependent Defined by principal investigator and funding body Student's learning related to given project tasks
Temporality	Process time (Ylijoki)	Credit time (3 or 4 years)	Project time (Ylijoki)

Societal impact

(Belfiore, 2014; Benneworth, 2015; Hazelkorn, 2015; McCowan, 2018; Sivertsen & Meijer, 2020)

Impact levels	Macro (societal) Knowledge economy Democracy Happiness	Meso (institutional) Employability Educational policy Doctoral curriculum	Micro (pedagogical) PhD project Learning trajectory Doctoral supervision		
Impact issues	Conceptual What do we mean by impact?	Pragmatic How to measure impact?	Political What counts as impact?	Ethical Are the impact definitions academically desirable?	
Impact types	Economical	Political	Social	Cultural	Technological
Impact variation	Duration Short or long term	Trajectory Direct or indirect	Destination Individual, collective	Intensity Strength and depth	
Impact perils	Normativity Inscribed agendas Favourism Hierarchies	Linear relationship Linear causality Multiple directions Butterfly effects	Unpredictability Immediate effect Delayed effect (lag) Mode 1 or mode 2	Measurement Quantitative Qualitative (In)commensurable?	Instrumentalization Instrumental value Intrinsic value Academic freedom?

NEW TRENDS - and new horizons for societal value and impact



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NEW TRENDS

1. An **ecological curriculum** for the PhD
2. A **sustainability curriculum** for the PhD
3. A **justice curriculum** for the PhD



ECOLOGICAL CURRICULUM

- The ecological university (Barnett 2018) and doctoral ecologies (Bengtzen, 2019) show doctoral education and the PhD to be **interconnected** and **societally entangled**
- Creativity in knowledge creation expands and **transgresses** institutional and societal **boundaries** (Frick, 2021) and facilitate **interdisciplinary** and **intercultural** encounters (Manathunga, 2016)
- Doctoral learning (and supervision) journeys take place through **interlinked** cognitive, instrumental, professional, personal, and ontological **dimensions** (Wisker et al, 2010; 2021)
- Formal, informal, and non-formal learning spaces are interwoven through **learning ecologies** and form a **hidden curriculum** in doctora education (Elliot et al, 2016; 2020)



EXAMPLE: KNOWLEDGE ECOLOGY

(H2020 project 'Opening Doors' 2021-2022)

<https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101006514>



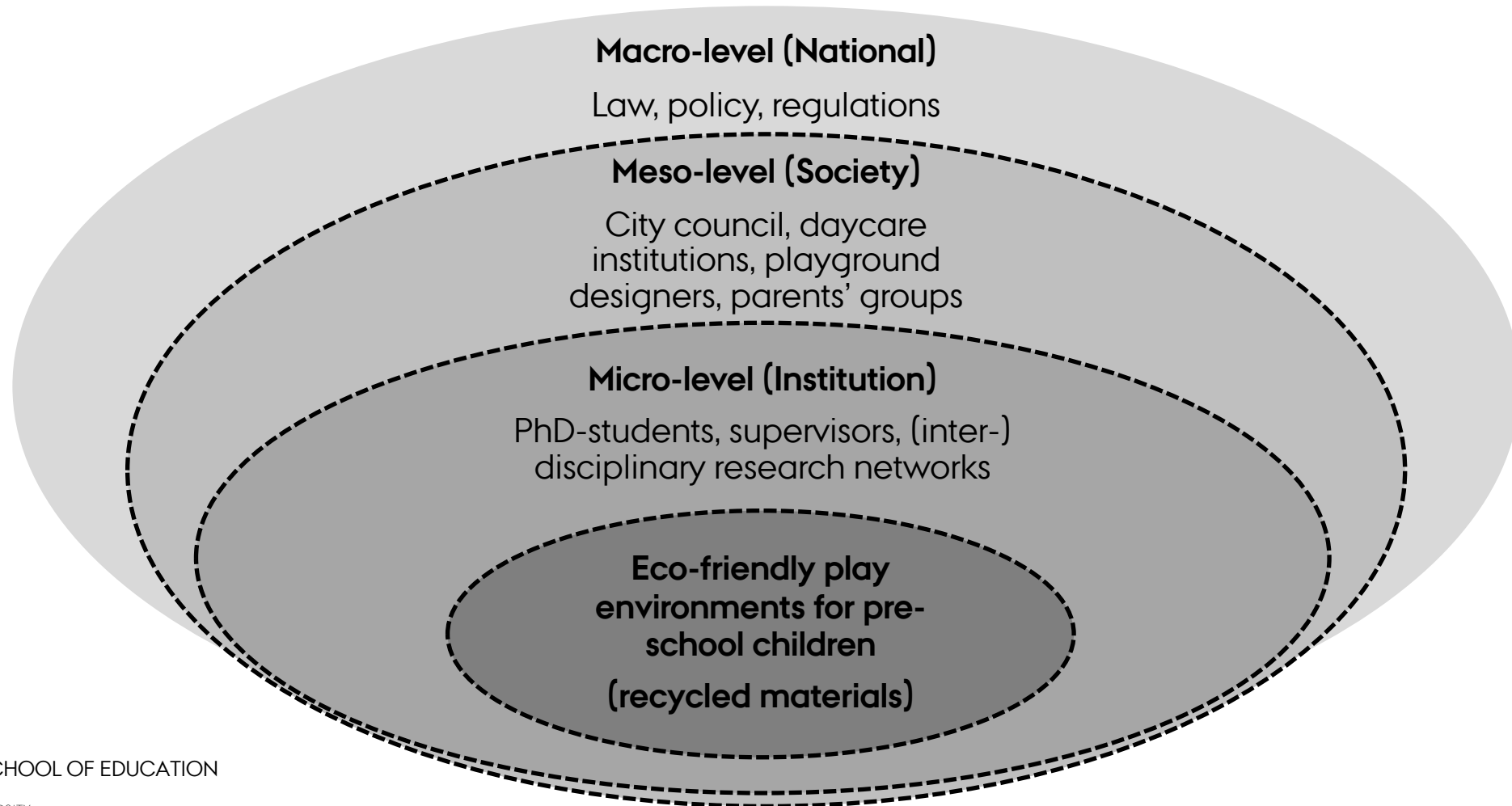
SUSTAINABILITY CURRICULUM

- Doctoral education and the PhD should engage with and respond to discussions around the **anthropocene, transhumanism and posthumanism** (Barnacle & Cuthbert, 2021; Braidotti, 2019)
- Problem-oriented focus on **global grand challenges** such as **climate crisis and pandemic** with collaboration across multiple stakeholder-levels (Cuthbert & Barnacle, 2021; McAlpine, 2021)
- The call for a **care-full PhD** (Barnacle, 2018), developing students' **capacity to care** (Dall'Alba, 2011) through **outreach** and **public PhD programmes** (Cuthbert & Barnacle, 2021)
- Researcher **agency** and societal **impact** happen through a series of personal, academic, institutional, societal, and cultural **nested contexts** (McAlpine & Amundsen, 2016; 2018)



EXAMPLE: PUBLIC OUTREACH

(McAlpine, 2021; Cuthbert & Barnacle, 2021)



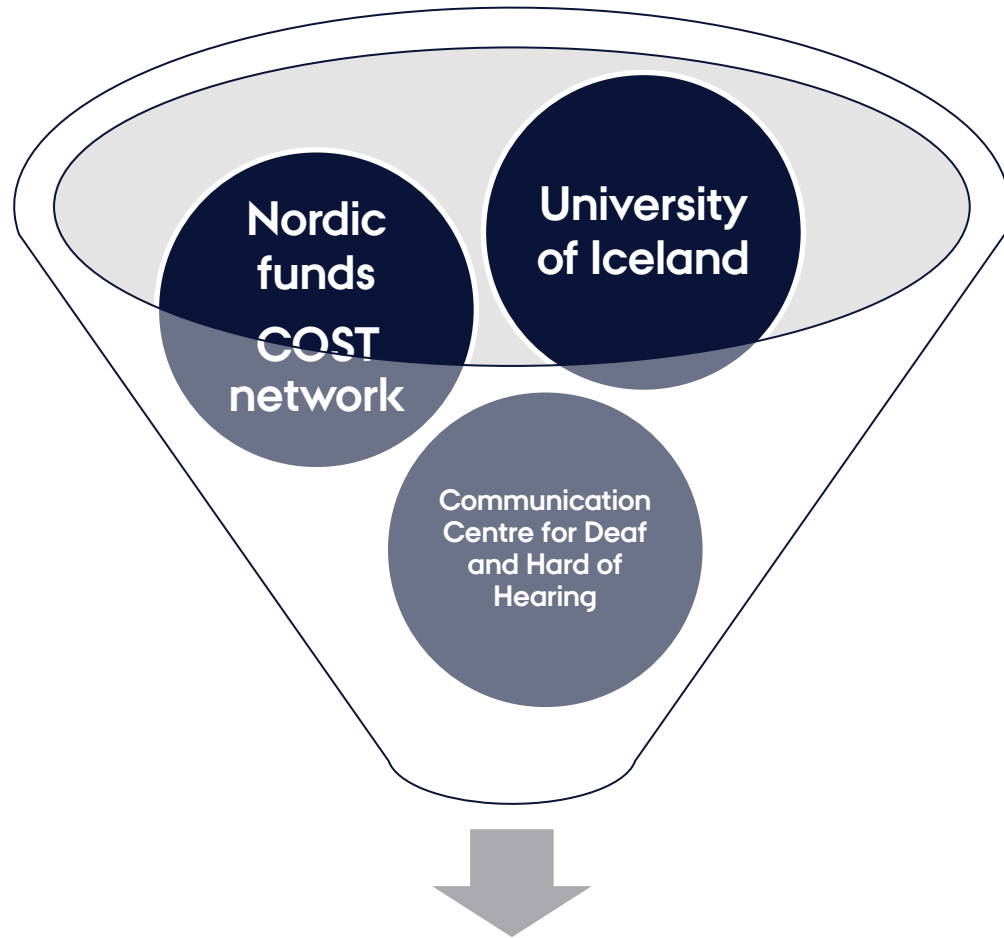
JUSTICE CURRICULUM

- Integrating ideas from **social (in)justice** (McArthur, 2013; 2018) and **epistemic (in)justice** (de Sousa Santos, 2016; Fricker, 2007) and research as **truth-telling** (Gibbs, 2019)
- **Decolonised curriculum** (Kelly, 2016; Manathunga, 2014) and interrelations between research, politics, and ethics – i.e. **academic activism** (Davids & Waghid, 2021; Nørgård & Bengtson, 2021)
- Doctoral education as facilitating new forms of societal and public engagement through **academic citizenship** (Macfarlane, 2007) and the **citizen scholar** (Arvanitakis & Hornsby, 2016)
- Challenging and changing social and cultural **centre-periphery issues** through research collaboration with **unions, NGOs, and publics** (Sigurðarson, 2020; Sivertsen & Meijer, 2020)



EXAMPLE: SOCIAL AND EPISTEMIC CAPACITIES

(Sigurðarson, 2020; Sivertsen & Meijer, 2020)



Social justice through research

Research on Icelandic sign language

- Sign language experts and general linguists
- Including the signing community from the start
- Policy: Decision to pass new law making Icelandic Sign Language formally equal to spoken Icelandic
- Different and more robust debate about sign language with less risk of abuse
- More self-confident deaf students proud of their own language
- Sign language more obvious in the public space and more accepted



DISCUSSION

Confused ownership,
dark impact,
and blurred agency?



Confused ownership

PhD students, supervisors, universities, policy makers, external partners, the industry, the job market, civil society, various publics, the Earth?

Blurred agency

Who acts and attains agency through the PhD?
The students themselves, or just as much their supervisors, institutions, and partners?

Who owns the PhD?

Dark impact

Unnoticed and unacknowledged impact/value
Useless and non-instrumental impact/value
Muffled voices and silenced research

Where to go next?

What are the implications for institutional leadership, doctoral supervision, and doctoral students' learning trajectories?
What are the implications for the dissertation genre and doctoral writing/acting?

**THANK YOU
FOR YOUR ATTENTION!**



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