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Welcome to Classroom Alive!

We are very excited that you are considering joining us as a participant for this learning journey!

Classroom Alive is an effort to design an educational framework to support participants in their learning through an open relationship with the world, built on the foundation of walking. It is with great joy that we welcome you as a fellow journeyer, wayfarer and student, and look forward to this collaboration.

There is no pre-existing blueprint and throughout the experience we will be discovering how to best move forward. There is no formula that will make this work and there will definitely be a lot of chaos, improvisation and confusion. In order to bring this rather simple dream into reality, there are a few details we feel the need to address.

Please read this letter and the website** carefully. For our journey to be all that it can be, it is very important to build it on a strong foundation.

***This letter is designed to act in partnership with information on the website, not as a stand alone description of all aspects of Classroom Alive: Ireland - please read the website too!*

This letter covers:

- Participants' individual responsibility
- Participants' individual research & learning
- The constitution of Classroom Alive: Ireland
- Decision Making
- Core Team
- Daily and weekly schedule
- Food
- Accommodation
- Gear
- Safety
- Finances
- Meeting Up
- Letter of Intent
- Next Steps

Participants' Individual Responsibility

Classroom Alive: Ireland is created by the participants who are participating. Everything from cooking to finding accommodation, budgeting to fundraising, and from creating research questions to caring for one another and ourselves, will be done by the participants on the walk. This level of interdependency will require each of us to take responsibility for our relationship to the whole. The structure of Classroom Alive: Ireland will not be a raft to float upon, but a ship for us to collectively maintain and guide. A large part of this will be caring for the social health of the community, an exciting opportunity that we will undertake together. Essential to the trip will be each individual taking responsibility for their own learning, safety, resources and finance which will be formed completely out of their will to learn. This is not easy and before joining Classroom Alive: Ireland it is important to reflect about whether this level of self-directed engagement is what you are looking for.

Participants' Individual Research

Classroom Alive: Ireland is just a simple walk, and it is also much more than that. The simplicity of the framework, walking through Ireland and meeting people and places along the way, is intended to provide a platform for participants to pursue their individual questions and research. This can be anything that lives in your heart, such as film, economics, or silence in nature, and much more; what is crucial is that you are passionate about your pursuit and excited to learn more.

Participants who wish to come for longer than a week are asked to choose an area of focus and guiding question(s) in order to provide a framework to their learning while on the journey. Once you have chosen a topic, you are encouraged to create a study plan of how you will pursue your chosen focus, including what resources you'll use, how you will communicate your learning, and if there are any mentors who will support you in relation to the topic. As part of your learning plan, you are encouraged to imagine how you might like to share and collaborate with the other participants on the walk. There can be many different forms for this, such as the focus weeks, in which individual participants will take up the role of teaching or hosting the group in a process around their specific area of focus.

There are many different ways to go about creating your learning plan. Here are some example guides:

- Alan Webb's Open Masters (<http://www.alanwebb.org/masters/purpose/>)
- Weezie Yancey-Siegel Eduventurist (<http://eduventurist.org/the-eduventurist-project/>)

One method for developing this type of individual curriculum can be found on the UnCollege site (<http://www.uncollege.org/9-tips-for-effective-self-directed-learning/>)

Zand, part of the core team, can also help take you through a process called Designing for Wiser action using a graphic template.

But designing individual research can also be very simple. To conduct individual research effectively, we recommend the following steps:

1. Define your research question/focus – there is always so much, so it is important to choose a place to start
2. Design how you will learn about it – books/E-readers, conversations with others, field research, or whatever else it maybe be, identify the learning tools you want to use
3. Find support – find mentors and peers who can support you in the work, help you refine and deepen your questions, find resources, and witness your learning process
4. Communicate your learning – through writing, photographs, films, interactive art projects, lectures, giving courses, or whatever else you can dream up, find a way to share what you have been learning about with others.

Classroom Alive: Ireland Constitution

In joining Classroom Alive: Ireland, you are asked to agree to four principles. These principles are more than statements about what you will be asked to honour. We offer them as questions to you to help you determine if Classroom Alive: Ireland is your next step.

The four principles relate to the physical world that is outside of us, the people that surround us, ourselves and our inner lives, and the unknown. As much as we are able, we want to respect each of these directions, and we ask you to strive for the same.

1. **Respect for the Earth:** To respect all that exists outside of us in our environment and to strive to meet with openness and clarity all the places we encounter.
2. **Love for the Other:** To strive to meet every human being with love and respect.
3. **Awake Self:** To strive each day to be awake to, care for, and act from ones inner Self.
4. **Wonder for the Unknown:** To be striving to act for the highest potential of the world. To have reverence for the vast unknown and wonder for the mysteries of the world.

Can you say YES to these principles?

Decision Making

Inherent in any group is need to balance the individual and the collective. This means recognizing and owning that we each have power to make our own choices and that this can often be a tension point in a group. To truly set the conditions to co-create the Classroom Alive: Ireland journey we feel it wise to outline the flow for the group decision making process so it is clear to all who participate.

Major Decisions - Whole Group

All major decisions impacting the core purpose or integrity of the trip are made by consensus in general meetings using alignment with the core purpose and values of Classroom Alive: Ireland as the guiding compass to make decisions against. Everyone's voice counts and every voice is equal in the deliberation process.

Example decision: A significant change to the overall route

Area Decisions - Team Circles

To make daily organizational decision making more effective team circles will exist to handle certain parts of the organizational aspects of the walk. These team circles are:

- Food
- Route
- Budget
- Check In/Out
- Harvesting & Communication

Team members are elected by the collective and are delegated responsibility to act on behalf of the group to carry out the purpose and function of that group. Their responsibility is to take everyone's needs into consideration and work out the best solution for the group within their respective duty in line with their team's purpose.

Core Team

During the walk there is likely to be a changing group of people and perspectives as to what Classroom Alive: Ireland exactly is. The core team will include anyone who walks for more than 5 weeks and who's commitment lies to walk all the way to the end of the journey, finishing in Ballycastle on the 13th of July.

This core team will steward the journey as a whole once we hit the road. The role of these stewards is to listen to the needs of everybody on the walk as well as the body of Classroom Alive: Ireland itself, and out of this ensure that the decisions that are arrived at over the course of the journey best support the health of the whole. In this way, all decisions will be made by the entire group. However, if the group is struggling to arrive at an agreement, then it will be up to the stewards to make the final decision based on what has arisen out of the group and grounded in Classroom Alive: Ireland's original intentions.

Daily and Weekly schedule - A rough guide!

Daily

The daily structure will function on a block system. During the average day there will be 7 blocks, 2 of which (0 & 6) will be optional:

Block 0: Morning Practice

Block 1: Breakfast, Check In & Breaking Camp

Block 2: Walking

Block 3: Lunch & Intentional reflection, study or researching.

Block 4: Walking

Block 5: Making camp, Dinner & Check Out

Block 6: Evening activities

The sequence and nature of these blocks will vary depending on where we are and the needs of the group.

This means that the order of blocks and amount of walking and reflection blocks might be different every day. These changes will be made in conversation with the group of participants.

Rough Weekly Structure

The week will consist of six days functioning on the block system and one day of rest. This rest day will mostly be on Saturdays or Sundays.

Weekly	Schedule						
Day	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
Type	Block	Block	Block	Block	Block	Block/ Hitch	Rest
Distance Goal (miles)	10	12	12	15	10	15+	0

On Wednesdays, the afternoons will be put aside for peer-mentoring and participants to share their research.

Food

Along the journey, one of the steady rhythms holding the trip together will be the shared meals. We will be eating simple meals, three times a day. The diet will be flexible, but will likely be largely comprised of grains and vegetables. We will be cooking primarily on a camping stove, so most meals will not be elaborate. If you have a special diet, you are welcome to prepare your food separately, however you will have to take care of this yourself. We will be sourcing our food from grocery stores and farms along the way. We will try to eat in a way that respects the principals of our constitution, but acknowledge that this may not always be possible, as we will choose our food from what is available.

Gear and Fitness

As this is a long distance walk, it is important that you have the right gear with you. This makes a big difference! Although the daily distances planned do not push the limits of long distance walking, this trip still falls into the category of extreme sports. Therefore, if you have never done something like this before, you are encouraged to do some practice walks to make sure you will be comfortable during the trip.

If you are joining, we will send a more extensive gear list to help you know what to pack, At a minimum, you will need to have:

- Good hiking boots/shoes & socks - your feet are vital!
- Good waterproofs - jacket and trousers
- A good backpack
- Layers of breathable clothing
- A good tent and whatever YOU need to sleep comfortably outside

It is also important to PACK LIGHT. You will be carrying whatever you bring, plus a portion of the group's food and cooking gear.

Accommodation

For accommodation along the way, we will be doing a mixture of sleeping in tents/under tarps, staying with contacts, and knocking on doors. We will also respect both the regional land, people and weather and so their maybe day's for one reason or another we decide to pay for accommodation, a camping permit or even give a collective gift to give to someone who hosts us - therefore we are building in a cost for this into our budget.

Everybody will need to bring their own tent/tarp/sleeping bag/sleeping mat; whatever you need in order to get a good night sleep. It is also possible to arrange with other participants to share a tent, so if you know in advance when you are coming, we can help you connect with others with whom

you might be able to share. Because the core team will be walking as of May 5th, we will be unable to guarantee extensive communication to support this connecting, but will do what we can.

Safety

As was stated above, though the distances are not ambitious by long distance walking standards, this is still in the category of extreme sports. Safety considerations are, therefore, important. Please make sure that you have valid health insurance before joining the walk. If you don't have insurance yet, one option is <http://www.worldescapade.com/default.aspx?lang=1>. In addition to this, we strongly encourage everybody to become well acquainted with basic first aid, as well as foot care, blister care, and any other health related content you feel to be important.

Weather & Terrain

Please expect rain, wind and places where we are exposed - so please have gear and a mindset that is prepared for this. See the website for more info.

PLEASE PREPARE YOURSELF, YOUR OWN HEALTH & WELLBEING IS YOUR OWN RESPONSIBILITY.

Finances

So now we come to it.

Hopefully you have read the document word for word up until this point. If not, go back through and do so now.

Done?
Good.

Now we can go into finances.

We ask every participant to find a way to cover their own costs - you can save, fundraise, crowd fund, borrow, but it is up to each participant to commit through their own initiative to make the journey possible economically for themselves. We are happy to be in conversation about how one might do this.

Full 10 Week Cost

We have estimated the costs for the full 10 weeks to be between **€750-850**.

This is made up of 2 core components:

- **Daily Living Costs Total** = €550-650
- **Emergency Backup Fund*** = €200

* We ask all participants, no matter the time frame, to have a minimum of €200 emergency back up funds available for themselves in addition to their travel insurance. This is to cover any unforeseen costs that may arise and will not be used unless its needed.

Estimated Daily Living Costs Breakdown per person

	Daily	Weekly	Full 10 weeks
Food (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner & Snacks)	• €5	• €35	• €350
Accommodation & Hosting Gifts.	<i>variable (€1.40 - 2.80)</i>	• €10-20	• €100-200
Gear & Materials	<i>variable (€0.30)</i>	• €2	• €20
Other (the odd beer, coffee etc.)	<i>variable (€1.10)</i>	• €8	• €80
TOTAL	Approx: €7.80 - €9.20	• €55 to 65	• €550 to 650

Okay. There you have it. In simple terms, life will continue, so you can expect to continue to pay your weekly food costs. There might be a couple of camping permits or hostels. Perhaps some gear.

The collective pot culture

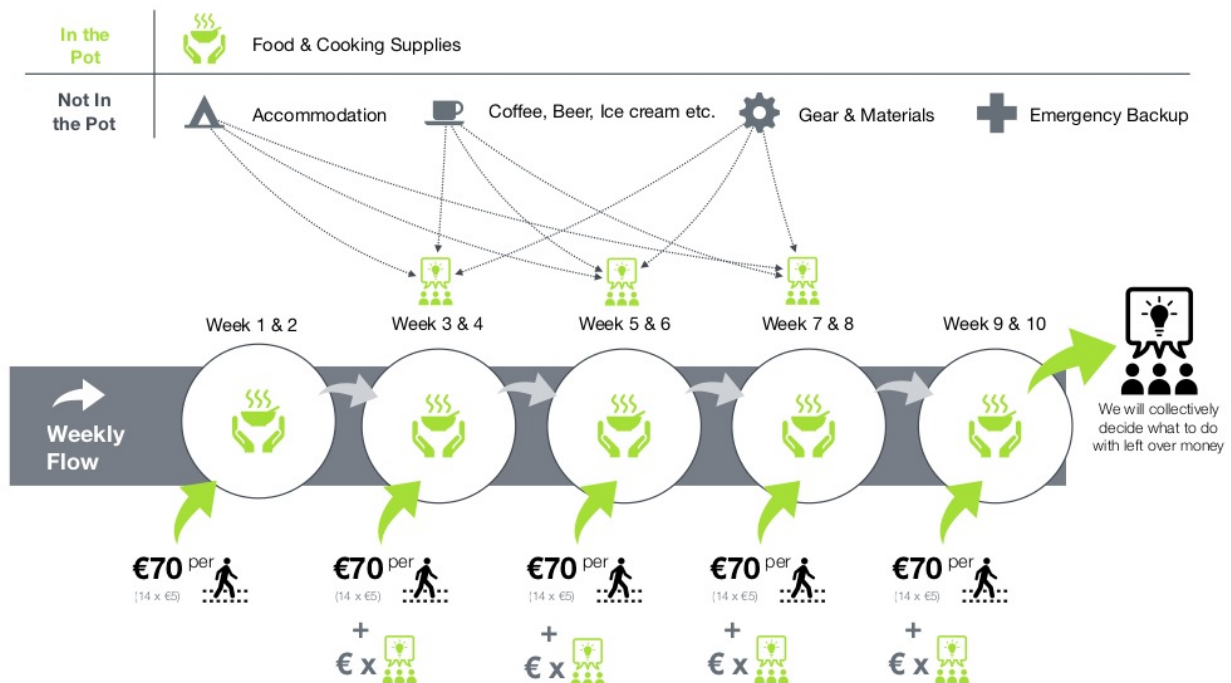
One of our goals during Classroom Alive: Ireland is to work with a sense of abundance and spirit of gift - in both giving and receiving - when dealing with economy.

In this light we invite every participant to offer a contribution to a collective pot every 2 weeks that will be overseen by the budget team circle.

As shown in the diagram below, the initial goal of this collective pot will be to provide us all with enough food and cooking supplies at every meal to share 3 meals a day and feel content and healthy. We wish to view this as a collective gift we will give ourselves together to support nourishing our community on the road that will circle back in many varied ways - rather than a rationing exercise where we count out or fuss over every portion we each have. This collective pot will be supplemented by the invitation to friends not with us to support us by offering gift donations to help cover food costs. We have already received some such gifts. :) As the journey unfurls we will discuss finances regularly and will have the opportunity to collectively decide whether other cost should be added to the collective pot. At the end of the trip we will decide together on how to equitably divide remaining money from the pot back to everyone who contributes to it.



The Common Pot Prototype



Along the way we will budget expenses together, buy and cook our food together and trust each other to operate economically in a way that serves the purpose of the whole and well being of all. This can be a huge challenge for some people but the spirit of Trust, Equity and Gift are core principles in Classroom Alive: Ireland and is the edge of learning we want to push as a collective and in society at large.

Fundraising

You are welcome to fundraise in whatever way needed to support the journey.

We do also encourage you to invite people to support us through the pointing people to the website so it goes into our collective food pot and to supporting Corrymeela. If we all invite our communities to support us collectively in this way we will benefit and so will the landscape that will host us.

To hear more about Corrymeela and why we are supporting them, chat to Zand.

Meeting Up

Almost there! The last of the practicalities is where to meet. The schedule on the Classroom Alive: Ireland website gives a picture of where we will be when. The best option for connecting is rest days, which we will have once a week. On these days, we will stay put for the day, making us easier targets to find. Or, if you are up for an adventure, come find us on the trail. We will be carrying a cell phone with us, and will do our best to be in communication with you by phone. However, there is no guarantee about this, so if you want to be sure to find the group, it is

recommended to be in communication beforehand and to find an appropriate city or town to meet up in. If you have a clear idea of when you would want to join, let us know as soon as you can.

Letter of Intent

Okay. So that's the plan! If you are in, we have some questions for you now. We want to get to know a little bit about you! In your letter of intent, we would like you to answer whichever of the following questions feel relevant for you regarding your interest in Classroom Alive: Ireland. Please make sure to include something about your individual learning, as well as when you would like to join.

You can send us this letter through the website by following the Join Us links.

Please feel free to tell us:

- Who are you and where do you come from
- How did you hear about Classroom Alive: Ireland
- What are you interested in pursuing for your individual research
- What questions do you still have about your individual research
- What are you hoping to get out of Classroom Alive: Ireland
- What excites you the most about Classroom Alive: Ireland
- What are your biggest fears around joining Classroom Alive: Ireland
- What part of the journey are you interested in joining, when, and why
- What touches your heart about this form of education
- How do you plan to pay for the trip
- How do you feel about the constitution and the responsibilities of the participants
- What piece of gear are you most excited about bringing on the trip
- Are you open to having a short description of your individual research posted on the Classroom Alive: Ireland website
- ...anything else you would like to share with us
- ...any questions you have for us

Next Steps

If you are now on the edge of your seat wondering about the next steps, here they are!

- Send us the letter of intent
- We will schedule a Skype call - then lets begin the real conversation in person and explore whats possible together!

Thank you for your interest and we hope you will let us know what you think. Please write to us if you have questions!

Zand & Manik

The Classroom Alive: Ireland designing team