

The Hybrid TCI community of Planetary Citizens

From first ideas to elaborated vision

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*Thanks to and based upon the input and feedback of many people in the TCI
network and landscape!*

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Positioning and vision of the Hybrid TCI community of Planetary citizens

In the landscape of TCI activities, assemblies, and initiatives, we are a cross-regional and internationally oriented community, inspired by and working with TCI as Planetary citizens. Our working language is English, our meetings are both online and live.

What we envision for this Hybrid TCI Community is a vibrant, inclusive community that people enjoy being a part of. A network where we practice living learning and share TCI with everyone who also sees TCI as a sustainable and relevant approach to current and urgent questions in our lives and societies. A contemporary way to connect, share and inspire. Across national borders, with English as the official language. With TCI as the foundation and a warm welcome for everyone and every method that fits this basis. Inspired by Ruth Cohn's call to act responsibly being a part of the whole, society and world, we focus on being Planetary Citizens and what this means to us in daily life and work.

How it started - what we agreed with the liquidators of RCI Lage Landen

In October 2021 we started to explore the option of a hybrid TCI community after the regional RCI association in Vlaanderen and The Netherlands ('RCI Lage Landen') decided in September 2021 to not continue in its current form, but also to not dissolve the RCI Lage Landen yet.

The General Assembly of de RCI Lage Landen felt that the current form of association no longer fit the needs of its members anymore. There was a wish to see a continuation of a TCI community in Belgium and The Netherlands, but also a wish to find a contemporary form to organize ourselves that might be more fitting to the current challenges and opportunities we face nowadays: being creative in how we can meet each other in pandemic times, making use of the possibilities of meeting many more TCI-ers internationally online, involving younger generations, being inclusive... And so the idea of a hybrid TCI Community was born.

Based on the boards' request and our own enthusiasm, we (Carolien and Ingeborg) took on the initiative to investigate if such a community would be viable. The Board, in casu the liquidators of RCI Lage Landen, gave its full commitment and support to us as the initiators of this idea. We agreed that *if* the idea were viable, we would work together towards a legal transition from association to community in the summer of 2022.

How this initiative supports/fits into the preferred future direction of the international TCI assembly

This idea of a community across regions and national borders with English its first language is also a supporting transformation from the perspective of three main challenges that we face in the international RCI assembly: (1) a membership structure based on regions, (2) being truly an international association and (3) a need to change the culture and character of meetings.

As for the first challenge (region based structure), membership based on regions doesn't fit anymore for everyone. RCI international is looking for different kinds of membership connected to the shared mission. For members that do not have a regional association or do not connect to it for various reasons, there is the alternative to become an individual member (thanks to the current Board's lobby!) However, that does not include the right to vote. We, as a community, want to contribute to the mission of RCI international as a full member with the right to vote and be driven to become truly international. As for the second challenge (internationalization), the community's choice for English as its language supports that members from all nationalities can feel welcome and included and helps to generate a balanced representation of the diverse countries/regions over time. As for the third challenge (culture of meetings), the community aims to focus on inspiring meetups that are dedicated to the meaning of TCI in personal life, work, and societies, as planetary citizens. The community's holacratic way of organizing itself (see page 8) supports this topic/content driven focus.

How we worked this out - strategy, facts and figures

An inclusive exploration

Starting from the conviction that a community is only possible if you create and sustain it together, we chose to start online small group conversations with other TCI enthusiasts and people interested in TCI to explore the needs, wishes and possibilities for creating this hybrid TCI community. We encouraged everyone who joined the conversation to continue this conversation with people they knew (snowball approach) and let us know their findings so we could systematically gather them.

Timeline with activities, facts and figures

December 2021 - March 2022

- We started the first exploratory conversations together in december 2021 to draw up an initial idea that could help participants to tell us what they were interested in and what not.
- Between January-March 2022 we hosted 10 online exploratory talks to discuss this idea of a hybrid TCI community and gather all the needs and wishes in the field.
- In total, we invited over 94 people to join these conversations.
- We gathered needs, wishes and ideas from more than 40 people from:
 - ◆ India
 - ◆ Austria
 - ◆ Germany
 - ◆ Belgium
 - ◆ the Netherlands
 - ◆ Norway
 - ◆ Board members of RCI International
 - ◆ region Rheinland Westfalen (Germany) to learn from/connect to their online initiative

- ◆ former members of RCI Lage Landen (including former board members)
- ◆ potential new members of the community (new generation)
- We summarized all the wishes and needs together with the mission, vision and leading principles in this presentation <https://prezi.com/p/bsizgmyknn8m/?present=1>
- Based on this process it became clear in March 2022 that there was enough enthusiasm and engagement to start this community (based on the framework and ideas below).

April - June 2022

- We sent out 2 surveys to gather an overview of who was interested to join the community and to gather ideas that help to solve the needs that we expressed in the conversations. There are currently 15 people interested in contributing actively to the community's meet ups (working out ideas and organizing them), and 20 people are interested in membership.
- We organized an online meeting on April, 9th on the theme *Being and building the hybrid TCI community together!* with 13 people from Belgium, India, Germany and the Netherlands. In this meeting we:
 - ◆ shared again our findings of the exploratory phase
 - ◆ shared in small groups what topics and themes would inspire and interest each one of us to meet
 - ◆ we explained the focus on Planetary citizenship
- You can find a summary of this meeting on <https://prezi.com/i/ousb9juycedr/community-of-planetary-citizen/>
- We sparred with a TCI colleague in Germany to learn about the back of their online platform and contacted a professional web designer to ask for a proposal to build an online Basecamp
- Together with current and former Board members of RCI Lage Landen we worked out the idea of different kinds of membership to be chosen within our community
- On June 29th, we met a group of 12 people interested in organizing a meetup in the coming time (spring 2023 & autumn 2023). Three small groups were defined to organize a meetup. Three topics were defined:
 - ◆ From polarization to dialogue in this time of clashing powers and hardening of views. How can we use the power of communication - essential in TCI?
Frederik - Natasja - Carolien
 - ◆ The dynamic balance in our societies these days: cultural aspects, ethnic background and diversity. What is the influence of language?
Phien - Lien - Ineke W. - Ingeborg
 - ◆ Deepening the second axiom: the humane and inhumane. TCI and other perspectives (Thich Nath Hanh) - sources for reflection and action?!
Ineke B. - Thea - Annelies - Jessica

July 2022

By now, in July 2022, we have:

- a potential coordination team of 4 or 5 members, next to us also Thea Beentjes and Linde Sevenhuijsen want to participate in the coordination team!
- three organizing teams for the upcoming meetups (see above)
- a professional proposal for the web design/online platform including a time schedule to build the online Basecamp of our community from mid-July till end of September 2022
- 21 people interested in membership - out of 25 reactions (unfortunately a low response rate; we expect more members if it's clear to everyone what it means and costs)
- a date for the first "official" meeting of the community: 30 September 2022

September, 30th 2022: first Planetary citizens meetup.

Setting up camp and starting our journey!

The agenda for this festive meeting:

- the legal transfer from association to community, with
 - ◆ transfer of responsibilities from the current board/liquidators to the future coordination team
 - ◆ voting on the membership options and amendments to the articles of association
- a transformation session, a ritual from 'old to 'new' energy
- announcement of the meet ups by the organizing groups
- presentation of the online basecamp of our community, it's possibilities and functionalities
- the celebration of the newborn Hybrid TCI community for Planetary citizens!

What we stand for - the outcome of all conversations and meetings

Our mission

Sharing TCI with everyone who is interested in (working with) TCI as a sustainable and relevant approach for the current and urgent questions we face in our societies and lives.

Our vision

The community is a lively, inclusive network for planetary citizens where we practice living learning and encourage each other to integrate TCI in life and work.

Our leading principles

- Light & lively
- Flexible and natural ways of organizing ourselves
- Equal responsibility of liveliness and quality of what we share
- Open, inclusive network of planetary citizens
- Supporting each other to be courageous and to stimulate dialogue

- TCI's fundament inspires and justifies our interactions

The needs and wishes we meet

Enabling (international) connections

- low threshold contact possibilities online
- keeping possibilities to meet TCI peers (physically) nearby (meetings in mother tongue)
- getting, staying in touch, meeting with TCI-ers across the world (online)

Learning together

- a deeper exploration of themes in personal & professional life
- through peer exchange (dialogue, sharing experiences, intervision, study days,...)
- living learning

Access to information

- literature, articles & activities on TCI & the community
- for newcomers, people looking for info on TCI
- for people that already know or practice TCI
- connection to other (TCI related) networks/platforms
Including **links** to education (seminars, courses, basic/advanced/graduation) by TCI Trainers/leaders and Institutes

Showing TCI and ourselves to the world

- being visible as professionals with our expertise
- reflecting the diverse range of TCI applications
- sharing TCI with the world

Answers on some questions that might occur on your mind

Why focus on Planetary citizenship?



Ruth Cohn was very aware of how we as humans are part of the bigger picture as planetary citizens.

"Being human doesn't mean being meaninglessly brought into this world, but rather finding meaning in the realization of the individual self, that is a part of the community of all."

We felt inspired by Ruth Cohn's term of planetary citizenship, her call to courage and to broaden again the horizon of all the ways that TCI can be used to create a positive impact in our world and societies. During the exploratory conversations these ingredients became parts of the core of this initiative since it was clear that the overall need of the participants was to meet each other based on topics and themes that move us, are inviting and inspiring.

Ruth's term of planetary citizenship seemed very fitting as the thematic focus of community's meetups. Additionally, planetary citizenship makes it easier to attract and invite people who don't know TCI yet it is a recognizable term (as TCI is not yet for some of them). This connects to the leading principle of being open and inclusive for all.

One of TCI's characteristic features is to foster an engaged awareness and empathy towards all and to resist totalitarian systems in whatever form. We could say that discovering how to think, act and speak as a planetary citizen, means that we are practicing this engaged awareness. It is how we practice our position as both autonomous and interdependent entities. Applying TCI will help to develop and deepen our ideas, insights, and actions. We use the power of open dialogue and communication based on equal level, trying to connect polarities within the humane and democratic narrative.

What distinguishes this community from other TCI initiatives?

- A focus on living learning as **planetary citizens** in this world today
- Inclusive and attractive to **everyone** who is interested in TCI as a sustainable and relevant approach
- Online and physical/live meetings around topics and **themes** that inspire us to act with courage, to integrate TCI in daily life, work, and society
- A focus on being an **open community** rather than the more closed structure of membership within an association, open to the world and other communities and initiatives
- A **new initiative** in the TCI landscape in a modern form, with a legal base in Belgium & the Netherlands, and a formal connection to the RCI international network

Proposal for important issues in the forming of a new way of assembling

Connecting to the community - different options

We want to enable different ways of connecting within the community, in order to meet the diversity of connections that people have with the community. This also means that we use different types of membership.

1. Visitors to the platform.

Our 'digital basecamp' (online platform) is freely accessible to everyone all over the world and is a place where visitors feel welcome and where they can easily find their way. It's a place where people get inspired to think and act as planetary citizens while getting to know more about TCI. Visitors do not pay for visiting the basecamp – for members this basecamp is a way to show TCI and themselves to the world (one of the needs that have been expressed in the exploratory conversations).

- We would like to make literature and articles publicly available here (see leading principles, open & inclusive, showing TCI to the world), as long as its authors have given consent.

2. Participants in meetups.

Planetary citizens who participate in an (online) meetup that involves costs, pay for access and participation. The organizing circle determines the amount and makes the budget and realization transparent.

3. Members of the Hybrid TCI community

As a paying member of the community they receive::

- All the meetups
- A say in the distribution of revenue (budget) for community initiatives and current community affairs

4. Members of the Hybrid TCI community *including* membership of RCI international

The same as in 3. but moreover being a member of RCI international via the formal association within this community and thus receive:

- The magazine of RCI international
- Voting rights within RCI International
- Discounts on courses and training as offered through RCI International and RCI contracted teachers and institutes

5. Donors that care about the community.

Anyone who wishes can donate to the community or purchase an attractive item (merchandising), of which a part of the proceeds will go to the community. There will be a donation button on the digital basecamp (the amount can be chosen by the donator).

Levels of contribution

For participants with membership (3. and 4.) we use - as was usual - three levels for contribution, depending on income (register yourself, no control on this)

Low income < € 14.000,- per year: €90 (2019: €115)

Middle income € 14.000,- - € 27.000,- : €110 (2019: €140)

High income > € 27.000,-: €130 (2019: € 170)

We must substantiate the amount with a budget overview.

In addition, according to the statutes, it remains possible to individually make an arrangement with the treasurer of the coordination team, who can determine the amount of the contribution 'without consultation' for individual members who for reasons of their own cannot pay the full membership amount.

NB. Remittance of each member to RCI International is €70 (possibly more in the future).

Connection to other networks and associations in the globe of this community

To meet the wishes of people in the field, the community wants to be a member of RCI international with the associated rights and obligations. This means that the legal structure of the community will remain an association according to Dutch law, with members and a coordination team. We are proposing changes in the articles of the association RCI Lage Landen. At least in the name: from “RCI Lage Landen” to “Hybrid TCI community of Planetary citizens”. The articles of association will have to be amended according to this in several paragraphs. These necessary changes will be put to a vote on September 30 or soon after (preparation in consultation with the current board).

Within the community we want to encourage different kinds of initiatives and meetings. There is room for people who want to meet regionally, physically, in their mother tongue and who want to maintain a strong connection with RCI international and other existing (inter)national networks. This matches with the leading principle of this community to be open and inclusive to everyone who is interested in TCI, wants to live and act as a planetary citizen and support the vision and ideas of Ruth Cohn.

Flexible and natural way of organizing ourselves with Holacracy

In order to be flexible in the way we organize ourselves (another leading principle), we introduce Holacracy¹. The aim of this is to create a clear and at the same time organic structure, within which we can organize and create in a natural and fluid way.

Holacracy means:

- distributed leadership - there is no hierarchical, delegated power/decision structure
- A lot of autonomy for everyone who fulfills a role to shape the work according to their own insight, within clear and explicit frameworks and agreements. Entitled to make autonomous decisions.
- Transparency. Always be accountable for your responsibilities and communicate clearly about this. A high degree of transparency is expected from each other. Transparency = a knife that cuts both ways: you know better what others are doing and what choices they are making, but your own progress and priorities are just as visible!

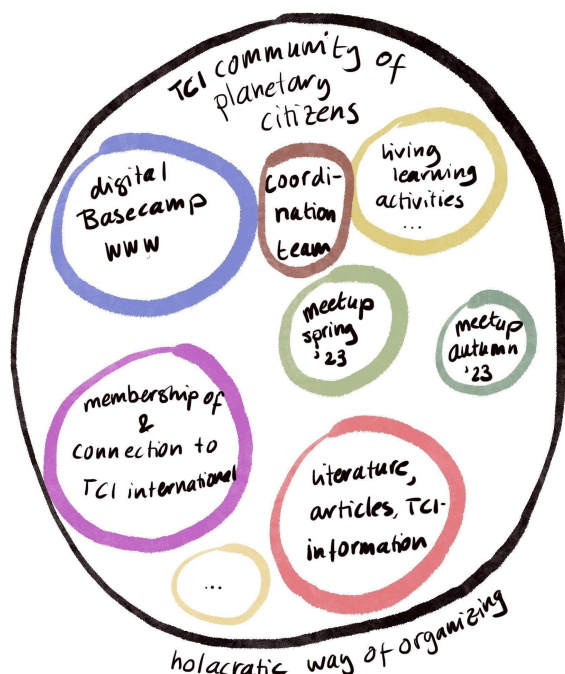
¹ Holarchy: natural hierarchy (such as a body with organs and cells). Holacracy distributes authority and decision-making throughout an organization, and defines people not by hierarchy and titles, but by roles. By this, holacracy turns everyone into a leader. Holacracy creates organizations that are fast, agile, and that succeed by pursuing their purpose, not following a dated and artificial plan. See: Brian Robertson, *Let's reinvent organizations*.

Circles with roles

We organize the community in different circles, within which people assign roles themselves. Like an organ in a body, a circle fulfills a specific function for the organization. A circle functions relatively autonomously, but at the same time it is also part of the larger whole: the community. A circle covers a specific 'domain' of the community (meetup, digital platform, connection to TCI international, literature,...) and has a clear assignment. This assignment is coordinated with the circle 'Coordination team'. There is a budget available for each circle, from the various revenues of the community. All participants with membership jointly determine the expenditure via their annual mandate to the coordination team.

Circles cease to exist when the goal is reached; circles can arise because there is a need for a certain activity or function. This is how it works with roles within the circle: they arise and disappear in a fluid way.

A circle is responsible for a task: a specific function within the community (for example, *'coordinating the community'* or *'taking care of membership with RCI international'*), a clear assignment and purpose. Within a circle, different people (temporarily) work together.



A schematic representation of the Community with different circles.

As a circle "Hybrid TCI Community of Planetary citizens" we are once again part of a larger whole; the international network of RCI. We also feel and nurture the connection with other (non-TCI) communities that are based on a humane value system that is in line with the TCI axioms.

Light & lively: the circles are not a formal structure, in the sense of working groups that must be appointed by the coordination team. A group of people can also unite themselves in a circle for a period of time. There is, however, optimum transparency: the members of a circle must be accountable to everyone in the community at all times. In addition to the circles that deal with the website and the membership of RCI internationally, circles that organize meetups determine the amount for access and participation themselves.

Circle members don't have to be a paying community member.

The Coordination team

Within the community, the coordination team has a separate role and responsibility. This means: formal representatives of the community (as specified in the articles of association), including

- annual financial report and budgeting of the community
- collecting the yearly membership fees
- allocation of the funds to the circles e.g. 'digital basecamp', 'literature', and 'membership/connection to RCI international'
- coordinating the assignments of the circles within the community

Within the Circle 'membership & connection to RCI international' the roles decide who will represent the community in the yearly General Assembly of RCI international.

The Coordination team will consist of Carolien Vink, Ingeborg Kooger, Thea Beentjes and Linde Sevenhuijsen. There's room for others! We aim to become a more diverse team in the (near) future :-)