



# Nova Academia

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New Academic Education.  
Hopes, plans, actions.



# Preliminaries

Subtitle



## Existing universities?

Poor teaching, poor personal development. Fearful. Negative. Bureaucratic. Captured. They fail to stimulate and prepare our children, infantilise the academics, and weaken society.



## Societal need?

Society needs spaces where future intellectuals can be nurtured, major problems are looked at, and ways are found to overcome the personal challenges posed by modern technology.

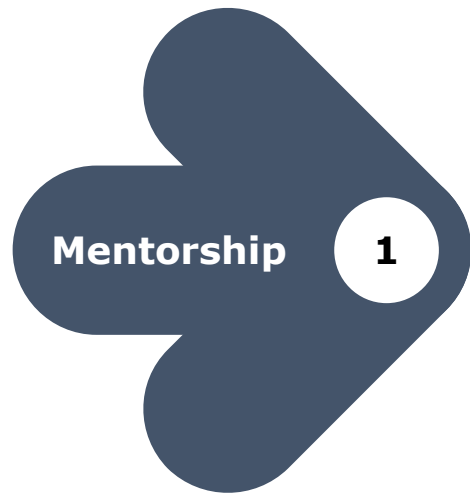


## Our proposal

To start new academic institutions, oriented towards positive critical thinking and development. The initial 'niche' we aim for is the top 5% of thinkers.

# Plans

From 'proof of concept' to new academies



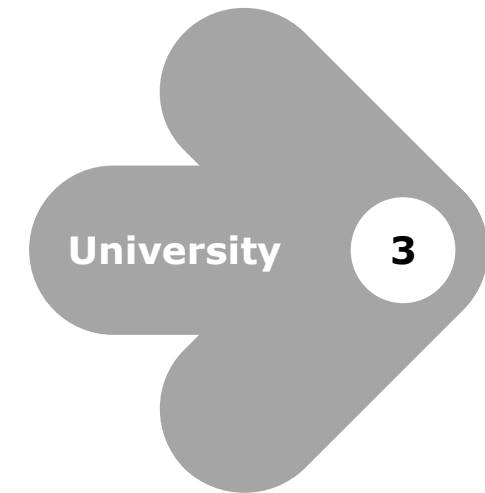
Primarily online mentorship of research-capable critical thinkers by willing academics and other mentors.

Start November 2024



1-year masters-level social science program on a campus with 50-150 students and 1-3 streams using part-time academics.

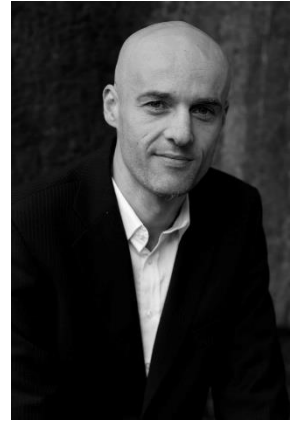
Start September 2024



Up till 6000 students. 1 FTE academic per 25 students.

Start September 2025/6

# The core team



# Nova Academia



# Crucial decision points and timing

Subtitle



## Symposium

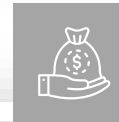
Yes/no decision to try or not.

## Mentorship program

Start Mentorship program via meetings.

## Enrollment opens for 1-year program

## Bootcamps



100 person bootcamps used for selection and start of the journey.

## Start College

Physical start of the 1-year program

# General state of play and wants

Issues being addressed and outstanding



**The goal(s): to set up the structures needed for mentorship, the 1-year program, and the university**



## **IT/websites**

The website [novacad.org](https://novacad.org) is now up and running, with an active mentorship program. The Discord Community infrastructure is available.

Wanted: IT and admin volunteers to help run the program.



## **Location**

We have just bought a castle in the Ardennes, Belgium, to house this initiative.

Wanted: initiatives to double-up with to share costs. HQs, secondary schools, institutes.



## **Students**

We aim to find them via our contacts, via the academics, and via a push within the new media networks.

Wanted: help disseminate info, run taster workshops, run bootcamps.



## **Networks/Activities**

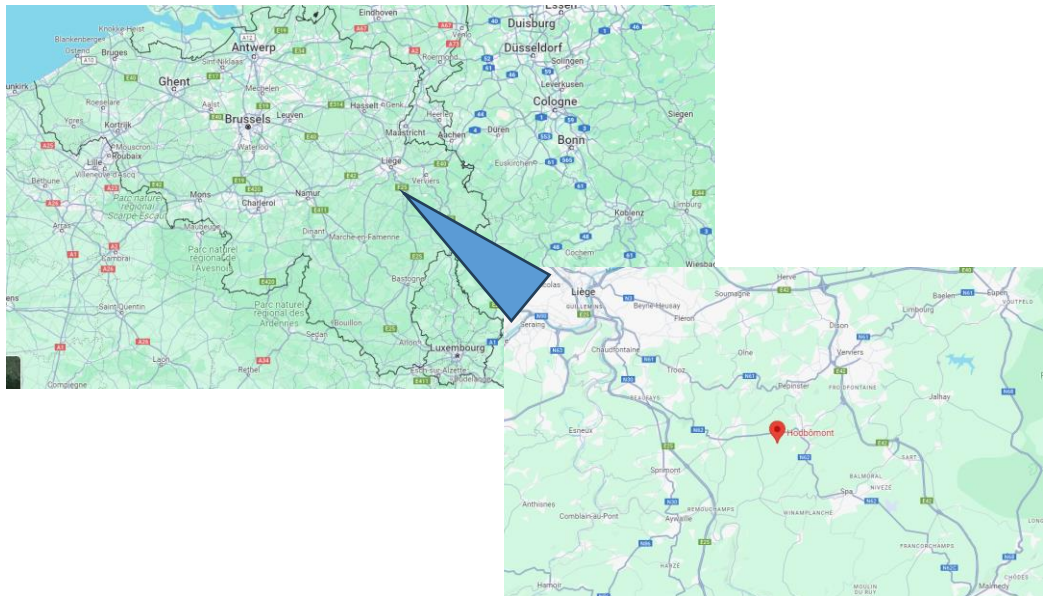
We are looking for sponsors but will set up a 1-year program regardless.

In Jan-July we will run lots of in-person workshops and events to find parents and students. We are open for collaboration and shared resources (Conf / HQ?).

# Location is found, available from March 23<sup>rd</sup>



- Theux, Belgium
- Castle with >10 bedrooms and several conference rooms.



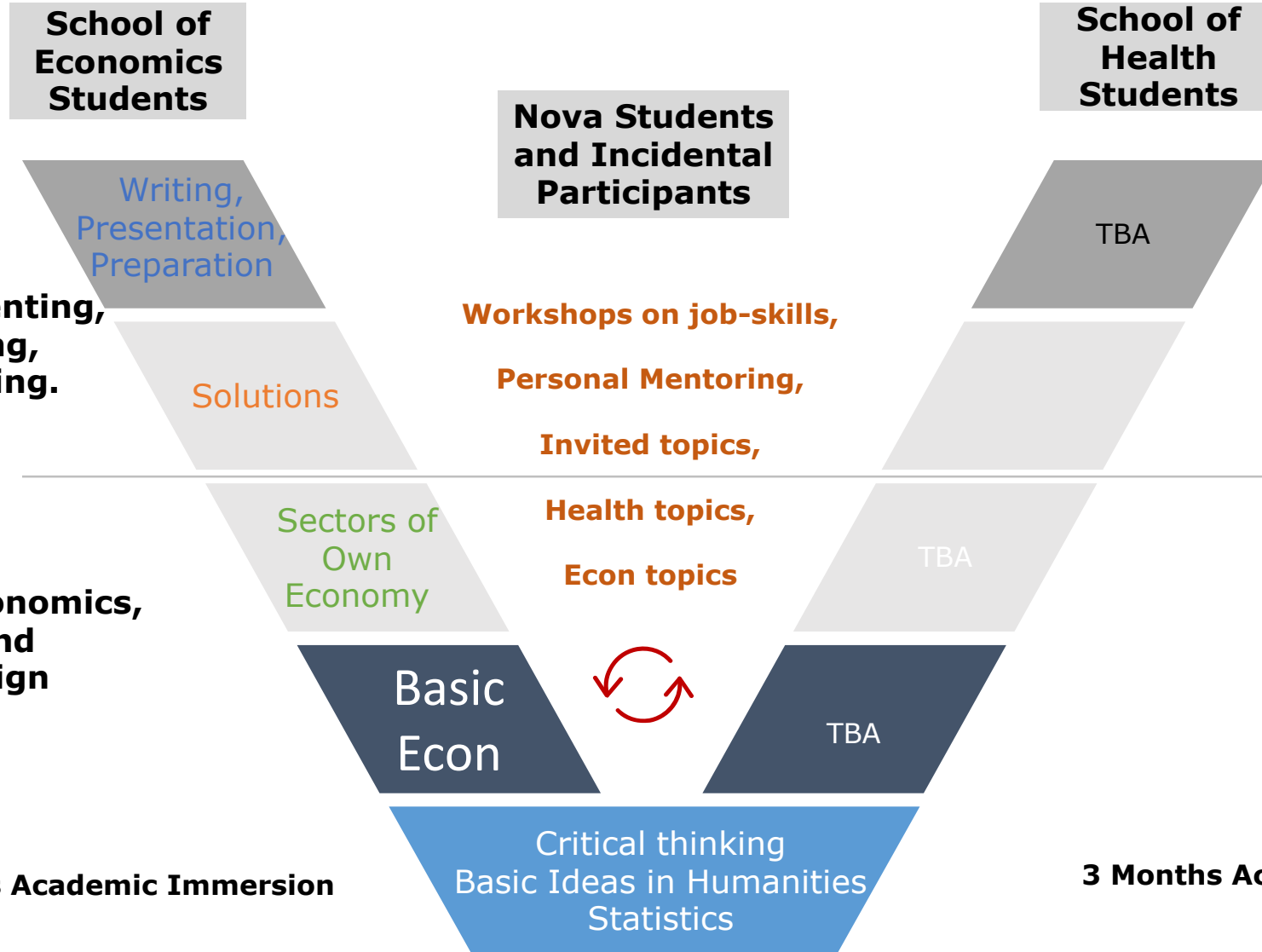
What will Students Learn?





# Teaching Set-up

Subtitle



**School of Economics Students**

**School of Health Students**

**Nova Students and Incidental Participants**

Writing, Presentation, Preparation

TBA

**4 Months writing, presenting, Discussing, reflecting, Proofing, disseminating.**

**Workshops on job-skills, Personal Mentoring, Invited topics, Health topics, Econ topics**

Solutions

**4 Months Core Economics, Research, and Solution Design**

Sectors of Own Economy

TBA

Basic Econ

TBA



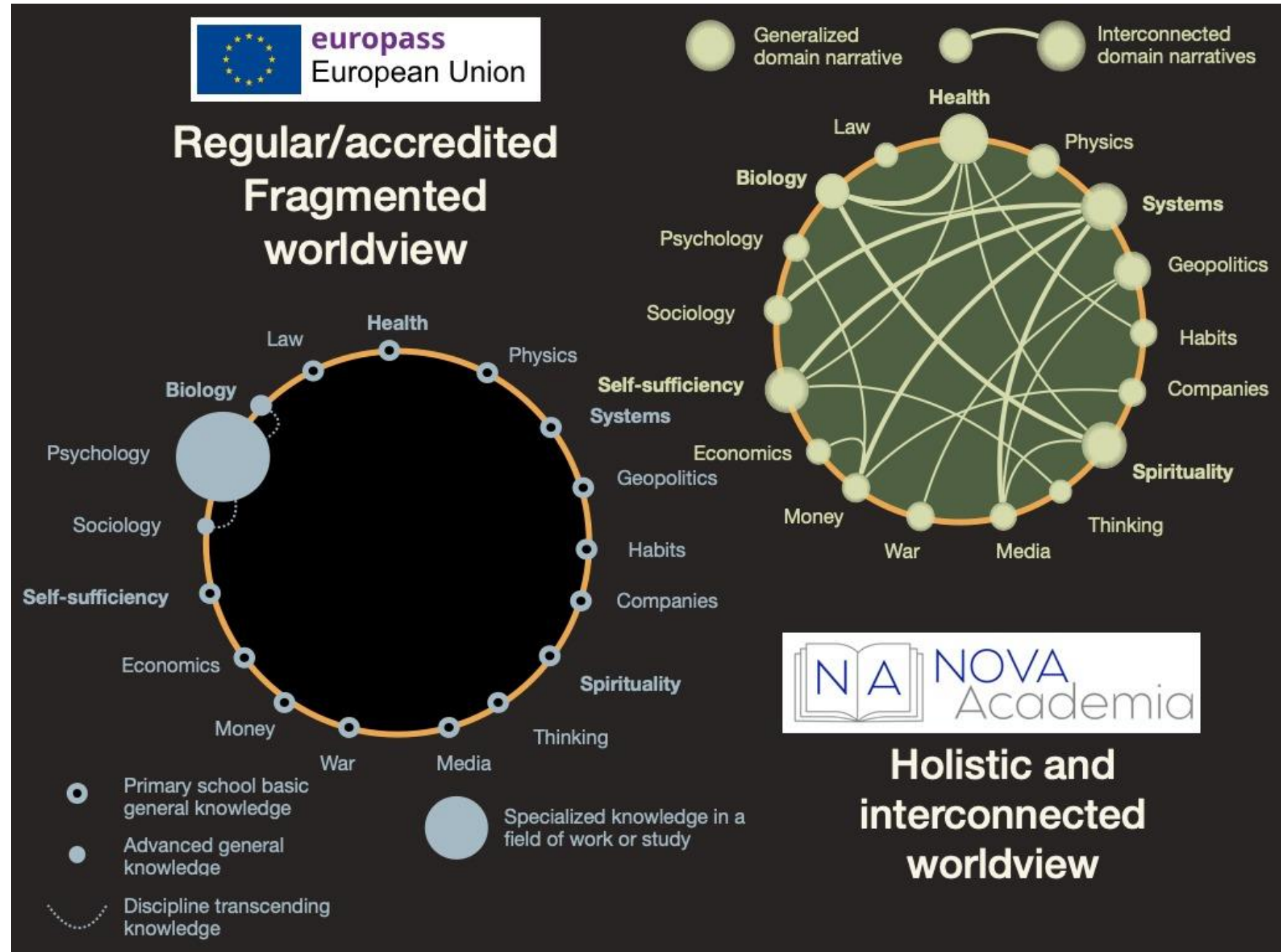
**3 Months Academic Immersion**

Critical thinking  
Basic Ideas in Humanities  
Statistics

**3 Months Academic Immersion**

## Critical thinking

The development of a personal worldview  
Freedom of speech and thought  
Making connections between concepts

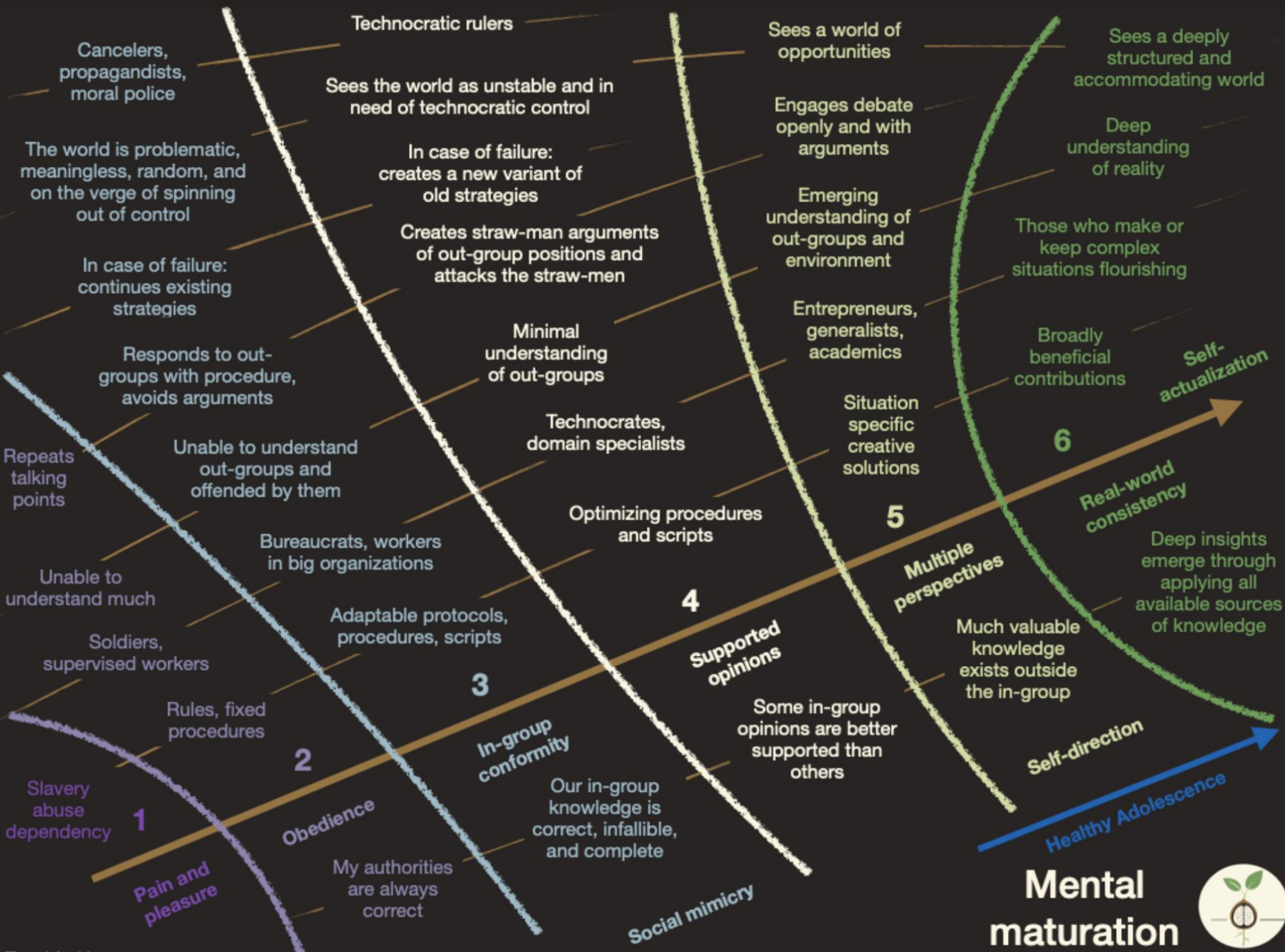




Current level at universities: 3

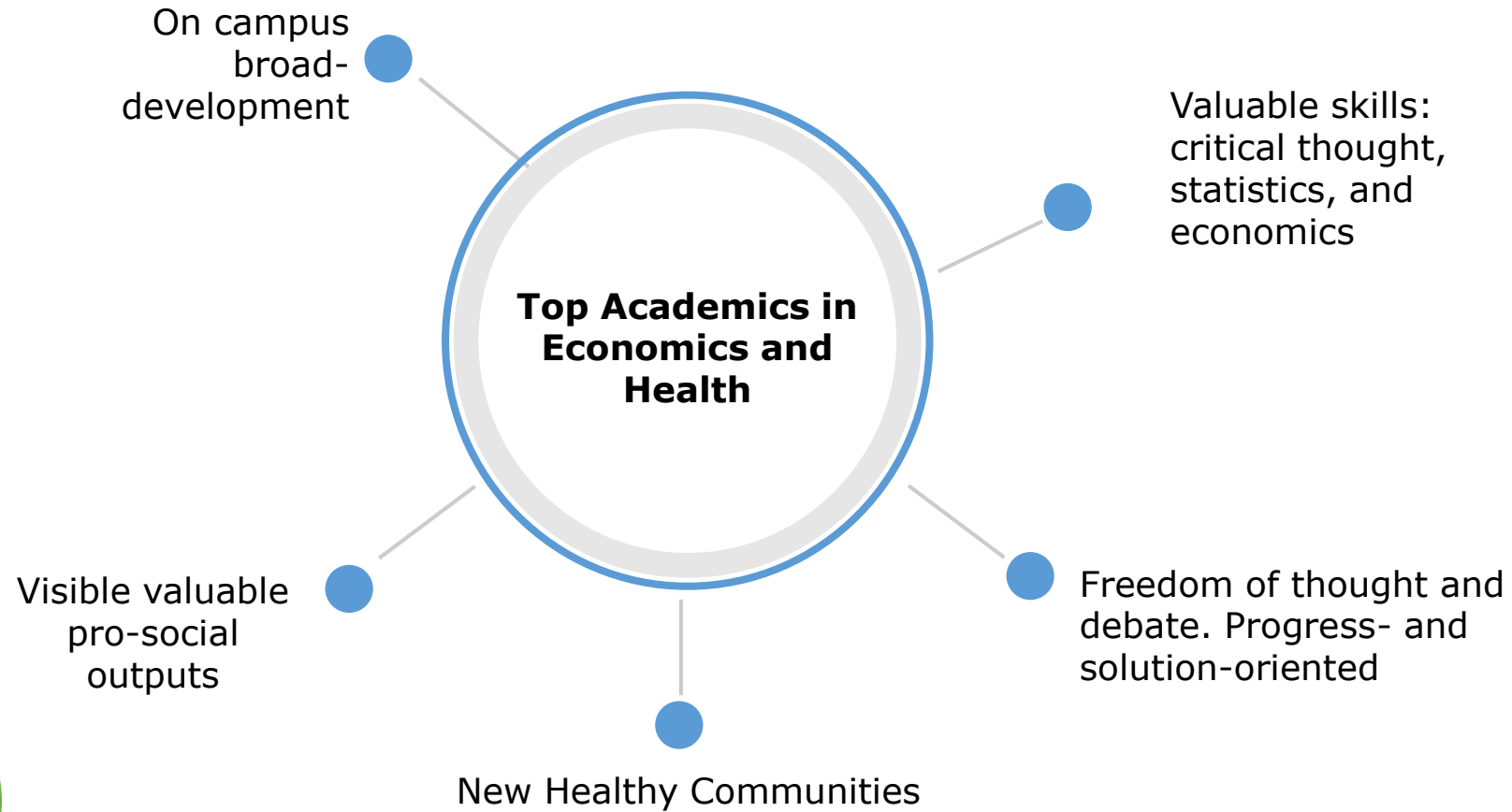
Target Nova students: 4 or 5

Aim: to lift students to level 5 or 6



# Value Proposition Nova Academia

## What Students Get



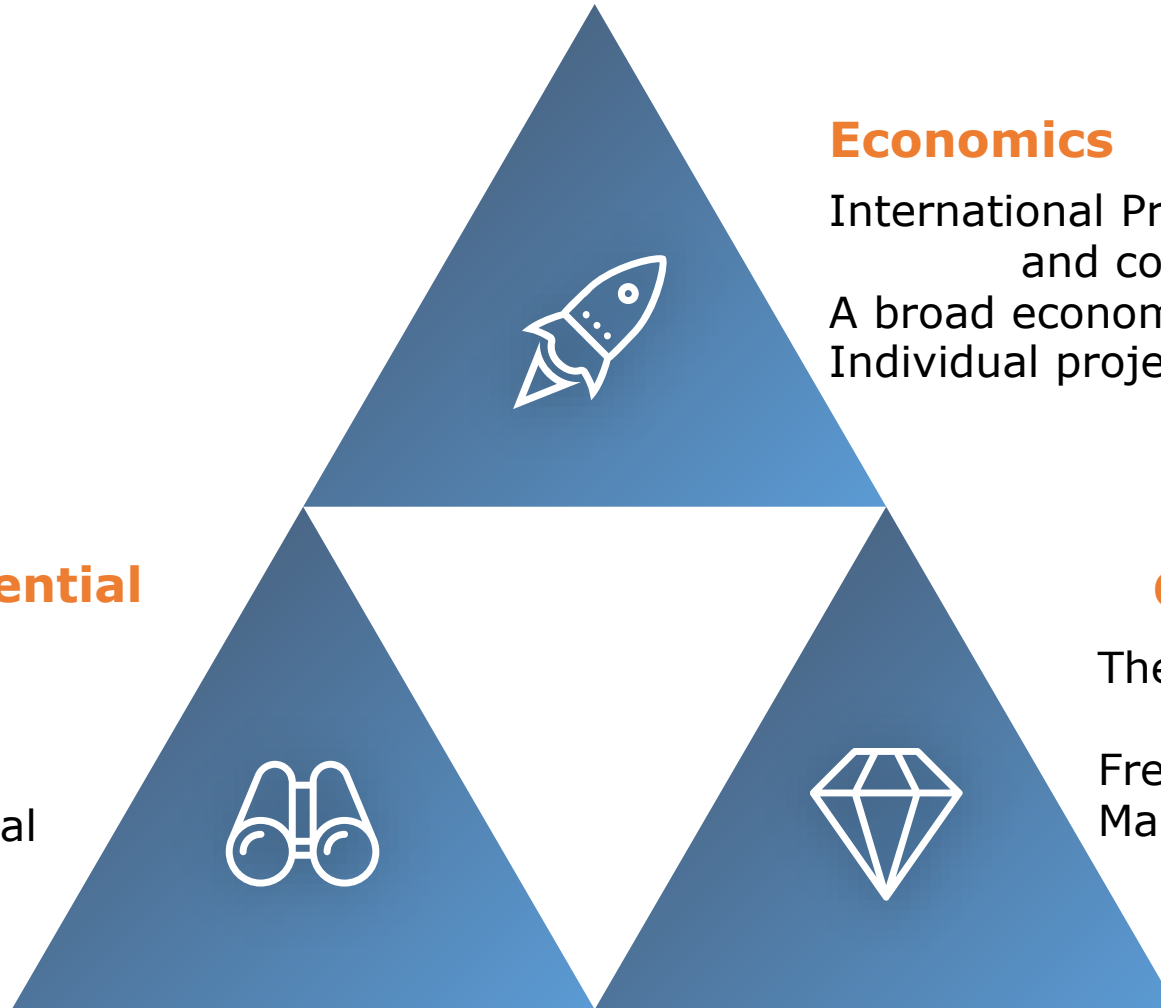
# Integrated Learning

## Pedagogy in the School of Economics?



### Conceptual and experiential

A unique blend of Socratic learning, experiential Business School teaching methods, and top conceptual academic tools



### Economics

International Professors who mentor and co-produce  
A broad economics curriculum  
Individual projects on the home economy

### Critical thinking

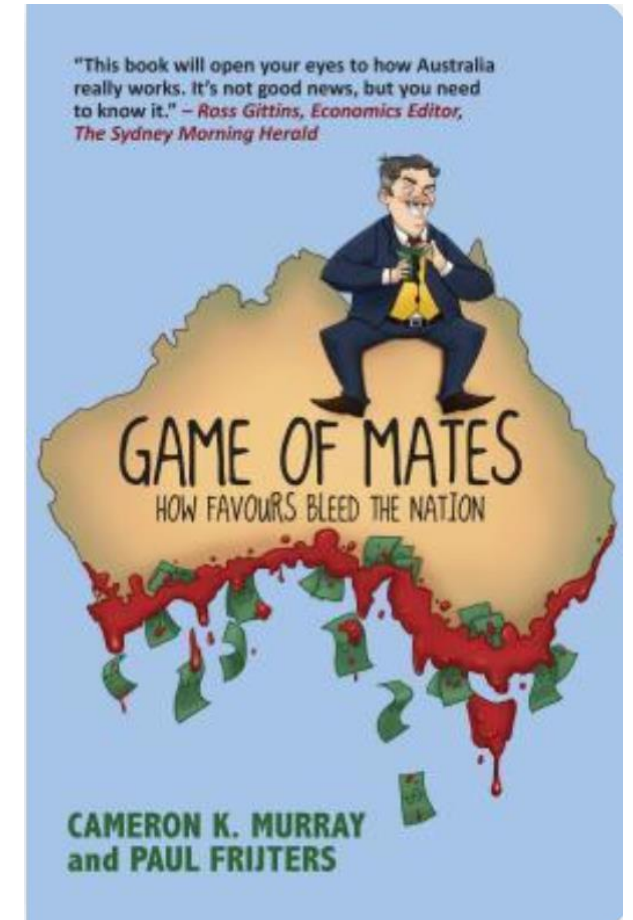
The development of a personal worldview  
Freedom of speech and thought  
Making connections between concepts



# How would the Economics stream work?

- ✓ The first 3 months of general training will include a grid with key economic ideas.
- ✓ In the 8 months ensuing about five international academics (Paul Frijters, Prof Gigi Foster, Dr Cameron Murray, and 2 more) will take turns being the economist-in-residence to deepen knowledge of those ideas and apply them.
- ✓ Students will be working towards a joint product: “Game of Mates in the Netherland and Belgium”.
  - ✓ An analysis of the main economic sectors in Belgium/Netherlands.
  - ✓ An analysis of the waste and corruption in these sectors, plus how that is embedded via media and politics.
  - ✓ World-best-practise looks like in those sectors and hence how much can be gained by optimal policies.
  - ✓ Analyses of how corruption works and what democratic renewal elements are effective against it.
- ✓ Students would take on sectors in groups or do individual parts, credited for their work (unless they object), with output including a joint book, videos, presentations, etc. So students will be expanding their knowledge of economics whilst performing a vital service for their countries.
- ✓ Guest lectures as appropriate by visiting academics, workshops with extras for the different target groups,

# 2017 and 2022 (best-selling) books templates



See: <https://gameofmates.com/> or

<https://www.amazon.com/Rigged-networks-powerful-everyday-Australians-ebook/dp/B0B7KD8WL1>

# Outline of student-specific programs





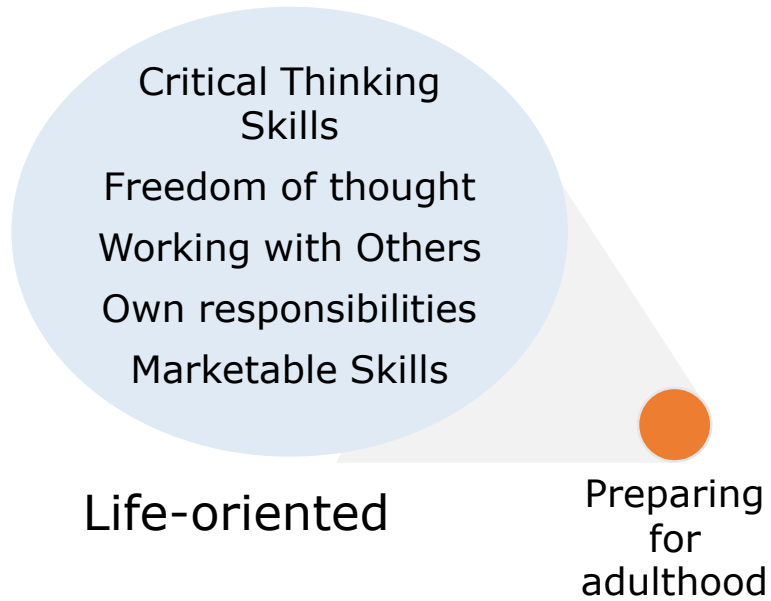
# The School of Economics programs

## The three student groups



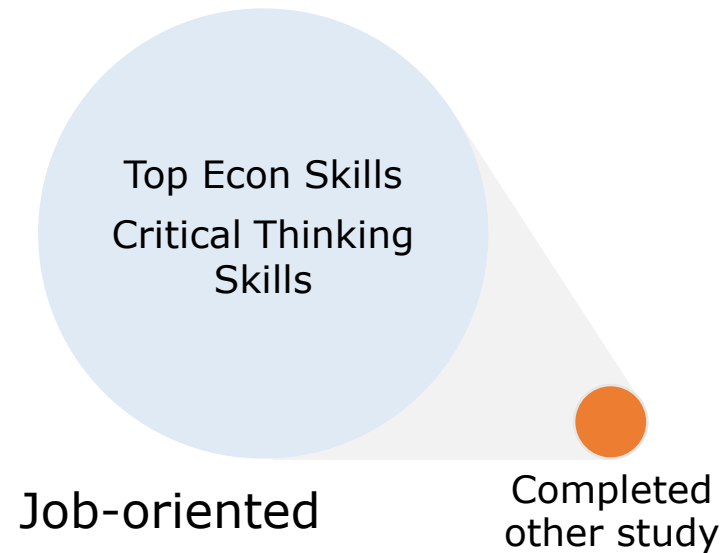
### "Gap Year Program"

Smart out-of-school



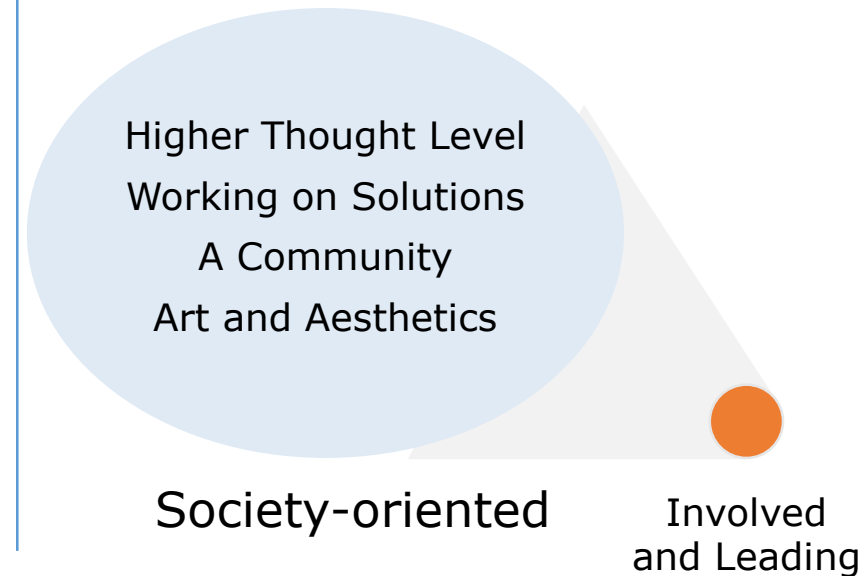
### "Finishing School Program"

Ambitious post-grads



### "Avant Garde Program"

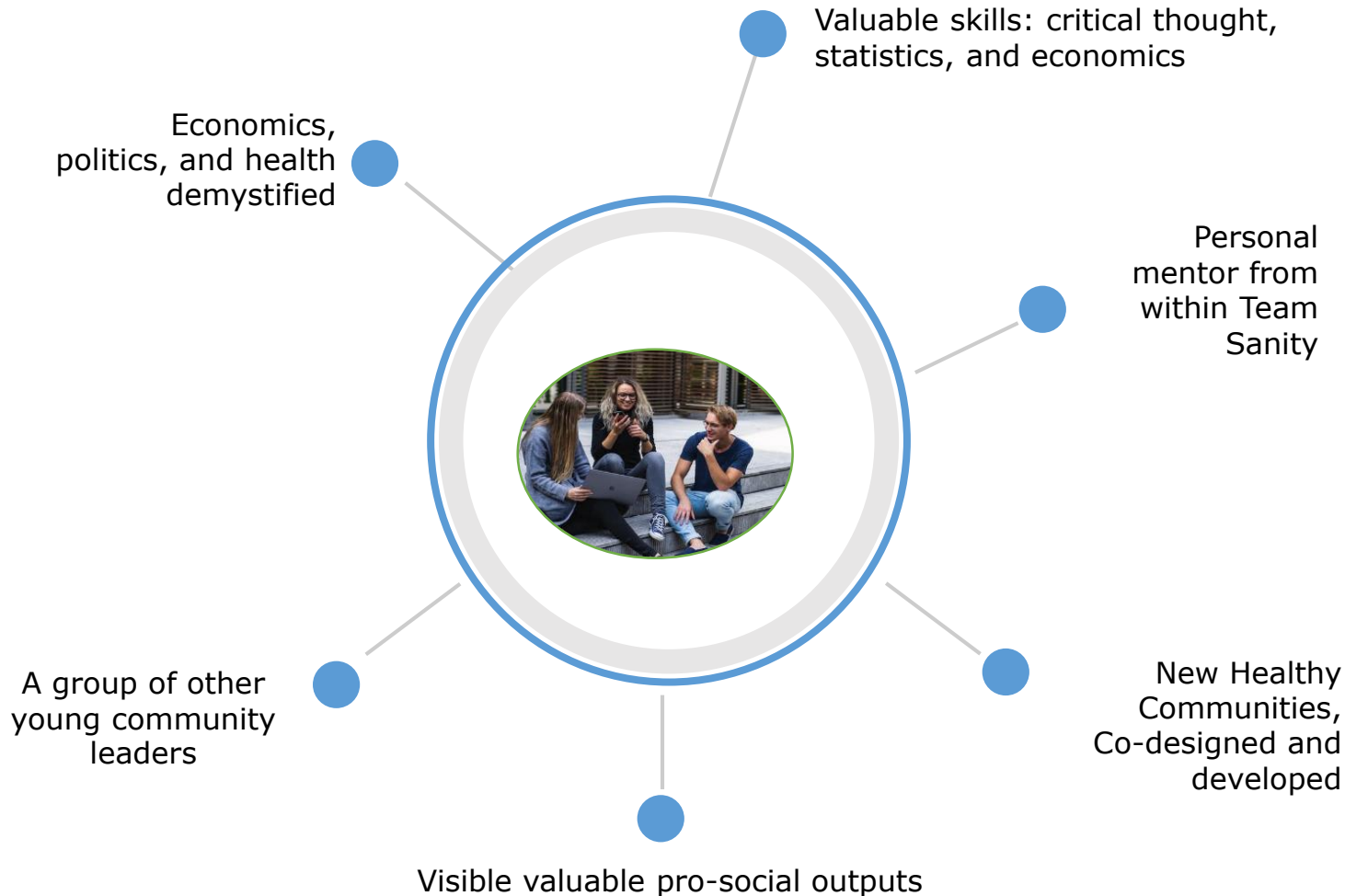
Young Adults Already Committed to help their community



# Features Avant Garde Program



## What Students Get



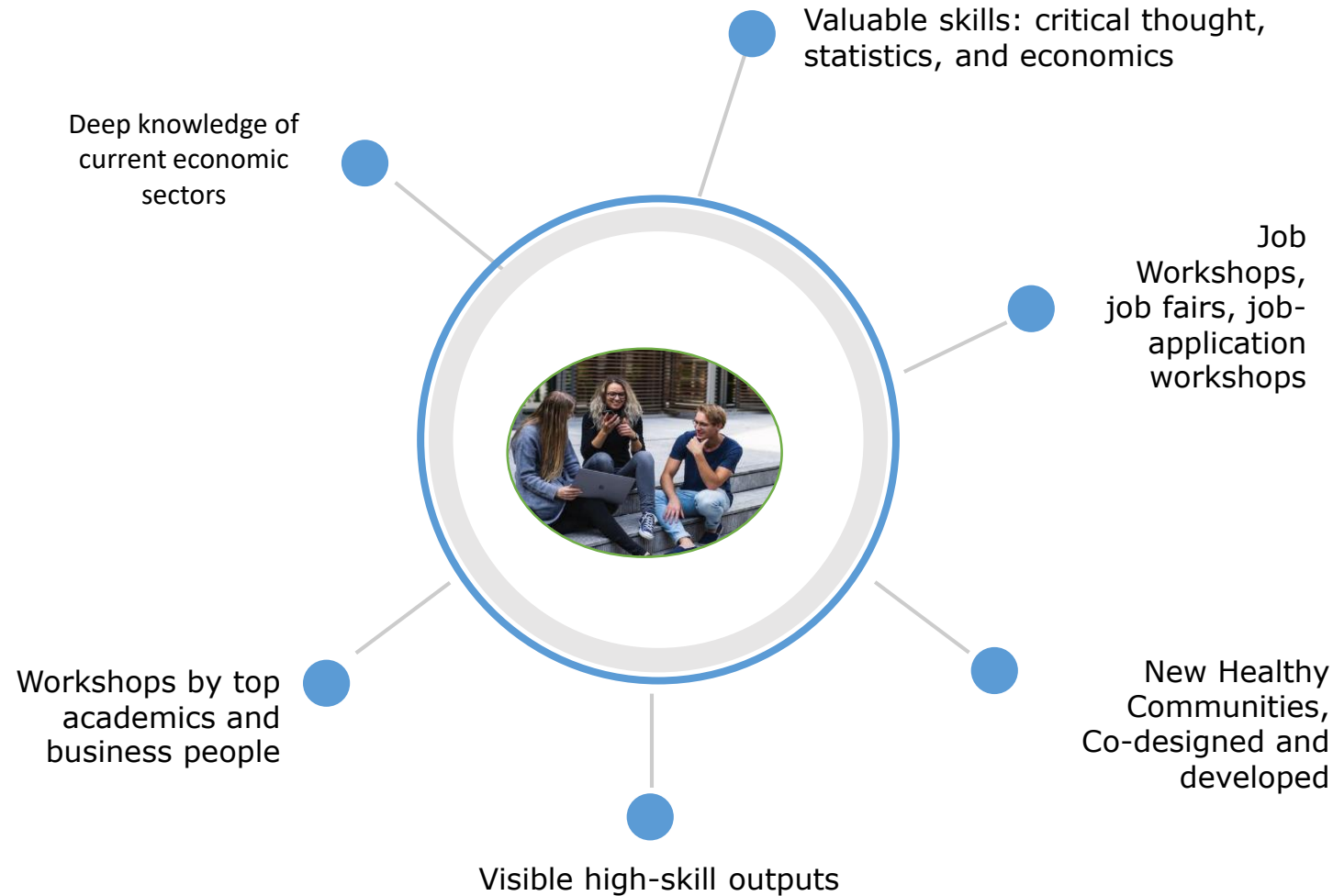
## Selection criteria

- Young leaders within Team Sanity
- Eager to lead experimentation with new communities and dissemination
- Committed to own development
- Smart
- Math literate and conceptually strong

# Features Finishing School



## What Students Get



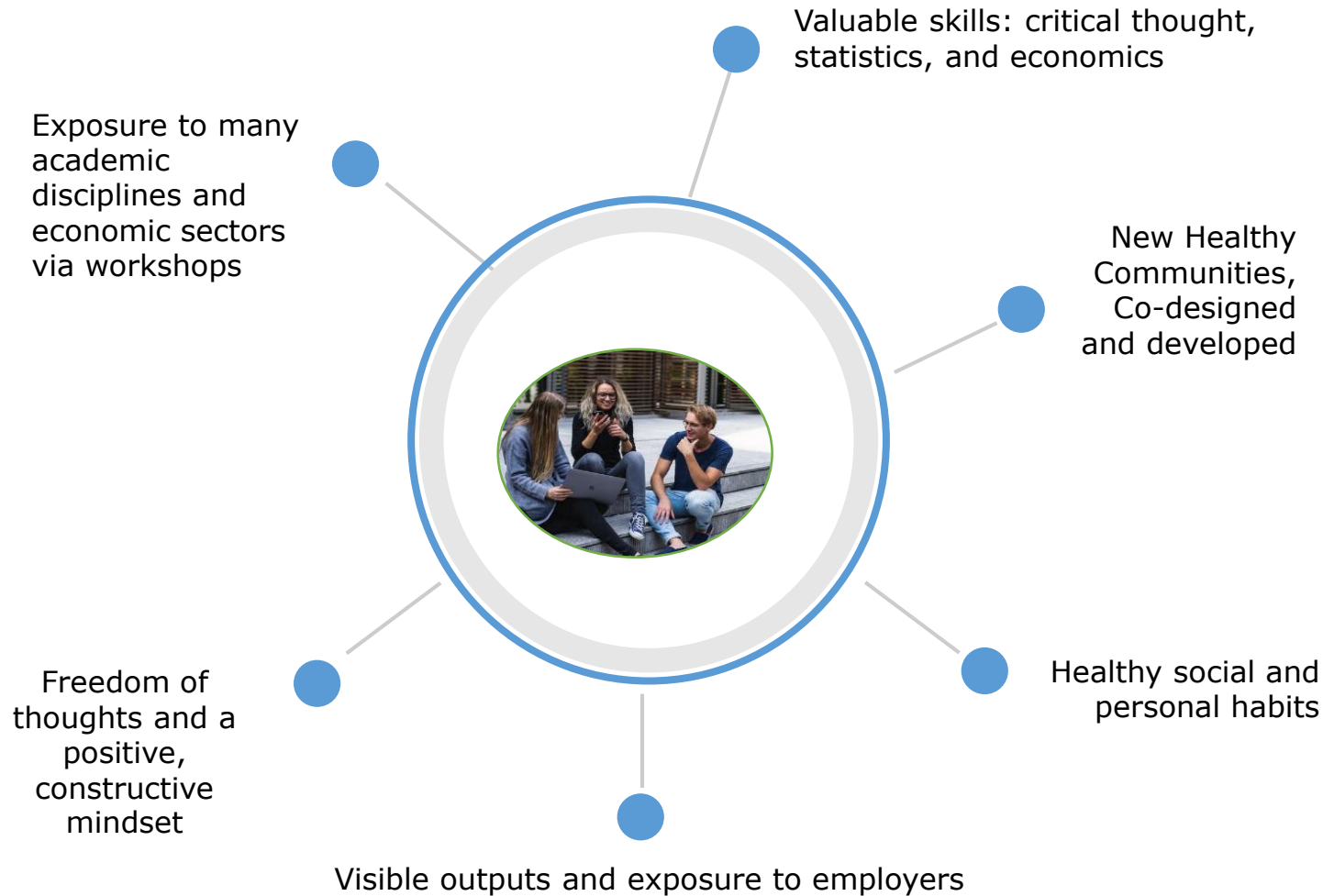
## Selection criteria

- Finished other study
- Age 23-28
- Job oriented
- Some pro-social interest
  
- Smart
- Math literate and conceptually strong

# Features Gap Year Program



## What Students Get



## Selection criteria

- Finished high school
- Age 18-20
- Life oriented
- Some job and social interest
  
- Smart
- Math literate and conceptually strong

# Unique selling points Nova Academia



1. You live freedom of thought and speech.
2. We assist you to further develop your world view and your critical abilities.
3. You will do research and learning that benefits your community.
4. Your mental development level will likely increase to 4 or 5, making you more valuable to employers, better prepared for further education, and a more rounded adult.
5. You can then join the international effort towards freedom and critical-thinking.
6. You get a completely modernised curriculum in critical-thinking and economics.
7. You are on a campus with self-organising student communities, a high value on personal interactions, with lots of peers and healthy activities.
8. You are in a beautiful place in the centre of Europe surrounded by nature, with plenty of opportunities for outdoor activities and cultural excursions.
9. You are in a community of smart critical-thinking students and the support networks around Nova Academia, with whom you are likely to make friends for life.

# Brand Essence



## *An Academic Oasis*

Universities once challenged you intellectually and assisted you to become a responsible adult. Now they are large impersonal bureaucracies that treat you as fragile and in need of protection from wrongthink. You are taught compliance and dogma, leaving you unprepared for the demands of work and adulthood. Both you and the academics are made to fear deep questions about self and society, stuck at mental development levels 3 or 4. We - a group of outspoken academics, thinkers, and citizens - have seen our universities abandon you.

Why waste your life in such soulless places? Come join our oasis in a beautiful castle in the Ardennes. Live on a campus with freedom of speech. Discover yourself and the world, and escape from constant fear and online distractions. Live in an open community where art, aesthetics, movement, and genuine interactions are as important as academic content. Elevate your mental development level to 5 or 6.

Is this for you? It is not a place for passive consumers: it is where you will expand your thinking, become a more responsible adult, set up creative activities for others to join, design solutions to economic and social problems, and prepare for future jobs and studies. Graduates and academics will have made friends, acquired critical-thinking and job-relevant skills, and developed improvements to major sectors of our society.

# Want to know more or join? Three key dates. <https://novacad.org/events/>



1. March 16th, 14:00 Central European Time. An online information session for students and parents with potential interest in the 1-year programs of Nova Academia which start in September 2024. Up to 100 registrants. People have to leave their email and will be sent information, a link, and a reminder close to the day. Entry is free. More information at [info@novacad.org](mailto:info@novacad.org)
2. April 6th, from 10:00AM to 19:00PM. Inaugural event for academics, sponsors, volunteers, media, and others interested in the Nova Academia project. It will be a day of presentations and discussions by high-profile academics (including Professor Paul Cliteur, Professor Paul Frijters, and Professor Tjeerd Andringa) on what an ideal university would look like and how Nova Academia can fill the gap. There will be a reception and a panel discussion. The event will be taped. Up to 100 registrants. At location Chateau de Hodbomont . B-4910 Theux Belgium. Registration involves leaving an email, with information and directions sent to that email. There will be an at-the-door cash fee of 60 euro per person, which includes lunch and a reception. More information can be asked at [info@novacad.org](mailto:info@novacad.org)
3. April 7th, from 9:30AM to 19:00PM. Open day and taster-sessions on teaching and activities at Nova Academia. This is oriented towards potential students and their carers, though generally interested individuals (sponsors, academics, supporters), are also welcome. Activities include several example teaching sessions by involved academics, in-depth immersion activities about what students want from education and life, Q&As, art-oriented activities, and a reception. There will be an at-the-door cash fee of 20 euro per person (excluding lunch: bring your own) or 50 per person (including catered lunch). Up to 200 registrants. At location Chateau de Hodbomont . B-4910 Theux Belgium. Registration involves leaving an email, with information and directions sent to that email. More information can be asked at [info@novacad.org](mailto:info@novacad.org)



# Final thought

- Let's make this fun.







# Our longer-term ambition:



- A radical break with current academia:
  - Escape from the clutches of admin and government via building up own signalling mechanisms like prediction races, start-ups, and job fairs. Thus deliberately no accreditation. A community of scholars and other thinkers.
  - A real interest in addressing the whole person. Movement and aesthetics. How to live with others? How to escape the addictions of social media and mobile phones? How to generate and maintain a positive personal and group story? We aim for academic mentorship and life mentorship, both to some extent self-provided by co-creating students.
  - The best of classic academia (critical thinking, helping people build their own view of the world, freedom of thought and conscience), but also modern (use of latest techniques), oriented to address modern problems (atomisation).
  - We hope to see the emergence of lots of small new free thinking colleges in various countries, building future intellectuals for the communities involved. The many small colleges would form their own ecosystem. The colleges would help secondary schools and the 95%.

# Some mentorship pages :



## DR CAMERON MURRAY

FRESH ECONOMIC THINKING, PREVIOUSLY THE  
UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY

ECONOMICS

Brisbane, Australia

[Read More](#) →



## DRS. DJAMILA LE PAIR

FREELANCE JOURNALIST

HISTORY, JOURNALISM, MEDIA, PHILOSOPHY,  
PHYSICS, PSYCHOLOGY

Leiden & The Hague, The Netherlands

[Read More](#) →



## PROFESSOR GIGI FOSTER

UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES

ECONOMICS

Sydney, Australia

[Read More](#) →

# Example profiles



Professor Gigi Foster, University of New South Wales.

<https://research.unsw.edu.au/people/professor-gigi-foster>



My Interests.

Deep and enduring curiosity about the influence of groups on individual behaviour...

How would it work.

I envision working in the Enlightenment mentorship program with young researchers who ...

I envision beginning a student's journey with ....

Following half a dozen online interactive sessions over a period of two to three months interspersed with directed reading, a student would be expected to ....

Selection criteria:

- Bachelor's degree in a relevant discipline (Master's level work/degree even better)
- Pragmatic, intrinsically motivated, and optimistic outlook
- Commitment to using research to serve the broad social good

Application process:

- Contact [gigi.foster@scienceandfreedom.org](mailto:gigi.foster@scienceandfreedom.org) with your transcript, CV, and three pages (1500 words) describing your motivation, your research interests, and how they relate to social influence and policy
- Attend an initial online reception/information session on Friday 20 October 2023 from 4 to 6 PM Sydney time.

# Example research mentorship offered?



New basic textbooks in Economics and Social Science based on a broad historical understanding, combined with empirical and subject-specific expertise. This in principle can be a commercial project leading to widely sellable books, also training the student to be able to teach this subject in future years. What is particularly needed are smart well-organised students willing to engage with new ideas, somewhat ambitious, and mathematically/statistically proficient.

A project into mapping existing participatory democracy systems and exploring particular alternatives that have not been well-explored, such as random-citizen-based mini-publics with particular roles in the judiciary and major corporations, the use of random-foreign-experts as decision makers in major spending areas, the role of random-alumni mini-publics in funding out-of-mainstream new schools of science, etc. This is expected to lead to papers, videos, and maybe a book.

A project into building new summary historical narratives of existing national and supra-national communities built on a realistic understanding of controversial issues like feudalism, genetic ancestry, and inter-group dynamics. The explicit goal is to build historical self-stories that are faithful to historical reality but are also useful to go forward in a constructive manner and hence not innately divisive. The intended output is in terms of videos, short stories, and other forms of communication useful for mass-consumption.

