



Welcome

It is a pleasure to invite you to the 5th **World Appreciative Inquiry Conference** (2012 WAIC), to be held in Ghent, Belgium from 25-28 April 2012.

The conference is focussing on how we can scale up the generative power of AI. Towards an 'economy' of connecting strengths: scaling-up the generative power of AI". We will study and share exceptional outcomes of the connecting capacity of AI towards the construction of a truly connected society of strengths. To meet the challenges of today, we must find other ways to grow ourselves, our organizations we work in, and our communities we live in. We should excel in the way we connect, learn, collaborate and merge our strengths.

Decision makers in business and society, AI-practitioners and representatives from public authorities from all over the world will meet in Ghent to connect with people and bring together and explore stories of connecting and generative practices.

The World appreciative Inquiry conference is held every three years. The last decade, the conference was held three times in the US and lately in Kathmandu, Nepal (2009). In April 2012, it will be organized in Europe for the first time in history. The marvellous city of Ghent (Belgium) will set the scenery for this event. The meeting will take place in ICC International Convention Center Ghent.

Further details will be forthcoming on the conference website ([HYPERLINK "http://www.2012WAIC.org" }](http://www.2012WAIC.org)).

By organizing this meeting, we provide you with an excellent opportunity to meet and interact with the conference participants and to welcome successful insights through the application of AI and other strengths-based change methodologies.

We look forward to welcoming you in Ghent in April 2012.

Yours sincerely,



René Bouwen, professor Emeritus of KULeuven; **Luc Verheijen**, adviser and partner in Kessels & Smit, The Learning Company; **Arno Vansichen**, co-founder and partner in Evenwicht; **Bert Verleysen**, employee at Stebo vzw; **Griet Bouwen**, staff member of Stebo vzw; **Lut Brenard**, coordinator Stebo-Academy; **Erwin De bruyn**, Ceo of Stebo vzw; **Luk Dewulf**, advisor and partner in Kessels & Smit, The Learning Company; **Wim Croonen**, HR –manager Genzyme and consultant in Evenwicht.

Local Organizing Committee: three Belgian organizations form a partnership "De Werf". They are all active in personal, organizational and community development: Stebo vzw, Kessels & Smit and Evenwicht. They have the support of professor Emeritus René Bouwen of KULeuven.

Partnership brochure: Fifth World Appreciative Inquiry Conference 25-28 April 2012 - Ghent, Belgium

1. Background information

More and detailed information on the fifth World Appreciative Inquiry Conference is available on the following website: www.2012WAIC.org

Conference theme	Towards an 'economy' of connecting strenghts: scaling-up the generative power of AI". The conference is focussing on how we can scale up the power of AI. We will study and share exceptional outcomes of the connecting capacity of AI. AI as a truly generative practice and theory will be setting the scene for this endeavour. We will learn about the mechanisms and effects of connecting change at a micro level to change at the scale of the whole.
Estimated number of participants	500
Dates/Location	The World Appreciative Inquiry Conference is held every three years. It took place 3 times in the US and the last time, in 2009, it was held in Kathmandu, Nepal. In April 2012, for the first time in its history, it will be organized in Europe. The marvellous city of Ghent in Belgium will set the scenery for this event between 25 and 28 April.
Duration	4 days+ pre-conference
Conference Inspirers	David Cooperrider – USA - Professor at Case Western Reserve University Ron Fry – USA - Professor at Case Western Reserve University
Local Organizing Committee (host organization - Belgium)	Three Belgian organizations form a partnership "De Werf". They are all active in personal, organizational and community development: Stebo vzw, Kessels & Smit and Evenwicht. They have the support of professor Emeritus René Bouwen of KULeuven.
Conference Organizing Committee (International)	This group is responsible and mandated for putting the conference program together. We worked towards a group of people who take a leading role in several European AI networks, and with a link to the origin of AI at Case Western Reserve University. <i>Members are:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Luc Verheijen – Belgium - Co-founder of the Local Organizing Committee (hosting organization) • Philippe Beliën – Belgium - Also member of the program group of the Kathmandu world AI conference 2009 • René Bouwen, professor Emeritus of KULeuven • Leif Josefsson – Sweden - Network of the Begeistring Community • Annet van de Wetering – The Netherlands - Dutch AI network • Danielle Zandee – The Netherlands - Professor at Nyenrode Business Universiteit

	<p><i>Supporting committee members:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lindsey Godwin – USA - Professor at Morehead State University – organizing committee of two former world AI conferences. • Dhruva Acharya – Nepal - Chairperson Imagine Nepal – host of 2009 World AI conference
International Advisory Board	<p>The International Advisory Board is a group of people from AI communities worldwide. They advise the Conference Organizing Committee at regular point during the design and preparation phase.</p> <p><i>Currently members of the Board are:</i> Kees Ahaus (Netherlands), Tony Asberg (Sweden), Anastasia Bukashe (South-Africa), Gervase Bushe (Canada), Joep de Jong (Netherlands), Mario Gastaldi (Italy), Carsten Hornstup (Denmark), Sue James (Australia), Jim Ludema (US), Ada Jo Mann (US), Anne Radford (United Kingdom), Daniel Richardsson (Sweden), Robyn StrattonBerkessel (US), Kay Um (South Korea), Lou Van Beirendonck (Belgium), Neena Verma (India), Ralph Weickel (US), Diana Whitney (US), Herman Wittocx (Belgium), Jacqueline Wong (Singapore), Nadya Zhexembayeva (Slovenia).</p>
Organizing secretariat	<p>Momentum, Grensstraat 8, B-3010 Leuven, Belgium Telephone: +32 (0)16 40 45 55, Fax: +32 (0)16 40 35 51</p>

Programme Overview

See www.2012WAIC.org in the course of 2011.