

POLICY PLAN 2026 - 2028

Worldview Journeys Foundation

RSIN 863862792
KvK 86104799



*Seeing the lenses that shape our world
to change our world*

Annick de Witt, director, 02-07-2026

1. Introduction

This policy plan covers the period 2026–2028 and outlines the objectives, strategy, and expected results for Worldview Journeys Foundation in the coming years. It replaces the previous policy plan (2025–2027).

Since its founding in 2022, the foundation has evolved significantly. What began with a focus on educational innovation — developing transformative learning interventions around worldviews in a university setting — has matured into something broader: an organization that combines academic research, public intellectual engagement, and scalable practical tools to address worldviews as deep leverage points for personal, cultural, and systemic change.

Our 2025 Annual Report articulates this evolution in detail, including our sharpened vision and our three-layered mission:

Worldview Journeys aims to contribute to a flourishing world for all by engaging worldviews as deep leverage points for personal, cultural, and systems change. We offer a worldview lens on the pressing challenges of our time, develop new change approaches through (action-)research on concrete societal issues, and translate our insights into scalable tools that bring worldview exploration into classrooms, organizations, and public life.

We also articulated our unique positioning claim:

We are, to our knowledge, the only organization globally that brings a worldview lens to the great challenges of our time, while translating this perspective, through rigorous and innovative (action-)research into scalable interventions for personal, cultural, and systems change.¹

¹ While several organizations work on related aspects — such as depolarization (e.g. Braver Angels, More in Common), inner development for sustainability (e.g. the Inner Development Goals initiative), or transformative education (e.g. various contemplative and integral education networks) — none, to our knowledge, specifically centers worldview exploration as the entry point for transformation, nor combines an empirically validated worldview measurement with rigorously designed transformative learning interventions and dialogical methods. Our approach is distinctive in addressing the deeper

This policy plan takes that identity as its foundation and focuses on what comes next — and this has, over the course of recent strategic reflection, come into sharper focus than before.

At the heart of Worldview Journeys lies a claim: that worldviews — the deep meaning-making frameworks through which humans make sense of reality — are a critical *leverage point* for personal, cultural, and systemic change. That is, interventions that engage this level, we contend, produce broader, more durable, and more transformative outcomes than interventions operating at shallower levels. This is the thesis on which our work, our methods, and our offering rest.

Yet this claim, however well-grounded in theory and supported by two decades of research and practice, has not yet been put to a rigorous empirical test that would allow others — funders, policymakers, institutional partners, the wider public — to see what we see. Our growing insight is that people may not recognize the potency of this work as long as the claim that underwrites it remains, in the eyes of those who do not already share our worldview, a matter of belief rather than of hard (and probably quantitative rather than qualitative) evidence. Substantiating this claim is therefore not a side project, but an important strategic priority of the coming period.

2. Strategic context: What has changed

Looking back across four years of policy plans and forward to the period ahead, three patterns shape our strategic context.

From educational innovation to systemic ambition

Our mission has evolved from developing great learning interventions to pursuing cultural and systemic change through three interrelated pathways: offering a worldview lens, advancing new change-pathways through research and innovation,

meaning-making frameworks that underlie individual perspectives, societal polarization, and larger economic, political, and technological systems, while translating these into concrete practices oriented to fostering transformative change.

and developing scalable tools, interventions, and practices. With this evolution has come a sharper understanding of the central thesis that ties these pathways together — and a recognition that empirically substantiating this thesis is what allows the three pathways to reinforce one another at full strength.

Ambition has outpaced capacity and funding

Each previous policy plan has flagged the need to secure funding for the period ahead; each time, this has been achieved — but only narrowly, and without the kind of stable, multi-year funding that would allow for sustained focus and growth. Going into 2026, our financial situation remains insecure, and this must be addressed structurally rather than project by project.

The same pattern shows up on the capacity side. While a small but growing team has begun to take shape around the founding director — including Topher Hunt's long-standing work on the platform, Peter Schmitt's role in bringing the worldview-work into organizations, and Rebecca Bouhuijs's and Dave Pendle's contribution to program delivery — the strategic, creative, and intellectual core of the foundation still leans heavily on a single person.

The gap between what we want to achieve and what this configuration can deliver is the most critical operational challenge for the coming period. Encouragingly, the trajectory is right: a growing Facilitator Network, deepening commercial partnerships, increasing platform and training revenue, and expanding academic connections at Utrecht University and beyond. The task ahead is to formalize and strengthen what is already emerging — turning a small core with extending capacity into a genuine team — while addressing the funding gap that this plan returns to in the section on organizational development.

The novelty penalty — and why empirical substantiation is the way through

Society at large still remains largely oblivious to the *worldview lens* we offer. Relatedly, we face what the literature calls a *novelty penalty* — the price one pays for pioneering pathways that operate from logics not yet widely shared or recognized (Boudreau et al., 2016). Because our work lies beyond the dominant paradigms in both advocacy and change-making networks, as well as within science and

academia, even explicit funding calls for innovation and transformation may fail to recognize the need for, and potency of, worldview-work.

This is precisely where the strategic priority of empirical substantiation comes in. We think the novelty penalty is not overcome by louder communication or better marketing but by collecting empirical support for the larger thesis our work is grounded in – that worldviews are a critical leverage point for transformative change of our current ‘poly-crisis’ – allowing it to land in conversations where it would otherwise be dismissed or overlooked. This thesis predicts that interventions that engage worldviews, as ours do, should produce effects that are larger, more durable, and broader in scope than those produced by shallower interventions. This prediction is testable. Putting it to a rigorous test may be the path through the novelty penalty toward the institutional recognition our work needs to do its job.

The need for this work could hardly be greater. Our world is increasingly on fire, with wars and humanitarian crises, with climate change and ecosystem collapse, with hyper-polarization and far-right populism in power across multiple democracies. Noteworthily, the progressive movement is also in a state of disorientation and searching for new approaches. And developments in AI foreground our inner and inately human capabilities as crucial, including in withstanding the negative impacts of this accelerating technology.

All of this means that the need for *worldview literacy* — as personal capacity, cultural practice, and institutional effort — is becoming ever more apparent. Our work has been ahead of its time for years; now that the time is catching up, we are ready to deliver not only research-based insights but rigorously developed and empirically validated interventions, practices, and tools.

3. Strengths, opportunities, weaknesses, and threats

Strengths

- A genuinely unique contribution: no other organization globally combines empirically validated worldview measurement, rigorously designed and

scalable transformative learning interventions, innovative dialogical methods, and a larger vision and pathway for cultural and systemic change.

- The Worldview Test is accessible, engaging, and academically grounded — now taken by nearly 100,000 people from over 200 countries.
- The Worldview Journey has been tested with thousands of participants and consistently produces significant learning outcomes.
- The SoC dialogue method has proven remarkably reliable in fostering constructive conversation across difference, with outstanding evaluation results (e.g., 98% (!) recommendation rates in Break your Bubble sessions).
- A growing body of peer-reviewed publications provides academic credibility.
- An emerging international Facilitator Network extends our delivery capacity into new sectors and contexts.
- A distinctive and increasingly confident public voice through World/views and media publications.
- A founding director with a rare combination of academic rigor, practical skill, creative vision, and deep intrinsic motivation — supported by a growing team of collaborators bringing complementary expertise.

Opportunities

- Escalating polarization worldwide creates growing demand for approaches that bridge worldview divides — making our work more relevant than ever.
- The crisis facing the progressive movement creates an opening for the kind of reflexive, integrative analysis we offer – attuning to a diversity of worldviews rather than promoting its own as the only right one.
- Growing interest in ‘inner development’ for sustainability creates a receptive audience, while our approach is more specific and more grounded than most offerings in this space.
- International op-ed placement would step-change our visibility with policymakers, funders, and the broader public.

Weaknesses

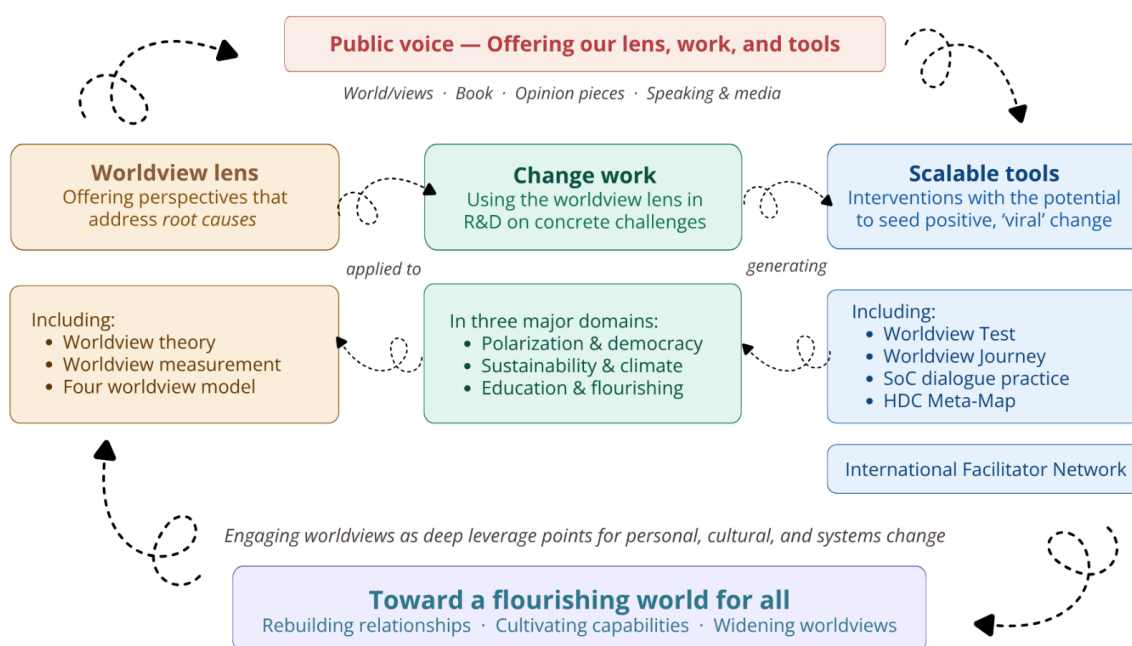
- Although a small but growing team has formed around the founding director, the strategic, creative, and intellectual core of the foundation still leans heavily on a single person.
- Funding remains precarious and project-dependent, without stable multi-year income.
- The work's pioneering and cross-cutting nature, and the apparent abstraction of 'worldviews' as an organizing concept (the 'paradigm blindness' in society), makes it harder for funders to recognize the value of the work and support it.
- Marketing and audience-building have been inconsistent due to capacity constraints.
- The organization's visibility does not yet match the quality, originality, and relevance of its contribution.

Threats

- Concentration risk: a sustained interruption to the founding director's capacity (illness, departure, burnout) would significantly constrain operations until the team is more fully built out.
- Continued financial insecurity could force a scaling back of ambitions or loss of the founder to better-resourced positions elsewhere.
- The Worldview Test has limitations in non-Western contexts that require further research and development.
- In a highly polarized environment, any work that names worldview dynamics risks being perceived as politically partisan, even when it is not.
- More generally, the worldview-work moves beyond the shield of 'objectivity' and 'neutrality' that characterizes many approaches. Though we believe this step is crucial in our current global context – which includes a major meaning crisis – it demands to be handled with great care and reflexivity.

4. Ambitions 2026–2028: The three pathways

Our ambitions for this period are organized along the three pathways through which we pursue our mission: a worldview lens on the issues of our time, research and innovation on worldview-based change, and scalable tools for wider use.



Pathway 1: Worldview Lens

Offering illuminating insight on hot topics, demonstrating what a worldview lens reveals that conventional analysis is blind to.

Wherever complex issues seem intractable, a worldview lens has a unique capacity to 'zoom out' and illuminate the different approaches and their underlying assumptions. This results in a meta-perspective that allows us to understand the issue more comprehensively, while opening new pathways for change-making. This pathway carries this lens into the public conversation, through writing, speaking, and media that make it visible and accessible to a broader audience.

Public voice: Op-eds, Substack, and public speaking

Our public engagement strategy works across three reinforcing channels. Our World/views Substack remains our primary public channel — a testing ground for ideas, a community-building tool, and an archive of thought leadership. We also aim to publish opinion pieces to prominent international outlets (e.g. *The New York Times*, *The Guardian*) to demonstrate to a wider public how a worldview lens can illuminate the great issues of our time. And we will pursue speaking engagements, podcast appearances, and other media opportunities to create multiplier effects.

Concretely, this includes perspectives that:

- Argue for a new understanding of polarisation as an issue of worldview-conflict and worldview-protection (rather than partisan animosity);
- Put progressives' postmodern worldview-problem, and how it alienates those with other views, on the agenda;
- Speak to the search for meaning and the resurgence of (traditional) religion and what worldview-work may offer in this context.

Pathway 2: Change work

Testing the Worldview Journey as cross-sector intervention that engages the 'deep leverage point' of worldview, simultaneously delivering impacts in multiple domains.

Applying the worldview-lens, we engage societal challenges, using (action) research and development, to offer up new ways to understand and analyze these challenges, and point to new change pathways.² We partner with universities, organizations, and civic institutions to investigate how worldview dynamics play out in specific contexts — and develop innovative approaches that intervene at the deeper level where transformation becomes possible. Our ongoing work spans three broad domains: 1)

² Such worldview analysis has proven valuable for surfacing deeper assumptions across diverse fields, from biotechnology (De Witt et al., 2015) and wildfire management (Ruane, 2018) to sustainable lifestyles (De Witt et al., in press) and education (De Witt, 2026).

polarization & democracy; 2) climate, ecology, & sustainability; 3) health, education, & human flourishing.

Breaking through Polarization. A Worldview-Level Intervention for Strengthening Democracy. This is our central empirical project of this period. It aims to test whether the Worldview Journey — an intervention that engages the worldview level — is better able to respond to the challenge of political polarization and our decaying democracies. Additionally, it tests whether interventions that engage deep leverage points (like worldviews) produce outcomes that are broader, more durable, and more transformative than interventions operating at shallower levels — as Meadows predicted in her famous thesis about deep leverage points and their ability to effect systemic change. This widely cited but rarely tested proposition is itself part of what the study sets out to examine. Funding for the project is being sought.

Beyond that, our ambition is to:

- Potentially apply for a larger research grant (e.g. ERC Consolidator grant?)
- Create a team with solid connections to the different impact domains;
- Re-design of the complete intervention for accessibility and transferability.

Generative Dialogue Lab. We aim to continue with our activities at the Generative Dialogue Lab at Utrecht University, including the monthly *Break your Bubble* sessions, which we hope to develop as a model to be replicated in other institutional settings. We are currently awaiting response to an application that would secure follow-up funding for this.

Academic publications. Several papers are planned in this period, including:

- *Toward a Eudaimonic Theory of Cultural Change and Worldview Transformation* — to be presented at the International Sustainability Transitions Conference (IST 2026) in Zurich, where our director co-convenes Track 12: *Navigating the Meta Level: Worldviews, Sensemaking, and Cultural Evolution in Sustainability Transitions*. The paper argues that dominant approaches to "changing hearts and minds" fail because they rest on inadequate theories of human nature, and proposes that worldviews transform through conditions that activate developmental potential.

- *Toxic Polarization as a Worldview Crisis* — a theoretical reframing of contemporary polarization through the worldview lens, building on the conceptual foundations of the *Breaking through Polarization* project, and last year's Substack essay, '[Toxic Polarization is Killing Us.](#)'
- *An integrative approach to fostering sustainable lifestyles: worldviews and the change-strategies of translation and transformation* (in press, [Handbook of Research on Sustainable Lifestyles](#), Edward Elgar).
- *Facilitating Generative Dialogue. The Design of a Practice that Fosters Constructive Conversations, Democratic Capabilities, and Transformative Learning* ([under review](#)).
- *Designing an Education of the Future: A Human Democratic Capabilities Meta-Map for a Planetary Era* ([just published](#)).

Pathway 3: Scalable tools

Tools and practices for personal, cultural, and institutional change and transformation.

This pathway translates the worldview lens and research insights into concrete offerings: a public program of recurring trainings, workshops, and open sessions, alongside organizational engagements and the platform that supports it all.

A consistent public program. In this period we are building a recurring public program with a clear, communicable cadence, aiming for:

- [Worldview Journey](#) — offered every year, in partnership with Gaia Education
- Workshop: Facilitating [Generative Dialogue](#) — offered twice per year
- Facilitator training — offered once every few years
- Open Generative Dialogue sessions — ideally every month, as accessible low-threshold entry points and community-building moments
- The development of new course based on the [HDC Meta-Map](#)

The program runs primarily online, with local offerings available on request. It functions as both the public face of our work and the engine through which the Facilitator Network develops, gains experience, and grows.

Organizational engagements. Alongside the public program, we develop and deliver worldview-work for organizations. The current anchor is our engagement with Empact/Feedem, led by Peter Schmitt and the director, with the potential to develop into a broader B2B offering as we learn what works and what is needed.

Platform and tools. The Worldview Test and platform, with a plethora of functionalities, including research tools, group tests / culture scan, and worldview-diverse groups, continues under Topher Hunt's ongoing development. The platform sustains the back-end of everything in this pathway: it makes the tools accessible, supports facilitator workflows, and enables the foundation to operate at scale without proportional growth in operational overhead.

Toward shared stewardship. As the Facilitator Network matures, the public program shifts gradually from being director-led toward being increasingly co-delivered by trained facilitators. This is not an overnight transition — building the trust, training, and coordination required takes years — but it is the direction of travel, and a deliberate one. The Network is not only a delivery mechanism; it is part of how the worldview-work continues beyond any single person.

A book on dialogue and worldviews. A priority for this period is the completion of a book on the Stream of Consciousness (SoC) dialogue practice and its potential as a pathway for cultural and worldview change. Experience over time has shown that this dialogue practice is an accessible entry point into deeper conversations that access or approach the worldview- and meaning-making layer. The book draws on nearly two decades of practice, academic research, and is aimed at a broad audience of educators, facilitators, leaders, and engaged citizens. We expect the publication of this book to be a step-change moment for our visibility and reach.

5. Realizing our ambitions: organization development

Taken together, these pathways represent a coherent and ambitious agenda, which requires gradually extending and formalizing the modest team structure that has begun to take shape. Our aim is therefore to move toward a small, sustainable team in which key collaborators are compensated and core support functions are covered. Specifically:

- *Develop the emerging collaborations around facilitator development and program delivery into a paid role over time.* These collaborations are growing organically and could become formalized roles on a paid basis over time.
- *Add a (parttime) communications & fundraising lead.* This role would carry the middle layer that is currently squeezed into the margins of the director's week: managing public-facing work, coordinating events and activities, building relationships, and developing grant pipelines. Combining communications and fundraising into one role keeps the structure modest while addressing the two areas where lack of sustained attention most directly limits what the foundation can achieve.
- *Compensate the programmer's work on our technical platform (which has been done for years on a pro bono basis).* Moving this contribution onto a modest, reliable retainer reflects both its value and our commitment to placing the foundation on more sustainable footing.
- *Build a modest base of unrestricted income.* Alongside these steps, we aim to grow a reliable floor of unrestricted revenue — through Facilitator Training fees, platform subscriptions, paid World/views subscriptions, and organizational engagements — that covers core operating costs and reduces dependence on the timing of grant cycles.
- *Strengthen board capacity as appropriate.* As the work develops, we will continue to invest in our board's ability to support the organization, including where helpful expanding with members who bring complementary expertise in fundraising, organizational development, or relevant networks.

What this unlocks. Even these modest steps would meaningfully change what the foundation can do. With this basic structure in place, the ambitions described in the previous section move from aspirational to deliverable. The director can give sustained attention to the book, research projects, and the public intellectual work that drive the foundation's distinctive contribution. Communications and audience-building become consistent rather than episodic. Fundraising becomes proactive rather than reactive. And the foundation begins to operate at a scale that matches the quality, originality, and societal relevance of its work — and the urgency of the moment it is responding to.

6. Financial outlook

Currently our financial situation is insecure. We have developed several promising projects and are in the process of seeking funding, while also awaiting responses to project applications. Additional income is expected from trainings, platform usage, paid World/views subscribers, and assignments for organizations. However, greater long-term funding is needed to sustainably pursue our ambitious mission.

Revenue strategy. We aim to develop a more sustainable revenue model:

- *Earned revenue:* Facilitator Training fees, workshop and speaking fees, platform subscriptions, paid World/views subscribers, and organizational consulting (Culture Scan, Worldview Journey for teams).
- *Project funding:* Grant applications for 'Breaking Through Polarization,' and continuation of the Generative Dialogue Lab.
- *Strategic philanthropy:* Targeted outreach to foundations whose missions align with ours — in the spaces of dialogue, democracy, inner development, education innovation, and sustainability transformation.
- *Book-related income:* Advances, royalties, and the speaking/consulting opportunities that a published book generates.

Key funding targets for 2026–2028:

- Secure project funding for 'Breaking Through Polarization'
- Secure continuation funding for the Generative Dialogue Lab at UU
- Grow earned revenue from Worldview Journey, Facilitator Training, workshops, and speaking to a level that covers basic operating costs
- Develop the worldview-work for organizations in partnership with consultants
- Explore book advance/publishing deal
- Find 1–3 philanthropic partners that are willing to commit to our work
- Fund the Communications & Fundraising Lead position

7. Accountability

Each year, our income and expenditure are accounted for in our financial statements, and our activities and results are reported in our annual report. Both are published on our website.

We report the outcomes of our research in peer-reviewed academic journals. These reports are announced on our website and through our communications.

Lastly, our interventions are designed to ultimately become learning innovations and resources that can be widely used by educators, trainers, and institutions worldwide through our platform and Facilitator Network, so that they benefit as many people and contexts as possible.

8. Organizational details

KvK number: 86104799

VAT number: NL863862792B01

ANBI status: since 6 June 2023

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Board composition and director

Chair: Froukje Jansen

Secretary: Maarten Robben

Treasurer: Tim Manschot

Board member: Mirjam de Groot

Director: Annick de Witt

Remuneration policy

The board works on a voluntary basis. The director has a permanent employment contract since August 2024.