

EARTHCARE'S FINANCIAL PRINCIPLES

Earthcare's financial principles are based on the Permaculture ethics of *Earthcare*, *Peoplecare* and *Surplus Share/Fair Share* and on the *Laws of Reciprocity & Return*.

(1) Sliding Scale

Costs for all of Earthcare's educational work are based on a sliding scale, where participants decide on the amount to pay across the scale, appropriate to their income. The lowest amount is for lower income people and students, the highest for higher income people as well as externally funded organisations and businesses sponsoring a participant to attend on their behalf. This range simplistically represents wealth discrepancy in society, with the aim of making the workshop accessible to everyone whilst still enabling it to be viable for the tutors and organisers. For short workshops the bottom figure is generally half the top figure. People are encouraged to give as generously as they are able, with consideration for the value of the workshop for them.

(2) Surplus Share

(a) When a sponsor (e.g., local council, business) covers all workshop overheads, the work is offered for free. Additionally, participants are encouraged to donate to Earthcare, with consideration for the value they have received from the workshop and what they can afford, to support a local project that reflects its aims. A range may be suggested, such as \$1 - \$100. The donation may go directly to the organisation hosting the workshop in a local area. A percent may also go to the tutor/s depending on the rate they're contracted for.

(b) When Earthcare runs its own courses, e.g., the annual Permaculture course, tutors and administrators generally work for the lowest end of tertiary education's national rate, and as well, the budget is based on a high-end break-even number of students to bring down the cost per person. If there are more attendees and a profit is made, it is shared between Earthcare and staff (tutors, cooks, administrators), acknowledging their extra effort for each additional participant. This principle always brings surprises!

(3) Tutor/Facilitator Rates

When Earthcare works for or with other organisations, tutor's and facilitator's rates (whether contracted independently or under Earthcare) are based on the actual source of the funding and operate on a three-tiered scale: community groups – educational organisations – corporate businesses.

(4) Other Means of Exchange

If a potential participant is genuinely too poor to pay for a course at the lowest end of the sliding scale, Earthcare applies whichever of following is appropriate. The aim is to broaden the circle of exchange and enable everyone, whatever their personal circumstance or location, to honour what they receive, doing their part to sustain the whole web of life.

(i) One out of nine people can request a **part or full sponsorship** in exchange for an agreed amount of practical assistance before, during or after the event.

(ii) Earthcare provides a letter of support, including intended outcomes and skills learnt, to the potential participant, to accompany their letter of request for **sponsorship from friends, organisations and businesses in their own locality**. In advance of the course, the participant writes a contract with the sponsor/s for delivery of/sharing of the competencies gained during the course. This is effectively a work exchange with their sponsor.

(iii) Participant organises a **direct work exchange** with the tutor, in lieu of tutor's personal fees, and pays for the rest of the course.

(iv) If a course is held outside of New Zealand, Earthcare supported by the tutor/s may by arrangement **bequeath the participant's work exchange to a local organisation** whose aims and work it endorses.

(v) The participant can pay in local LETS currency (see below) and Earthcare may **bequeath these Green Dollars to a local organisation member**.

(5) Alternative Local Currency (LETS system)

Earthcare is a member of HANDS (How About Non Dollar System) in Golden Bay, offering educational work and resources for part HANDS to locals and using the HANDS earned to pay for venue hire and food for its courses. HANDS are also interchangeable with some other LETS systems internationally. When Robina worked in Capetown, she offered part of her work for the local currency, TALENTS, which she will either spend there to support the local economy in a minute way or transfer back to Earthcare's account in Golden Bay.

(6) Seed & Support Funding

Seed funding helps 'kick start' a new initiative. Support funding assists an established initiative in ongoing work. When Earthcare has a 'waterfall financial flow,' support funding will become a significant aspect of its work. For example: In 1996, New Zealanders and Australians could donate to the 'Africa Link' to support the work of S.E.E.D. in impoverished squatter settlement schools, by

providing tools and seeds for school garden projects. In 2010, Robina will donate ten percent of earnings from her Capetown workshops to S.E.E.D. for similar purposes.

(7) Tithing

Some people donate a percentage of their income (generally 10%) to organisations or individuals making a difference in the world. Donations are usually made regularly, often through auto-deposit. Earthcare welcomes those who use this principle or are considering it to contribute to its Resource Development work or for Project Seed Funding.