

Ethics outreach by teaching materials

The Idea

This document outlines an idea for ethics outreach through teaching materials. It contains links to additional living documents, all of which are works in progress. All feedback is much appreciated.

The general idea is to develop teaching materials for educational purposes designed to introduce important ideas that might inspire talented young people to do good. If adopted by teachers, impactful ideas would then be disseminated in a highly scalable fashion.

In the Norwegian educational system, there are ethics classes in primary and secondary schools, as well as in high schools and universities that include one or more lessons dedicated to applied ethics. There are also popular ethics courses offered outside the state educational system, like the humanist confirmation program. All in all, Norwegian ethics classes reach about 200 000 students annually, or 1/25 of the Norwegian population. Moreover, there is now a strong focus on interdisciplinarity in the Norwegian educational system, and many topics in ethics are suitable for interdisciplinary projects involving other subjects. Therefore, teaching materials on ethics could potentially reach even more students. Although there is a greater focus on ethics in the Norwegian educational system than in most other countries, the potential is great in other countries as well. See our document [☰ Curricula for ethics classes](#) for more on ethics education in Norway and other countries.

It is common for teachers in Norway to use existing teaching materials when planning a lesson. Most teachers use materials offered through the digital platforms administered by the great Norwegian publishing houses such as Cappelen-Damm, Aschehoug and Gyldendal, in addition to public institutions like NDLA and NRK. These actors are credible, and have a good offering. However, current offerings do not focus on the ethical ideas that are likely to inspire young people to further reflection, investigation or action.

The challenge for this project is to make teaching materials that are good enough that one or more of these actors would want to adopt the material to their platform. To do this we first need to answer the following question: What are the characteristics of good teaching materials? We outline an answer to this question here [☰ Criteria for evaluating teaching materials](#) .

On the basis of these criteria, we develop materials that can be found here

[☰ Teaching materials](#) . We then test the materials out and do our best to measure the expected impact, conditional on uptake. If we can demonstrate that some particular set of materials is net positive if adopted by teachers in their ethics classes, we will attempt to disseminate the materials to various platforms for teaching materials. Here is our [☰ Dissemination strategy](#) . See the [☰ Impact assessment](#) for more details on our reasoning, motivations, and long-term ambitions. Here is also the project plan for the project, which documents activities so far, and our plan going forward [☰ Project description - Ethics outreach through teaching materials](#) .