

Cambridge Festival 2025: leading the charge on climate action and sustainability

From 19 March to 4 April, the Cambridge Festival will tackle the climate crisis head-on with an exciting array of events focused on sustainable solutions, groundbreaking research, and real-world action. In a year where climate change has never been more urgent, the festival will spotlight innovative ideas and hands-on initiatives that could change the course of our future.

ABCs of Climate Action: Change! Connections! Curriculum! (21 March) focuses on the stories of school children. This event will feature the innovative creative project [ABC, or Anthropology By Children](#) developed by social anthropologists Dr Kelly Fagan Robinson and Dr Hildegard Diemberger from the Department of Social Anthropology at Cambridge. The team are spending three intensive months mapping out the ways in which teachers and students in the UK, Nepal and Italy schools connect environment, climate, and biodiversity across a number of nationally determined curricular priorities. Dr Robinson said: “We are aiming to show that environment, climate and biodiversity education is at its best when it joins curricular content with local context to support young people's connection to and appetite for preserving their spaces and places”.

Interested in finding out who you can do to help climate change? **Climate Intervention: a Distraction or a Necessity?** (21 March) is inviting the public to come along and explore the role of climate interventions and assess whether they are essential for meaningful progress, or if they divert our attention from the systemic changes needed for a sustainable future. Hosted by the Centre for Climate Repair at the University of Cambridge, this event will help deepen your understanding of the urgent climate crisis and contribute to a meaningful dialogue about the paths we can take to address it.

What do 300 secondary school students think about climate change? In **Green Dialogues: A Debate for the Planet** (1 April), we've invited students from Parkside Community College to the historic Cambridge Union Debating Chamber to debate and vote on a series of motions concerning climate justice, inter-generational responsibilities and the most effective actions for students to accelerate government action.

Children are the future but how can futuristic technologies help us in the fight against climate change. In **Solar Chemical Technologies: A Presentation by Professor Erwin Reisner** (22 March), learn more about futuristic solar technologies that use waste as precious resource for a circular economy. Professor Reisner will look at the concept, design and prototypes of devices performing solar chemistry to achieve a net-zero 2050 economy.

On research trying to tackle the climate change emergency, join a panel of experts as they discuss their research in **Don't call it climate change: This is already a climate emergency** (20 March). Panellists include:

- Dr Nerea Irigoyen, an Associate Professor of Virology in the Department of Pathology who studies the role of virus genome translation in viral pathogenicity and disease.
- Dr Cristina Peñasco, an Associate Professor in Public Policy, Department of Politics and International Studies at the University of Cambridge and Senior Research Economist and an expert in Climate Finance at the Bank of France. Dr Peñasco's research bring together multidisciplinary research in environmental economics, innovation policy and energy economics in green and energy efficiency technologies, with a focus on the policy instruments enabling the transition to low-carbon economies.
- Dr Thant Myint-U, a United Nations Special Adviser on Humanitarian Diplomacy who has served on three UN peacekeeping operations.

Events looking at sustainability include **Creating a sustainable neighbourhood at Eddington** (27 March) where Head of Development for North West Cambridge, Matt Johnson, will be speaking with other experts to discuss neighbourhood planning with a focus on Cambridge's Eddington. The event will explore the sustainability ambitions of the development including the site-wide infrastructure, the quality of homes, and the natural environment, as well as how the future strategy is underpinned by three key principles: fostering healthy living, reducing wholeplace carbon footprint and designing for today and the future.

Also tackling sustainability is **Discover the Future of Sustainable Eating in Cambridge!** Taking place on 2 April, Cambridge Sustainable Food and the University of Cambridge ThinkLab will discuss the findings in a recent project to uncover the challenges faced by residents in eating a climate-friendly diet in Cambridge. This panel will explore how local food systems can be transformed to create a healthier, more sustainable future for all. With Cambridge being reported as the "most unequal city" in 2020, join us to find out how we can feed our city fairly.

Get hands-on with sustainability at the Department of Engineering in **Smart and Sustainable Infrastructure and Cities** (29 March). Two interactive activities offer participants the opportunity to engage with the concepts of smart infrastructure and sustainable city planning in interactive and practical ways. City Futures: People, Technology and Public Value will explore how society can make sustainable practices and innovative solutions central to urban development and aims to inspire forward-thinking approaches that integrate sustainability and innovation to create more liveable, resilient, and inclusive cities. In Building Smarter Bridges, attendees will have the chance to play the Bridge Builder Simulator, a computer game that allows them to

design, test, and assess bridges and learn how fibre optic sensors and other smart technologies are transforming infrastructure like bridges. The activity aims to engage participants in interactive learning about smart and efficient bridge design.

An event looking at the relationship between humans and nature from a different perspective is **Music & Words: Humans [with/in/and/vs/or] Nature** (26 March). Performed by the choirs of Churchill and Murray Edwards Colleges and directed by Dr Ewan Campbell, Director of Music at both colleges, this performance will examine, inexactly and holistically, the coexistence of humans and nature by using a diverse and often contradictory set of sources ranging from the very ancient to the as yet unwritten.

Images available here:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/13xpAygNirtGc84reW5lSHpon4oedKSb0?usp=drive_link

About the Cambridge Festival

The Cambridge Festival is a vibrant, multidisciplinary event that showcases the best of Cambridge's world-class research, innovation, and creativity. Spanning a diverse range of topics—from science, technology, health, arts, humanities and social sciences—the Festival invites participants of all ages to explore ideas, engage with experts, and ignite their curiosity whilst debating some of the world's biggest questions.

Through a packed programme of lectures, workshops, performances and interactive, hands-on activities, the Festival fosters meaningful conversations about the issues shaping our world today and into the future.

Organised by the University of Cambridge, the Festival is committed to making cutting-edge knowledge accessible to the public while celebrating the power of collaboration and community. The annual event attracts thousands of attendees from around the globe, offering an inclusive space for learning, dialogue, and inspiration.

For more information, please visit: <https://www.festival.cam.ac.uk/>

About the University of Cambridge

Founded in 1209, the University of Cambridge is one of the world's leading educational and research institutions. With 31 Colleges and over 100 departments, it attracts a diverse and dynamic community of students and scholars from around the globe. Cambridge is committed to addressing global challenges through interdisciplinary research and innovation, with a major impact on the UK and global economies.

For more information on the University of Cambridge, visit: www.cam.ac.uk

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