



# UK UNIVERSITIES CLIMATE NETWORK

## Our Story

The **UK Universities Climate Network (UUCN)** is a growing group of over 85 UK-based universities and research organisations working together to deliver a low carbon, resilient world.

Our Network enables collaboration to advance climate action nationally and internationally. We disseminate climate change research and analysis, conduct evidence-based public engagement, and share evidence for climate action with policymakers, including the UK Government.

We first assembled in Autumn 2019 as the COP26 Universities Network with the goal of ensuring the academic sector played its role in delivering a successful UN COP26 Climate Change Conference in Glasgow in November 2021.

In March 2022, we became the UUCN and will continue our work in the lead up to COP27 and beyond. Our Secretariat is currently based at the Grantham Institute for Climate Change and Environment at Imperial College London.

## We are...



- **Collaborative:** we enable the sharing of knowledge and best practices across disciplines and institutions



- **Grassroots:** we are an inclusive community of researchers and professional staff from a range of disciplines and institutions



- **Expert:** as a collective of academic experts, we are a leading and trusted voice for climate change research that informs policy



- **Innovative:** by leveraging expertise across our diverse membership, we are able to develop unique evidence-based perspectives and insights

# UUCN in Numbers

- Membership includes over **85** UK universities and research organisations.
- Coordinated and published a series of **13** [briefing papers](#) on key climate change topics by over **100** authors from member universities.
- Recorded and released **10** episodes of our podcast series, [The Climate Papers](#), in partnership with Planet Pod.
- Compiled and published a [database](#) of over **560** UK-based climate change experts.
- Amassed over **1,900** followers on Twitter and over **800** on LinkedIn.
- Hosted or co-hosted **seven** events in Glasgow at COP26.
- Supported COP26 negotiations by hosting **five** [research fellowships](#) in the lead up to the conference, which provided comprehensive review, translation and interpretation of scientific evidence on key climate change topics.



**85+**

UK universities and research organisations

**13**

briefing papers on key climate change topics

**560**

UK-based climate change experts



## Our work areas include



Engagement with Policymakers



Public Engagement



Climate Risk



Education and Skills Transformation



Innovation



Net Zero Universities



International Partnerships

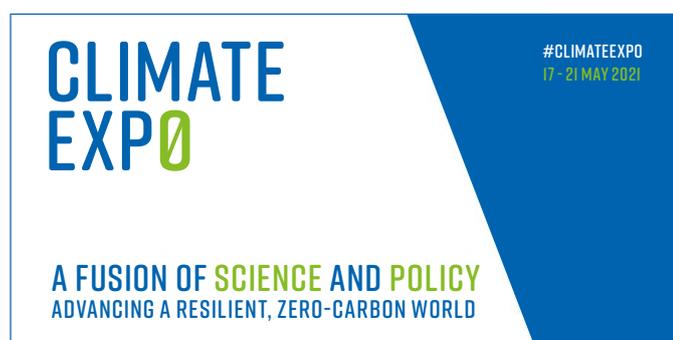
# Mobilising Universities for Climate Action

In the lead up to COP26, our work created momentum, engaged public and business audiences, and provided support to the UK Government.

## Climate ExpO

We partnered with universities in Italy to plan, organise and deliver the **Climate ExpO conference**, held 17 – 21 May 2021. This virtual event featured over 700 live and pre-recorded presentations, with contributors from over 40 countries and over 5,300 attendees from more than 150 countries.

It also included five Ministers from the UK and Italy as speakers, and sessions co-designed with policymakers.



## Climate Risk Work Programme

To highlight the latest evidence in advance of COP26 and better equip experts, we carried out a major work programme on climate risk and its communication. We awarded **seven fellowships** to 10 academics and practitioners with expertise in this topic.

Our work programme included hosting the **Climate Risk Summit**, held 29 September – 1 October 2021, which brought together key experts for an in-depth examination of climate risk topics. Building on this event, our fellows created several resources, including a handbook and a toolkit on climate risk communication.

## Engagement with Policymakers

Since our creation, we have been engaging with policymakers and building networks within the UK Government to **strengthen the interaction between academics and policymakers**.

To highlight the findings of our briefing notes, we held a series of **roundtables with government** and other stakeholders, including officials from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, and Cabinet Office.

We also worked with BEIS and the Department for Education to shape the development of the UK Government's **Green Jobs Taskforce** and provided input to the Cabinet Office on pathways for meeting commitments under the Glasgow Climate Pact.

## Leading by Example in Higher Education

Universities must 'walk the talk' in the transition to net zero. Therefore, we have taken several actions to enable the higher education sector to play a key role in the transition.

We published a working paper on **mainstreaming climate education**, which set out how UK universities can embed climate change education into their curricula and what policy support is needed.

We also published a briefing paper on **carbon off-setting to support net zero strategies** in higher education institutions. As well, we collaborated with key partners to promote net zero actions among our membership.



As part of our climate risk work programme, researchers from the Climate Action Unit at University College London developed a practical guide to help experts in communicating climate risk. **Photo credit:** Freya Roberts, UCL Climate Action Unit.

# On the Ground at COP26

We delivered an extensive series of initiatives and events for COP26 and maintained an active presence on the ground in Glasgow. Here are some of the highlights of our work at COP:

- To showcase the unique role that the academic community can play in public engagement on climate change, we were awarded a stand in the **COP26 Green Zone**.
  - Our members directly engaged public attendees in four to five activities each day of the conference, which included games, art displays and technology demonstrations.



Our Green Zone stand at COP26 was an opportunity to disseminate our work and engage the public in games, art and demonstrations. **Photo credit:** Supergen ORE Hub.

- Organised a **Climate Innovation Showcase** at the University of Strathclyde for the duration of COP26. It included an *Images of Climate Innovation* photo exhibition and a series of events highlighting the creative techniques used by researchers to address climate change.



ActNowFilm features young people from around the world sharing their experiences of climate change, their personal climate change pledges, and their demands of the COP Negotiators. **Photo credit:** University of Bath Institute for Policy Research/Cambridge Zero.

- Mobilised youth from around the world to create **ActNowFilm** – a 30-minute film profiling youth voices on climate change and their hopes for COP26. The film was shown at an event in the Green Zone, which included a panel discussion with youth contributors.
- Created impactful and engaging media products to highlight the crucial role of the academic sector at COP26.
  - Collaborated with Planet Pod and the University of Strathclyde to create the **podcast series COP Conversations**, consisting of a podcast a day from Glasgow during COP26.
  - Worked with the Creative Media Academy at the University of the West of Scotland to create a **video series** documenting the work of our members at the conference.
- Partnered on the delivery of a panel event on climate risk and its communication as well as an additional event on the challenges and opportunities for skills and education to address climate change.

# Bringing Universities Together Across the Globe

International engagement has been a key part of our work so far and will be crucial to our mission as the UK hands over the COP Presidency.

In the lead up to COP26, we partnered with leading research centres in Singapore to facilitate a series of [briefing notes](#) on key climate policy issues in the ASEAN region. We also engaged closely with other networks of universities around the world to share our experiences and align objectives.

We collaborated with the Cabinet Office and other partners to plan, organise and deliver two virtual meetings between COP President Alok Sharma and university networks from around the world to discuss the unique role of universities in meeting climate commitments. The COP President intends to continue to hold additional meetings with this group of university networks in the lead up to COP27.



We played a lead role in convening university networks from around the world for a meeting with COP President Alok Sharma to discuss what universities can do to achieve the goals of the Glasgow Climate Pact.

In preparation for COP27 in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, we have been making connections with Egyptian higher education partners. We are currently supporting a newly developed consortium of universities in Egypt who will represent their country's academic sector at COP27.



In preparation for COP27 in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, we have been making connections with Egyptian partners and offering support to Egyptian universities.

Our work is proudly supported by:



Website: [www.gla.ac.uk/research/cop26/](http://www.gla.ac.uk/research/cop26/)  
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