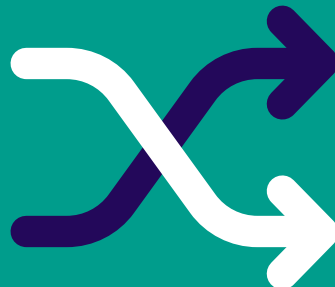
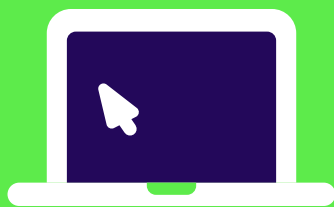
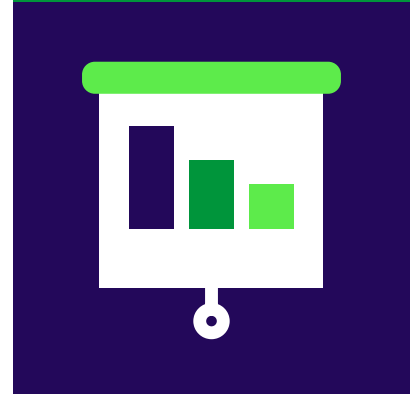
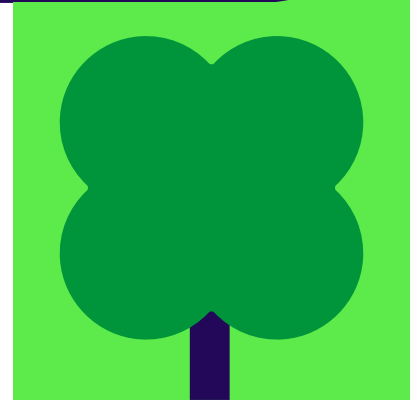


The Climate Connection

Delivering on our climate change strategy

2024–25
progress report





Launched in 2024, our climate change strategy, *The Climate Connection 2024–2026*, is our organisational response to climate change. We have committed to an ambitious portfolio of climate projects across arts, cultural heritage, education and the English language. And we have pledged to explore new partnerships to amplify our global impact, while operating in a more environmentally responsible manner.

This report marks the mid-way point in delivering this strategy and assesses our progress. Covering the 2024–25 financial year, it looks at our work with partners, our key achievements and our performance against our strategic climate objectives.

We recognise that our measurement systems are still evolving, and there are varying levels of maturity for reporting across our work and programmes. A final impact report will be published in 2026, providing a comprehensive evaluation of our impact.

The British Council's role in addressing climate change

Climate change is a top priority for all our stakeholders – young people especially. And governments worldwide are increasingly recognising the crucial role of education and culture – our core sectors – in shaping effective climate responses. With a presence in 100 countries, a reach of 600 million people, and expanding networks of young changemakers, we are uniquely positioned to create new partnerships with the UK and meaningful impact in our collaborative effort to address climate challenges. This contributes to the British Council's purpose to support peace and prosperity by building connections, understanding and trust between people in the UK and countries worldwide.



Our 2024–25 highlights



Supported 44K+ young people

to participate in climate initiatives and climate policy platforms, directly and through our partners

Provided 8K+ English language teachers

with online training to deepen their awareness of climate change and integrate it into their lessons

Enrolled 7K+ learners

on climate-focused training courses

Mobilised £4.8 million

in funding to protect cultural heritage at risk from climate change and support artistic climate responses

Achieved a 53% reduction

in our carbon emissions since 2017–18, exceeding a target of 33 per cent by 2026

Reached 6K+ people

through COP29 and COY19 sessions and activities, advocating for the role of culture and education in climate solutions

Created 21 new partnerships

with leading sector organisations focused on arts, culture, education, young people and their response to climate change

Verified by The Social Investment Consultancy (TSIC)

The key performance indicators we use to measure our progress towards our strategic objectives have been independently verified by TSIC, ensuring that the information presented is quality assured for reliability and credibility.

Statement from TSIC on our 2024–25 activity: *The assessment reveals strong progress across all strategic objectives, with particularly notable achievements in carbon reduction, cultural heritage protection, and youth engagement. Of the five strategic areas, these three achieved 'High Impact' ratings, demonstrating the British Council's effective mobilisation of resources and strategic positioning in this area. The remaining two areas achieved 'Medium-High Impact', indicating solid foundational progress with clear pathways for enhancement.*



Progress against our strategic objectives

Objective 1: Climate and sustainability education

We are committed to strengthening climate and sustainability education and research and helping to build the resilience of education systems to climate impacts.

Empowering English teachers

We empower English teachers worldwide through our professional development resources, enhancing their knowledge, skills and agency for climate resilience and action. 2024–25 saw 8,452 enrolments on our **TeachingEnglish Climate action in language education course**. A 2024 evaluation suggests that 86 per cent of 800 participants surveyed had deepened their awareness of climate change and learned how to integrate it into their teaching.

Building climate awareness

Through our longstanding partnership with the University of Edinburgh, the **Learning for a Sustainable Future** and **Live at COP29** online courses reached 7,381 learners worldwide, showcasing how climate education and youth engagement can inspire climate action.

‘Climate teaching makes English teaching [lessons] more engaging, relevant and impactful. It prepares students not just for exams, but for global challenges.’

Climate Action in Language Education course participant

‘It’s been a transformative experience [deepening] my awareness of the environmental challenges we face.’

Live at COP29 course participant

Supporting higher education climate research

We foster climate research collaborations between the UK and the international community through our **global research funding**. In 2024–25, we supported 61 international climate research projects, contributing to global expertise and innovation in climate science, and supported 296 early-career researchers to enhance their climate action work through workshops, projects and fellowships.

Addressing Brazil’s key climate challenges

Through our delivery of the International Science Partnerships Fund on behalf of the UK Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT) and working with local partners, we supported the **Amazonia+10 Initiative**, which strengthens research and technological innovation in the Legal Amazon. Our series of bilateral workshops between the UK and Brazil supported discussions and pilot activities to address key climate challenges, such as the social impact of deforestation and the increase in infectious diseases brought about by extreme weather events.

Greening further education systems

Our **Greening TVET self-assessment tool** has supported Botswana, Ghana, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique and Tanzania to develop national greening roadmaps for their technical and vocational education and training (TVET) systems since its launch in 2023. In 2024–25, we launched seven new **international skills partnerships** to address systemic challenges related to climate change and brought together 30 government, education and industry stakeholders from 13 countries at a **UK policy seminar** on industry-led TVET for a greener future.



Objective 2: Young people and future climate leaders

We are committed to supporting young people and future leaders to build their skills and knowledge to respond to climate change and empower them to be part of the just transition to a more sustainable future.

Empowering young people through climate initiatives and platforms

In 2024–25, we engaged 44,031 young people through climate-related initiatives – both directly and in partnership.

- Our continued support of **YOUNGO** (the children and youth constituency of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change – UNFCCC), including silver sponsorship of the COY19 Conference of Youth, helped 500 youth participants attend training and advocacy initiatives, contributed to the creation of the Global Youth Statement handed to the COP29 President, and generated 200,000 social media interactions.
- We helped to equip 303 young climate negotiators from 63 countries with key negotiation, communication and climate policy skills through our grant to support the **Climate Youth Negotiator Programme**, and supported 139 negotiators to attend COP29, where they built connections and lasting peer networks.

'I gained hands-on experience in presenting climate priorities at high-level panels and side events. It boosted my confidence in advocating for my country's needs on the international stage.'

Climate Youth Negotiator Programme participant

- We appointed two climate ambassadors within our **Alumni UK network** and awarded nearly £100,000 of grants to 20 diverse climate action projects worldwide, ranging from afforestation of mangroves in UAE, waste-to-energy projects in Indonesia and green skills projects in Nigeria.
- Through our global youth leadership programme, **Youth Connect**, we equipped 42,889 young people with essential life skills and climate knowledge, enabling them to take personal and community action on climate change. Strategic partnerships with Education Above All Foundation on the **Pakistan Youth Leadership Initiative** and HSBC on our global **Climate Skills** initiative helped to expand our reach.
- Our **COP negotiation simulation events** in the UK and Baku, Azerbaijan, helped 430 young students develop key skills in negotiation, diplomacy, communication, critical thinking and climate literacy, and achieved a media reach of 1.6 million in the UK.



Supporting YOUNGO on the creation of the Global Youth Statement, handed to COP29 President H.E. Mukhtar Babayev on the last day of COY19, which was attended by 189 young participants in Azerbaijan.

Objective 3: Artistic and cultural responses to climate change

We are committed to protecting cultural heritage at risk from climate change, raising the awareness of climate change and biodiversity loss through arts and culture and supporting the sector to adopt more sustainable practices.

Protecting cultural heritage at risk from climate change

Through our **Cultural Protection Fund**, founded in partnership with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, we have funded 33 projects worth £6.7 million that safeguard heritage from climate change since 2020. In 2024–25, we allocated £3.14 million to 22 projects.

Manchar Lake Mohannas: safeguarding the last surviving houseboat village from extinction

In Pakistan, with support from the Cultural Protection Fund, NED University of Engineering and Technology worked with the Mohanna community to protect their houseboat village around Manchar Lake from the threats of seasonal drought and flooding, brought about by climate change. All 35 houseboats have been restored, and young volunteers have been trained in restoration techniques to safeguard for the future.

Raising awareness of climate change through arts and culture

We continued to support a **series of projects globally that bring together art, science and climate action**. In 2024–25, we awarded 71 grants totalling over £1.6 million to raise awareness of climate change and biodiversity loss, empowering communities to engage with environmental challenges through climate education and creative practice.

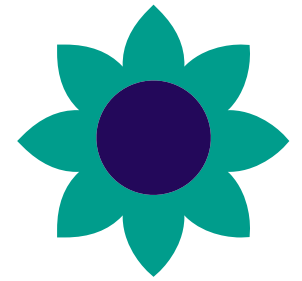
Objective 4: Environmentally responsible organisation

We are committed to decarbonising our activities and operations and being environmentally responsible.

Continuing our journey to achieve net zero by 2040

In 2024–25, we **reduced global carbon emissions by 53 per cent**, from a 2017–18 baseline, surpassing our 33 per cent reduction target for 2026. Emissions from business travel decreased by 65 per cent and building energy emissions decreased by 38 per cent. Overall emissions in our UK offices were reduced by 75 per cent.

- Our offices in Dubai, Colombo and Port Harcourt piloted measures to save energy and reduce carbon emissions, such as the installation of solar panels, which are now supplying a significant proportion of these locations' energy needs.
- In partnership with Manchester Metropolitan University, we developed a **travel carbon budget** for one of our global education programmes. In collaboration with Jigsaw consultants, we carried out a **carbon impact assessment** of an education programme.
- We developed a bespoke **carbon literacy training course**, certified by the Carbon Literacy Project, to equip staff with the knowledge and tools to identify and implement positive change, wherever they are in the world.



Objective 5: Learning and sharing knowledge

We are committed to building our organisational capacity and capability to deliver our climate ambitions and share knowledge and best practice.

The British Council at COP29 and COY19

In Baku, Azerbaijan, we collaborated with strategic partners, UK and local governments, and young people to advocate for the vital role of education, arts and culture in addressing climate change.

- In collaboration with 35 partners, we organised and contributed to 24 sessions and activities, directly reaching 6,394 people (4,734 online) and a further 63,000 people through social media.
- In the COP29 Blue Zone – the formal conference and negotiation space – we engaged with key stakeholders involved in climate negotiations through official side events and high-level discussions.
- In our role as knowledge partner, we participated in the second ministerial meeting of the Group of Friends of Culture-Based Climate Action.
- We showcased innovative projects, such as Schools Across the Ocean in partnership with the University of Exeter. During COP29, the project empowered 1,600 students and 81 teachers in the UK, UAE and Azerbaijan to share their unique perspectives on the environment through artistic expression.
- We launched our Global Youth Climate Connection Hive campaign, supporting 25 young climate leaders from 11 countries to develop skills, connecting them with key decision-makers and presenting their work at COP29. This campaign is now building a body of knowledge on green youth skills to showcase at COP30, in Brazil.

Commissioning research

In 2024–25, we continued to commission research on the role of arts and culture, education and youth engagement in addressing climate change. This included our UAE culture-based climate action joint research study, in partnership with the UAE Ministry of Culture, to map current climate-related initiatives and provide recommendations to embed culture climate policies.

‘The British Council’s strength lies in its ability to bridge arts, culture and education with climate action, making climate issues more relatable and inclusive.’

Leyla Hasanova, Youth Climate Champion, COP29 Presidency



British Council event in the UK Pavilion at COP29 in Azerbaijan

Thank you to our partners

We would like to thank our partners around the world for their support and dedication. Without them, none of these achievements would be possible.



The installation of 381 solar PV panels at our teaching centre and offices in Colombo, Sri Lanka, is providing 80 per cent of that location's energy needs.

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The British Council is the United Kingdom's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities.

