

## The Climate Connection

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# Working together for our planet



# Finding shared solutions to the climate crisis

“Global cooperation is crucial to addressing the world’s shared development challenges. Which is why, as Glasgow prepares to host the 26th UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) in November 2021, the UK has a key role to play in bringing the world together to address the global climate emergency.

If we are to raise ambitions of reaching net zero emissions globally, connecting and building trust and alliances between countries, communities and generations will be a vital part of ensuring the whole of society can contribute to the shared goals for our planet.

This approach is at the heart of the British Council’s new Climate Connection programme – a global platform for dialogue, cooperation and action, connecting millions of people through shared solutions to the climate crisis.

The British Council has a long history of addressing climate change through the arts, education and English, and the Climate Connection builds on this, by providing new opportunities for young people, policymakers, artists, scientists, early career researchers, teachers, students and academics and business and community leaders across our global network to find creative and collaborative solutions to climate change.

Young people will be at the centre of this collaborative approach, as we support them to gain the skills and networks to participate in meaningful dialogue and bring about real change for our planet. And to reach as many young people as possible, we’re providing a host of opportunities for debate and action, so they can connect wherever they are.

Ultimately, the Climate Connection is about making climate action as inclusive as possible, by reaching beyond the usual climate change circles to bring new voices from the arts, education and English sectors to the table – and especially young people

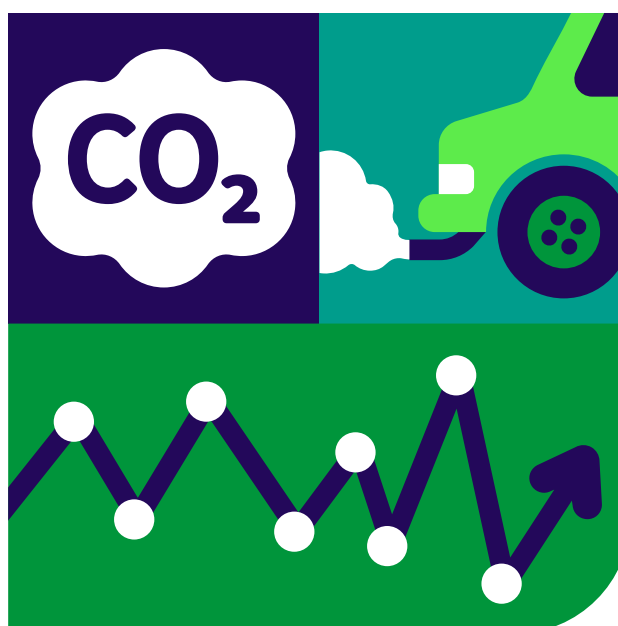
– to ensure leaders and policymakers understand the needs and concerns of those most affected by the climate crisis.

To make this happen, we’re working directly with the UK government and devolved governments, as well as cities and sector partners across the UK and the world, to reach all parts of society.

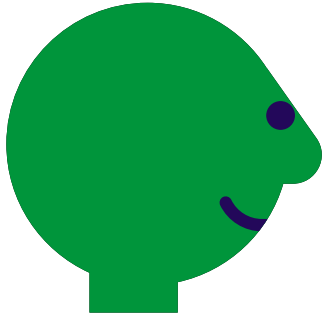
By strengthening cooperation between the UK and the world, and between sectors and communities, the Climate Connection will support COP26 objectives by laying the ground for future collaboration and partnerships on climate change.

So, let’s discover, share and act together, to build a better future for our planet.

**Alison Barrett MBE, Project Director,**  
The Climate Connection,  
British Council



# Welcome to the **Climate Connection**



**233 Million people**  
across



**More than  
100 countries**  
connecting through



**More than 100  
partner organisations**  
to tackle



**One shared  
global challenge**



Values-led approaches to international engagement provide new ways to foster global dialogue and agreement on climate change. Countries seeking to improve coordination and cooperation around this issue should promote cultural relations programmes that create the enabling environment necessary for effective action between people from different countries. They are attractive and engaging platforms on which international collaborations can be built, connecting actors from all levels of society as well as developing strong trust-based relationships through sustained engagement. The networks and relationships that these programmes create will be an asset for the UK and other countries working to prioritise international action on the environment.

Source: [Big Conversation Research in China, India, Japan and Mexico](#), conducted by London School of Economics and Political Science. The research was commissioned by the British Council to understand more about how we can create the conditions for co-operation on shared global challenges.



# What is The Climate Connection?

The Climate Connection is a global platform for dialogue, cooperation and action against climate change. It will reach millions of people from the UK and the rest of the world through collaborative and creative solutions to the climate crisis.

## Who?

Young people (including the British Council's alumni networks), policymakers, artists, scientists, teachers, students, early career researchers, academics and business and community leaders from across the British Council's global network will work directly on collaborative initiatives to tackle climate change. Millions more will connect online to discover opportunities for dialogue, debate and action.





## How?

The Climate Connection engages people through three interconnected activity strands in the arts, education and English sectors:

### 1. Engaging young people

The Climate Connection puts young people at the centre of climate change solutions, by giving them a platform to participate in dialogue, debate and action. It will also engage teachers, youth and community networks, early career researchers and marginalised groups such as women and girls, while amplifying voices from the Global South.

### 2. Engaging leaders and policymakers

The Climate Connection provides a platform for young people to connect with leaders and policymakers from the UK and the world through debates and discussions on climate change, giving both sides the chance to share perspectives and learn from each other's actions.

### 3. Engaging the public

The Climate Connection works to build the public's trust in climate science, by amplifying youth voices, engaging different parts of society in climate change discussions, highlighting innovative climate solutions and widening access to, and understanding of, research and policy in the run up to, and beyond, COP26.



## Why?

International cooperation through cultural relations is key to addressing shared development solutions. By encouraging cross-sectoral, inter-generational and international collaboration, and bringing in new voices across the arts, education and English, The Climate Connection will enable more innovative, creative and sustainable solutions to our shared climate crisis.

Through this approach, The Climate Connection will make climate action as inclusive as possible, by strengthening cooperation between the UK and the world, and across all parts of society, to enable everyone to contribute to a better future for our planet.



# Supporting COP26

Through a cooperative and inclusive approach to tackling climate change, The Climate Connection will directly support the UK's COP26 objectives, and the UK government's 'Global Britain' ambitions, by:

- Connecting the UK with current and future young climate leaders
- Raising awareness of the role of the education, English, arts and science sectors in tackling climate change
- Promoting the UK as a leader in collaborating with other countries to solve shared global challenges
- Enabling pupils in the UK and internationally to understand the role they can play in tackling climate change
- Creating English resources for teachers and learners that raise awareness of climate change
- Improving public understanding of, and trust in, climate science
- Developing sustainable, climate-related research collaborations between the UK and other countries
- Sharing UK and international sector approaches to tackling climate change through policy dialogues and round tables
- Garnering awareness and support for COP26 that leads to real change
- Giving young people, marginalised groups, women and girls, and those most affected by climate change opportunities to influence and shape thinking and practice
- Ensuring all programme activities are delivered sustainably.

By supporting the UK's COP26 and Global Britain ambitions, we'll be contributing to our ultimate aim of making the UK a force for good in the world - a country to trust, visit, study in and do business with.

To find out how you can get involved, and to discuss potential partnership opportunities, visit [www.britishcouncil.org/climate-connection/about/connect](http://www.britishcouncil.org/climate-connection/about/connect)





# Cultural relations and the climate crisis

As the UK's cultural relations organisation, the British Council has a strong legacy of building trust and understanding between countries and communities worldwide.

Through The Climate Connection, we are using this knowledge and experience to help the UK strengthen the partnerships, networks and alliances it needs to promote cooperation and understanding in tackling our biggest shared development challenge.

Engaging our global network and all parts of the UK, we are supporting collaborative international partnerships, built on mutuality, to enable the sharing of knowledge, practice and expertise between the UK and other countries to find solutions that meet our shared aims for our planet.





# The Climate Connection initiatives

The Climate Connection is a global programme and campaign, bringing together the British Council's global network through a range of initiatives, many of which are funded by the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development office.



# Engaging young people

**Green Careers** raises awareness of the importance of green jobs and routes into green careers amongst secondary school and university students. Alongside a global webinar series and green careers guide, featuring stories from global alumni of UK universities working in green careers, it will provide 26 UK university scholarships for overseas students to pursue a climate-related subject.

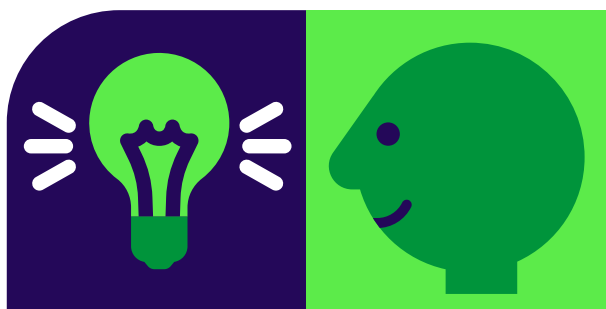
**Countries and regions involved:** Egypt, Nigeria, Pakistan, Turkey and Vietnam (scholarships); the UK, East Asia, South Asia, Wider Europe, EU and Sub-Saharan Africa (webinars)

**Climate Action in Language Education** produces online teaching modules to support English language teachers to integrate climate action into their teaching practice. Alongside these is a podcast series and research report showcasing how the English teaching sector is tackling the climate crisis.

**Countries involved:** global

**Challenge Grants for Young People** support young alumni from 22 countries in the Active Citizens network to deliver grassroots action against climate change. These young people are supported to design and deliver social action projects aimed at tackling climate change, underpinned by global virtual networking sessions to raise awareness of these initiatives.

**Countries involved:** global



The **Global Youth Letter** is a plan of action directly addressing policy makers and leaders in relation to young people's aspirations and recommendations around climate change. Based on crowdsourced data from more than 8,000 young people in 23 countries (Brazil, Ethiopia, Germany, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Kenya, Mexico, Myanmar, Nepal, Nigeria, Philippines, South Africa, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, the UK, Vietnam and Zimbabwe; and bringing in voices



from the Youth Perception Research in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Sri Lanka as well as the British Council's global network of over 100 offices), the initiative is also identifying gaps in relation to the ability of young people and other groups to make a difference in communities, as well as the best paths for young people to influence positive change.

Alongside this, **Global Youth Letter – Youth Voices for Climate Action - 8,000 Rising** will be a virtual launch in September, as part of Italy's All4Climate Pre-COP programme, to give young people across the world an opportunity to add their voice to the call for action. British and Italian Embassies worldwide will be invited to collaborate with local British Council offices to underline the importance of youth voices and youth participation in debates and action on climate change.

**Countries involved:** global

**Youth Perception Research** is surveying 4,000 young people aged 18 to 35 to give a platform to 'unheard' voices, including women and girls, people with disabilities and those belonging to minority groups and indigenous communities. The research will uncover the perceptions, attitudes, challenges and readiness of young people in four countries in South Asia around climate vulnerability and looming threats.

**Cultural Relations Collection** is a new series of essays which will be published exploring the role of cultural relations in addressing climate change. The essays look through a cultural relations lens at diverse facets of society, economy and culture, demonstrating how cultural relations can contribute to the goal of a more equitable, intercultural climate action.

**Destination Zero** supports innovative ideas from young people that help communities reduce their carbon footprint, move closer to zero emissions and adapt to the impact of climate change. Ten finalists, chosen from a global social media campaign, have received a grant and mentoring support to help them realise their innovations.

**Countries involved:** global

The **Fashion Open Studio x COP26** programme presents an international cohort of designers who are leading change in the industry and responding to COP26 themes of Nature and Adaption and Resilience through the medium of fashion. From different regions of the world, the designers will open their studios virtually, to showcase their creative responses to fashion's environmental impact. Through a digital and physical event series, audiences can get the opportunity to explore the processes, practices, techniques and values behind each designer's work and consider how fashion can work with nature and communities rather than against them. All events will be free to access and available to book at Fashion Open Studio.

**Countries involved:** Argentina, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Nepal, South Africa, Thailand, Turkey and Zimbabwe





# Engaging leaders and policymakers

The British Council and UK non-profit organisation Julie's Bicycle are hosting a series of **Cultural Roundtables** to explore how cultural policy can respond to key environmental challenges, and the role that the arts and culture can play. Alongside the roundtables will be a series of short films featuring voices from the intersection of culture and climate around the world, and a research project to understand how far arts and cultural policy is aligned with international ambitions to tackle climate and environmental issues and highlight future opportunities.

## **Countries hosting the global roundtables:**

Colombia (with participation from Mexico and Peru), Indonesia, Nigeria, Turkey and Italy

**Connecting Classrooms**, in partnership with the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, is just one of the British Council's schools programmes taking part in the Climate Connection. Schools around the world can access an exciting range of opportunities to support teaching and learning on climate change, including ready-to-go, downloadable classroom resources on sustainability, opportunities to work together with schools in other countries on climate projects, competitions for pupils to showcase their learning, and professional development opportunities for teachers.

## **Countries involved:** global

## **Higher Education Climate Innovation Partnerships**

are supporting 22 higher education institutions in Sub-Saharan Africa and the UK to build connections with climate innovation and entrepreneurship entities, to strengthen their capacity and role within that ecosystem. The initiative is providing roundtables, joint research and policy dialogues and networking opportunities.

**Countries involved:** Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Uganda and the UK

A series of **Higher Education Roundtables** will examine the role of higher education in the climate debate and what they can do to address the climate crisis as institutions and by engaging academics and learners. They will also provide an opportunity to share global best practice and engage senior policymakers.

**Countries hosting roundtables:** Egypt, Indonesia, Scotland and South Africa





**Research and Education Network for Knowledge Economy Initiatives for COP26** is supporting collaborative research opportunities between Japan, the UK and countries receiving UK government Official Development Assistance in the ASEAN region to develop innovative low-carbon solutions that will reduce the dependency on coal power in South East Asia and inform Japanese development policy.

**Countries involved:** Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Thailand and the UK

**Commonwealth Futures**, a partnership with the Association of Commonwealth Universities, is providing leadership training and research collaboration opportunities for 26 early career researchers from, or researching the needs of, small island states particularly vulnerable to climate change.

**Countries involved:** Australia, Barbados, Canada, Cyprus, Eswatini, Ghana, Jamaica, Mauritius, Nigeria, Seychelles, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka and the UK

A partnership with the **World Wildlife Fund** is raising awareness of the importance of meaningful climate action, with a focus on cities. The collaboration aims to give a voice to young people and communities that are vulnerable to the impact of climate change, and will provide learning resources for students.

**Countries involved:** global

A partnership with the **Global Parliament of Mayors** is highlighting the role cities can play in providing innovative and creative solutions to address local and global challenges, including through cultural and educational policies, by empowering city leaders in countries receiving UK government Official Development Assistance to have a say in relation to global climate policy, especially in relation to arts, culture and education.

**Countries involved:** global

**British Council Researcher Links Climate Challenge Workshop Grants** are supporting early-career UK researchers and international partners to develop innovative solutions to climate-related developmental challenges through a series of virtual interdisciplinary workshops. Participants will then have the opportunity to unlock further funding in form of individual challenge prizes which can be used to implement and apply the research ideas that the workshops will generate.

**Countries involved:** UK, Brazil, Pakistan, Indonesia, Vietnam, Egypt and South Africa





## Engaging the public

The **Creative Commissions** are 17 creative interventions that bring people from varied cultures – from indigenous communities and rural areas to bustling metropolises – across the UK and 28 other countries together to collaborate on creative responses to climate change. These solutions will be shared to engage and inspire global audiences through a range of innovative digital platforms.

**Countries involved:** global

**Future News Worldwide** is a skills development programme for trainee journalists run in partnership with leading global media organisations. This year, the programme is supporting Future News Worldwide alumni to cover the run-up to COP26, through grant funding to climate related journalism initiatives in over sixteen countries. In addition, this year's conference will bring together over 100 young journalists from over 50 countries and will focus on climate, and the challenges facing journalists in environmental reporting. The conference will include live scenario exercises and key notes from renowned media leaders on the topic.

**Countries involved:** global

**FameLab Climate Change Communicators**, the international scientific talks competition, has called for online video entries from people in selected countries receiving UK government Official Development Assistance on the theme of 'Trust in Climate Science'. Ten entrants will be selected for two days of science communication training in preparation for an online final in September with the winner participating in the FameLab International final.

**Countries involved:** global

**Future Ecologies** is a collaboratively curated series of exhibitions, screenings, performances and public events that interrogate how contemporary artists from the UK and the Western Balkans explore topics of social importance, engaging the public in a critical dialogue on themes including the environment, cosmology, climate change and sustainability. FUTURE ECOLOGIES is part of WE ARE HERE: Artists' Moving Image from the British Council Collection and LUX.

**Countries involved:** Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia

# Amplifying our cultural programmes

Through the **Climate Innovation Fund**, the British Council is implementing nine country-led initiatives to address local climate challenges that complement our existing cultural programmes. These initiatives include bringing young people and scientists together to understand how they can tackle flooding, pollution and salinity through the Rivers of Life project in Vietnam; providing kids, teens, their families, and teachers in remote areas of Colombia access to radio programmes that link English language teaching and environmental awareness; strengthening indigenous voices on social and digital media through the development of creative digital skills; sharing insight on greening the HE sector, and enhancing youth advocates for climate change in secondary schools through online debate forums in partnership with organisations such as UNICEF.

**Countries involved:** Algeria, Colombia, Jamaica, Libya, Malaysia, Mexico, Nepal, Turkey and Vietnam





