

Symposium: Recentring the Human within Nature

DIALOGUE Network Launch

Date: April 30, 2025 (Full day)

Location: Anglia Ruskin University (Cambridge, UK)

Abstract

We are seeking participants for the inaugural event of the **DIALOGUE** (Developing Interdisciplinary **A**ctive **L**inks and **O**pportunities for **G**rowth, **U**nderstanding, and **E**ngagement) network. Our 'Recentring the Human within Nature' symposium invites researchers, practitioners, policymakers, business collectives, community leaders, and artists to reimagine the role of the citizen in sustainability transitions. This one-day event blends research, artistic expression, and community discussions to provide the foundation for developing collaborative projects.

The symposium is structured around three themes, with each theme having a dedicated session for the selected participants to engage with and share knowledge. Presentations will be kept brief to provide space for interactive group discussion. These themes will then be brought together in our final session to allow inter-theme dialogue and debate:

Theme 1: Sustainable Development and Society: Sharing community-driven approaches to natural resource use and economic innovation.

Theme 2: Re-tangling Humans within Nature: Creating immersive artistic and audiovisual explorations of human-nature relationships.

Theme 3: Community-Led Policymaking: Developing collaborative frameworks for inclusive and grassroots policy development.

This event aims to integrate academic inquiry with the arts, enabling participants to explore sustainability through creative, interdisciplinary lenses through the development of joint projects and collaborations. The symposium is open to individuals from all levels and areas of **academia, arts practitioners and crafters, community groups, business collectives, and policy workers**.

Merging Art, Research, and Policy Discussions

The symposium will provide the opportunity to engage with a number of immersive performances including:

- **Interactive Artistic Exploration:** Led by the theme 2 team based at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, these immersive experiences will encourage participants to reimagine their connection to the natural world.

- **Collaborative Art Creation:** Participants and arts students will co-create pieces that translate complex research into accessible and impactful artistic works re-merging the Natural with the Human, and the experience of the Citizen within a changing society.
 - **Evening Entertainment:** A specially curated evening of performances, including drag performances, theatrical displays, and eco-expression through movement, will celebrate the fusion of art and sustainability themes.
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Call for Papers/Presentations

We invite contributions that engage with the symposiums themes and will prioritise work that encourages interdisciplinarity. Topics of interest include, but are not limited to:

- **Innovative Approaches to Sustainable Resource Use:** Exploring novel methodologies and practices for the sustainable management of natural resources, including community-led frameworks, circular economies, and integrated ecological approaches that address economic, social, and environmental dimensions.
- **Artistic or Creative Methodologies for Understanding Environmental Challenges:** Investigating the role of artistic expression, such as visual arts, performance, and digital media, as tools for interpreting, communicating, and addressing complex environmental issues. Emphasis will be placed on approaches that engage diverse audiences and inspire actionable change.
- **Participatory Frameworks for Inclusive Policymaking:** Examining mechanisms for incorporating grassroots, marginalized, and underrepresented voices into policy development. Contributions may focus on co-creation models, deliberative democracy techniques, and frameworks that empower communities to shape the policies affecting them.
- **The Role of Emotions in Sustainability Transitions:** Analysing how emotional dimensions impact individual and collective engagement with sustainability challenges. This includes exploring ways to harness emotions constructively in fostering long-term commitment to sustainable practices.
- **Strategies for Interdisciplinary Collaboration:** Identifying methods and best practices for bridging disciplinary silos, fostering cross-sectoral partnerships, and addressing challenges in interdisciplinary research and practice. Topics may include team dynamics, shared language development, and integrating diverse epistemologies to tackle sustainability issues.
- **Approaches for Engaging with Communities and Amplifying Their Needs:** Developing and evaluating methods for building trust, facilitating dialogue, and effectively representing community voices in research and decision-making processes. This may include case studies or frameworks for participatory action research, community workshops, and localised knowledge-sharing initiatives.
- **Best Practices for Working with Government and Policy Workers:** Exploring strategies for establishing productive relationships with governmental and policy actors

to ensure the translation of research insights into actionable policies. Contributions might address barriers to collaboration, effective communication strategies, and the co-development of sustainable policies aligned with community priorities.

This list is non-exhaustive and not prescriptive, we encourage you to apply if you believe your work or research is linked in any way to some or multiple of these suggestions or the overall symposium topic.

Submission Guidelines:

- Academic abstracts should be 300 words maximum, have a title, and up to five keywords.
- Submissions from non-academics are welcome in any format. Please use the abstract space, and if needed the additional space at the end of the form.
- **Submission Deadline: 17th of March 2025 23:59.**
- Please send us your submission via this form: <https://forms.office.com/e/Gny4AYKECL>
- If you have questions, please reach out to pr479@pgr.aru.ac.uk.

Opportunities for Collaboration:

Selected participants will have the chance to collaborate with arts-based students to create visual, auditory, or performance-based works inspired by their research, contributing to the event's artistic displays.

Students based at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama should apply to the symposium via their internal call for submissions.

Reserved Spaces for PhD Researchers and ECRs:

The symposium is committed to supporting emerging scholars. Dedicated spaces have been reserved for PhD researchers and Early Career Researchers (ECRs).

Participant Support

To ensure accessibility, funding is available to cover travel and accommodation for a limited number of participants. Priority will be given to PhD researchers and ECRs, alongside other participants demonstrating financial need.

Funding transparency

This symposium is funded by the Sustainable Futures theme at Anglia Ruskin University, with additional support from the Centre for Research into the Organization of Work and Consumption (CROWC), the Global Sustainability Institute (GSI), and the Cambridge School of Art (CSA).