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About the British Council

The British Council is the UK's largest international agency for cultural relations. We build engagement and trust for the UK through the exchange of knowledge and ideas between people worldwide.

The British Council works in 110 countries and territories. Each year the British Council reaches more than 85 million people through its work in the arts and creativity, education and training, science and technology, sport, good governance and human rights.

In Norway the British Council works together with partners on three large pan-European programmes themed around the complex issues of climate change, intercultural dialogue, and urban innovation. The three projects in Norway are Low Carbon Futures: Challenge Europe, Intercultural Navigators, and Creative Cities.

Our programmes in Europe have been developed as a direct response to an extensive study undertaken by the British Council in 2007. The study showed that the next generation of influencers and leaders in Europe, Russia and North America are most concerned about climate change (50 per cent) and intercultural issues (33 per cent).

For the full results of the study go to:

http://www.britishcouncil.org/makingadifference_sweden.pdf

For more information about the British Council go to:

<http://www.britishcouncil.org/new/>

Our track record in diversity

Intercultural Navigators

Intercultural Navigators aims to pave the way towards more inclusive and diverse societies by engaging young people in an innovative intercultural leadership programme. The programme is currently running in 16 European countries.

Our Shared Europe

Extremism – using violence against ordinary people to achieve objectives – is rejected by the vast majority of people around the world. Our Shared Europe works to deepen the understanding of how Christian, Muslim, Jewish and secular contributions have helped shape modern Europe, and to challenge exclusive interpretations of Europe.

British Council Bulgaria: Media and Diversity Project

British Council Bulgaria launched a large scale public campaign as part of their Media and Diversity project which aims to challenge public attitudes towards a range of diversity issues such as disability, HIV/AIDS, ethnic minorities, sexual orientation and refugees.

The British Council's equal opportunity and diversity policy

The British Council is committed to a policy of Equal Opportunity and Diversity, and works to promote these values at every level of work. The Integrated Equality Scheme is a tool British Council has developed to help promote equality and eliminate discrimination in the areas of gender, race and disability.

Our track record in climate change

Low Carbon Futures

The British Council's global climate programme, Low Carbon Futures, aims to help increase the understanding of climate change issues through a number of large-scale projects, which will help lead to consensus about climate actions and solutions.

ZeroCarbonCity

In 2005, the British Council launched ZeroCarbonCity, a global campaign to raise awareness and stimulate debate about climate change and the energy challenges facing the world's cities. The campaign involved activities in over 60 countries worldwide, including workshops, city debates, educational activities, performing arts, and a photographic exhibition that toured over 100 cities. The campaign reached a total of 11.5 million people.

Greening Cities Summit

In 2006 and 2007, the British Council hosted 60 international students to work with others to advance the climate change debate, and focus on developing tangible outcomes to present to the UK government.

The British Council's environmental policy

The British Council is committed to improving, managing and measuring its environmental impact. An Environmental Management System (EMS) has been implemented to ensure that minimum standards on corporate activities are set and monitored through ISO14001. An Environmental Framework Tool (EFT) is also being implemented to ensure that all British Council project related activities adhere to minimum standards of environmental performance.



Challenge Europe carbon footprint guidelines

Challenge Europe is a three-year programme that aspires to make a definite and lasting impact on the climate change debate, and is ambitious in its aim to accelerate change to a Low Carbon Future.

Throughout the duration of the programme all participants and colleagues have a responsibility to consider the carbon footprint of any activity undertaken within Challenge Europe. Without exception, steps must be taken to ensure that the impact of the programme itself is minimised and this document outlines simple guidelines that should be followed.

Travel & Accommodation

- We will avoid all unnecessary travel.
- We will encourage the use of teleconferencing and teleworking; highlight the use of instant messaging and webcam/video calls.
- Wherever possible the lowest carbon possibility will be used – reduce dependency on car travel to essential business use and where essential we recommend multiple occupancy car use.
- We recommend starting a carpool with fellow Climate Advocates/colleagues.
- For shorter distances all low carbon options will be considered and used, including walking, cycling, carpooling and public transport.
- For longer journeys travel by train is encouraged.
- Challenge Europe will operate a flight minimisation policy and all flights will be tallied under directives of the Environmental Framework and our Environmental Management System.
- We will give preference to hotels that are members of a green hotel association.

Events & Meetings

- We will avoid heavily packaged products – specifically we will not buy bottled water, only tap water will be used.
- We will not use paper or plastic cups.
- We will not use plastic bags.
- We will collect and re-use name plates and other office supplies.

- We will recycle all used materials wherever possible.
- We will source all food from local suppliers and producers wherever possible.
- We will give preference to venues that have a green policy.

Printed Materials

- We will attempt to minimise the paper used, with printed materials at a minimum; e-mail, online tools and phone use will be our main communication tools.
- If printed materials are required, such as notepads, these will be sourced from sustainable suppliers, or made from recycled materials.
- Where applicable, printed materials will be double-sided.
- Steps will be taken to reduce margin sizes and increase the print area.
- Where possible remanufactured inks and toners will be used.

Office and Residence

The British Council is committed to improving, managing and measuring its environmental impact. An Environmental Management System (EMS) has been implemented to ensure that minimum standards are set on corporate activities and monitored through ISO14001.

Significant steps are being taken to ensure that the high standards that are promoted through the Low Carbon Futures programme are achieved.

Low Carbon Futures: Challenge Europe in a nutshell

Challenge Europe aims to take strides towards addressing one of the urgent global challenges we face today; climate change. The programme offers younger generations the opportunity to focus valuable time and invaluable talents to find real answers to address the climate crisis.

In 2008 the British Council launched the European element of its global climate programme; Challenge Europe. The Challenge is a three year programme that aspires to make a definite and lasting impact on the climate change debate, and is ambitious in its aim to accelerate change to a Low Carbon Future.

In each of 15 countries 15 young influencers, aged 18-35, will work together as Climate Advocates to unearth new ways to reduce carbon use or utilise methods already found but not yet properly exploited. Each group of Climate Advocates offers a broad representation of skills, attitudes and ideas from all walks of life, working across disciplines to seek, gather, develop and then refine scores of ideas to agree just on three concrete project ideas. Climate Advocates will delve into current knowledge, merge new thinking with old, and formulate project ideas that seek to change the way we use carbon. Their ideas can address absolutely anything that has the potential to accelerate change to a Low Carbon Future.

The outcome: a network of 200+ bold and young influencers working together to develop 40+ concrete, tangible project ideas.

The British Council is actively partnering with a number of organisations across Europe spanning all sectors. Through these partnerships Climate Advocates are offered access to established networks of experts and professionals in their fields. The groups will pitch their ideas to the broader public, including eminent experts, philanthropists, commercial organisations and entrepreneurs across a range of fields in an effort to make the ideas become reality.

The philosophy of the campaign is simple: to create momentum towards change through collaboration, innovation, energy, can-do attitude, drive, passion, understanding and knowledge-sharing.

Programme Outline Challenge Europe: Norway 2009-2010

The programme in Norway for project cycle May 2009 – April 2010 will have two main conceptual frameworks: **diversity** and the development of **sustainable climate solutions**. The project cycle and all meetings and training sessions will be facilitated by Lisa Cooper (Leadership Foundation) and Karen Sund (Sund Energy).

The ability and process of designing and implementing climate change initiatives will improve by using techniques from diversity training, as well as through an overall understanding of the diverse approaches needed to effectively find solutions to mitigate and adapt climate change. By understanding different people's perspectives, preferences and values, including "morale" and quality of life, it is believed that a diverse approach will empower sustainable climate solutions.

Themes focused on diversity will cover several issues and tools to help to define and appreciate diversity and frame it in the mindset of Climate Advocates. The Advocates will be trained in new skills and in how to use these actively in their work. This training will include:

- Assumptions and how they guide our behaviour
- The power of questions
- Systems thinking & tipping points (climate, social, economical, and political)
- How to make change happen
- How to work in diverse groups

Climate change themes will cover key topics and discussions with experts in selected areas, and will be adapted to the Advocates' competence levels and areas of interest. Discussions will include:

- How to reduce emissions from several sources
- What role does industry, power, transportation, and individual behaviour play?
- How can we learn from others?
- Possible international solutions for improved sustainability
- Does making solutions economic for users help forward sustainability and realism?
- Cases to get involved in, stories to tell, mapping of stakeholders that should be influenced
- How to use diverse skills, backgrounds and networks in climate change projects, and especially in the communication of ideas to reduce emissions sustainably

The overall aim is to ensure that Climate Advocates are equipped to design and implement solutions which are sound, and based on both an understanding of climate challenges and a diversity of perspectives and solutions.

Competencies, Content & Process

A wide variety of skills, tools and techniques will be introduced, strengthened and practiced during the programme. These will be applied in a number of different contexts within the participants' spheres of influence, as well as communities who will be partners in the delivery of projects.

Competencies	Content	Process
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To be able to work in own world and other worlds ● To value diversity and to work with difference ● To increase capacity to negotiate for common grounds ● To challenge assumptions and stereotypes ● To be socially and emotionally intelligent ● To ask good and powerful questions ● To be self-analytical and self-aware ● To strengthen leadership skills and other peoples' leadership skills ● To strengthen influencing and advocacy skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To work in diverse groups and to value diversity ● How to learn the power of questions ● To participate in international networking events ● Way of being, thinking and behaving in a professional context ● To increase understanding on several climate issues and possible initiatives to tackle these ● To build a network with other Advocates across Europe, key stakeholders and possible influencers ● To develop project ideas that incorporate diverse thinking and have strong potential in terms of impact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Training ● Simulation games ● Role plays ● Immersion – training sites and study visits ● Twinning-exercises between modules ● Workshops ● Web groups ● Inspirational resources

Overall Programme Outcomes

- To create and reinforce a sense of ownership and urgency with regards to making a definite and lasting impact on the climate change debate.
- To develop practical diversity skills to be used in professional and personal relations.
- To build networks of motivated Climate Advocates across Europe to influence the climate change debate through tangible ideas on how to curb carbon emissions.
- To produce three concrete projects which will be developed and designed to have a real impact and bring about a low carbon future through changes in any sector of society.

There will be 6 modules during the project cycle with the following focus

Module 1 and 2:

28 and 29 May 2009, 09.00 – 18.00:

Introduction to purpose, team, and early thoughts on ideas to curb carbon-craving

Purposes

- To explore assumptions about ourselves, others and the environment
- To get connected to self, others and communities
- To create a sense of ownership and responsibility for the programme and the process
- To begin reviewing the diversity of climate change needs
- To begin focusing on what sort of projects should be designed and addressed

Expected Outputs and Results

- To have Climate Advocates challenge assumptions about themselves, others and the environment
- To have Advocates that are more appreciative of difference
- To have Advocates curious and buzzing
- To build relationships and team spirit among Climate Advocates
- To have Advocates express a desire to act
- To start process where concrete project ideas are formed
- To get familiar with ideas proposed by Climate Advocates, and how they can be developed and possible contributions from each individual

Module 3:

Thursday 27 August 2009, 09.00 – 17.00

Themes and initiatives: from initiatives to project plans

Purposes

- To refresh joint commitments to programme purpose
- To exchange ideas on initiatives jointly developed during the summer
- To assess initiatives and the cooperation process in developing these
- To channel focus on promising initiatives
- To assign new teams and responsibilities – to revisit some of the criteria and prerequisites for good team-working
- To set specific, measurable, attainable and realistic goals for projects
- To get familiar with entrepreneurial thinking and the possibility of finding economic solutions to climate challenges

Expected Outputs and Results

- To have a re-energised group with a common sense of purpose
- To have channeled energy to the most promising initiatives

- To enhance understanding of success from perspective of team-work and different skills
- To enhance understanding of the activities to be carried out
- To create greater knowledge of entrepreneurial projects and thinking
- To create a greater knowledge of a common mission

Module 4:

Thursday 5 November 2009, 09.00 – 17.00

Using diversity to make change happen

Purposes

- To assess the different projects in terms of angles, views, effects, and impacts
- To review assumptions, the power of questions and systems thinking with regard to projects
- To strengthen leadership skills
- To highlight the importance of congruence from ideas to action
- To inspire Climate Advocates to work towards inclusive projects
- To enable Advocates to journey from ideas development towards influencing others

Expected Outputs and Results

- Synergies within and between projects (on local and international levels) realised
- Greater understanding of proposed solutions: from case-specific projects to the bigger picture in Europe and the world
- To have Climate Advocates engaged in specific action-orientated and operational planning
- To increase sense of ownership and responsibility of projects
- To make Advocates better equipped to manage change and to direct efforts to change in their local (professional or personal) contexts

Module 5:

Thursday 21 January 2010, 09.00 – 17.00

How do I speak so that people and the media hear what I have to say?

Module 5 will be delivered and facilitated by Lisa Cooper, Karen Sund AND an external media professional (TBC)

Purposes

- To build understanding on how to sell projects into traditional media
- To increase understanding on how media works and what makes an attractive project story for media
- To build understanding on how to use new media for information purposes
- To understand why an information strategy is important

- To finalise project-specific media and communication plans
- To revisit criteria on what makes a successful project
- To map the media and PR strengths of every project
- To rehearse elevator pitches

Expected Outputs and Results

- A greater understanding of how media works and what is attractive
- A greater understanding of how to sell-in specific projects to traditional media outlets
- A greater understanding on how to use new media
- A better understanding of the concrete steps to be taken to ensure media interest
- Concrete communications plans finalised for all projects
- Thinking of dissemination becomes an integral part of working

Module 6:

Thursday 15 April 2010, 09.00 – 17.00

Key learning points, what happens next?

Format and content of the last session will be developed Autumn/Winter 2009. Programme, purpose and expected outcomes will be designed on the basis of Climate Advocates' projects. Possible activities can include roundtable conference with key stakeholders, on-site visits together with key partners or stakeholders, hand-over or sell-in to stakeholders or partners, etc.

Low Carbon Futures: Challenge Europe – frequently asked questions

What is Challenge Europe?

Challenge Europe is a pan-European programme, launched in 2008 by the British Council, to find and motivate hundreds of dynamic and skilled young people to take action to bring about changes that will reduce carbon usage, fundamentally and forever.

What does British Council hope to achieve by carrying out this programme?

The aim of each project year is to generate over forty tangible and concrete ideas that can be implemented to make a difference and help reduce reliance on carbon. The long term goal of the programme is threefold; aiming to bring about a Low Carbon Future, to help improve knowledge of climate change, and to get more people involved in the debate.

Where is the programme taking place, and when?

15 countries are involved in Challenge Europe – Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia, Norway, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, UK, Germany, Belgium, Turkey and Greece. The programme takes place from 2008 to 2011. The second project year takes place from May 2009 to April 2010.

Why have you chosen these countries?

The British Council has a global climate programme called Low Carbon Futures and Challenge Europe is the European element. We have a presence in each of these countries and our hope is to expand to other countries in time.

Why is climate change important to the British Council?

Climate change is the most urgent challenge that we face today, and the time for action is now. It is not only a priority for the UK but across the globe too and affects each and every one of us. The British Council wants to help give younger generations the opportunity, information and tools to make a real and tangible difference before it's too late. Challenge Europe is a continuation of the work that the British Council has already done, through initiatives such as ZeroCarbonCity, to raise awareness of the need for action on climate change.

Has anything like this been attempted before?

There is currently a lot of work taking place in the climate change arena and we are keen to offer a new approach. We are not aware of any other programme involving next-generation leaders on this scale trying to achieve real change in this way.

How will you utilise this network of people to get results?

The philosophy of the campaign is to create momentum towards change through collaboration, innovation, energy, drive, passion, understanding and knowledge-sharing. A collection of over 200 minds will have the same mission and will be encouraged to share their discoveries. They will also have access to a network of expert organisations and individuals equipped and motivated to

provide guidance. The British Council is a unique organisation with vast experience of engaging networks of young people and this knowledge will be used throughout to gain the best from this network.

How old will the Climate Advocates be?

The ideal Climate Advocate is 18-35 years old.

Why have you chosen this age group?

Challenge Europe has been created because scientific consensus suggests we only have one generation to take action to avert potentially catastrophic environmental consequences. By engaging this age group, we will achieve a combination of youth and real-world expertise. Ultimately, it is the younger generations that will inherit the impacts of climate change in the future so the British Council wants to help give young people the opportunity, information and tools to make a real and tangible difference before it's too late.

What kind of people are you recruiting to become Climate Advocates?

We are recruiting from all areas of the general population in each participating country. Anyone can apply to become a Climate Advocate if they are interested in getting involved in the project; we are looking for young, highly motivated people aged between 18 and 35, who want to make a difference and take action rather than just debate.

What makes you think they'll leave their day jobs?

The Climate Advocates won't have to leave their jobs. The programme does require that a proportion of time is set aside, and the people chosen to take part must have a passion to make a difference and spend time developing their ideas. It is designed to be as flexible as possible to accommodate the Advocates' needs and if they work for a company, we will expect that the business is supportive of the efforts they are contributing to the programme.

Will Climate Advocates be spokespeople for their organisations?

No. Climate Advocates will participate as individuals and not as representatives for the organisations or corporations they work for.

What do you mean by Chatham House Rules?

Chatham House Rules govern the confidentiality of the source of information received at a meeting. Participants are free to use the information received during a meeting, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s) nor that of any other participant may be revealed, unless specifically given permission.. The Rule allows people to speak as individuals, and to express views that may not be those of their organizations, and therefore it encourages free discussion. Climate Advocates are free to voice their own opinions, without concern for their personal reputation or their official duties and affiliations.

Why will people pay attention to Challenge Europe above all the noise around carbon savings these days?

This programme is different because it each year brings together over 200 people to develop over 40 tangible, workable and realistic ideas whose singular aim is to change public policy, business practice, and public opinion. We hope people will see the potential of this practical and positive approach.

Wouldn't it be easier just to plant lots of trees?

Taking action to offset carbon is not enough. Positive action is needed in order to actually reduce the carbon we emit in the long term. The aim of Challenge Europe is to make a definite and lasting impact by stimulating innovation and generating workable ideas.

Do the ideas that Climate Advocates develop have to be new?

While we want to find new ideas, the aim of Challenge Europe is to reduce carbon use. So, existing ideas that have not yet been fully realised can be developed, adapted and extended to see if they can be turned into reality.

Given that each country will be coming up with three ideas, won't there be repetition?

The Climate Advocates will have the freedom to decide the focus for their ideas, with support from experts who can guide the Advocates to avoid ideas that may have already been implemented. We can expect some ideas to be developed in more than one country, but if an idea is picked up across borders then regional collaboration will be encouraged, and those country teams may work together to develop the idea further.

Doesn't the programme structure mean that a really broad variety of ideas will be proposed and so there will be no consistency?

Our objective is to build a broad spectrum of ideas but consistency is achieved because of the singular focus on reducing carbon.

When will we see results?

Over 40 ideas have been developed over the first year of the project and many of these are already leading to concrete results.

Will the British Council take responsibility for turning ideas into reality?

The British Council will use its network of contacts at all stages to ensure that Climate Advocates have access to knowledge and expertise in order to develop their ideas and present them to key figures. However, businesses and other organisations must ultimately play the key role in reducing carbon emissions and turning ideas into reality.

How often will Climate Advocates meet?

In Norway there will be six modules during the project cycle. This means that there is 6 days that Climate Advocates are expected to join. It is expected and encouraged that Climate Advocates meet in-between modules to network, work on challenges, and on specific tasks given at the end of every module. Our

hope is to stimulate fluid and regular communication, whether it's face to face or virtual, and always to minimise Climate Advocates' collective carbon footprint.

What do you mean when you talk about appreciative questioning?

Appreciative questioning is based on Appreciative inquiry (AI). AI is one of today's most successful change methods and is a philosophy that incorporates an approach and process to engage people at all levels to produce effective, positive change. This approach gets people to focus on what works in every situation and to be positively curious about situations that are unfamiliar. AI will be used to guide the initiatives and our interactions in the diverse environments the Climate Advocates will operate in.

What do you mean when you talk about the power of questions?

The power of questions is a tool that is based on the premise that the act of asking questions about an organization or group influences the group in some way. The very process of inquiry creates its own change and inquiry and change occur simultaneously. A change initiative creates its own changes that are products of the process it uses. The power of questions will be reviewed as part of the change process Climate Advocates are addressing within the group and in relation to the projects they develop.

How will you facilitate sharing best practice among countries?

We are dedicating significant thought and energy to ensuring effective communication across countries and sectors. Groups of Climate Advocates will be able to meet face-to-face at various stages in the programme to share knowledge and expertise both in country and across Europe. There will also be collaborative online tools allowing Climate Advocates to discuss their ideas and share their discoveries virtually. At all stages the carbon footprint of best practice sharing activity will be minimised.

What is the British Council's relationship with the Foreign Commonwealth Office/UK government?

Through the Low Carbon Futures programme, the British Council supports the UK government's commitment, as outlined in the Foreign Commonwealth Office (FCO) International Strategic Priority, to 'Promote a low carbon, high growth, global economy'. For more information please go to www.fco.gov.uk/en/fco-in-action/carbon. Although the British Council receives an element of its funding through grant-in-aid from the FCO, it has operational independence and is a cultural, not a political organisation.

Where do I find more information about Challenge Europe?

You can visit our website <http://challengeeurope.britishcouncil.org/> where you can read more about Climate Advocates and their projects as well as visit the pressroom to download promotional materials and read what has been written about Challenge Europe. You can also get in touch with your local Challenge Europe Project Manager, Tiina Ruohonen.