

Energy, environment and us
Circular economy and the role of citizens

1st Energy & Environment Clustering Event
23-24 September 2019

Hosted by Durham University

Ken Wade Lecture Theatre
Calman Learning Centre, Science Site
South Road
Durham, DH1 3LE, United Kingdom
#EUAenergy @DEI_Durham

PRELIMINARY PROGRAMME

The transition towards a carbon-neutral society or, preferably, towards a carbon-negative society requires the collective effort of all of us. It is now widely acknowledged that the Earth cannot sustain the pace at which its natural resources are being exploited and frequently converted into products that, even when they contribute to our well-being, are very difficult to reuse and recycle. At the bottom of the value chain for economical competitiveness and social prosperity lie the never-ending needs for affordable access to energy.

The targets set by the European Union (A Clean Planet for all, COM(2018) 773 final) and COP 21 (Paris Agreement, United Nations, 2015) regarding CO₂ emissions, energy saving and the use of renewable energies aim at speeding up a transition towards sustainability, and are directly related to the way we use natural resources to generate the energy that our societies need. University research and education have a key role to play in these endeavours, particularly in exploring new business models and citizen behaviours to achieve these goals. Collaboration between universities and businesses and with citizens is essential to ensure that the newly generated knowledge is put at the service of society.

In this context, what is the role of research, education and training? How can we find solutions for the social and technological challenges of the energy and climate transition? These are key questions which are going to be addressed at the 1st Energy & Environment Clustering Event, organised by the [EUA Energy & Environment Platform](#) (EUA-EPUE) and [Durham University](#).

EUA-EPUE connects universities across Europe to tackle the energy challenge through collaborative and interdisciplinary research, education and innovation to create a truly clean and sustainable energy system. As part of the [UNI-SET project](#) (2014-2017), the Platform developed two main documents: In 2016 a [Roadmap for European Universities in Energy](#) laid out a vision for a strategic agenda for universities and stakeholders in order to maximise their impact in the field of energy. In 2017 a strategic report [An Action Agenda for European Universities](#) provided a framework for universities across Europe to take initiative and develop interdisciplinary cooperation in the energy and environmental field. Early 2018 EUA-EPUE strategically broadened its perspective by integrating environmental aspects, to align with European and international targets towards sustainability.

Consequently, the Energy & Environment Clustering Events aim to support universities in addressing social and technological challenges of the energy transition and climate change. Building upon the [“Energy Clustering Events”](#), this new series of events is addressed to university leadership, energy professionals and policy-makers active in higher education and research in the field of energy and environment.

The [1st Energy & Environment Clustering Event](#) will focus on the engagement of consumers and citizen communities and on the transition to a circular economy. It will provide a platform for university leaders to share experiences in i) educating and training the next generation of master’s graduates and doctorates, ii) building research capacity within universities and other higher education and research institutions, or iii) strengthening interdisciplinary cooperation between universities and citizen communities, policy-makers and industry/business.

MONDAY, 23 SEPTEMBER 2019

12.00-13.00 Registration and Welcome Lunch

13.00-13.15 Welcome Addresses

13.15-14.05 Keynote “The global challenge: Interdisciplinary education and research, SDGs and circular economy”

14.05-15.00 “New perspectives on university research, education and training towards energy and environment sustainability”

This plenary will introduce the EUA-EPUE Platform and conference specific objectives. The session will also include a presentation on new perspectives for university research and education, including the need for more interdisciplinary research and the development of new educational programmes.

15.00-15.30 Coffee break

15.30-17.00 **Parallel Sessions “How universities contribute to interdisciplinary education for circular economy”**

This session aims at the sharing of experiences from institutional initiatives supporting and developing energy research and education activities relating to the integration of renewable technologies and solutions and resulting in significant steps towards the required energy and environmental transition.

Best practices from call for contributions:

- **Engagement of consumers and citizen communities in the energy transition and care for the environment**, such as consumer behaviour, energy end-user empowerment, informative billing, energy communities, etc.
 - **Transition to a circular economy for the energy transition and care for the environment**, such as the impact on energy efficiency and greenhouse gas emissions
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17.00-17.30 **Report on the outcomes of the parallel sessions**

19.00-22.00 **Dinner**

TUESDAY, 24 SEPTEMBER 2019

8.30-9.00 **Registration**

9.00-9.50 **Keynote “Informing consumers/citizens, motivating and facilitating behaviour change: how can universities play a role”**

9.50-10.50 **World Café Method: “How to design consumer or community oriented research projects at universities” (in relation to energy/circular economy)**

The main objective of this session is to test ideas for the main topics addressed in Day 1. Participants will split into 5 to 6 small and informal working groups. The session is structured in two parts of 30 minutes each. Each group will have one moderator and one rapporteur. The moderators will invite the participants to brainstorm on selected questions.

10.50-11.15 **Coffee break**

11.15-11.45 **Report from the World Café groups**

11.45-12.45 Roundtable discussion “The role of consumers in the circular economy and energy transition”

The objective of this session is to translate the discussions into concrete steps in supporting the role of consumers in changing their energy consumption behaviour. Different actors engaged in that endeavour will participate, including policy-makers, local authorities, university leaders, energy communities, industry.

12.45-13.00 Closing Remarks

13.00-14.00 Farewell Lunch

14.00-17.00 Visit Durham energy and environment facilities
