



Unlocking the power of youth to develop equity in net-zero governance: invitation to apply to participate in our new research programme

Oxford Net Zero, in partnership with the British Standards Institution, is launching a new 8-month research project exploring opportunities to embed equity criteria into net-zero standards. We are looking for 12 individuals between 18-35 years old from around the world to participate in this project and contribute their ideas for how net-zero ambitions by companies can better account for equity considerations. The project will run from late-October 2024 through June 2025.

Read on to learn more about our project and how to apply!

Youth knowledge and a global citizens' assembly

There is perhaps no single demographic that will be more affected by today's decisions on how we achieve net zero than youth, especially those from the most climate-vulnerable countries. Young people will experience the implications of net-zero pathways followed today, yet are under-represented in current net-zero governance discussions. A prolonged social movement has demonstrated how youth offer unique climate justice perspectives and play expectation-setting roles in international climate politics. 12 young people will be brought together across eight workshops, working with international standards professionals and UK-based businesses to co-produce a set of equity criteria for companies transitioning to net zero.

By bringing global youth representatives together, we will demonstrate the importance of including youth in global climate governance.

Net Zero Standards and Equity

Achieving climate justice means different things to different people in different geographies. Whether it is the duty to reduce carbon emissions and pay for carbon removals; the need to compensate or support adaptation of those affected by the impacts of a changing climate; or securing safe futures for future generations of people, plants and animals; the meaning of a 'just transition' is often a source of debate. In this programme, we want to explore what it would mean to embed 'equity' into the governance systems used to guide companies in their transitions to net zero.

Action by companies is an important part of getting to net zero. Voluntary standards and guidelines are used by companies across the world to help them make transition plans to get to net zero. Although the number of companies setting net-zero targets has grown significantly in recent years, setting a target does not necessarily mean that steps to decarbonise will be actioned, nor does it ensure the integrity, urgency of equity of their plans. The impact of companies' transition plans will be felt by communities along supply chains and amongst future generations. However, information about how companies should embed equity in their transition plans is largely missing or very vague in current guidance.



Our ambition is to develop a set of criteria that can guide companies to meaningfully embed equity in their net-zero transition plans. Our vision is that these equity criteria will be taken up by the international voluntary standards landscape and embedded within their corporate guidance.

How you could be involved:

We're looking for 12 individuals between 18-35 years old, with two representatives from each of the 6 continents, to participate in a series of 7-8 workshops between late October 2024 and June 2025. These will be broken down as follows:

Phase 1: November 2024 - March 2025: 12 youth will participate in four workshops in which we will explore the meaning of equity and net zero in the context of corporate climate action, and work together to identify guidance for companies to follow in order to contribute to a just transition.

Phase 2: March - April 2025: We will bring youth participants from the first phase together with representatives from UK-based businesses to further develop the criteria proposed in Phase 1. This will take place via two more workshops. The objective here is to ensure our recommendations are feasible within the corporate context, and generate support from different sectors for our ideas before we present them to standards bodies.

Phase 3: May - June 2025: Youth participants share their criteria with representatives from international standards bodies. This will take the format of 1-2 additional workshops.

The benefits to you of participating in this research:

We have designed this research programme to build capacity amongst a select cohort of youth from around the globe. Through this process, you will:

- Have the opportunity to make a real impact on business and corporate climate action today
- Learn what the international climate standards landscape is and how it works
- Develop negotiation skills for different contexts, including with youth peers, businesses and standards bodies
- Have the opportunity to build networks with like-minded peers, academics, businesses and standards-experts

How to apply

Our objective is to find a balance of participants who can help us develop boundary-pushing and novel equity criteria.

We are looking for candidates who...

- Are aged between 18-35 years old (confirmation of birth date may be requested for safeguarding purposes)
- Can describe what 'equity' in the context of 'net zero' means for them



- Understand and are excited by the role businesses can play in getting us to net zero
- May have a background in areas including climate activism and campaigning, research, policy making and regulation, and corporate climate action
- Able to commit to monthly, 1.5h online or hybrid workshops between November 2024 and May 2025.
- Good proficiency in spoken English (strong written English is not required, and we will also accept applications in French and Spanish, although workshops will be hosted in English).

Remember - you may not fulfil all of the criteria we set out above, but don't worry, we are interested most in your ideas! We'll be holding interviews to select our final workshop participants, and, if selected for the interview, you'll have the chance to demonstrate your passion for equity, climate change and corporate action.

In order to improve accessibility of the project, a small amount of remuneration will be available to those for whom participation would otherwise not be possible. Individuals who are selected to participate are welcome to discuss their circumstances with the team before the project begins.

To apply, please complete [this form here](#). The deadline for applications is 23:59 BST 14 October 2024. We will not accept emailed CVs.

Remember to get permission from an individual who can give you a reference upon request, and share their email with us in your application. The individual should be able to speak to your experience and commitment to equity and climate justice and be available for contact to confirm they know you. References from family members will not be accepted. Appropriate referees include teachers or lecturers, colleagues, collaborators or mentors. Letters must include contact details for your referee.

Candidates will be informed of the outcome of their application in the week commencing 21 October 2024, with short interviews in the week of the 28th October.

Funding for the project:

This research project is funded by ACCESS, a programme of work providing leadership on the social science contribution to tackling and solving a range of climate and environmental problems. ACCESS distributes funding received from UK Research and Innovation - the United Kingdom's national academic grant-making body.