



Green Gown
Awards 2016



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The University of Oxford, Oxford Brookes University & Oxford City Council Community Low Carbon Oxford Week

About the project

Summary

Low Carbon Oxford Week is a city-wide summer festival comprised of over 100 pop-up events that integrate culture, creativity and community to inspire local citizens to support local biodiversity, take action against climate change, and lead healthier and greener lifestyles.

Now in its third year, the festival is a celebration of all things good and green in our city and aims to show community members how to save money, get fit and be happy whilst taking care of the environment.

Activities include a wealth of workshops, talks, tours and activities such as an interactive green treasure hunt, a local wildlife tour on the Thames, talks with "pop-up" natural history scientists, a presentation on regional impacts from climate change and a DIY bicycle repair workshop.

Project partners

Low Carbon Oxford Week is a joint project led by the Oxford Strategic Partnership involving Oxford Brookes University, University of Oxford and Oxford City Council.

The results

The problem

Low Carbon activity needs to be normalized in order for more people to adopt low carbon behaviours. Low Carbon Oxford week aims to involve local people in fun and engaging low carbon activities.

The approach

Low Carbon Oxford Week is all about making low-carbon behaviour an everyday part of life, creating a standard, low-carbon approach within the university and city strategies and celebrating the success of low carbon measures in Oxford. This event creates networking to a huge number of Oxford residents emphasising the message that the move to a Low Carbon society is a strategic issue to the City and its higher education

Profile

- Higher Education
- 40,062 students (includes full and part time students, combined)
- 15,390 staff (combined)
- Urban



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institutions. It gives people a first-hand experience with real-life examples of sustainable choices and technologies.

By bringing together key stakeholders in a festival setting, the event creates an atmosphere of cooperation and celebration where participants can see how environmental issues are a key part of a larger movement to create healthier and more sustainable communities.

Our goals

To show local people how they can save money, get fit and be happy whilst being kind to the environment.

Obstacles and solutions

Obstacles	Solutions
Getting people involved	An emphasis on the activities offered through Low Carbon Oxford week has been to make them fun, engaging and accessible.
Funding and resources	Low Carbon Oxford week in its entirety wouldn't be fundable by one institution so by working in collaboration with other further funds and staff time has been made available.

Performance and results

Over 70 partner organisations have worked together to deliver an engaging festival programme since LCO Week began in 2014. Attendance at LCO Week 2016 events is estimated to be in excess of 40,000, including 27,000 at the Big Green Day Out launch event alone. This high profile event on Broad Street in Oxford's city centre was stewarded by student volunteers from both universities. Another key event on electric transport - 'Test Drive the Future' featured stalls from both Oxford University's Transport Studies Unit and Oxford Brookes University's vehicle engineering course. Staff and students from both universities are very involved in the shaping, organising and running of events throughout the festival.

The future

Lessons learned

With very modest financial resource behind the festival, the scale and success of LCO Week so far is due to effective and enthusiastic collaboration between a large number of key organisations in the city – led by Oxford City Council, University of Oxford and Oxford Brookes University. LCO Week is now a much anticipated highlight of the city's events calendar and local organisations are motivated and mobilised to put on special events or theme/promote their regular events each June in order to be part of the festival.

A benefit of the model is that the scale of the festival can be increased through partner events without an equivalent increase in cost of organisation. It can scale up by leveraging additional sponsorship and grant funding, but is resilient to reductions in this funding being available. These aspects lend both to inherently building partnerships and its replicability by other regions that can start small.



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The model for LCO Week is highly replicable and could provide an inspirational starting point for any city wanting to increase engagement with the public on environment and sustainability. LCO Week organisers are keen to share their experiences with other cities and institutions and to see similar festivals proliferating around the UK and beyond.

Sharing your project

The festival website makes available all the information about LCO week including all the partners involved, the delivery team, all the Challenge resources and a full archive of all the festival events since 2014. It features short films about LCO Week which quickly convey what it's all about and what's involved. The film is also available on YouTube and has been shared widely via social media.

The Test Drive the Future event was filmed by Oxford based media company GreenTV and broadcast to their significant global following. Entering the Green Gown awards also provides an excellent platform to share the experiences of organising LCO Week with other universities, colleges and cities and to meet people who might be interested in replicating the initiative elsewhere.

What has it meant to your institution to be a Green Gown Award finalist?

The potential for the institution's collaboration to be recognized by such a prestigious award as the Green Gown has been a great motivator for the organisations to work even more closely together planning for next year's event.

Further information

@LCOWeek

<http://lcoweek.org/about-low-carbon-week-oxford/>

<http://lowcarbonoxford.org/>

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