



Third Annual International Conference in Leicester (UK) on *Energising the post-COVID recovery to support the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*

Deadline Extended

Call for Papers

The Institute of Energy and Sustainable Development (IESD) at De Montfort University (Leicester, UK) is organising the annual international conference in July 2021 in Leicester to explore the how post-COVID recovery could be energised through targeted interventions in climate-friendly infrastructure development in three areas, namely energy, water, and waste management, which in turn could support the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The conference will include presentations from the funded research projects being undertaken at IESD alongside papers selected from this call. We are inviting abstracts of papers for presentation in the conference.

Background

In 2019, the first annual international conference organised by the IESD focused on Energising the SDGs through technology and governance. The two-day event considered how technology and governance could support the implementation of the SDGs. The conference attracted authors from different parts of the world and focused on energy, water, health, innovation and architecture in urban and rural communities. One of the areas that was highlighted in the conference was the need for an integrated, systems perspective in implementing the SDGs to capture the synergies and avoid the hindrances. In 2020, the second conference focused on aligning local interventions with the UN SDGs. This webinar was held in the middle of the global pandemic, which is still continuing and affecting normal life in many parts of the world, including the UK. One of the global impacts of the pandemic has been the economic downturn and the unprecedented global recession that is paralysing the world economy.

Accordingly, the main theme of this year's conference is to explore the how the global economic recovery could be supported through an accelerated transition to a low-carbon pathway by focusing on investment in infrastructure in sustainable energy, water and waste management. How could the temptations of a quick and dirty recovery be avoided as was observed in the past? How could sustainable interventions be designed at different levels (such as the local level by cities or in rural areas, and at the national or regional levels)? What specific challenges and risks are likely to arise in such an accelerated transition process? How could such challenges be overcome and what adjustments in the governance arrangements would be required? How could these interventions take advantage of possible synergies with other UN SDGs?

Thematic Areas

This year we are considering three main thematic areas. These are indicated below:

- a) **Investments in sustainable energy, water and waste management infrastructure for post-COVID recovery:** Accelerated and focused investments in targeted areas

could be suggested in urban areas, rural areas or for strategic infrastructure development such as smart local grids, smart charging system roll out, integrated public transport services, etc. Is the European Green Deal the way forward? Can a green Marshall Plan be designed? Are there any frameworks for a resilient recovery and a just world? Can a resilient power system infrastructure development be an engine for recovery? Studies suggesting investment decision-making, planning, systems integration, behavioural and social implications could be considered.

- b) **Governance arrangements to support sustainable and circular economy driven post-COVID recovery:** Delivering an accelerated transition to a low-carbon future could require new approaches to doing business, organising finances, supporting investors, policymakers and communities. New and innovative business models, integration of data and analytical approaches and even decision-making processes could be suggested. Possible differences in the arrangements in urban and rural contexts, across countries and regions could also be the focus of these papers. How can we deliver sustainable solutions in scale? What role can communities play? How can social issues be addressed through an SDG-aligned approach?
- c) **Co-creating a low-carbon recovery pathway:** How can a recovery pathway be co-created? Is there any experience or practice that could offer guidance to others? How can a recovery path be co-created to ensure a more equitable and just world? How can a resilient development path be created to protect against future vulnerabilities?

We invite contributions from researchers, academics and other stakeholders on above thematic areas. Please send a structured abstract of 500 words by **30th April 2021** indicating the purpose of the work, the methodology used, main findings and your recommendations for recovery and delivering the SDGs. A review panel will consider all abstracts and authors of the accepted abstracts will be asked to submit the full paper (with a page limit of 8 A4 sides) by 30th May 2021. At least one author will have to present the paper in the conference – physically or virtually.

Important Dates:

Deadline for submission of abstracts: 30th April 2021

Acceptance information sent to authors: 15th May 2021

Deadline for full paper submission 15th June 2021

Conference presentation 2nd July 2021

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