

Call for Partnerships

2026



From Insight to Impact:

Knowledge and networks to drive climate action

Why this moment matters

Climate change is no longer a distant risk. It is a real and present danger. Its impacts are being felt now and they're getting worse. Yet just as the stakes rise, momentum for action is slowing. Many governments are backtracking on climate commitments; public support is under pressure; and businesses, financial institutions and legal systems are grappling with unprecedented levels of uncertainty and challenge. Leaders across sectors urgently need credible evidence, practical tools, and trusted guidance to navigate this changing environment.

The Centre for Climate Engagement (CCE) was created specifically to meet this need. Positioned within Hughes Hall at the University of Cambridge, the Centre serves as a bridge between world-class academic research on climate law and policy, and the practitioners responsible for implementing climate action. CCE exists to translate complex research into actionable insight that strengthens climate governance across government, law, finance and business.

Our 2025–2028 strategy recognises the next few years as a rare and crucial window. Climate governance is evolving rapidly through new regulation, litigation, political realignment and economic pressure, and the choices made now will shape whether climate commitments translate into delivery. There is an urgent need for credible, practical decision-making guidance, and an unprecedented opportunity to influence system-level change across law, policy, finance and corporate governance.

“CCE was founded on a simple insight: brilliant climate research has little impact unless the people who make decisions can act on it. Today, as political and economic pressures to slow climate action mount, our role has never been more essential. We invite partners to join us at a pivotal moment, to ensure that knowledge becomes action, and action becomes lasting change.”

*Dr Paul Jefferiss, Director,
Centre for Climate Engagement*



What We Aim to Achieve Together

Partnership investment will enable CCE to advance a strategic vision grounded in rigorous research, cross-sector collaboration, and practical impact. Over the next three years, CCE will work to:

- Strengthen national and international climate law and policy frameworks
- Support a legal paradigm shift that enables corporate, finance and political leaders to accelerate climate action
- Use the law to drive accountability and transparency through procurement and the supply chain
- Help local authorities to set and deliver ambitious climate goals
- Empower the public to give consent for climate action.

In addition...

CCE builds climate decision-making capacity by training and equipping corporate leaders, lawyers, and regulators with the tools they need to embed climate action into decision making.

We play a vital role in nurturing the next generation of climate leaders. Our talent pipeline of Postdoctoral Researchers, Interns and early-career Fellows pursue applied climate work that directly shapes policy and governance now and in the future.

Critically, we are a trusted, neutral climate convenor - the connective tissue between academics, companies, lawyers, regulators, policy leaders and civil society. Few institutions provide such an open and collaborative environment that allows research to be tested, challenged, refined and translated into targeted solutions. Partnership support, will allow CCE to expand our capacity and talent-building mission, ensuring sustained expertise in the field long beyond immediate project cycles. And to extend the scope and reach of our networks and communities of practice.

IMPACT Case Study: The Locally Determined Contributions (LDC) Framework

CCE's LDC framework is reshaping how local authorities plan and deliver climate action by aligning local plans with national climate objectives. Piloted with councils across the UK and supported by Innovate UK, the framework is now positioned for national rollout and international replication. It offers a scalable model for improving local climate governance and ensuring that local and national climate ambitions reinforce one another.

Our Work and How We Deliver Impact

CCE's impact is delivered through three interconnected programme areas:

1. **Law for Climate Action**
2. **Policy for Climate Action**
3. **Engagement for Climate Action**

While each programme has distinct goals and methods, they are tightly coordinated, reflecting our belief that climate governance challenges transcend any one sector or discipline.

Law for Climate Action

The law is one of society's most powerful levers for climate action. CCE's Law for Climate Action programme empowers legal practitioners, policymakers, corporate leaders and regulators to understand how climate issues intersect with legal frameworks, and how those frameworks can evolve to accelerate climate action. The programme includes the development of the internationally recognised Law & Climate Atlas, in-depth legal research on emerging climate issues, analysis of directors' duties and fiduciary responsibility, guidance on "true and fair" accounting standards, and comparative research covering state-owned enterprises, planning law and the governance of artificial intelligence. The programme has already made global impact. It has informed government consultations at national and international levels, shaped parliamentary debate and influenced how legal professionals are trained. It has created new tools for law firms, general counsel, policy experts and civil society groups, providing a backbone for credible climate governance work worldwide.

Policy for Climate Action

The Policy for Climate Action programme supports governments and local authorities in navigating the increasingly complex policy landscape. One of CCE's flagship contributions

is the Locally Determined Contributions (LDC) framework — a model for aligning national climate ambition with local delivery. Piloted with UK councils and developed with funding from Innovate UK, the framework offers decision makers a practical way to understand responsibilities, plan action and track progress. The framework has been referenced in a publication by the British Academy, who also co-hosted an event with CCE to discuss local and national delivery of net zero targets. The Policy programme also provides ongoing analysis of UK climate policy, develops narratives to build public consent for climate action, and produces consultation responses and briefings on critical issues such as devolved energy decision making, the ESG backlash, resilient cities, carbon markets, adaptation and green finance. Through this work, the Centre has become a trusted and independent resource for policymakers seeking clarity, evidence and expert advice.

Engagement for Climate Action

CCE is a rapidly growing convening hub for global climate governance. Our Engagement Programme brings together scholars, practitioners and decision makers across disciplines and geographies. We host high-level roundtables on emerging issues; deliver major events in partnership with international organisations; and curate seminars that bring some of the world's leading climate law, policy and finance thinkers to Cambridge. This collaborative work is the engine that translates academic knowledge into policy and practice. Whether creating dialogues between regulators and researchers, supporting thousands of non-executive directors through Chapter Zero and the Chapter Zero Alliance, or partnering with the Nasdaq Centre for Board Excellence and the UNFCCC High-Level Climate Champions, CCE facilitates exchange at the scale needed for rapid system change. Our flagship achievement is the launch of a new online peer-reviewed academic journal, the Cambridge Forum on Corporate Climate Governance in partnership with the Cambridge University Press.

How we work

CCE's values and working methods are grounded in our theory of change. We believe that law, policy and organisational culture must evolve together if societies are to build resilient, effective climate governance systems. Our role is therefore to identify where these systems fail, where opportunities exist, and how solutions can be practically implemented.

To achieve this, we operate as the connective tissue between climate researchers and the practitioners who must act. We convene communities of practice that bridge sectors and disciplines; synthesise evidence into accessible formats; and build networks that accelerate learning. Our open-access ethos ensures that knowledge flows outward, supporting a wider ecosystem of climate action.

CCE's approach is characterised by timeliness, credibility, inclusivity and practicality. We respond quickly to new developments — from major court rulings to legislative reforms, geopolitical shifts, and emerging technologies — and translate them into accessible analysis. We foster environments where difficult conversations can happen productively, and we equip decision makers with tools and frameworks they can use immediately.

IMPACT: Transforming UK Planning Law

CCE's postdoctoral research on planning law identified critical gaps in how climate considerations were embedded in the UK planning system. Working closely with Parliament and civil society, this research directly informed Section 94 of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 — a landmark provision that requires planning decision makers to give "special regard" to climate.

Our Strategy for 2025–2028

CCE's strategy for 2025–2028 responds to a rapidly changing climate landscape in which physical impacts are accelerating while political and economic pressures challenge climate ambition. In this context, decision makers in government, law, finance and business urgently need credible, timely and practical guidance. CCE exists to meet this need by translating world-class academic research into solutions that strengthen climate governance across the economy.

As a Bridge Initiative at Hughes Hall, and a core part of the College's Strategy, CCE is uniquely positioned at the intersection of research and practice. Our vision is a world where governments and businesses have the legal, policy and governance frameworks required for meaningful, rapid climate action. Our mission is to identify and communicate how law, policy and organisational culture can be applied or improved to support better climate decision making across sectors.

CCE's strategy rests on a clear theory of change: that law, policy and culture are powerful levers for climate action; that collaboration between researchers and practitioners generates practical solutions; that these solutions must be tested, refined and supported through tools, training and implementation guidance; and that networks and public engagement are essential to scaling and legitimising change.

Over the next three years, CCE will focus on strengthening national and international climate law, enhancing climate policy

at all levels, improving decision making in companies and public institutions, embedding climate considerations into procurement and supply chains, and addressing emerging climate-related challenges in areas such as AI governance. These priorities reflect domains where CCE can generate the greatest impact through its expertise, partnerships and convening power.

Our approach combines connecting, creating, convening, communicating and capacity building. We bring experts together to identify problems and co-design solutions; translate academic insights into accessible tools and guidance; host high-level dialogues and global events; and support leaders, from board directors to local authority officials to students, in strengthening climate governance practices.

CCE's position within the University of Cambridge gives us access to deep research expertise and influential practitioner networks, including Chapter Zero, the Chapter Zero Alliance, the Net Zero Lawyers Alliance, Cambridge Zero, Science Europe, and partners in government and civil society. This combination of credibility, reach and agility allows CCE to respond quickly to emerging issues and shape climate governance at scale.

Delivering this strategy requires sustainable core funding. The cost of implementation is £700,000 per year, covering expert staff, programme delivery, research translation, convening, communications and operational infrastructure. Current funding is secured only until August 2026, making partnership essential to ensure that CCE can fulfil its mission and expand its impact during this critical period for climate governance.

Why Partner with CCE

Partnership with CCE is an investment in strengthening the systems that enable climate action. Few organisations combine access to deep academic expertise, practitioner networks, research translation capability and global convening power. This unique position allows CCE to influence decision making in government, law, corporate governance, finance and civil society in ways that are timely, practical and impactful.

Partners align with a centre that has a strong track record of influencing legislation, shaping public policy, contributing to international climate governance, and delivering trusted resources used by thousands of practitioners. Partners also become part of a community that values collaboration, rigorous analysis and a commitment to public benefit.

Partnership brings mutual value: credibility, access, visibility, thought leadership opportunities, and a direct role in shaping the future of climate governance.

IMPACT: The Law & Climate Atlas A Global Resource

Developed with the Net Zero Lawyers Alliance, the Atlas offers accessible but rigorous overviews of how climate change intersects with dozens of areas of law. Since its launch, it has received more than 25,000 views from users in over 100 countries, been cited in academic journals and parliamentary debates, and become a core resource for law firms and general counsel seeking to understand climate-related legal obligations.

What your partnership supports in practice

CCE partnerships provide core support that enables the Centre to deliver a portfolio of high-impact, interconnected projects across climate law, policy and engagement. Current and planned work includes:

Law for Climate Action

- The **Law & Climate Atlas** (with the **Net Zero Lawyers Alliance**): a globally used, open-access resource mapping how climate change intersects with over 40 areas of law, used by law firms, in-house teams, academics and policymakers in over 100 countries.
- Research and guidance on **directors' duties**, fiduciary responsibility and corporate climate governance, delivered with **Chapter Zero** and the **Chapter Zero Alliance**.
- Continued work on **true and fair value accounting**, in collaboration with **Social Value International**.
- Comparative and applied legal research on **planning law, procurement, state-owned enterprises, supply chains, AI and climate governance**, including collaborations with **BIICL, the National University of Singapore and Cambridgeshire County Council**.
- Development of practical **legal tools**, including a sortable database of climate contractual clauses with the **Chancery Lane Project**.
- High-level **legal roundtables and seminars** with lawyers, judges, regulators and policymakers.

Policy and Governance Innovation

- **Locally Determined Contributions** (LDCs): a pioneering framework aligning local climate delivery with national targets, developed with UK local authorities and positioned for national rollout and international replication.
- The **Policy for Climate Action Programme**, including work on local climate governance, national-local alignment and delivery frameworks for net zero.
- **Rapid Evidence Synthesis** (RES) tools, developed

with **Science Europe** and academic partners, enabling policymakers to access timely, rigorous climate evidence.

- Research and engagement on **Local Government Reform**, devolved decision-making and climate delivery capacity, including work with the **British Academy**.
- Research and tools to support **public consent** for climate action, developed with **CISL** and **ZeroIdeas**.

Engagement for Climate Action

- Support for CCE's contribution to the **Cambridge Corporate Climate Governance Forum** journal, in collaboration with **Cambridge University Press**.
- Ongoing **collaboration** with partners including **Cambridge Zero, Chapter Zero, Chapter Zero Alliance, Net Zero Lawyers Alliance, UK100, ICLEI, Science Europe** and international academic and policy networks.
- **Engagement** with local authorities, government departments, professional bodies, law firms and global climate governance initiatives.

People, Capacity and Leadership

- Support for postdoctoral researchers, policy fellows and interns, ensuring academic insight is translated into practice and **future climate governance leaders** are developed.
- **Convening of practitioners, policymakers and academics** through Cambridge-based and international events.
- Delivery of a **climate literacy** module for senior civil servants, in collaboration with the **Centre for Science & Policy** (CSaP).

Partnership funding enables this work to function as a connected whole, allowing CCE to respond rapidly to emerging challenges, sustain open-access tools relied on globally, and scale solutions that strengthen climate governance where it matters most.

Partner benefits

Partners receive tailored opportunities to engage strategically with CCE's work and networks. This includes structured dialogue with CCE leadership, invitations to high-level roundtables and seminars, visibility across publications and events, opportunities to co-curate knowledge-sharing activities, and early insight into emerging research and policy developments. Partners also receive bespoke annual impact reports demonstrating the influence and reach of their investment.

Partnership investment

CCE is seeking strategic partners to support delivery of its 2025–2028 strategy.

Delivering the Centre's work requires sustainable annual investment of £700,000.

Contact

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