

PRESS RELEASE

New research project to produce a shared vision on a UK Net Zero future

- **Project will utilise the best academic research available to provide clarity on the net zero options available to the UK**
- **Project will feature a series of workshops with leading UK academics and key stakeholders from the public, private and third sectors to focus on the role of research in the challenge to transition the UK to net zero**
- **The Sustainability Research Institute at the University of Leeds are the academic lead on the project working alongside Cardiff University and Cultivate Innovation**

Leeds, November 9th, 2020 - A new UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) funded project will use the best academic research available to articulate a consensus identifying urgent initial steps and a longer-term strategy for delivering a UK net zero transition. The project will be delivered by the University of Leeds, Cardiff University and innovation research consultancy, Cultivate Innovation.

The project will work with stakeholders from academia and industry to produce a shared vision on what is required to deliver a UK net zero future in the short-term (the next ten years) and the longer-term (from 2030 onwards). It will also identify and clarify what further research is needed to help underpin a net zero future.

The project has been commissioned by UKRI and focuses on the role of research in the challenge to transition the UK to net zero and will apply a whole systems approach because of the need to understand the costs and benefits of different technologies, systems design and decarbonisation.

It will feature a deliberative process, running a series of workshops with leading UK academics and key stakeholders from the public, private and third sector focusing on the areas of decarbonisation, energy demand, carbon capture and removal, and the social and economic implications of net zero.

Academic lead for the project, Professor John Barrett from the Sustainability Research Institute at the University of Leeds said:

"To achieve net zero the UK must act now because we need rapid greenhouse gas emissions reductions in the short-term to avoid a climate crisis. Academic support and frameworks are essential to provide the best available scientific evidence to inform decision making. This project will work with leading UK academics to collate their thinking and research to articulate a consensus to help avoid decisions being made without relying on such evidence."

Professor Nick Pidgeon, Professor of Environmental Psychology and Director of the Understanding Risk Research Group at Cardiff University adds:

"With this project we are seeking to ensure that the UKRI Energy & Decarbonisation Programme has the maximum opportunity to inform and guide the response of UK decision makers to climate change. We will apply a whole systems approach and produce a shared vision outlining a narrative for net zero in the short-term, the next decade, and for the longer-term, from 2030 onwards."

Dr Mike Colechin, founder of innovation research consultancy, Cultivate Innovation concludes:

"Our aim for the project is to provide decision makers involved in net zero with the best academic evidence available to create an environment whereby rapid but above all robust decisions made in the UK are informed by the most advanced research on climate mitigation."

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For further information

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NOTES TO EDITORS

The University of Leeds is one of the largest higher education institutions in the UK, renowned globally for the quality of its teaching and research. The University strives to achieve academic excellence within an ethical framework informed by its values of integrity, equality and inclusion, community and professionalism. The University's Sustainability Research Institute explores a wide range of issues including climate change, energy, transport, water, resource use, land-use, conservation, cities and communities, business and lifestyles – specialising in participatory, action-orientated research that brings together government, business, non-governmental organisations and local communities to enhance the relevance, quality and practical influence of their research.

Cardiff University is an ambitious and innovative university with a bold and strategic vision located in the capital city of Wales. The University excels in education, research and innovation building strong international relationships whilst delivering significant economic and social impact in Wales and the UK. The Understanding Risk Research Group at Cardiff School of Psychology conducts leading edge research into public and stakeholder engagement with a range of energy technology and environmental issues on both the supply and demand side. They are core members of the UK Energy Research Centre (UKERC) and also lead the social science work-stream of the Flexible Integrated Energy Systems (FLEXIS) project, a £24 million research collaboration between South Wales Universities partnering with industry and local authorities to develop demonstrator projects in local communities to model future decarbonised and decentralised energy systems.

Cultivate Innovation is an energy focussed innovation research consultancy that connects people and empowers them to build high quality relationships that deliver lasting impact. It specialises in working with organisations who are delivering innovative low-carbon energy solutions.

