

## Case Study: Our Green Skills Intervention Project

In May 2022 the STEM Ambassador Hub West of England implemented the Our Green Skills intervention project with the aim of increasing awareness of green skills, their links to STEM, and their relevance to a low-carbon, sustainable economy.

### How it came about

In April 2022 the Department for Education policy paper: “[Sustainability and climate change: a strategy for the education and children’s services systems](#)” created the role of Climate Ambassador as a subject expert who helps schools and colleges with the delivery of their sustainability and climate change action plans. The role of Climate Ambassador was added as a scheme to the STEM Ambassador platform, meaning that any STEM Ambassador could add this designation to their profile. This meant that as a Hub we could identify who was part of the Climate Ambassador cohort.

At the same time, the West of England Combined Authority's regional Green Skills report was highlighting the skills needed for the region to achieve Net Zero. Together with the Lighthouse Schools Partnership MAT we successfully applied to the Combined Authority's [Green Futures Fund](#) for money to support a new curriculum project. Called Your Green Future, our approach involved working with subject teachers to develop lessons and resources that link what needs to be taught to the skills needed locally to meet sustainability targets such as Net Zero.

In order to unify these two opportunities and simplify communication with stakeholders, we developed the umbrella project Our Green Skills as our intervention project.

### Mobilisation of STEM Volunteers

We launched Our Green Skills through meetings with STEM Ambassador stakeholders to promote participation in the Climate Ambassador scheme. We ran online networking events to explain how to become a Climate Ambassador, highlighting upcoming opportunities for Climate Ambassadors and signposting to existing resources Climate Ambassadors would find useful when working with schools.

We developed five [template requests](#) for Climate Ambassadors and promoted this to our education partners. This was to encourage teachers to use the STEM Ambassador digital platform to make requests for Climate Ambassadors that we could be confident we could fulfill through the existing Climate Ambassador cohort. We also created a small library of [Green Skills Job Profiles](#) that highlight the green skills that Climate / STEM Ambassadors have, how their jobs use the skills they learned at school, and what motivates them to have a green job. These profiles were an effective addition to the Your Green Future resources.

## **Working collaboratively**

To provide Climate Ambassadors with ways to support schools and young people with activities relevant to green skills, we started by signposting a number of existing activities, including those from RIBA, Go Construct and Jacobs. Locally we worked alongside the Initiative for Digital Engineering Technology and Innovation (DETI) Inspire programme, based at UWE Bristol, to roll out activities that highlight how digital engineering is helping combat climate change. We also worked with the national Eco-Schools programme to devise an approach to use Climate Ambassadors to support school Eco-committees across the whole of the South West of England. This mix of activities helped the Climate Ambassador programme to appeal to primary and secondary school teachers in the region, and enabled volunteers to understand what they were signing up for when becoming a Climate Ambassador.

Your Green Future was a collaboration between us and 12 teachers from 3 different schools, representing science, maths, geography and DT departments. They worked with us to look for opportunities to bring ideas about green skills and green jobs into lessons. We developed the resources, including lesson plans and Green Skills Job Profiles, and handed them over to the teachers for them to deliver in their KS3 lessons. The evaluation of this project indicates that this collaborative approach and inclusion of the profiles has resulted in teachers embedding green skills and careers messaging into their teaching, using it as a modern context for teaching an established curriculum.

Through the collaborative approach of the West of England Careers Hub and the Green Futures Fund, we developed more activity for Climate Ambassadors through the other two funded projects. UWE Bristol put on Sustainability Summits and Careers Fayres in 3 schools that were all supported by Climate Ambassadors, and Climate Ambassadors also supported South Bristol Youth's Green Futures group mentoring programme. Also as a result of Combined Authority funding, the [Career Pilot](#) website now features a whole section on Green Jobs, some of which feature our Green Skills Job Profiles, developed as part of Your Green Future.

## **Ongoing Impact**

The Our Green Skills intervention project provided us with a new cohort of STEM Ambassadors with a focus on climate. To date (July 2023) there are 51 Climate Ambassadors registered in the West England region, 84% of them have been active since the start of Our Green Skills. We have created new opportunities for Climate Ambassadors, and our relationships with the West of England Careers Hub and UWE Bristol are even stronger than before. Together with new relationships with organisations like Eco-Schools, South Bristol Youth, Career Pilot and Future Leap we are continuing to develop and deliver opportunities to raise awareness of green skills among teachers, schools, and students, and build a strong Climate Ambassador presence in the region. We believe that this approach is replicable in other local authority areas and in other regions, responding to labour market information on future green skills needs and working alongside local networks of schools, career hubs and employers.