

The Great Copenhagen Debate

A Young Members Opportunity

Briefing Document for Young Member Panels

Objective

To contribute to the UK's carbon emissions reduction strategy for the period 2013-2020, as input to the international Copenhagen conference in December 2009.

Successful delivery of this project will meet in full the YMB Business Plan objective to "develop package of lectures/events aligned to the 4 themes and deliver through YMPs through HQ resource".

The Task

Each participating Panel to organise one or more event(s) that engages members in the technology, policy, regulatory, financial, supply chain and/or skills issues facing the UK in reducing its carbon emissions in the "post-Kyoto" period of 2013 to 2020 (by at least 26% by 2020 from 1990 levels). The event(s) can be focused on particular issues (e.g. transport, built environment, power generation, skills needs, etc.), or specific technologies (e.g. solar PV, bio-fuels, carbon capture & storage, etc.) or take a broader overall look at carbon reduction options. Specific areas of interest include (but are not limited to); The development of renewables, encouraging low carbon transport choices and the development of fuel-efficient road vehicles, energy demand reduction from the domestic sector, potential for energy efficiency gains in industry, decarbonising centralised power generation (e.g. nuclear and coal/gas with carbon capture and storage), and the potential for de-centralized, community and domestic-scale power, heat and transport fuel provision.

In order to feed in to the Copenhagen conference, the events will need to be held before end May 2009. The exact format of each event is for determination by the organising Panel. HQ can support, e.g. in suggesting ideas and providing (limited!) funds for room hire/catering. We want to provide Panels with as much flexibility as possible, so all ideas for engaging members in a relevant conversation are welcome. Some possible event formats might be:

- a) follow-up a technical visit with a debate about the future role of that technology;
- b) get several members from one company together one lunchtime/evening to discuss what their company/sector can and should be doing to reduce carbon emissions;
- c) organise a "Question Time" style debate with panel members (YMs) from various industries/sectors and get them to address questions and suggestions from the audience;
- d) organise an evening discussion meeting, with an invited speaker to speak for 15-20 minutes and kick-start a debate on a particular topic (e.g. a lecturer from a local university).

The Deliverable

Each Panel will need to appoint a "scribe" for each event, to produce a short summary document (say 2-3 pages) describing the participants, major discussion points and recommendations. The document should be emailed to the YMB Energy Theme Ambassador. It is hoped that a web-based facility will also be in place whereby initial drafts from each event can be uploaded to a forum and comments from participants and others can be added. The objective should be to engage as many members as possible and encourage them to contribute their views and ideas.

The benefits

Organisers and participants will both have made an important contribution to the Institution's and UK Government's carbon reduction policy development. They will be helping to raise the profile of engineering and its value to future society. Individual organisers could also acquire valuable skills in project management, event organisation, stakeholder dialogue, member engagement, public speaking, chairmanship, etc. Each event should also provide valuable networking opportunities and, of course, deepen participants' technical knowledge of the engineering challenges and opportunities ahead.

What might success look like?

The aspiration for this project is to have had, by the end of May 2009, at least one event in each Panel Area around the UK, together covering most of the major carbon reduction issues (including energy demand reduction, energy use in buildings, energy use in transport and emissions from power generation and industry), and having engaged at least 1,000 members in the process.

Contacts for further info

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