

Daniel Rey, Citizen of a Nation Swallowed by The Sea, 2023, MA Fine Art Central Saint Martins



# Foreword

**As we embark on the journey to become a social purpose university, we are pleased to invite you to learn about our efforts in the past year to stabilise the climate and regenerate the environment. This is one of four interconnected priorities for all our work articulated in our [Social Purpose Implementation Plan](#), launched in October. Our Climate Action Plan brought together various strands of climate-orientated action at UAL into a plan for systemic change, now our task is to embed this in everything we do.**

It will not be lost on any reader of this update that we find ourselves poised on the brink. The emergency that engulfs our natural world rages unabated, threatening the wellbeing of all humans and the planet. It is incumbent on individuals, institutions and societies to take serious action to respond to the climate and biodiversity crises.

Neither will it be lost on you all, the tremendous difficulty of the task of transition. At UAL, we have made steady progress on reducing our direct emissions, but, like the rest of our sector, continue to grapple with the task of reducing Scope 3 emissions such as travel, capital projects, and everything we consume from food to equipment and materials. We remain resolutely committed to reaching our target of net zero by 2040. The scale of this ambition remains as inspiring as it is humbling, and we hope you will gain insights into how you, too, can participate.

The dedicated work of our colleagues on display in this update reminds us again and again that climate justice is inseparable from social and racial justice, and the world needs creativity to deliver it.

Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions- Scope 1 emissions are direct emissions caused by people and organisations. Scope 2 emissions are indirect emissions from the generation of purchased energy. Scope 3 emissions are all indirect emissions caused a consequence of the activities of people or organisations, but occur at sources caused or controlled by someone else. (Source: GHG Protocol)

As one of the world’s largest creative education institutions, we must ask ourselves what distinctive role we play in nurturing the creativity the world needs to respond to climate and ecological crises. The disciplines we teach - art, design, fashion, communication and performing arts - can act as transformative practices and channel our collective imagination. In our teaching we develop the next generation of creatives, who will go on to shape the creative industries of the future. Through our research, knowledge exchange and advocacy we can help and inspire businesses and organisations to see and do things differently.

We are proud to recognise our progress over the past year. 35% of courses at UAL have taken steps to embed climate and environmental themes into their curricula, preparing our students to be creators of a regenerative world. We have invested in the power of community through the Climate Emergency Network. We have leveraged research expertise to map our systems and discover pathways for climate action. Our direct emissions have continued to fall, progressing us towards our interim target of net zero in Scope 1 and 2 by 2030. As this update sets out, important work is underway. But there is so much more to be done.

The stories of our community’s work are stories of immense drive, talent and hope, in a context that so often and so understandably invokes the inaction of despair. As we move forward in our social purpose journey as a university, we encourage everyone to model our action today on the future we seek to create. A fairer world is nurtured in communities of care, carried by creativity and purpose and grounded in equity and regeneration.



**Polly Mackenzie,**  
Chief Social Purpose Officer



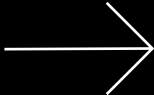
**Professor Dilys Williams,**  
Chair Social Purpose Advisory Group and  
Professor of Fashion Design for Sustainability

# Climate Action Plan Summary

Action area	Our goal	The change we want to make	Our Social Purpose Objective
1. Change the way we teach	Make climate justice a part of every student's learning experience by September 2025	Influence organisations by making climate justice a part of students' creative practice	Our actions will contribute to stabilising the climate and regenerating the environment
2. Change the way we research and exchange knowledge	Demonstrate the impact of our creative research in tackling societal challenges by 2028	Influence climate action in creative industries, policy and the higher education sector	
3. Change the way we operate	Achieve net zero by 2040, with an interim 2030 target of net zero Scope 1 and 2 emissions	Become a net zero university, modelling behaviour and sharing our learnings with others	
4. Change the way we work together	Nurture the activism of students and staff to create positive change in the world	Influence climate action in creative industries, policy and the higher education sector	

# 1. Change the way we teach

Actions	Progress	Our goal	The change we want to make
Embed climate justice in all our courses through a set of teaching principles and a framework to apply these in the curriculum	<div>35%</div> <div>of all our courses have taken steps to embed climate justice</div>	We will change the way we teach so that all our courses embed climate justice, making it part of every student's learning experience by September 2025	By equipping the next generation of creatives to integrate climate justice into their careers and practice we can change organisations from the inside out
Provide staff development and training on climate justice, so our staff have the knowledge and skills to transform the curriculum			
Pair a student Climate Advocate with every academic programme, to ensure student input in the development of a new curriculum			



# 1. Change the way we teach

This work has been developed and delivered by a cross-university community of tutors, students and staff who have a first-hand understanding of the challenges and opportunities for curriculum innovation. This community approach enables people to enact change across hierarchies and disciplines. More resources are needed to ensure all staff have the opportunity to fully engage in the work.

## What we have done this year

- Developed a framework for embedding climate, social and racial justice principles into all UAL courses
- Developed 5 resources to help our staff transform the curriculum
- 155 staff have completed Carbon Literacy Training
- Piloted Train-the-Trainer model for Carbon Literacy Training with 7 trainers
- Worked with 20 hourly paid lecturers to enhance knowledge and practice for nature-based teaching and learning
- Worked with 30 student Climate Advocates to support curriculum co-design and audit course handbooks against the framework

## What we'll do next

- Appoint college-based roles to support courses who are embedding climate justice, including leading staff development and training
- Pilot a fund to support courses to embed the climate, social and racial justice principles
- Conduct mapping research to understand how we can support our staff to develop the curriculum
- Update our online carbon literacy induction module to align with in-depth Carbon Literacy Training
- Review our course portfolio in line with our social purpose objectives
- Embed a social purpose approach in the development of a new suite of online courses



# Carbon Literacy Training leads to commitments for action

**Carbon Literacy Trainers George Barker, Margot Bannerman and Richard Watson explain how this training programme provides staff with the knowledge and skills to take climate action in their work.**

Extreme weather events are already severely impacting our basic living conditions around the globe. And yet, despite our knowledge of the effects of our changing climate, it's difficult to understand what pathways there are to reduce our emissions.

Carbon literacy recognises the significance of this educational gap and seeks to address it. During an initial pilot phase, we developed and tested learning models for Carbon Literacy Training with participants from across the University. One significant moment this year was when our courses reached accreditation from the [Carbon Literacy Project](#).

Now, learners can demonstrate their knowledge and receive carbon literate certification. Critically, the training also requires learners to outline two pledges they can make to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions at work and contribute to reduction on an institutional level. This means that we're starting to see more staff commit to tangible climate action.

The path ahead is daunting and exciting in equal measure. Over 160 staff members have now gone through the 8-hour Carbon Literacy Training and made their climate action pledges. As well as honoring and supporting these commitments, our task now is to scale the work, expanding our trainer pool to ensure that carbon literacy informs all our curricula and operations.

To do this, we're taking a whole community approach, encouraging colleagues to become trainers themselves, as well as inviting students and graduates to co-facilitate learning sessions. This year, we will launch an updated e-learning package, and make more sessions available to grow the body of carbon literate staff.



**“We’re starting to see more staff commit to tangible climate action.”**

# New course explores design for climate justice



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**Noemi Sadowska, Programme Director Branding and Design Innovation at London College of Communication (LCC), spoke to us about the design of a new course which embeds the teaching principles for climate, racial and social justice into curriculum design and students learning journey as evidenced by course aims, content and learning outcomes.**

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## **Tell us about BA (Hons) Design for Climate Justice and what it's trying to achieve.**

The course draws on the disciplines of graphic design, illustration, data visualisation and interaction design, where students learn how to creatively respond to the climate emergency. The course invites students to explore the potential for design to have positive agency, using multiple global perspectives and voices, as well as nature-centred design approaches. We hope that this course helps change attitudes and practices in designing for climate justice and supports students in becoming industry changemakers.

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## **What has been your biggest achievement and your biggest learning point in the last year?**

Our biggest achievement has been to design a course that responds to the growing interest and commitment to embed ecological and social design practices in our pedagogical approach. This course responds to a need for rapid action on addressing the climate crisis.

Our biggest learning points have emerged from rich discussions. A lot of questions have been asked about which design practice the course will focus on, the motives for its launch and the meaning of climate justice. As a course team, we recognise our own position and privilege and consider how to reflect this in the course.

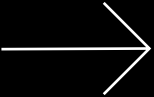
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## **What are your hopes for the future of this initiative?**

As the course is set to launch in September 2024, my hope is that the engagement and responses we receive from students will help us to iterate and evolve it. Focusing on climate justice is a direct response to the need expressed by students for us to engage more with the climate emergency, its impact on the planet and society, and the role of creative action.

## 2. Change the way we research and exchange knowledge

Actions	Progress	Our goal	The change we want to make
<div>Increase the scale and impact of our climate-related research and knowledge exchange</div> <div>Engage industry, policymakers and the public with our research</div> <div>Apply our research expertise to our own systems and operations</div>	<div>Measure to be defined</div>	<div>By 2028 we will be able to demonstrate the impact of our creative research in tackling societal challenges including the climate and biodiversity crises</div>	<div>Through our research and knowledge exchange we can influence climate and environmental action in creative industries, higher education sector and policy</div>





## 2. Change the way we research and exchange knowledge

Over the past year, we have focused on four areas, using our research expertise to develop whole systems change methodologies. Activity and participation across research and knowledge exchange has been limited due to a lack of connectedness, which is being addressed through the commitments made in the [Research Strategy](#) and the mobilisation of the [Social Purpose Implementation Plan](#), launched in May and October respectively.

### What we have done this year

- Committed to galvanising our research efforts to address societal challenges, such as climate crisis, one of four key objectives in our Research Strategy
- UAL researchers are conducting systems mapping research to investigate how we, and other higher education institutions, can orientate our activities towards stabilising the climate and regenerating the environment
- Partnered with the British Council to map and report on climate action and sustainability in UK arts and culture
- Commissioned scoping research on biodiversity to inform our actions on biodiversity across teaching, research, operations and our community
- Continued climate and sustainability related research in a range of disciplines including architecture, textiles, circular materials and sustainable fashion.

### What we'll do next

- Define how we will measure the societal impact of our research and knowledge exchange
- Identify leverage points, transition pathways and barriers for us to become a regenerative university through systems mapping research and produce a toolkit to enable colleagues to apply systems mapping across areas of social purpose
- Launch Mapping Climate Action and Sustainability in the Arts report with British Council during COP28 to demonstrate the value of creativity and culture in environmental justice

# Climate System Mapping charts pathways to change

**Professor Ramia Mazé (LCC) and Dr Niki Wallace (CCW) discuss a pilot research project to identify and map ways that UAL can build positive connections and change in the interest of climate justice.**

We are working in a cross-UAL research team with Professor Dilys Williams (LCF), Domenica Landin (CCW) and Niamh Tuft (UAL). To pilot a project which studies the University itself as a system, we are drawing on the fields of systems theory, transition studies and design. By charting the climate-related perceptions, practices and actions of different parts of our system, we aim to find pathways for change.

We are studying ourselves as a system, how we relate to larger systems such as higher education, as well as three sub-systems within the University. Sub-systems in this case refer to groups and departments in Library Services, Research Management and Administration, and Student Marketing, Recruitment and Admissions. Research methods include literature reviews, document analysis and participatory action research, a method that emphasises the participation of affected communities. The research includes focus group and workshop sessions with staff and students, and climate and higher education experts.

This research will:

- Create an evidence-based systems map of the historical and current ways of working in the areas of environment, climate and climate justice within UAL.
- Identify visions, key 'leverage points' and ambitious 'transition pathways' for action (for example, policies or projects) beyond the near term.
- Develop research that documents processes, methods and toolkits for systems change.
- Demonstrate the potential to adapt and apply the methodology to UAL priorities, supporting our pledge to becoming a social purpose university.

The project, which runs until April 2024, will produce a set of recommendations, alongside a system mapping toolkit.



**“By charting the climate-related perceptions, practices and actions of different parts of our system, we aim to find pathways for change.”**

# Place-based knowledge exchange demonstrates the power of design to create positive local change

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**We spoke to Dr. Lara Salinas, Senior Research Fellow in Knowledge Exchange and Senior Lecturer on MA Service Design at LCC to reflect on the power of Knowledge Exchange activities to create positive change in local communities and beyond.**

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**Tell us a bit about how your work and what it's trying to achieve.**

My practice research focuses on embedding design-led approaches in local and central government in the context of complex challenges such as climate justice. Through this work I bring a stronger people and place-centred approach to policy making and public service provision.

Since 2019, I have been collaborating with Southwark Council to increase their design capability and to help them achieve net zero in the borough. We started with a couple of small collaborations in the curriculum, followed by a yearlong collaboration funded by UKRI's Design Exchange Partnerships and Higher Impact Education Funding in which we founded a temporary Climate Studio.

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**What has been your biggest achievement from the last year?**

Our biggest achievement over the last year has been that our design-led work has informed the borough's sustainable food strategy. Through this they achieved national recognition for their leadership in securing good food for residents. Personally, I am proud to have gained national and international recognition across local and central government departments for my work.

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**What are your plans for the future of this initiative?**

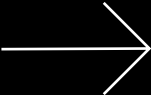
Building on the learning from Climate Studio we are extending our collaboration with local and central government departments nationally and internationally. We will continue our collaboration with several publicly funded schemes to tackle climate justice in the borough. Many of the postgraduate service design students involved have started their career in public sector organisations so I am hopeful to see how their work influences change.





# 3. Change the way we operate

Actions	Progress	Our goal	The change we want to make
Reduce Scope 1 and 2 sources of carbon emissions through effective utility management	<div>20.1%</div> <p>Our 2022/23 carbon emissions for Scope 1 and 2 have decreased by 20.1% against a 2018/19 baselined 2 emissions from the 2018/19 baseline</p>		
Reduce indirect sources of carbon emissions (Scope 3) by reducing waste, cutting unnecessary travel and encouraging behaviour change		We will achieve net zero emissions by 2040, with an interim target of net zero Scope 1 and 2 emissions by 2030	We will lead by example by becoming a net zero university, modelling behaviour and sharing our learnings with others
Change how and what we consume as a university			
Take action in departments, to support the reduction of direct and indirect emissions			





# 3. Change the way we operate

We have a good track record with reduction of direct emissions and these continue to steadily fall. However, like the rest of the higher education sector, Scope 3 emissions are our biggest challenge, they represent 92% of our overall emissions. Decarbonising our supply chain and reducing emissions from international student travel will be imperative. Changing the way we operate means embedding this work in everything we do. Our Social Purpose Implementation Plan sets out how we will go about this and identifies seven major change programmes where we will test this approach.

## What we have done this year

- We have seen a 20.1% reduction in Scope 1 and 2 emissions from the 2018/19 baseline year to the year ending July 2023
- An estimated 10% rise the Scope 3 emissions we report through the Estates Management Record between 2018/19 and 2022/23. Principally reflecting an increase in procurement spend which drives a corresponding rise in emissions.
- Reused and refurbished furniture from across London College of Fashion (LCF) to furnish their new site in East Bank, Stratford, as well as spaces in Chelsea and Camberwell
- Integrated carbon calculation into the environmental assessment framework we are piloting in workshops at Central Saint Martins (CSM)
- Tested approaches to material reuse and circularity, including a materials Swap Shop and Re-Use units
- Piloted removing red meat from the menu at CSM, which has led to a decision to remove beef from all college menus from January 2024

## What we'll do next

- Participate in a pilot of the Science Aligned Target Framework Guidance for HE sector
- Review our Scope 3 carbon data and calculation methodologies to improve accuracy and focus decarbonisation efforts on our highest emissions categories: supply chain and student international travel emissions
- Increase the percentage of renewable energy we purchase and generate on and offsite. Solar panels at our new LCF site are expected to generate 83,000 kWh/year.
- Move existing gas heating to district heating schemes
- Undertake a strategic review of how we operate, manage and maintain our buildings which will inform future energy and building management
- Embed social purpose objectives in our approach to procurement
- Devise a plan for the embedding of material reuse and circularity into our course delivery



**“We sought to reduce the carbon emissions of our daily courier service between sites.”**

# Library Services work to reduce emissions and waste

**Rowan Williamson, Associate Director of Library Services explains the tangible action being taken in our libraries to reduce our emissions and environmental impact.**

We worked on several projects across Library Services this year to address our impact on the environment. We focused on the supply chain, considering how to manage the demand, procurement and disposal of materials in a more sustainable way.

## Reducing carbon emissions

We sought to reduce the carbon emissions of our daily courier service between sites. On revisiting the service this year, we renegotiated the contract stipulating the use of electric vehicles. While ad hoc couriers, using petrol vehicles, are still needed in some instances, we hope that all vehicle use will be zero carbon in the future.

## Influencing the Green Supply Chain

Karen Carden, Resources and Systems Manager, has been representing all UK libraries on the Book Industry Communication (BIC) Green Supply Chain Committee. The Committee is made up of publishers and their representative trade bodies, booksellers, and sector bodies such as CILIP and the British Library.

They are working to identify the carbon footprint of the book industry using supply chain data. The project helps organisations to establish best practice and monitor their own environmental impact. Part 1 of the Design for Recycling Project (Life Cycle Assessment) is now published.

## Reuse and recycling

This year, three libraries were refurbished and three new library sites were opened. While procuring sustainable furniture has been challenging, we have found opportunities for re-use. Furniture has been sourced and refurbished from across all sites for new spaces and we have identified specialist recycling for items that could not be reused.

# Re-using materials unlocks creativity for students



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**We spoke to Carla Fallen, Technical Coordinator and Studio Workshop Manager for the Foundation Programme, about her experience running the Re-Use Exchange, where students can access unwanted or excess materials for their work.**

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## **Can you tell us about the Re-Use Exchange?**

It began with student donations and odd bits of materials donated by colleagues. Over the following years, I gradually began to manage the space and donations from both students and industry.

I am now at the point where I am coordinating and managing the project with the support of two more technicians, Manda Helal and Jason Allcorn. We eventually started getting calls from Jocelyn Foye, Office Manager in the Development team, and now we have a pipeline of donations from other organisations and businesses. People don't want to waste, and they feel good having given materials to students.

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## **What has been your biggest achievement and biggest challenge from the last year?**

I hate throwing things away and I absolutely love being able to give students something for nothing while reducing waste. They don't all have access to cash, and many are working full-time as well as studying. Our biggest achievement is to help level the playing field.

Our biggest challenge is finding ways to scale the initiative. We simply don't have enough space to store all the materials so I would love to find ways to realise its full potential.

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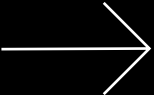
## **What are your hopes for the future of this work?**

As the Foundation courses move to Lime Grove, I hope that we can expand and grow the offer so the Re-Use Exchange available to even more students. With permanent staffing the exchange could become a teaching and learning space to educate students in areas such as saving energy, reducing waste, recycling and reusing packaging and paper, eliminating the use of plastics, using sustainable transport and beyond.



# 4. Change the way we work together

Actions	Progress	Our goal	The change we want to make
Build the Climate Emergency Network as a movement of staff and students advocating for change			
Work with educational, cultural, government, industry and civil society partners to advocate for change	Measure to be defined	Nurture the activism of students and staff to build momentum towards creating positive change in the world	Through our campaigning and advocacy we influence change in creative industries, government policy and the higher education sector
Develop collaborative and multi-disciplinary approaches to campaigning, advocacy and movement building			





## 4. Change the way we work together

Through the Climate Emergency Network (CEN), we have shown the power of community organising to channel the urgency and creativity of our students and staff. In cultivating this non-hierarchical movement, we provide tangible and meaningful experiences that interpret our broader strategic objectives. Going forward, we will consider the movement's governance and relationship to the institutional structure and how it develops models of creative activism with partners and allies

### What we have done this year

- Curated an exhibition and events programme for Earth Day which showcased the work of over 50 students and staff and was visited by nearly 1000 members of the UAL community and public
- Ran a series of collaborative workshops with the Climate Emergency Network to define how it is structured and how it makes collective decisions
- Supported a student-led campaign for a transition to plant-based food, working with our catering supplier on a regenerative menu for Earth Day
- Sharing the transformative power of creative action through public programming both on and offsite, for example the inaugural public exhibition at LCF, East Bank titled 'Designed for Life'
- Worked with educational and cultural organisations to share and develop approaches to creative climate action. For example, our Climate Emergency Interactive has been adopted by the Royal Opera House and National Theatre as a training tool

### What we'll do next

- Define how we will measure the impact of our campaigning and advocacy
- Defining the Climate Emergency Network organising principles, purpose and aims, areas of action and roles needed as well as our relationship to the university and to the Social Purpose Lab
- Explore and test models of creative campaigning and activism with Citizens UK
- Build our policy and advocacy function as part of the newly formed Social Purpose Lab, one strand of which will focus on fashion and textiles public policy
- Continue to develop event programmes and campaigns for climate and ecological justice with members of the Climate Emergency Network and campaigning partners

# Green House: Marking Earth Day 2023

**In April 2023, the UAL Climate Emergency Network (CEN) organised an Earth Day initiative spanning 10 days. This event programme was a blend of exhibitions and activities, aimed to unite a diverse group of creative individuals, including artists, designers, campaigners, educators, and experts from various fields.**

Throughout the week, an exciting lineup of events engaged students, staff and alumni. Lucy Orta's installation 'Fabulae Naturae' treated visitors to 60ft draperies on the Granary Building, spotlighting the issue of species loss in the UK, while Phil Barton's installation at Granary Square fountains drew attention to rising sea levels.

We had rich discussions on climate issues through a series of events, including a conversation on climate justice led by our Climate Advocates, and a moss workshop

exploring the unique connections between humans and nature. A zine-making workshop run by Roots + Routes facilitated a dialogue on sustainable fashion and accountability in the fashion industry.

Other events in the programme included guided tours at London College of Communications' library to showcase nature-based themes and binding methods, while the Camberwell Repair Café and graduate start-up Renée Materials offered opportunities to enhance skills in stitching, patching and mending.

At the Recycled Bag Weaving Workshop, attendees learned to reuse materials in their practice. The Green Screening event shared a series of film by CEN to demonstrate how purpose-driven storytelling can inspire positive change.

The Earth Day initiative encouraged dialogue, action and artistic expression as essential tools in the fight for a more sustainable and just future.



**“This event programme was a blend of exhibitions and activities, aimed to unite a diverse group of creative individuals.”**

# UAL Regenesi s: A student-led campaign for a fair and just transition to plant-based foods



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**Nicole Afonso Alves Calistri, a recent graduate from MA Biodesign at Central Saint Martins, spoke to us about why she co-created UAL Regenesi s, a student-led campaign which asks UAL to transition to plant, mushroom and algae-based food.**

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## **Tell us about Regenesi s**

This initiative examines data and discussions surrounding the impact of animal agriculture. The topics that we explore include decolonisation, biodiversity and culture. Our goal is to empower our community to help UAL transition to a food supply chain that is kind, compassionate and responsible towards people, animals and other more-than-humans. We want people from all walks of life and different perspectives to understand the interconnections between the liberation of other species and social justice. For Earth Day, we worked with Baxter Storey, who run our canteens, to develop plant-based menus.

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Nicole Afonso Alves Calistri running a UAL Regenesi s workshop | Photograph: Ana Blumenkron

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## **What was on the menu?**

- Camberwell - Rebirth Pizza (served with chestnut mushroom and plant-based cheese) by Rishkandha Tomar
- Central Saint Martins - Wild Sea Paella by Giulia Bartoli
- Chelsea - Rhizome & Gut Health Velouté (Celeriac & sorrel velouté) by Jane Scobie
- London College of Communications - Rooted Risotto & Sea Salad by Agriti Goel

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## **Where did the idea of UAL Regenesi s come from?**

Initially, it came after seeing the UAL Climate Action Plan and recognising that the dominant metric for success is calculating carbon emissions. Agriculture is the second biggest emitter of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases.

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## **What are your hopes for the future of Regenesi s?**

For me, the future of Regenesi s depends on coalition. The Climate Emergency Network was invaluable for our development. CEN creates spaces, relations and interactions that build stronger understanding and campaigns. Although we should be concerned with these issues every day, it's good to have this network where people are more open to learning and collaborating.



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ZongyuanWang, GreeningReversal, 2023 MA Fashion Artefact  
London College of Fashion | Photograph: JunxianPan



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