



EDINBURGH SCIENCE

Scottish businesses lead the way on the Road to Net Zero

www.thenetzerotoolkit.org



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As the eyes of the world's scientific community fix on Scotland hosting COP26, **around 200 Scottish businesses have signed up to The NetZeroToolkit**, a new, free, 8 step resource by Edinburgh Science which supports UK businesses to build carbon reduction strategies, getting them to achieve Net Zero carbon emissions by 2040.

With plans considered to force UK businesses to show how they will hit net zero by 2050 (the UK's proposed net zero target), The NetZeroToolkit is proving even more timely.

Scotland is boasting the most ambitious climate crisis targets in the UK and is among the leaders in the world and The NetZeroToolkit takes the business industry one step closer to fighting the climate emergency.

Internationally recognized leader on global climate change, **Christiana Figueres**, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) 2010-2016 **who was instrumental in securing the historic Paris Agreement in 2015**, sent her best wishes to Edinburgh Science team and said: “We are now on an accelerated path, because at 2030 we have to be at one half emissions of everyone. Every city, every country, every family, every corporation, one half emissions by 2030. So that means accelerate, accelerate, accelerate.

“But how wonderful that you have already started along this and I have full trust that you will continue to accelerate.”

Kate Forbes, Cabinet Secretary for Finance and the Economy who attended a [Climate Opportunity Ideas Factory](#) meeting in Glasgow yesterday, organised by Edinburgh Science said: “The work of Edinburgh Science is hugely important in a number of different ways. First of all, in terms of facilitating collaboration right across the board. None of us in isolation are going to solve the problem of climate change, we need to be working together and Edinburgh Science enables that, ensuring that we are considering the most effective solutions to the difficulties that we face.”

Completing the Toolkit will allow the businesses to identify the changes they need to make, access a simple directory of resources to help implement them and create an actionable carbon reduction strategy, and something that can be referred back to when making future decisions. Following the process will futureproof businesses by supporting them to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2040.

The Toolkit can be successfully used by a UK business of any size – from individual micro-businesses to multinationals – but is specifically aimed at small- to medium-size enterprises (SMEs) which make up 99% of UK business and who account for 50% of UK business-driven emissions.

HollyGrows, one of the businesses that has signed up to the Toolkit, is a lifestyle and plant shop based in Portobello. Director Holly Johannessen said: “We are determined to play our part in building a sustainable, net zero future. The NetZeroToolkit has supported me to address my carbon emissions and set a clear pathway for both reduction and for working towards Net Zero. I am keen to share this valuable resource with fellow SME owners as SME owners like us are vital in the fight against our climate emergency - we all have to get on board.”

Another business on board, **Weigh-To-Go**, is a Leith Walk-based refill shop offering affordable dried goods and locally sourced dairy as well as cosmetics and cleaning products. The owner Lucy Watters said: “As SMEs, there are times where we know what needs to be done but individually, we don’t have the power to change them. Using The NetZeroToolkit allows us to be part of a community of similarly committed businesses and this network gives us strength to tackle these problems head on and share our experiences for a brighter – net zero – future.”

Nicholas Devison, Principal of Leith School of Art commented on their reasons to sign up: “As a charity, it can be impossible to know where to start with carbon reduction – or very quickly feel overwhelmed. Having carbon reduction broken down into eight steps allows us to focus our time and resources on the most impactful changes that we can make now, as well as identifying the hot spots and areas for our longer-term plans. Using The NetZeroToolkit has given us confidence in Leith School of Art’s net zero future.”

Business Networks across Scotland are sharing the The NetZeroToolkit. **Gillian Cameron, Manager of Supplier Development Programme – an Ayrshire-based government**

initiative that supports small businesses to bid for public sector contracts said: “The Supplier Development Programme is always actively engaged to help micro, small and medium sized businesses in Scotland prepare in advance for changes coming in public sector procurement. The NetZeroToolkit is a perfect example of a useful resource for businesses to get ready for net zero requirements in public sector contracts!

“By breaking carbon management down into eight comprehensive steps, The NetZeroToolkit enables SMEs to futureproof their business practices and take the proactive, meaningful actions that local authorities and other public sector buyers will begin to require as we move to protect our towns, cities, Scotland and the planet. SDP is proud to work in partnership with Edinburgh Science to support businesses in the journey to 2040.”

The NetZeroToolkit arose from one of Edinburgh Science’s [Climate Opportunity and Ideas Factory](#) meetings, which was chaired by diplomat Christiana Figueres, these round table meetings invite industry leaders to come together to share learnings and expertise on topics pertinent to the Climate Emergency and to develop and collaborate on actionable solutions.

Over the course of COP26, Edinburgh Science will be hosting two Climate Opportunity and Ideas Factory meetings, one chaired by Dr Martin Valenti on Scotland’s Future Green Economy and attended by Cabinet Secretary for Finance and the Economy, Kate Forbes, and the second on how we ensure that we build an education system – both for young people entering the workforce and adults re-skilling – that will support a just transition.

Simon Gage, CEO of Edinburgh Science said: “Every individual and enterprise must do everything they can to reduce their carbon emissions quickly. The science tells us we need to behave as if this is an emergency not simply urgent. The NetZeroToolkit makes this change easier for businesses: it identifies the first eight science-based steps they should take and helps them take them. Edinburgh Science, the charity behind Edinburgh Science Festival, is totally committed to helping the world grasp the immediate need for change that climate change calls for and to reveal the positive and sustainable futures being developed for the whole world.”

Businesses interested in signing up are invited to visit www.thenetzerotoolkit.org or email hello@TheNetZeroToolkit.org.

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Notes to editors:

NetZeroToolkit FAQs: <https://thenetzerotoolkit.org/faqs/>

IMAGES:

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/lit2ch6o84xi03i/AACF_Ed70juwkg5biXwEWcVza?dl=0

Edinburgh Science

Edinburgh Science, founded in 1989, is an educational charity that aims to inspire people of all ages and backgrounds to discover the world around them. The organisation is best known for organising Edinburgh’s annual Science Festival: the world’s first festival of science and technology and still one of Europe’s largest.

The two-week Festival provides wide and diverse audiences with amazing science-themed experiences through a diverse programme of innovative events for adults and families. Alongside the annual Festival in Edinburgh, the organisation has a strong focus on education, running a touring programme, *Generation Science*, that brings science to life for primary

schools around Scotland throughout the year, and running an annual *Careers Hive* event which promotes STEM careers to young people.

After programming on the themes of climate change and the environment for many years, in 2019 Edinburgh Science awarded the Edinburgh Medal to Christiana Figueres, the inspirational Costa Rican diplomat instrumental in the Paris Climate agreement. Inspired by this visit, Edinburgh Science established the Climate Opportunity Ideas Factory, a forum for all sectors to come together and generate collaborative actionable ideas that accelerate our transition to a zero-carbon world.

Edinburgh Science also shares its content and expertise internationally through Edinburgh Science Worldwide and operates a large-scale international programme of work. It regularly presents events overseas and is currently the Major Programming Partner of the annual Abu Dhabi Science Festival, helping to curate, produce and deliver the event. For international partners, the team at Edinburgh Science provide engaging content, curatorial advice on programming and business planning support, along with expert staff and training for local science communicators.

www.sciencefestival.co.uk

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