Sustainable Travel in Academia

Initiative

Since the inception of the Tyndall Centre in 2000, academics and researchers within MACE Tyndall Manchester have been inspired to consider the sustainability of their own travel behaviour. Led in the first instance by the ideas and leadership of Profs Kevin Anderson and Alice Larkin, researchers have endeavoured, where feasible and appropriate, to make use of lower CO2 alternatives to air travel, and engage in the testing and trailing of virtual forms of communication. Prof Alice Larkin has had opportunities to trial and test some of the more novel forms of academic engagement, having given keynotes in Columbia in 2016 and ETH in Switzerland in 2017 from her desk in Manchester, as well as taking part in her first virtual cocktail party following the ETH Virtual Air Miles Reduction in Academia Conference, by operating a robot with iPad in order to ensure that networking opportunities were not lost (photos available). Low-carbon train travel is common for getting to and from meetings across the EU within the Tyndall Manchester team, and to support further virtual engagement, Drs McLachlan, Broderick and Mander are leading work on reviewing technology options, to both share their expertise with School of MACE colleagues and enhance international collaborations in a low carbon way.

How Tyndall Manchester has Made a Difference

Prof Anderson produced a very well-read blog about his train journey to China in 2013 and others within the team, most notably Dr Ruth Wood, engaged in 2015 with an initiative across the whole of the Tyndall Centre to develop its own Travel Strategy. Dr Ruth Wood then became a co-author of ‘Towards a culture of low carbon research for the 21st century’ which resulted in the strategy being rolled out across the centre as well as considerable media coverage at the time. The strategy includes a decision tree and requests that researchers monitor their own CO2 emissions associated with their research activities. When organising the Tyndall Centre Radical emissions reduction conference in 2013, Dr Carly McLachlan and Dr John Broderick, arranged for full live web-streaming of the conference from the Royal Society, and included a virtual keynote by Naomi Klein from Canada.

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