

Glasgow as a Living Lab Accelerating Novel Transformation

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Glasgow as a Living Laboratory Accelerating Novel Transformation_(GALLANT)

Overview

[GALLANT](#) is funded by the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) and delivered by the University of Glasgow in partnership with Glasgow City Council (GCC). It is a large-scale environmental project that aims to support the city of Glasgow in its goal to be carbon neutral by 2030. It also investigates the impacts of health, social and economic inequalities on people and nature, specifically in light of the climate challenges the city faces. GALLANT is bringing leading scientists and researchers from across the University together with experts, communities, residents and council representatives from across the city to explore sustainable alternatives to current practices and engage with five key themes. These themes are climate adaptation, biodiversity, carbon sequestration, active travel and clean energy.

Community Collaboration Workstream

Research Purpose

The overarching purpose of Workstream 2 (Community Collaboration) within the GALLANT programme of research led by Dr Ria Dunkley, CR&DALL Core member from the School of Education at the university is to undertake research with communities of practice, place and interest to promote wide-ranging collaboration within the project. We aim to understand participants' experiences of being involved in the GALLANT project, which seeks to approach the city of Glasgow as a living laboratory for accelerating the novel transformations necessary to address climate and ecological crises.

We aim to gain these insights and actively contribute towards novel transformations through developing creative methods to achieve two aims: firstly, to explore sensory, affective and cultural understandings of place; and secondly, to develop processes by which we can enhance the processes by which communities participate in the dialogue about novel transitions in the face of climate and ecological crisis. By exploring local ways of knowing a place and gaining insight into complex community understandings and ways of organising, it will be possible to inform the wider GALLANT programme of research. Insights provided will also inform decision-making while offering community participants enhanced environmental learning and engagement opportunities.

This work aligns closely with the city's objectives in being a Learning City. The city has expressed its commitment to environmental objectives in this context as follows:

Our Learning City framework aims to make Glasgow one of the most sustainable places in Europe, where a high quality of urban life and green business practices generating sustainable profits go together. We have been recently awarded the status of Global Green City, and we have an ambitious target of achieving carbon neutrality by 2030. Glasgow is currently ranked 4th in the world on the Global Destination Sustainability Index (GDS-Index), which promotes responsible business tourism best practices. For

these reasons, energy, low carbon, and sustainability are regularly in the top three sectors for conferences in the city's world-class venues. In recognition of our commitment to tackling climate change through innovative solutions, the COP26 UN Conference represented the most significant and complex event ever staged in Scotland, with the largest gathering of Heads of State ever to happen in the UK. The Conference was a remarkable opportunity to understand the significance of education for climate change, where lifelong learning initiatives play a determining role in our future.

Principles for Community Collaboration

The community collaboration workstream in GALLANT has adopted the four principles of community collaboration, as shown in figure 1.1. below.

GALLANT Collaborative Communities Principles



Figure 1.1 GALLANT Collaborative Community Principles

We will provide community benefits throughout GALLANT by embedding eco-pedagogic, participatory action research and arts practice-based research principles and praxis. We also aim to enhance community agency and ecological stewardship.

A four-phase approach to the co-production of research

Our work will happen through five phases. In **phase one**, community dialogues, we will explore how activities in phases two and three can provide co-beneficial research and practical outcomes for diverse communities. GALLANT community-hub workshops will offer opportunities for communities to become involved in dialogues and creative-led explorations concerning novel transition. Communities will discuss and be invited to co-design the research activities/ interventions that will evolve in phase two. We will also develop appropriate, co-produced evaluation designs. The workshops will open opportunities for new connections between individuals and communities across the city and University, and introduce various

creative practices capable of nurturing these connections. A sharing event will be held at the end of Phase one. At this sharing event, participant researchers will be invited to meet researchers from the wider GALLANT team and participants from other community hubs or satellite hubs.

In **phase two**, we will work with community-hub participants, engaged through phase one, to co-develop co-beneficial research/evaluation activities and interventions. In phase two, research participants will be invited to collectively reflect on and write up findings from phase one or represent findings through other visual or sonic means. Outputs will include a short report, article or collection of writings and a short video or podcast. Working as co-researchers within GALLANT, participants will have the opportunity to collaborate on progressing essential issues in their communities. We will primarily achieve this through developing ten standalone collaborative research activities/interventions that will seek to involve more collaborators beyond those in phase two.

In **phase three**, co-researchers from phases one and two will be invited to collaborate on city-wide dissemination events for GALLANT. Activities within phase three will include exhibitions, site-responsive and dialogical performances and creative community showcases focused on: "human and non-human narratives of transition to a low-carbon city" for each work package and culminating in an exhibition in the Kelvingrove Museum. The planning and management of these activities will be the responsibility of GALLANT's workstream two as informed by phase one and phase two community-led activities and in communication with GALLANT work package researchers. Community-based co-researchers will be reimbursed for their time and expenses to the extent that it is possible to involve them in the planning of these events.

We aim to accelerate digital innovations through phase four and visualise socio-ecological systems. The aim here is to facilitate dialogue and enhance transparency and transferability of GALLANT research outcomes within and beyond engaged communities. **Phase four** will run from months 20 to 48 of GALLANT. We will take a user-centred design approach to involve participants in developing an interactive platform for data emergent from GALLANT research. This platform will take the shape of a digital story map and website. This process and its outcomes will support the capacity of communities to interact with usable data for their aims. The story map will enable us to share GALLANT research findings with participants in the community hubs and wider audiences in Glasgow and beyond.

Supporting community-led research

Phases one to four will employ a co-productive research process. This process will offer community participants the opportunity to develop new and build on existing knowledge and skills in transdisciplinary environmental research. Being involved in co-produced research is also an opportunity for communities to engage with and inform research activities conducted by the five work packages. Throughout the GALLANT project, we will conduct activities that

1. enhance community ecological literacy and understanding of complex socio-ecological-technological systems;
2. enhance work packages' understandings of and respect for the complex communities of practice, place and interest and in the areas they are working in and;

3. mitigate the extinction of the experience of nature experienced by many in urban settings.

We will also seek to support community participants to develop specialist skills that enable them to engage effectively in environmental research and action. For example, group members of GALLANT's workstream two team will facilitate or co-facilitate phase one workshops. These workshops include creative writing workshops, "walkshops", and participatory mapping workshops delivered by a local participatory photography organisation, 'Open Aye'. Through these workshops, we will support local participants in participatory mapping and collective story-making activities, taking photos and exploring and telling stories of their neighbourhoods. Workshops will provide insight into participants' past, present and imagined future experiences in light of climate resilience strategies. The workshops will offer a safe space for dialogue and discussion around the issues raised by the GALLANT project and a platform for community responses and solutions in both community spaces and within the GALLANT project. Furthermore, participating in activities such as photography and participatory mapping offers participants the chance to enhance their skills and confidence in using creative methodology as a means of expression and documentation around environmental issues. Co-produced outputs from these processes will inform not just GALLANT-based science and social science research but also inform and hold to account policy and city-wide approaches to sustainable living in Glasgow.

A fundamental challenge to sustaining the benefits of GALLANT beyond the funded period is a continued investment of time for maintenance, monitoring, and stewardship of community-led environmental research and interventions. Our strategy will involve working with community partners to identify what is needed to ensure a legacy of local stewardship and local agency in environmental intervention processes. We aim to facilitate this through a range of activities, the aim of which is to support communities. For example, we will document barriers faced by communities in engaging in environmental research or actions, remove these barriers where possible, and signpost training for community collaborators to enhance their experiences securing funding, co-producing interventions and evaluation designs.

A Community-hub approach

Our research aims to nurture and sustain meaningful partnerships with a range of anchor community organisations interested in the themes covered within GALLANT research at varying levels of engagement. We are committed to collaborating with communities and GALLANT co-investigators in each work package within the GALLANT project. We aim to support existing community infrastructures and activities and develop community-embedded environmental research as a fundamental part of collective efforts to accelerate novel transformations in Glasgow.

In phase one, we aim to engage diverse, emergent, and complex communities in the GALLANT work package zones. We will investigate current and historical perceptions, and uses of and connections to and between city spaces to reveal how communities use them. We have identified three locations within which to work to develop community hubs. Two of these hubs will be on the south side of the River Clyde, and one will be on the north side of the river, with "satellite" hubs which reach out from each hub. Though GALLANT community-hub

locations and bases are yet to be fully confirmed, throughout the research project, Research interviews, focus groups, workshops, sharing's, and observations will concentrate on three hub locations within the city of Glasgow and four initial satellite hubs:

- Hub 1: Greater Govan and Clyde. Initial Satellite hub: Inchinnan/Newshot Island/ Erskine
- Hub 2: Partick/ Yorkhill/ Anderston and Kelvin. Initial satellite hub: 7 Lochs and Greater Easterhouse;
- Hub 3: Pollockshields East/Govanhill/Battlefield and Langside. Initial satellite hubs: a. Greater Gorbals and b. Dalmarnock.

For more information, please get in touch:

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Workstream Two Team

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