

THYME Project

Teesside, Hull and York - Mobilising Bioeconomy Knowledge Exchange

Engaging pupils and the public with the bioeconomy

The THYME project has delivered an innovative range of activities and resources to educate pupils, students and the wider public about the bioeconomy: what it is and why it is vital to our economy and our sustainability.



“The THYME schools materials are great at showing kids that science is so much more than what they learn at school.” Terry Kirk, STEM Ambassador.

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A dedicated bioeconomy venue for engagement

We have developed the Bioeconomy Outreach Centre, which provides a unique educational learning space for school groups and teachers, as well as space for other bioeconomy-related outreach activities, events and meetings. Visitors to the Centre can be inspired by its permanent exhibition of everyday products made from renewable materials, such as shoes made of seaweed and coffee cups made from coffee grounds. Users of the space so far include schools' groups, the Association of Science Education, the Knowledge Transfer Network and the Bank of England.

Encouraging participation with gamification

Working in association with Focus Games, the Project has developed a bioeconomy board game and an electronic quiz. Players are divided into teams that represent different communities in a city. Their objective is to create value from waste by reusing and recycling it in new ways, rather than sending it to landfill. Over a thousand people have played the online version of the game and it has gained fans from as far away as Canada.

Workshops for schools: make your own bioplastic!

Our workshops for school pupils deliver a programme of fun, interactive, curriculum-based activities that enable pupils to explore the global switch to a bioeconomy as well as informing pupils about possible careers in the bioeconomy. Activities have included making bioplastic and soap from natural ingredients, matching biobased products to the raw materials they are made from and touring the laboratories of the Biorenewables Development Centre. Some of the workshops were delivered in partnership with the Widening Participation Team at the University of York.

Support for young entrepreneurs

The THYME project delivered a one-day workshop to a group of young entrepreneurs who won the University of York's 2019 Big Deal Enterprise competition. Four students from St Wilfrid's Catholic High School in Pontefract designed a hydroponic plant growth system called BIO-HEX which allows customers to grow plants using less water than conventional growing methods. The BIO-HEX team were given mentoring and advice from staff at the Biorenewables Development Centre.

Out and about

We have engaged with wider audiences at public engagement events in York at both the Café Scientifique and the Pint of Science events. Thyme project research was selected for the Royal Society's prestigious Summer Science exhibition for schools, VIPs and the public.

Sharing our schools' resources

We have worked with teachers to develop a range of educational materials that link to the National Curriculum in a variety of topic areas. These are available to download on the THYME website, for use by teachers and parents.

Key facts

150 pupils from 42 schools at our workshops

31 events in the Bioeconomy Outreach Centre

Over a thousand players of the online bioeconomy quiz

Total audience of 150 for public engagement



For more information
please visit:
www.thyme.biovale.org