

Mock COP26 Phase 2

Concept note

1. Students Organising for Sustainability

Students Organising for Sustainability ([SOS-UK](#)) is a new charity set up in summer 2019 by students and staff at NUS in response to Fridays for Future so they could support students to go further and faster with their transformative sustainability campaigns. Three of the five [trustees](#) are young people and most of the 40 staff are young people. SOS-UK has three workstreams: i) Getting more students leading on sustainability; ii) Weaving sustainability through everything that is taught in formal education; iii) Making sustainability more inclusive. In our founding year (2019/20) the charity had an operating budget of £1.2m.

2. Mock COP26 Phase 1

In August 2020 students involved in [Teach the Future](#) decided to run Mock COP26 in place of the postponed COP26, filling the void with progressive action and showing world leaders how to deliver a truly ambitious, inclusive and low-carbon COP. The online event was run from 18 November - 1 December 2020 and brought together 330 youth delegates from 140 countries. Delegates were aged 11 to 30, 72% were from the Global South and 63% were female or non-binary. The event was managed by 18 part-time student staff Event Coordinators, from six continents, supported by four permanent staff at SOS-UK.



The eighteen-student staff from phase 1

The six themes of the conference were climate education, climate justice, health and mental health, green jobs, carbon reduction targets and biodiversity. Over 100 delegations made high-level statements covering these topics and providing powerful testimony for how global heating and the ecological crisis are already affecting them and their communities. The statements can be viewed on the [Mock COP26 YouTube channel](#). A series of panel debates and regional caucuses led to the development of 20 policies, covering all six themes. 18 of the policies were passed by delegates and it is these policies that form the basis of the [Mock COP26 treaty](#), written by a team of lawyers, led by ClientEarth. The treaty calls on political leaders in every country to implement the policies in the year to COP26, to avoid us having lost a year of climate action.



Phase one infographic including word cloud of delegate perceptions post-conference

[Greenhouse PR](#) helped us reach over 100m people through broadcast interviews in over 40 countries, including this [4 minute piece on C4 news](#). In addition to filling the void left by the postponed COP and demonstrating how to run an inclusive COP, we have shown that young people can do more than just strike, they can develop progressive and ambitious policies, and we have created a global movement of young climate activists focused on policy. We have also won some favour with UK Government officials and now have a good working relationship with the COP26 team. To date we have raised £150k for Mock COP: £25k from crowdfunding; £35k from sponsorship; £90k from trusts and foundations¹. Phase 1 cost us £115k to run, including overheads. We have £35k remaining for Phase 2.

3. Mock COP Phase 2

Phase 2 is centred around getting the Mock COP26 treaty implemented, in part or whole, by as many national Governments or domestic states as possible over the year to COP26, and thereafter, with us supporting delegates and youth climate activists, to engage their elected representatives and run domestic campaigns on the treaty asks. This is already happening, with delegates having met senior officials and ministers in at least three countries so far. We have recruited nine part-time student staff Campaign Coordinators, based across six

¹ The funders of Phase 1 were: UMI Foundation (£37k); Climate Change Collaboration (£19.5k); Golden Bottle Trust (£10k); We Have the POWER (£5k); Polden-Puckham Charitable Foundation (£5k); Esmée Fairbairn Foundation (£5k); Frederick Mulder Foundation (£3k); Kestrelman Trust (£3k); Margaret Hayman's Trust Fund (£1k). We also received £33k in sponsorship (£30k from Clim8; £3k from UKRI) and £25k from the crowdfunder (including £3k from Solberger Foundation; £2k from Kreitman Foundation).

continents, to lead on delivering the Phase 2 delivery plan, which was shaped by delegates and volunteers:

- Map out which countries to target based on likelihood we can influence them (how progressive their Governments are), how engaged their Mock COP26 delegates are, and how safe it is for young people to campaign there.
- Support delegates to develop advocacy and influencing skills, especially marginalised young people in the Global South.
- Working with NUS, and students' unions, encourage and support international students studying in the UK to get involved with lobbying their national Governments.
- Volunteers to translate the treaty (and website) into different languages.
- Student staff to adapt the website to show progress in implementation with countdown until COP26.
- Support delegates in target countries to engage key officials and ministers on the Mock COP26 treaty asks. Support them to run their own domestic campaigns, funding them through micro-grants.
- Coordinate the advocacy support of international NGOs (we have offers of support from Greenpeace, Save the Children, FoE, ClientEarth).
- Support delegates in getting positive press coverage in their countries, and internationally, using a PR Agency.
- Run a series of six youth-led international events for policy-makers on key Mock COP26 treaty asks, one based on each of the six policy themes.
- Support delegates to participate in international and regional conferences on behalf of Mock COP26, including the steering group of the Italian Government's official COP26 youth conference.
- Run a weekly blog (Youth in Action series) that highlights projects delegates are running to implement Mock COP26 treaty asks in their own countries.
- Continue to build the Mock COP26 social media following and use it to drive action.
- Develop and deliver a campaign plan for COP26. We are liaising with HM Government to make climate education a 'feel-good' outcome of the conference, linked to the review of the [Doha amendment](#) (the work plan for Action for Climate Empowerment) due at COP26. We are working to get the UK Government and UN to request that Ministers for Education attend COP26 and collectively produce a strong statement on integrated climate education. We are also working to ensure a strong official youth presence at the conference.
- Subject to budget, we would like to work with some filmmakers that have approached us to produce a documentary based on the efforts of a small number of the Mock COP26 delegates. World's Largest Lesson are keen to support this.
- We have applied to the British Council creative commissions fund for £50k to give a six climate activists GoPro's for them to film what it is like to be a young person in a hostile climate. This will form a youth-led VR exhibition in the Green Zone at COP26 to help us with engagement.

4. Phase 2 outcomes

- 30 countries agree to implement one or more policy commitment from the Mock COP26 treaty before, or immediately after, COP26.
- Secure ambitious outcomes at COP26 by influencing delegations and getting a strong youth presence in both the green (outer) and blue (inner) zones, including in negotiation teams.
- Ensure COP26 delivers a strong commitment to climate education.
- Build an impressive list of individuals and organisations publicly supporting individual policy asks from the Mock COP26 treaty.
- Create a network of climate activists actively collaborating on policy implementation centred on the Mock COP26 treaty.
- Get Phase 2-related press coverage in at least 20 countries in 2021.

5. Budget

Costs	
SOS-UK permanent staff time (4 days a week, 12m)	31,043
Student staff time (12 part-time roles over 11m)	66,420
Teach the Future international work (student staff 1 day a week, 6m)	2,670
Staff overheads (10%)	8,300
Campaign grants 2021 (£150 x 100 delegates)	15,000
Design and videos (external agency)	25,000
Communications and press (external agency)	25,000
Zoom Pro account	100
Documentary	50,000
(VR green zone exhibition (British Council))	50,000
	<u>273,533</u>

Income	
Phase 1 fundraising surplus	35,000
(British Council (TBC))	50,000
	<u>85,000</u>

We are asking all the funders of Phase 1 if they would be willing to further support us with the costs of Phase 2.

6. Risks

Risk 1: Delegates are persecuted or imprisoned for their campaigning and advocacy work for Mock COP26. Mitigation: Work with delegates to fully assess the risk posed in their countries and focus on countries that are not oppressive regimes, or support delegates to remain anonymous.

Risk 2: Student staff working remotely are ineffective or lack motivation. Mitigation: Robust recruitment. Invest sufficient permanent staff time to support and mentor the young people and have two student staff per continent so they can work as a team.

Risk 3: Delegates fail to engage their elected representatives. Mitigation: We will support them to engage senior ministry officials instead. If that doesn't work, we will draw on the support of our advocacy ally organisations, who can help make introductions for them.

Risk 4: Delegates / student staff become disillusioned by the slow pace of progress in securing policy commitments. Mitigation: By using Slack we will drip-feed positive news and celebrate progress on a daily basis, so they can see the bigger picture of our advocacy and engagement progress, and messages of encouragement and support.

Risk 5: The pandemic limits our ability to engage key people; COP26 is postponed again; delegates and student staff illness. Mitigation: We have 10 months until COP26, so can afford some downtime if lockdowns or illness prevent activity. We can also shift the engagement focus to countries that are less affected. If COP26 is postponed again we would look use the additional time to secure more policy commitments.

Risk 6: The media is disinterested because Mock COP26 is old news. Mitigation: We will work with a PR company to ensure we have media hooks that are presented in a compelling way. We will again work with the Global Strategic Communications Council to get domestic coverage through the Fridays for the Future movement.

Risk 7: The UK Government and/or UN do not support our requests / deliver on commitments for more youth delegates / a focus on climate education at COP26. Mitigation: We would try and escalate these issues to get them implemented. If that doesn't work, we will develop a media campaign / digital engagement strategy to ensure youth voices are heard. We would lobby domestic Ministers for Education directly, encouraging them to attend and personally support our asks.

Risk 8: We cannot secure enough income to run Phase 2. Mitigation: We have sufficient funds to run Phase 2 until Easter 2021. If we are unable to secure grants by end of Feb 2021, we will launch a second Crowdfunder and reduce our costs by dropping the documentary and reducing staff and student staff time. We will offer the Campaign Coordinator roles on 3-month contracts initially to give us flexibility.

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