




FESTIVAL OF FUTURES 2026

What's On Guide

9am - 9.30am	<p>Title: Festival Welcome Lead: Professor Cate Carroll Venue: i3B LT1</p>
9.30am - 10.30am and 1pm - 2pm	<p>Community Voices in Disaster Planning</p> <p>Lead: Dr Alessandra Lotteri Venue: Sim Lab Theme: Community, Culture & Heritage (SDGs 4, 11)</p> <p>Disasters don't just damage buildings, they affect communities, culture, and identity. This interactive workshop explores how heritage, social structures, and local knowledge shape risk and resilience through a fast-paced introduction to the Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) cycle and an immersive role-play.</p> <p>Working as community members, authorities, and heritage advocates, you'll collaborate to design a realistic disaster preparedness plan, gaining hands-on insight into how culture, inequality, and governance influence real-world responses. Ideal for students in sustainability, urban studies, social sciences, or disaster management.</p>
9.30 - 10.30am	<p>Culture Against War Film</p> <p>Lead: Dr Taras Khomych Guest Speaker: Liudmyla Sergiienko from AUGB Liverpool Branch & 'Kryla' ICI Venue: i3B LT1 Theme: Community, Culture & Heritage (SDGs 4, 11)</p> <p>What can culture do in times of war and why does it matter for the future? Culture Against War, a powerful film by Taras Kompanichenko, explores culture as a social and ethical force in moments of crisis. Through music, artistic expression, and historical memory, the film shows how culture becomes a form of non-violent resistance, sustaining identity, meaning, and connection amid conflict.</p> <p>The film offers a timely reflection on how cultural heritage helps communities endure uncertainty and violence, sparking conversations across cultural studies, history, politics, and peace studies about culture's role in shaping ethical futures and protecting shared human values.</p>



9.30am - 10.30am and 2pm - 3pm	Holistic Metamorphosis for Good Futures
	<p>Lead: Prof hc Dr Urs Hauenstein Venue: i3B 114 Theme: Digital Futures, Innovation & Enterprise (SDGs 4, 8, 9)</p> <p>Drawing on decades of leadership in international organisations, including work with the UN, OECD, UNESCO, UNICEF, and ILO, Prof. hc Dr Urs Hauenstein shares real-world insights from entrepreneurship and international media.</p> <p>The talk explores holistic metamorphosis: rethinking work, leadership, and innovation to address global challenges. Framed around the Sustainable Development Goals, it invites students to reflect on how their future careers can help build more resilient and sustainable societies.</p>
9.30am - 10.30am	The role of future educators in meeting the challenges of the climate and nature crisis
	<p>Lead: Professor Phil Bamber Venue: i3B 201 Theme: Environment, Ecology & Sustainability (SDGs 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15)</p> <p>This session uses the National Emergency Briefing as a starting point to explore how education can help drive meaningful change. Together, we'll unpack the scale of the challenges we face and consider why understanding the crisis as a true emergency matters.</p> <p>Designed to inform, challenge, and inspire, the session invites students to think critically about the responsibility and potential of educators in shaping a societal tipping point towards informed, collective action. Whether you're training to teach or simply interested in education's role in addressing global crises, this talk offers space for reflection, discussion, and fresh perspectives on what comes next.</p>
9.30am - 10.30am and 1pm - 2pm	Designing Eco Video Games
	<p>Lead: Dr Connor Jackson Venue: i3B 202 Theme: Environment, Ecology & Sustainability (SDGs 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15)</p> <p>This interactive workshop explores how video games can inspire care for the environment through the emerging field of green games studies. You'll discover how games like Alba: A Wildlife Adventure, Plasticity, and Gibbon: Beyond the Trees use storytelling and play to communicate ecological values.</p> <p>The session then turns creative, as you work with others to design your own eco game concept. Blending ideas with hands-on making, the workshop offers a fun, welcoming space for students interested in games, media, sustainability, and creative thinking.</p>
9.30am -10.30am	Whose Justice? Women's Rights Across Borders
	<p>Lead: Dr Onyeka Okongwu Venue: EDEN 004 Theme: Social Justice, Identity & Empowerment (SDGs 1, 5, 10, 16)</p> <p>This workshop invites students to explore how women's rights in law and lived reality differ across borders and time. Drawing on global case studies, the session will unpack how culture and politics shape access to justice for women.</p> <p>We will compare legal and social progress in the UK with experiences from other world regions, examining rights related to work, education, marriage and property ownership. Students will analyse case studies, challenge assumptions, and reflect on what justice means in different cultural contexts. The session will explore how women have resisted and reshaped systems of power; the role of law in enabling and constraining gender justice.</p>



9.30am - 10.30am and 12pm - 1pm	<p>Was Jesus disabled?</p>
	<p>Lead: Dr Emma Swai Venue: 9.30am - 10.30, EDEN 005 / 12pm - 1pm, i3B 202 Theme: Social Justice, Identity & Empowerment (SDGs 1, 5, 10, 16)</p> <p>Regardless of belief, Jesus was a historical figure, yet he is usually portrayed as a nondisabled white man. This workshop challenges that image by exploring Jesus' first-century context, where physical impairment was common and medical care limited.</p> <p>If Jesus worked as a tradesperson, injury would have been likely. We'll examine historical evidence suggesting Jesus may have been disabled and discuss why this idea can feel uncomfortable today, as well as how a disabled Jesus could challenge prejudice and offer a more inclusive, liberating perspective for disabled and non-disabled people alike.</p>
9.30am -10.30am	<p>The Power of Reading</p>
	<p>Lead: Dr Jamie Lingwood & Dr Gideon Salter Venue: EDEN 006 Theme: Health, Wellbeing, Creativity & Belief (SDGs 3,4,11)</p> <p>Sharing books with children is about far more than learning to read, it supports language development, emotional connection, and lifelong learning. This interactive workshop explores why shared reading matters, what research really tells us about its impact, and how everyday reading at home shapes children's development.</p> <p>Drawing on evidence from psychology and education, you'll examine how caregiver talk, responsiveness, and reading practices influence children across different family contexts. Using a hands-on CoNavigator (co-nav) activity, the session also explores real-world barriers to shared reading, whose voices are missing from research and policy, and how evidence can be used more inclusively to support children and caregivers.</p>
9.30am - 11am and 2pm - 3.30pm	<p>Why So Many People Struggle, Mental Health, Substance Use, and the World We Live In</p>
	<p>Lead: Dr Simon Bratt Venue: EDEN 008 Theme: Social Justice, Identity & Empowerment (SDGs 1, 5, 10, 16)</p> <p>We often treat mental health and substance use as separate problems, but they frequently grow together as responses to the same life pressures. This interactive workshop explores how distress and substance use are linked to trauma, poverty, inequality, housing, and work, rather than individual weakness or failure.</p> <p>Through real-life examples and small-group discussion, we'll examine why people can become trapped in cycles of diagnosis and crisis, and how support systems can sometimes make things harder. You'll leave with a more compassionate understanding of distress and substance use and why meaningful support means looking beyond individual choices to the conditions people are living in.</p>
9.30am - 11am	<p>Don't Screen Us Out: People with Down Syndrome and the Right to Life</p>
	<p>Lead: Dr Laura Waite Guest Speaker: Shauna Hogan Down Syndrome Liverpool Venue: i3B 004 Theme: Social Justice, Identity & Empowerment (SDGs 1, 5, 10, 16)</p> <p>This workshop explores the ethical implications of screening for Down syndrome and considers the value of life in all its magnificent diversity.</p> <p>Ran by Shauna who has lived experience of having Down syndrome and Laura who has had the privilege of working alongside children and adults with Down syndrome for over 40 years, the session aims to enable you to rethink typical misconceptions around 'quality of life' and the extent to which we can really claim that women are making autonomous reproductive decisions.</p>



9.30am - 11am and 2pm - 3.30pm	Muslims in Britain - Countering Islamophobia and Contributing to Britain
	<p>Lead: Dr Salman Al-Azami Lead: Professor Ron Geaves Venue: 9.30am - 11am, EDEN 007 / 2pm - 3.30pm EDEN 005 Theme: Community, Culture & Heritage (SDGs 4, 11)</p> <p>This session will discuss the role of Muslims in contemporary Britain. It will begin with a short presentation on the current demographic and social conditions of Britain, the contribution they are making to Britain and the threats they face through Islamophobia in politics, media, and some sections of the society.</p> <p>There will be an expert on British Muslims providing insights from his 40 years of experience researching on the topic. The session will then open up for a workshop on how Islamophobia should be encountered and how Muslims can further contribute to the British society.</p>
9.30am - 11am	From Access to Action: Foundation Year, Student Voice, and Social Justice
	<p>Lead: Dr Julianne McGeough, Dr Emma Swai and Dr Lisa Nahajec Venue: EDEN 013 Theme: Social Justice, Identity & Empowerment (SDGs 1, 5, 10, 16)</p> <p>How can access to higher education advance social justice? This interactive workshop explores the Foundation Year as social justice in action. Designed to widen participation, support diverse routes into university, and build belonging, the Foundation Year offers a powerful way to think about inclusion, opportunity, and representation beyond the classroom.</p> <p>Led by staff and students, the session combines short inputs with discussion to explore confidence, voice, and agency in higher education, and how these experiences connect to wider struggles for social justice and more inclusive futures.</p>
9.30am - 12pm	Navigating Dark Waters: Film screening and discussion
	<p>Lead: Dr Melanie Flynn Venue: i3B LT2 Theme: Social Justice, Identity & Empowerment (SDGs 1, 5, 10, 16)</p> <p>Join us for a screening of Dark Waters, starring Mark Ruffalo as lawyer Robert Bilott. The film tells the true story of the DuPont water pollution scandal, revealing how communities in West Virginia and Ohio were exposed to toxic “forever chemicals.”</p> <p>Gripping and unsettling, the film exposes corporate power, environmental harm, and the fight for justice. A post-screening discussion will explore the ethical, legal, and social issues raised, essential viewing for anyone interested in environmental and social justice.</p>
11am - 12pm	Stories of Home and Belonging: Exploring Identity Through Theatre
	<p>Lead: Scout Dragon and Karina Karpuk Venue: EDEN 013 Theme: Community, Culture & Heritage (SDGs 4, 11)</p> <p>What does home mean when it's been changed or left behind? This interactive theatre workshop explores identity, culture, and belonging through the lived experiences of young Ukrainian refugees.</p> <p>Led by Theater Domivka, and facilitated by Scout Dragon and Karina Karpuk, the session uses drama, movement, and collaborative storytelling to centre voices shaped by migration and resilience. No theatre experience needed, just curiosity and openness. Ideal for students interested in performance, social justice, refugee experiences, and the arts as a tool for empathy and connection.</p>



11am - 12pm	<p>The Great AI Debate</p> <p>Lead: Damien Maguire Venue: i3B LT1 Theme: Digital Futures, Innovation & Enterprise (SDGs 4, 8, 9)</p> <p>Artificial intelligence is already reshaping how we learn, teach, research, and work, so what role should it play in the future of Liverpool Hope University? This open debate invites staff and students from all disciplines to explore AI's opportunities, risks, and ethical challenges in a balanced, honest discussion.</p> <p>Moderated by Damien Maguire, with a diverse panel of students and academics, the session tackles issues from academic integrity and critical thinking to equity, sustainability, and data ethics. Whether you're excited, uncertain, or sceptical, your voice matters.</p>
11am - 12pm	<p>1001 Critical Days - what will you do?</p> <p>Lead: Professor Cate Carroll Venue: EDEN 002 Theme: Social Justice, Identity & Empowerment (SDGs 1, 5, 10, 16)</p> <p>Make your voice count for young children worldwide. This workshop introduces the 1001 Days Project led by the European Region of the World Organisation for Early Childhood Education.</p> <p>Join Cate, Vice President of the region, to learn about the project and take part in creating posts that will be shared globally to promote children's rights. By the end of the session, you'll have crafted at least one post and if you'd like, you can continue volunteering beyond the workshop to contribute further to this important initiative.</p>
11am - 12pm	<p>Interactive SDG Simlab Experience</p> <p>Lead: Jordan Carruthers Venue: Sim Lab</p> <p>Step inside the 360 Simulation Lab and explore the Sustainable Development Goals like never before. The Learning and Teaching Team invites students and faculty to an immersive exhibition where advanced display technology brings all 17 SDGs to life.</p> <p>Interact directly with the installation: choose a goal and watch a video narrative featuring a speaker who explains the objective and how it applies in the real world. This is a unique opportunity to experience the intersection of cutting-edge visualisation technology and global development policy and to see how creativity, innovation, and sustainability come together in an interactive, hands-on way.</p>
12 - 1pm and 2 - 3pm	<p>Power, Representation and Responsibility</p> <p>Lead: Mark Wood Venue: Sim Lab Theme: Community, Culture & Heritage (SDGs 4, 11)</p> <p>Drawing on his experience in Community, Culture & Heritage, Mark Wood explores Operation Spitfire, an award-winning initiative working with communities, schools, and museums in Stoke-on-Trent.</p> <p>This hands-on workshop examines the challenges of engaging diverse audiences with an iconic aircraft shaped by contested political meanings, raising questions of culture, identity, and belonging. Participants will explore how history is taught across primary and secondary education and experiment with digital learning resources for online and in-person use. A powerful example of how engineering and design connect past, present, and future.</p>



12pm - 1pm	The Future of Education
	<p>Lead: Dr Frank Su and Prof. Namrata Rao Venue: EDEN 004 Theme: Digital Futures, Innovation & Enterprise (SDGs 4, 8, 9)</p> <p>This workshop invites students to explore what education might look like in 10, 50, or even 100 years. We'll ask: What factors, positive and challenging, will shape its future? Is that future desirable, and what can we do today to help create it? With predictions that automation could affect half of current work activities by 2055, we'll consider how these changes impact learners, educators, and the skills education should foster. Join us to reflect, debate, and imagine the education systems of tomorrow.</p>
12pm - 1pm and 2pm - 3pm	Misinformation: How big a problem is it and what can we do about it?
	<p>Lead: Dr Jonathan Parker Venue: i3B 201 Theme: Digital Futures, Innovation & Enterprise (SDGs 4, 8, 9)</p> <p>How do we know what's real in a world of endless news, social media, and "fake" information? This interactive workshop explores misinformation and disinformation in the so-called post-truth era. We'll ask whether today's problems are truly new, how social media and filter bubbles shape what we see, and why confirmation bias makes it so easy to believe what we already think.</p> <p>You'll also get hands-on practice using the SIFT method, developed by Mike Caulfield, to verify information and separate fact from fiction an essential skill for navigating the modern information landscape.</p>
12pm - 1pm	Diogenes: the short path to happiness
	<p>Lead: Dr Gilbert McLaughlin Venue: i3B 114 Theme: Health, Wellbeing, Creativity & Belief (SDGs 3,4,11)</p> <p>Is wanting less the secret to living well? This talk explores how overconsumption shapes our values and why it so often leaves us dissatisfied. Drawing on the radical philosophy of Diogenes of Sinope, we'll examine the idea that happiness comes not from wealth or status, but from simplicity, integrity, and virtue.</p> <p>What can Cynicism teach us about success, pressure, and wellbeing today? This session invites students to rethink the "good life" and ask whether resilience, self-discipline, and freedom from social expectations matter more than having more.</p>
12pm - 1pm	Autocritical Disability Studies: The Power of the Personal
	<p>Lead: Professor David Bolt Venue: i3B 004 Theme: Social Justice, Identity & Empowerment (SDGs 1, 5, 10, 16)</p> <p>What if lived experience was the starting point of research, not a limitation? This workshop introduces Autocritical Disability Studies, an approach that combines critical disability studies with autoethnography, a method that openly values personal experience rather than claiming objectivity.</p> <p>Focusing on disability as lived and known from the inside, the session explores why researcher subjectivity can be ethically and intellectually powerful. You'll be introduced to ideas such as autocritical disability theory and autocritical discourse analysis, and consider how personal stories can challenge dominant narratives, disrupt injustice, and reshape how knowledge about disability is produced.</p>



1pm - 2pm	Feminism and Environmental Justice: Why Care, and Why Now?
	<p>Lead: Dr Marzana Kamal Venue: i3B 201 Theme: Environment, Ecology & Sustainability (SDGs 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15)</p> <p>Climate change doesn't affect everyone equally, so why should our solutions be one-size-fits-all? This interactive workshop introduces feminist environmental justice, exploring how gender, inequality, and power shape environmental harm. Through accessible theory, discussion, and creative activities, you'll examine how systems like patriarchy, colonialism, capitalism, and racism place women and marginalised communities on the front lines of climate crises.</p> <p>Topics include ecofeminism, Global South perspectives, water access, food security, climate migration, and care work. No prior knowledge needed, just curiosity and a willingness to rethink how more just and sustainable futures can be built.</p>
1pm - 2pm	Exploring Arts, Care, and Wellbeing
	<p>Lead: Dr Eleanor Rees and Dr Zoe Zontou Venue: i3B 114 Theme: Health, Wellbeing, Creativity & Belief (SDGs 3,4,11)</p> <p>How can creativity help us care for ourselves and for others? This relaxed, interactive 60-minute workshop explores the links between the arts, care, and wellbeing. Through gentle creative activities, you'll reflect on why wellbeing matters and how caring for ourselves can strengthen our relationships with others and our wider communities.</p> <p>You'll take part in drama games, storytelling, drawing, and creative writing, no artistic experience needed. Open to students from all disciplines, the session is reflective, and enjoyable.</p>
1pm - 2pm	Academic Skills Development for International Students
	<p>Lead: Dr Olga Ververi Venue: EDEN 005 Theme: Social Justice, Identity & Empowerment (SDGs 1, 5, 10, 16)</p> <p>Succeeding at university is about more than mastering content. This session introduces a research-based framework to support international students in developing confidence and key academic skills in UK higher education.</p> <p>Focusing on academic writing as a shared disciplinary practice, you'll explore how to structure arguments, develop a critical voice, reference accurately, and understand academic integrity. The session also demystifies marking criteria, assessment expectations, and how to use feedback to improve future work. With insight into presentations, collaboration, and transferable skills, this workshop links academic success with long-term confidence and employability.</p>
1pm - 2pm	From Digital Access to AI: Building Inclusive Digital Futures
	<p>Lead: Dr Ogonnaya Anicho Venue: i3B LT2 Theme: Digital Futures, Innovation & Enterprise (SDGs 4, 8, 9)</p> <p>Digital futures aren't just about AI, they're about who gets included and who gets left behind. While automation and data-driven innovation promise progress, they depend on basic foundations such as digital access, skills, infrastructure, and social and economic conditions. When these are unequal, digital futures risk deepening exclusion rather than creating opportunity.</p> <p>This session explores how more inclusive digital futures can be built, from improving connectivity and digital skills to shaping responsible AI and innovation. As digital technologies increasingly shape everyday life and work, it asks what exclusion from the digital economy really means and why inclusion must come first.</p>



2pm - 3pm	<p>Standing in Solidarity with Greenland</p> <p>Lead: Dr Dan Allen Venue: i3B 004 Theme: Social Justice, Identity & Empowerment (SDGs 1, 5, 10, 16)</p> <p>What does solidarity mean in a world of rising geopolitical tension? This workshop uses Greenland (Kalaallit Nunaat) as a case study at the intersection of global politics, Indigenous rights, and social justice. With growing international pressure, Greenlandic communities face challenges that shape their cultural, social, and political futures, especially for children and young people.</p> <p>Using a social justice lens, the session explores Indigenous consent, ethical research, and international solidarity, drawing on UN Indigenous rights frameworks and UK-based research to ask what responsible global engagement really looks like.</p>
2pm - 3pm	<p>Misogyny and the Manosphere Discussion Group</p> <p>Lead: Dr Gavin Heart Venue: EDEN 004 Theme: Social Justice, Identity & Empowerment (SDGs 1, 5, 10, 16)</p> <p>What is the “manosphere” and why does it matter? This interactive workshop explores the online world of masculinity-focused content, forums, influencers, memes, and self-help material and how some ideas can drift into misogyny, harassment, or even radicalisation.</p> <p>We’ll look at why this content is popular, how platforms and algorithms amplify it, and, most importantly, how students, educators, and communities can respond. Expect real examples, open discussion, and a safe space to ask awkward or controversial questions.</p>
2pm - 3.30pm	<p>Solidarity in Action: Ukraine, Europe and You</p> <p>Lead: Dr Taras Khomych Venue: i3B LT1 Theme: Community, Culture & Heritage (SDGs 4, 11)</p> <p>How do global events shape your world and what can you do about it? This interactive workshop connects students with organisations supporting Ukrainian communities in the UK and Europe, including Association of Ukrainians in Great Britain, Liverpool European Partnership, and Resilience Ukrainian Support Centre CIC.</p> <p>Hear real stories, explore solidarity in action, and see how global engagement builds skills like leadership and intercultural communication. Expect hands-on activities too, from Ukrainian language and culture to traditional motanka doll-making.</p>
2pm - 3.30pm	<p>What's (Y)our Story? - Creative Writing and Disability</p> <p>Lead: Saul Leslie Venue: EDEN 007 Theme: Health, Wellbeing, Creativity & Belief (SDGs 3,4,11)</p> <p>Join academic and published author Saul Leslie for an engaging workshop on telling your story through disability and d/Deaf perspectives. Using familiar books, films, and TV, you’ll explore how disability is represented and why those portrayals matter. Through discussion and debate, the session tackles philosophical, ethical, and political questions, challenging medical ideas of “curing” and highlighting cultural identity instead.</p> <p>You’ll leave with practical storytelling techniques and new ways to frame lived experience. Open to disabled and non-disabled participants alike, this workshop is for anyone interested in writing, representation, and whose voices get heard.</p>
3.30pm - 4pm	<p>Title: Festival wrap up Lead: Professor Cate Carroll Venue: i3B LT1</p>