

Environmentally Sound, Socially Just, Academic Conferences

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At the school where I teach, the University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB), 1/3rd of the carbon footprint for the campus comes from flying faculty and staff to a variety of conferences and meetings. The good news is that telepresencing can reduce the climate footprint of an academic conference by a factor of 100 or more.

However, the academic conference still has a range of issues that we need to address. The cost of airfare from many low- and middle-income countries to anywhere in North America or Europe is often greater than the per capita annual income in these countries. Consequently, scholars from most of the world's countries, and nearly the entire Global South, have long been quietly, summarily excluded from international conferences.

In this talk, I will discuss a nearly carbon-neutral (NCN) approach to conferences that we have been developing at UCSB for the past six years. From the start, our goal has been to stage more environmentally sound, socially just, academic conferences.

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