



University of Glasgow

Research Project: Creative writing and climate anxiety in Scotland

Information Sheet and Plain language Statement for participants submitting stories online

You are being invited to take part in a research project. Before you decide whether to take part, it is important that you understand why the research is being carried out and what taking part will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully so you can decide whether you want to take part. If anything isn't clear or you would like more information, please get in touch with the researcher using the contact information below.

What is the purpose of the research?

This research project aims to explore what people in Scotland think and feel about climate change, in particular in relation to the difficult emotions or mental health and wellbeing impacts that may be associated with climate change. This project is interested in seeing what we can learn from stories people write about climate change – considering what might be missed in other types of research into climate emotions.

The research aims to answer questions such as:

- (1) What stories do people in Scotland write about climate change, and are these different from the kinds of stories we read in the media?
- (2) What can these stories tell us about how people in Scotland think and feel about climate change?
- (3) Can writing stories about climate change help manage feelings of distress around climate change, and/or does this lead to pro-environmental action?
- (4) How can people's stories about climate change impact on the way climate organisations understand and respond to the Scottish public?

What will taking part in the research involve?

This part of the research invites you to write a story (up to 1,000 words long) about climate change. This can focus on your own experiences or be about a character you've made up. You can spend as much or as little time on this as you want to. Some prompts are provided on the project website (www.climatestories.co.uk) which you may find helpful to look at if you're not sure where to start, but you don't have to use these – if there's another story you want to tell, write whatever feels important to you. You have the option to decide whether to submit your story under your own name or anonymously.

There's also the option to provide some covering explanatory notes where you can describe your experience of writing your story. You do not have to provide this information to submit your story.

You will also be invited to express interest in joining a series of online workshops on creative writing and climate change, which will take place between April and June 2026. You do not have to join these workshops to submit a story online.

What will happen with the results of the research project?

By contributing your story to this project, you will be helping research into climate emotions and mental health and wellbeing in Scotland, which may in turn change how organisations understand and offer support around these issues. The researcher will use the findings from this research to address the research questions outlined at the beginning of this information sheet.

The results of this study will be written up into a PhD thesis by the researcher. The results may also be published in academic articles, books, reports, audio recordings and presentations, and a project website (www.climatestories.co.uk). Data from this project may be used in teaching, and it is also intended that these findings will be communicated to environmental and other interested organisations, which may include an anthology, audio, podcast, exhibitions, or public reports for relevant organisations. Quotations and excerpts from your stories (and covering explanatory notes) may be used in these outputs; some of these outputs may include full stories. These will all be kept anonymous unless there is a specific request otherwise.

What are the risks and benefits of being credited as the author of my story?

Quotations, excerpts, and entire stories will be used in the PhD thesis written as a result of this research and may also be used in other research outputs, such as academic papers and conference presentations. The researcher will also select some of the submitted stories to be shared on the project website (www.climatestories.co.uk) and collected into an anthology to be shared with environmental and other interested organisations in Scotland.

This means you need to think carefully about whether you want to be credited as the author of your story. It might sound obvious, but if you are credited as the author, this will mean that other people engaging with the research project will be able to identify you as the person who wrote your story. You might want to think about how this might affect you and how you will support yourself if you are sharing potentially emotional work publicly, or how you would feel if someone you knew read your story. You also need to feel comfortable with someone you don't know reading your work and seeing your name alongside it.

There are also benefits of being credited as the author of your work. It can be rewarding to see your name on your work, and, if you are an aspiring writer, it can be helpful to have examples of your work that have been published.

What if I change my mind about being credited as author?

If at any stage you decide that you do not want to be credited as the author of your story, please contact the researcher (contact details below) to confirm whether you would like your story to be included in the project as an anonymous contribution. You should do this by September 2026.

What if I want to withdraw my story from the project?

If at any stage you no longer want to be part of the research project, you can withdraw your story by contacting the researcher (contact details below). Participation in this research is voluntary, and you have the right to withdraw at any given time. This decision will be treated with the utmost respect, and no reason is required for your withdrawal.

You can withdraw your story until September 2026, but please be aware that your story may be used in the production of other formal report outputs (such as journal articles or conference papers) prior to your withdrawal, so you are advised to contact the researcher at the earliest opportunity should you wish to withdraw from the study. If you withdraw from the project, all the information and data collected from you (including your story) to date will be destroyed and your name removed from all the project files.

How will be data for this project be managed?

Stories and other data collected as part of this research project will be held securely on a university server in a password-protected location, using a storage system that is compliant with the university's good practice guidance in research data management.

If you have indicated that you would like to be credited as the author of your work, your linked name and story will be held apart from other research data, which will be anonymised; responses will be allocated an ID number so that these cannot be linked to you directly. Only the researcher will have access to your data in order to fulfil the aims of the research. Stories and other data will be analysed together to help identify common themes and answer the research questions outlined above.

The supervisor of this research has approved the data management impact assessment for this project.

Copyright

The copyright to the story written by you as part of the study will be owned by you, and you will be free to publish this and deal with it as you see fit. At the same time, you will be asked to consent to confirm that you have granted a creative commons licence (<https://creativecommons.org/share-your-work/ccllicenses/>) to the researcher Rhiannon Bull to use the submitted story for the purposes of the study including in her thesis and any other reports or outputs or publications relating to the study.

What will happen to my data after the end of this project?

At the end of the project, the stories and other data collected as part of the project will be retained by the researcher for possible future (re)use. All data will be stored on a University of Glasgow secure server in an anonymised form, with the exception of cases where authors have indicated they wish to be credited with their real name. This will be destroyed in 2038, ten years after the completion of the research. Stories that are included within an anthology and other outputs will be retained in this form and may still be accessible beyond the ten-year period.

What if difficult or unexpected emotions come up when writing my story?

If you find that you need extra support managing your feelings around climate change, the following organisations and resources offer help:

- The Climate Psychology Alliance offer information on where you can seek support - <https://www.climatepsychologyalliance.org/index.php/find-support>
- There is also a national helpline in Scotland for when people need help with overwhelming feelings: <https://www.breathingspace.scot/>

Who is carrying out this research?

This research project is being carried out by PhD researcher Rhiannon Bull within the School of Geographical and Earth Sciences at the University of Glasgow. Rhiannon is a writer of fiction and narrative non-fiction who has had shorter pieces published and been shortlisted for awards, and who has previous experience facilitating creative writing workshops both within and outwith a research context.

This research project has been funded by a University of Glasgow College of Science and Engineering Graduate School Scholarship.

Who has approved this research?

This project has been reviewed by, and received ethical clearance through, the University of Glasgow College of Science and Engineering Research Ethics Committee.

Contact for further information

If you still have questions about the research project, or if anything isn't clear to you, please contact the researcher at r.bull.1@research.glasgow.ac.uk for further information. If you need further information, you can contact the research supervisor, Hester Parr, at Hester.Parr@glasgow.ac.uk.

If you wish to contact anyone with concerns about the ethics of the research project, please contact the Geography and Earth Sciences Ethics representative Felicity Callard of the College of Science and Engineering Ethics Committee at felicity.callard@glasgow.ac.uk, or the Chair of the Ethics committee Julie Williamson at Julie.Williamson@glasgow.ac.uk.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet.