

Student Hub

How You Can Make Networking Your Best Friend

We get it, walking into a room full of seasoned professionals can be a daunting experience and whilst you try to carefully consider whether to eat the croissant (in case of that mid-mouthful-awkward-question-answering moment), it's important to just remind yourself that everyone in that room was you, whether that was recently or a longer time ago. Everyone has to start somewhere. So relax, networking is the best way to make contacts in your chosen sector who you can call on for advice, direction and introductions. We've put our heads together and come up with some great tips and ways you can network through CIEEM and, hopefully you might pick something up that you can use in the future.

Network at Conferences

Keen to make contacts with practitioners? Unsure where to start? Conferences can be a great place to meet ecologists and environmental managers and our top tips aim to help you make the most of these networking opportunities:

- **Before you go:** Check out the programme and get a copy of the delegate list. Use Google or LinkedIn to research delegates or speakers you may want to connect with and prepare questions in advance.
- **When you arrive:** Ask the organisers to help with introductions. Have a few key questions ready. Exchange contact details.

- **After the event:** send a brief 'great to meet you' follow up message. Use social media to keep up with your new contacts and keep expanding your networks.

Research the topics and presentations beforehand, especially in relation to the workshops so you can have an active involvement and participation. Make the most of networking opportunities and be bold. Also aim to meet up with fellow students.

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CIEEM has two types of Member Network (www.cieem.net/member-networks): **Geographic Sections**, which are regionally based, and **Special Interest Groups**, which are topic-based. Each group is run by a committee of volunteer CIEEM members who contribute their time to (amongst other things) run local events (<http://cieem.activclient.com/CIEEM/Events/Event-Listing.aspx>), many of which are free or low cost and open to members only. These events offer a great opportunity to meet people working in your chosen sector and learn new skills to complement your studies. Many committees will welcome student committee members (subject to availability) and all are keen to encourage and support early careers members into the profession. Find out more about how you can get involved at www.cieem.net/get-involved.

Join Member Networks and Network for Free!

Once you've started your journey towards a career in the environmental sector as a student, it's never too early to begin exploring who's who and beginning to build your own networks. Joining a professional body like CIEEM is a great start, but you will need to take an active part to get the most out of the opportunities available to you. You can do this by attending training, events and conferences, joining our LinkedIn Group (<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/4306428>) and/or getting involved with your local Member Network.

Networking Without Even Leaving the House

If you've just started on the new series of *Game of Thrones* or have disappeared under a mountain of shiny new text books, you might be reluctant to leave the house, but that's not a worry. You can network from the sofa – by connecting with us on social media. We have a very active Twitter account (@InstEcolEnvMan), with over 4,600 followers. We also have an engaging LinkedIn group, with a varied thread of discussion topics you can get involved with.

Student and Careers Working Group



Vicky Bowskill
Member Networks Co-ordinator



Emma Downey
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Krystie Hamilton
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