

30th September 2025

RE: National Conference for Societal Resilience Invitation Letter

On behalf of the organizing committee, I would like to offer the opportunity to invite 2-3 of your Sixth Form pupils to participate in the National Conference on Societal Resilience on 24th February 2026 to talk about their thoughts or experiences of resilience to major emergencies / disasters.

Many practitioners in the resilience sector share a perspective that young people are effective conduits for messaging about resilience to emergencies. However, often the voices of young people is not always included in practice. So, we are keen for resilience practitioners to hear this perspective.

This invitation represents an excellent opportunity for sixth form students to learn about societal resilience, to add real-life examples for their A Level / BTEC studies, as material for an EPQ, or for those interested in debating. It will provide a unique opportunity for those seeking to apply to university or an aspiring career in government or risk management. We would be delighted to help the young people to prepare for what they may say to this audience, so they feel comfortable before the event and there are no subject specific requirements for the invitation.

What will students be asked to do?

As one of the focus points of the conference is youth voice, we will run a panel session led by Dr Martin Parham. This session will involve 6 young people (from 2-3 schools) who will share their views. The panel/conference will be a very positive environment where the young people will be listened to, with the aim of setting up a new trajectory for resilience practice in the UK.

The timing of the panel will be 2.10-3.10pm on 24 February 2026 so to minimise the impact on the school day. Although the volunteer students will also need to commit to an additional date prior to the conference (date to be confirmed), for a practice discussion with Dr Parham
To support the volunteer students, the University of Manchester will reimburse student and staff travel costs and will provide drinks and snacks when they are on site. For their participation, students will receive £20 gift vouchers as a token of thanks for their support.

The audience

This is the 4th time we will run this National Conference on Societal Resilience, with between 140 - 180 people attending previous conferences. 50% of those audiences were resilience professionals from local governments (mostly UK); 20% from the voluntary sector; 20% from the national government (Cabinet Office, EA, Defra); 10% are consultants and academics.

At past conferences delegates have talked about the voices of young people, however we are interested in hearing their actual views.

About the conference (24-25th February 2026).

The conference is held in the university's iconic graduation hall: Whitworth Hall, The University of Manchester, UK.

Conference website and videos of past conferences www.ambs.ac.uk/NCSRconference

The conference is organised by the National Consortium for Societal Resilience [UK+] www.ambs.ac.uk/ncsr

Schools can receive further information and register student by contacting to Dr Martin Parham at martin.parham@manchester.ac.uk

Please register your interest for this event, no later than November 15th 2025 by contacting Dr Martin Parham or Sonja Bernhard (sonja.bernhard@manchester.ac.uk) the university outreach officer.

Yours sincerely,



Professor Duncan Shaw

Chair, National Conference on Societal Resilience [UK+] ... www.ambs.ac.uk/NCSRconference

Co-Chair, National Consortium for Societal Resilience [UK+] ... www.ambs.ac.uk/ncsr

Professor of Risk, Resilience, and Society

University of Manchester, UK