



BIOECONOMY CHANGEMAKERS FESTIVAL 2024

Vienna Edition

EVENT CONCEPT

VIENNA, AUSTRIA

12 MARCH 2024

Background

Embarking on the momentum of the promising European *Bioeconomy Changemakers Festival 2024 (BCF2024)*, an initiative promoted by the European Commission, a unique satellite event is set to unfold in the vibrant city of Vienna, which will foster strategic collaboration with key youth organisations. Recognising the influential role these organisations play in shaping our society, particularly on the Austrian level, the **BCF2024 – Vienna** seeks to amplify their impact in the bioeconomy discourse.

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Brought to life by the esteemed Centre for Bioeconomy (ZfB) at the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna (BOKU), the "*Bioeconomy Changemaker Festival 2024 – Vienna Edition*" (**BCF2024 – Vienna**), the event aims to catalyse a holistic transformation within the country and extend its influence on the broader European landscape. From the heart of Austria's bioeconomy leadership, the festival aspires to harness the youth's collective power to shape policies and strategies for a sustainable future and transform Vienna into a role model hub for the bioeconomy of tomorrow.

Key Information on the Event

Event Location

University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna
Ilse-Wallentin-Haus, seminar room 29
Peter-Jordan-Straße 82/II, 1190 Vienna

Date

Tuesday, 12th March 2024, 10:00 – 22:00

Language

Even if the event is part of an international series of event organised by the European Commission, the BCF2024 – Vienna will be held in **German**. This is to address the fact that the event will involve mainly Austrian organisations or chapters of international organisations.

Organisers

- **Main Organiser:** University of Natural Resources and Life Science, Vienna
- **Contributor:** Centre for Social Innovation – ZSI

Further Information

For further information and updates on the event, please consult the event website at <https://short.boku.ac.at/bcf2024-viennaedition>

Contact Information

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Introduction & Programme

What do food, feed, materials, energy and people have in common? They are all strongly connected through economic systems while also being part of the earth's ecosystems, a closed system where all resources are only available to a limited extent, with the exception of solar energy. Ecosystems have evolved over time to optimise energy flows and matter recycles, ensuring an internal balance. However, humans are currently disrupting this balance, causing major consequences for the environment. Indeed, the unconstrained resource consumption of our society, driven by its associated values and economic principles, is directly related to a cascade of various environmental drawbacks which generate irreversibly changes to our planet. How life on Earth will look in the future holds even more significant importance for young generations, as it directly shapes the world they will inherit. Ensuring a liveable planet for future generations necessitates a collective commitment to minimising environmental damage and optimising resource consumption, aligning our actions with the principles of sustainable ecosystems. Considering that bioeconomy focuses on how Earth's limited resources can be efficiently and fairly used based on the principles of nature and societal involvement, it is precisely this challenge that will be addressed as part of the **BCF2024 – Vienna**.

In recent decades, youth have proven to be pivotal stakeholders in our society, advocating for a sustainable and fair future. Nonetheless, their significant role is still frequently downplayed in policy-making arenas, where they often become victims of tokenism. To effectively shape what lies ahead of them, it is crucial for them to unite their efforts, creating synergies that amplify their collective impact. However, this collaborative approach might not yield the desired political influence if not grounded in scientific knowledge, which would reinforce the validity of their perspectives and lend credibility to their advocacy efforts. Amidst the urgent calls for action, **BCF2024 – Vienna** emerges as a catalyst aimed at empowering youth to become bioeconomy changemakers. This one-day workshop is dedicated to fostering cross-sectorial collaborations and sharing evidence-based knowledge with young participants, presenting the transformative potential of bioeconomy. **BCF2024 – Vienna** seeks to equip the youth with insights into how bioeconomy can effectively address contemporary challenges.

Starting with an exploration of individual interpretations of good life standards and resource use, the workshop will delve into strategies for securing these “good standards” for future generations. The event will not only challenge participants' perspectives but also harness their innovative young spirit, and highlight their ability to bring innovative ideas and unique perspectives, essential for involving the broader society in these pursuits. With their exceptional communication skills, youth are seen as crucial agents for crafting diverse and tailored communication strategies, which have the power to engage society and guide it towards positive change. Additionally, by inspiring youth organisations that are part of established organisations and wider international networks, the **BCF2024 – Vienna** will serve as an inspiring beacon, pushing the transformation towards a holistic bioeconomy forward within Austria and, consequently, on the European level by direct influence.

Preliminary Agenda for 12 March 2024

10:00 – 11:30	Opening Session Circular bio-economy as a solution?
11:30 – 12:15	Networking Youth as united force
12:15 – 13:15	Standing Lunch
13:15 – 15:15	Workshop Understanding the bio-economy
15:15 – 15:45	Coffee Break
15:45 – 17:45	Workshop Communicating the bioeconomy
17:45 – 18:30	Final remarks and closing ceremony
18:30 – 22:00	Dinner and sustainable party in TÜWI

Target Groups

In the last decades, youth organisations have proved to be catalysts towards a more sustainable future and pivotal drivers of our society thanks to their potential political pressure and consequent influence on policy-making processes. However, to maximise their impact, it is crucial for them to merge their efforts and bring together their different perspectives.

On the one hand, the event aims to uncover synergies for cross-sectorial collaborations and, on the other, educate young participants about the bioeconomy as one of the solutions to societal, economic and environmental challenges.

Specifically, to achieve these goals, the **BCF2024 – Vienna** will bring together 40 representatives from youth organisations active in the bioeconomy and related fields, such as industry, policy, forestry, agriculture, or environmental-related groups. The event will focus mainly on Austrian organisations or Austrian chapters of international organisations. By inspiring youth organisations part of wider international networks, the event will serve as an inspiring beacon, motivating these umbrella youth networks to replicate its success at the European, pushing the transformation towards a holistic bioeconomy forward within Austria and, consequently, on the European level by direct influence.

Inclusivity and Sustainability

The integration of people with disabilities or illnesses, as well as of people from different societal and economic backgrounds, striving towards gender balance, is of utmost importance to BOKU. Similarly, as BOKU is committed to reaching sustainability in all areas of its work, including in the interaction between BOKU and society, the **BCF2024 – Vienna** will be organised according to sustainability criteria (e.g., the Austrian Ecolabel for Green Meetings and Green Events and/or the ÖkoEvent certification).

The BCF2024

The **BCF2024** is an event organised by the DC RTD of the European Commission, in collaboration with the [EU Bioeconomy Youth Ambassadors](#). It aims to engage youth as drivers of the transformative change required in view of the multiple challenges the EU is facing nowadays and to unlock the full potential of the bioeconomy. The festival will improve the connection between youth and bioeconomy innovation ecosystems while empowering youth to act as catalysts towards the circular and sustainable use of biological resources.

The festival will take place between 11. and 17.03.2024 in various locations across the EU, with a high-level main event organised by the European Commission in Brussels on 13 and 14 March 2024. A limited number of satellite events will be organised by interested parties in different European locations, among them the **BCF2024 – Vienna**.



About the organisers

The event is organised by the [Centre for Bioeconomy](#) of [BOKU](#), with the crucial contribution of [ZSI](#). The coordination of the workshop session is taken care of by the ZSI teams working on the [Engage4BIO](#) and [GenB](#) projects. The event is supported by the [RTD Bioeconomy Team](#) of the European Commission and the [European Bioeconomy University Alliance](#) – EBU.

BOKU

Today's University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna - BOKU began its success story in 1872 as a small agricultural university under the name "k. k. Hochschule für Bodencultur". Today, the BOKU locations Türkenschanze, Muthgasse and Tulln offer the 15 departments and 11,000 students optimal conditions for learning, teaching and research. BOKU is one of Europe's best Life Sciences universities, distinguished by its holistic approach to research and teaching. Our scientists, students and graduates work on solutions for burning social issues and for a sustainable future.



ZSI

The Centre of Social Innovation (ZSI) has successfully operated as a non-university institution in the field of research and research transfer since 1990. This requires a high degree of responsibility to the public. ZSI is a private non-profit institute for applied social sciences and a Centre of Excellence for social innovation based in Vienna (Austria). ZSI implements research and application projects on the social embedding and impact of all types of innovations and contributes to the design and diffusion of socially accepted and sustainable innovations to meet global challenges.

