



**EXAMINING THE ROLE OF FOOD AS A VEHICLE  
FOR SOCIETAL CHANGE**

**24<sup>TH</sup> - 25<sup>TH</sup> MAY, COVENTRY UNIVERSITY  
TECHNOLOGY PARK, UK**

**ORGANISED BY**



24<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> May 2023

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**The Future of Food Symposium 2023:  
Examining the role of food as a vehicle for societal change**

It is our great pleasure to invite you to the 4<sup>th</sup> Future of Food Symposium event: Examining the role of food as a vehicle for societal change, to be held on the 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> of May 2023 at the Coventry University Technology Park, CV1 2TT.

**Event description**

Rising levels of hunger across the UK has placed millions of households in precarious, food insecure positions. Families are facing tough choices between heating, eating and travel, amongst a number of other demands, all rising in cost. At the same time community organisations have effectively responded to support vulnerable groups, meeting the demand for emergency food provision and utilising food as a vehicle for social good to enhance people's lives in their local community. However often the importance of these organisations is over-looked. Described as the 'fourth emergency service', this is a sector helping millions but having to negotiate considerable challenges to sustain their longevity.

The 4th Future of Food Symposium focuses on the food insecure position of households across the UK and the organisations supporting them. From food provisioning services, to the capturing and distribution of surpluses, to the guidance and help offered to improve food knowledge and nutrition, and the work of those offering alternative means of producing and accessing food, this event provides a space to share, reflect and progress in moving towards a more sustainable food system for all. This event recognises that food is an important medium through which the life prospects of the most vulnerable groups in society can be furthered. These organisations are at the centre of critical work in not only alleviating food insecurity but providing training and social experiences as well as encouraging and showcasing more sustainable community food practices.

[futurefoodsymposium@gmail.com](mailto:futurefoodsymposium@gmail.com)

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Participants of this event will learn about and debate a number of cross-cutting themes linked to combatting food poverty. We aim to provide practitioners with a space to reflect on issues such as the need to address nutritional deficiencies; the high expense of fresh, healthy food; the low quality, compromised nature and short shelf life of food donations, and the overall right for vulnerable people to have fair access to affordable food, amongst other issues.

In acknowledging a context of a failing food system we look to explore:

- How community organisations can navigate the access and provision of healthy, nutritious food made from good quality ingredients.
- How community organisations can use food as a vehicle to enhance the lives of people within their communities.
- The role of community organisations in capturing and utilising surplus food.
- Important work being undertaken to reverse nutritional inequality.
- The role of alternative food providers in a more sustainable and just food system.
- The merits and drawbacks of range of income generation models and pathways towards greater financial independence.

The event will feature keynote speakers, panel debates as well as breakout sessions that provide an opportunity to learn new skills and share grounded, real-world expertise.

We invite practitioners, policy makers, community leaders, organisations and funders tackling food poverty, as well as researchers working in this field to join us.

Confirmed speakers include:

Dr Clare Pettinger, University of Plymouth

Andrew Forsey, National Director of Feeding Britain

Anne Elkins, Head of Special Projects, The Felix Project

Pierce O'Connor, Projects and Programme Manager, FareShare Midlands

Wendy Zhou, Perfectly Imperfect

Jess Latchford, Waste Knot

Dr John Harvey, University of Nottingham

Pauline Fitzsimons, The NOW Group, Belfast

Vic Borrill, Brighton & Hove Food Partnership

Sophie Aoun, The Hornbeam Centre, Walthamstow, London

Sue O'Neil- Berest, Cyrenians Edinburgh

Jade Bashford, The Real Farming Trust

Dr Marsha Smith, Centre for Business in Society, Coventry University

Dr Jordon Lazell, Essex Business School, University of Essex