



Connecting Islands Virtually For Climate Action

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☀ Call to Action

Visit www.islandinnovation.co/summit/ Support innovative projects to fight climate change & sustain island ecosystems. Follow James on Twitter @jellsmoor

☀ Values

- Innovative
- Creative
- Entrepreneurial
- Environmentalist

☀ Lessons Learned

Technology can be used to solve some of our most challenging environmental problems.

Communication and collaboration among nations around the world is essential in the 21st century.

Communications skills as well as technical skills are needed in order to solve the global problems we are currently facing.

James Ellsmoor is a renewable energy advocate, digital nomad, and serial green entrepreneur.

He is cofounder of Solar Head of State (SHOS), a nonprofit organization whose mission is “To help world leaders become green leaders.” SHOS installed solar panels on the White House during Barack Obama’s presidency to raise awareness about renewable energy alternatives. They have also completed solar installations for the President of the Maldives, the Office of the Prime Minister of Jamaica, and the Government House in St. Lucia.

James went on to create Island Innovation, a green consultancy and advisory firm focused on small island developing states (SIDS). Out of this, the Virtual Island Summit, a free online event aimed at connecting global island communities on a common digital platform, was created. More than a hundred island communities were involved in the 2019 Summit. In 2017, James was recognized on Forbes Magazine’s 30 Under 30 List.

☀ Language Arts

Which environmental cause would you like to fight for and why? Read the article [5 Steps to Write an Inspiring Mission Statement¹](#), and write your own mission statement for an organization that is dealing with the environmental issue of your choice.

Write two three-minute sales pitches. The first one should be a pitch that you would use to promote your organization to investors. The second should be a recruitment tool for volunteers. Then write a five-paragraph essay comparing and contrasting the two. How are these pitches similar? How are they different?

Create a series of 6-8 digital posters to explain the concept of “Energy Poverty,” and what can be done to address this problem.

Choose an island in the Caribbean, and research what day-to-day life is like there for people your age; then create a five-to-eight-minute video to educate people on the problems that your island is facing in terms of energy infrastructure, climate change, and sustainability. Be sure to mention the Paris Agreement, and other possible solutions to these problems.

STEM Activities

In addition to James's experience in and passion for sustainability, he has been able to take advantage of the transition to virtual conferences and platform sharing. What is one topic that you think should be the focus at his next summit?

Explain why.

Due to the global pandemic that began in March of 2020, the way we organize conferences and collect information has drastically changed. Choose a topic related to climate change/sustainability and research how the pandemic has affected an organization related to your chosen topic. Then create a presentation describing the pros and cons of the virtual shift, how you could participate (digitally), and how the organization may transition from digital to live participation once the pandemic is over.

Have you ever traveled to an island for vacation? If you have, research the challenges and opportunities that characterize this island community. If you have not, select an island that you would like to travel to, or learn more about, and conduct the same research. Then, in groups or individually, participate in a mock Virtual Island Summit, sharing your research with the class, and comparing and contrasting the findings.

Sustainability Innovations

In addition to the efforts by Island Innovations to connect island communities for the purpose of targeting sustainable issues, organizations like [Greenbiz](#) create and enhance the intersection of business, technology, and sustainability. Greenbiz has events, news, and webcasts that educate individuals on the most recent updates in these sectors and how they can collaborate in the future.

Many sustainability organizations plan their projects based on the United Nation Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As a part of the UN SDG initiative, the organization has created a sector called [Small Island Development States](#)³. Small Island Developing States includes 38 countries that are members of the United Nations, as well as 20 nonmembers.

Sustainability Career Pathways

Renewable Energy Advocate. Through his work, James has shown the power of bringing together a diverse set of communities to collaborate with and learn from. Renewable energy is a rapidly growing field and will make up an ever-larger percentage of the world's energy mix in the decades to come. Becoming part of a renewable energy company—as a manager, [salesperson](#)⁴, or support staff—is one way you can help with this transition. Or, by joining one of the many nonprofit organizations like [Solar Head of State](#)⁵, you can help draw attention and resources to renewable energy.

Solar PV Installer. Not everyone wants to work in an office all day. Some people would rather help build infrastructure working with their hands. Why not help cover the world's rooftops in solar panels? These jobs pay well, and only require a high school diploma. Learn more [here](#)⁶.

Solar Electrician. Along with installing photovoltaic cells, trained electricians are needed to wire them properly. This kind of work

usually requires a technical degree or apprenticeship. Read more about how to become a solar electrician [here](#)⁷.

Applied Anthropologist. As James learned through experience, understanding how technologies are used in different countries and cultures is essential for successful adoption of them. Anthropologists study culture, and applied anthropologists use their understanding of culture to help solve environmental or social problems: for example, finding ways to overcome stigmas or misconceptions about using solar energy. Anthropology is a robust field: universities, nonprofits, government agencies, and companies all need them to help achieve their missions. Read more about the field [here](#)⁸.

1 <https://articles.bplans.com/writing-a-mission-statement/>

2 <https://www.greenbiz.com/>

3 <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/topics/sids>

4 <https://www.greentechmedia.com/articles/read/cleantech-careers-solar-sales-at-a-residential-installer>

5 <https://solarheadofstate.org/>

6 <https://collegegrad.com/careers/solar-photovoltaic-installers>

7 <https://www.electricschool.edu.org/solar-power-technician/>

8 <https://www.americananthro.org/AdvanceYourCareer/Content.aspx?ItemNumber=2150>

