

THE FUTURE OF FOOD

HUMBOLDT RESIDENCY PROGRAMME

INTRODUCING THE 2025 COHORT

HUMBOLDT RESIDENCY PROGRAMME

The numerous global challenges facing us today clearly demonstrate the need for international and transdisciplinary cooperation in the search for answers and for increased social and political impact of scientifically generated knowledge.

Every year, the Humboldt Residency Programme brings together a transdisciplinary group of researchers, journalists, artists, and activists to work on a common topic during a six-week residency in Berlin/Brandenburg. It reinforces innovation by transdisciplinary cooperation beyond the boundaries of science. Exploring innovative forms of science communication, the programme aims to share the group's results with selected target audiences in order to generate tangible new impetus in academia, politics, and society.

PROGRAMME
WEBSITE

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT
THE PROGRAMME

THE FUTURE OF FOOD

Nourishment is a basic human need and thus our shared relationship with food connects people across time and space. But rather than just a biological necessity, food is a lens through which we view and create society. This topic explores how technological innovations and ethical frameworks in food production and consumption address global health challenges and social inequalities. Participants will dissect the evolving landscape of global food practices and speculate on the future of food. Themes will include:

- **Environmental Shifts Driving Innovation:** Climate change, water shortages, and soil degradation affect the future availability of foodstuffs. This urges the need for innovation in food production, sustainable agriculture, and digitisation in food systems. Societal acceptance, however, remains a challenge.
- **Food Trends Around the Globe:** Veganism and vegetarianism are rising in Western countries, whilst meat consumption in other parts of the world is growing. Global social inequality affects food sustainability, with disparities in areas such as cooking resources and diet diversity.
- **Health and Ethical Considerations:** The obesity pandemic, malnutrition, and food insecurity pose major health challenges. Ethical concerns around unequal food accessibility are also critical.
- **A Cultural Construct:** Food plays a symbolic role in cultural identity. Gendering of food, its appearance, marketing, and expiration dates influence consumption patterns.

VANIA ZUIN ZEIDLER

(BRAZIL/GERMANY)

PROFESSOR (SUSTAINABLE CHEMISTRY) (HOST)

Vânia Zuin Zeidler is a Full Professor in the Institute of Sustainable Chemistry at Leuphana University Lüneburg, Germany, the Pro-Dean of Gender and Diversity, as well as the coordinator of the new Master's Programme "Sustainability Science: Resources, Materials and Chemistry". She is interested in developing analytical methods to determine renewable and bioactive high-value organic substances extracted from agro-industrial residues. Vânia was the Founding Director of the Field & Food Tech Hub (Universidade Federal de São Carlos, Brazil), an RD&I platform for green technologies and sustainability in resilient agro-industrial sectors. She has been a fellow of both the Robert Bosch Foundation and the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation and serves as permanent honorary counsellor of the Club Humboldt Brazil. Some of her recent distinctions include the 52o and 57o National Literary Jabuti Awards (Brazil), the title of Honorary Visiting Fellow at the University of York (UK), and her appointment as an "expert voice" in the Science Journal (AAAS).



PUBLICATIONS

Ancestral Cuisine as Regenerative Social Technologies in Amazon: Eco-humanist Perspectives towards a Critical Sustainable Chemistry. In: Current Opinion in Green and Sustainable Chemistry, Vol. 52, No. 1, 101006, 2025 (With Aymara Llanque Zonta).

Sustainable Chemistry and Food Systems Lessons: The Same Procedure as Every Year? In: Science, Vol. 383, No. 6683, 2024.

Mainstreaming Regenerative Dynamics for Sustainability. In Nature Sustainability 7, 964–972, 2024 (with Joern Fisher, Steffen Farny, David J. Abson, Maria von Salisch, Stefan Schaltegger, Berta Martín-López, Vicky M. Temperton and Klaus Kümmeler).

VANIA'S LINKEDIN
PROFILE

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT
VANIA ZUIN ZEIDLER

NANDINI AGARWAL

(GERMANY/INDIA)

RESEARCHER (SUSTAINABILITY AND FOOD SYSTEMS)

Nandini Agarwal is a sustainability and food systems researcher with diverse experience spanning think tanks, social enterprises, and international fellowships. Her work focusses on scaling innovative solutions for sustainable agriculture and consumption while shaping policies that drive systemic change. She was awarded a German Chancellor Fellowship by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation in 2023, during which she investigated the role of Food Policy Councils in transitioning urban food systems. Her key publications include a book, *Millet Mantra*, recognised by the UN FAO, and a scalability framework for sustainable agriculture. Passionate about translating research into action, Nandini aims to collaborate with diverse stakeholders to bridge policy, governance, and on-the-ground impact for more resilient and equitable food systems.



NANDINI'S LINKEDIN
PROFILE

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT
NANDINI AGARWAL

PUBLICATIONS

Millet Mantra – The Culinary Centrepiece of India's G20 Presidency. New Delhi: Council on Energy, Environment and Water. 2023 (with Parekh, Saahil, Karan Shinghal, and Shuva Raha).

How to Design Scalable and Sustainable Programmes: Framework for India's Sustainable Agriculture Initiatives. (Report) New Delhi: Council on Energy, Environment and Water. 2023 (with Apoorve Khandelwal and Aradhna Wal).

Regenerative Agriculture in Localised Food Systems: A Climate-Smart Way towards Nutrition Security and Food Sovereignty. (Policy Brief) Task Force 6: Accelerating SDGs: Exploring New Pathways to the 2030 Agenda, G20 India. 2023 (with Saahil Parekh, Karan Shinghal, Peter Volz and Phillipp Weckenbrock).

SAMUEL WENIGA ANUGA

(GHANA/MOROCCO)

SENIOR RESEARCH SCIENTIST (ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES)

Samuel Weniga Anuga is an environmental scientist from the University Mohammed VI Polytechnic (UM6P) in Morocco. His focus lies on a data-driven understanding of global environmental change, agriculture innovation and food systems transformation. Prior to joining the UM6P, Samuel was a fellow at the Academy of International Affairs in Germany. He was awarded an Alexander von Humboldt International Climate Protection Fellowship in 2019 which he spent at the Institute for Environmental Economics and World Trade in Germany. Samuel is now collaborating with a team of researchers at the UM6P to implement the African Carbon Flagship Programme (ACFP), one of the largest Carbon Flagships in Africa that aspires to improve Africa's agriculture and food systems through cutting-edge innovations and technology, formidable policies, and strategic finance.



PUBLICATIONS

Circular Economy and Its Relevance for Improving Food and Nutrition Security in Sub-Saharan Africa: the Case of Ghana. In: Materials Circular Economy, Vol. 2, No. 5. Springer 2020 (with Emmanuel Kwesi Boon).

Climate-Smart Agriculture Approaches and Concepts for Food Systems Transformation in Sub-Saharan Africa: Realities and Myths. In: Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security - World Sustainability Series. Springer, 2022 (with Christopher Gordon, et al.).

Towards Low Carbon Agriculture: Systematic-Narratives of Climate-Smart Agriculture Mitigation Potential in Africa. In: Current Research in Environmental Sustainability, Vol. 2, December 2020 (with Ngonidzahe Chirinda, et al.).

SAMUEL'S LINKEDIN
PROFILE

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT
SAMUEL WENIGA ANUGA

ABIOLA AWOYEMI

(NIGERIA)

DOCTORAL CANDIDATE (INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT)

Abiola Awoyemi is an international development practitioner. She holds an M.Sc. in International Development from the University of Edinburgh and is currently a Ph.D. candidate at Ladoke Akintola University of Technology, Nigeria, where she explores the gender dimensions of food security in Nigeria. Abiola is also a commonwealth scholar alumna. Previously, as a junior researcher with the Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Development at Ladoke Akintola University of Technology she introduced and implemented finance and budget planning programmes that deconstruct the norms of structured sexism in agricultural finance access. These programmes work to remove both real and perceived barriers to credit access for women farmers by ensuring a just redistribution of wealth in tenancy agreements. Due to the key role women play in sub-Saharan African agriculture that includes the cultivation, harvesting and processing of food crops, Abiola believes the future of food is intrinsically linked to food security.



ABIOLA'S LINKEDIN
PROFILE

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT
ABIOLA AWOYEMI

ANNIE CHENG

(USA)

CHEF AND WRITER

Annie Faye Cheng is a butcher, writer, and chef based in New York City. With nearly a decade of experience in food and hospitality, she has worked in various capacities at Chipotle, Blue Hill at Stone Barns, Wildair, Goosefeather, Tarry Lodge, and Junzi Kitchen. Currently, she is a full-time butcher at The Meat Hook, a whole-animal shop in Williamsburg, and a part-time Master's student at the CUNY School of Labor and Urban Studies. She also runs a mutual aid circle, dabbles in labour journalism and food writing, and hosts food pop-ups. Annie envisions an equitable, joyful future for food that is rooted in anti-imperialism, labour justice, and environmental consciousness, as well as cultural preservation and progression.



PUBLICATIONS

Migrant Farm Workers' Struggles, Across Borders. Midnight Sun. 2023.

Kurt Evans and the Black Dragon – A Philadelphia Chef Reimagines the Modalities of a Modern-Day Chinese Takeout Restaurant (Profile). This is Mold, 2024.

Queer Mycology. Smallhold, 2023.

ANNIE'S WEBSITE

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT
ANNIE CHENG

MUHAMMAD FAROOQ

(OMAN/PAKISTAN)

PROFESSOR (AGRONOMY)

Muhammad Farooq is a Professor of Agronomy at Sultan Qaboos University, Oman, and originally from Pakistan, with over two decades of experience in sustainable agriculture and food security. His research focuses on crop responses to abiotic stress, conservation agriculture, biofortification, and the use of agricultural waste to enhance soil and water productivity. His work spans Asia, Australia, the Middle East, and Europe, bridging traditional knowledge with modern innovations to promote resilient agri-food systems. With over 500 publications and extensive global collaborations, he actively contributes to sustainability, equity, and resilience in agriculture. Muhammad is a former Georg Forster Award winner, during which he conducted research at Justus Liebig University in Gießen, Germany. He aims to engage in interdisciplinary dialogue to integrate science with the social and ethical dimensions of food systems and to redefine food as a vehicle for sustainable development and social transformation.



PUBLICATIONS

Back into the Wild - Harnessing the Power of Wheat Wild Relatives for Future Crop and Food Security. In: Journal of Experimental Botany, eaf141, 2025 (with Michael Frei, Frederike Zeibig, Sumitra Pantha, Hakan Özkan, Benjamin Kilian, and Kadambot H.M. Siddique).

Enhancing Crop Productivity for Recarbonizing Soil. In: Soil and Tillage Research, Vol. 235, January 2024, 105863 (with Kadambot H.M. Siddique, Nanthi Bolan, and Abdul Rehman).

Neglected and Underutilized Crops: Future Smart Food. Academic Press, 2023 (with Kadambot H.M. Siddique).

MUHAMMAD'S
LINKEDIN PROFILE

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT
MUHAMMAD FAROOQ

MÓNICA GUERRA ROCHA

(BRAZIL/PORTUGAL)

DOCTORAL CANDIDATE (SOCIOLOGY, CITIES AND URBAN CULTURES)

Mónica Guerra Rocha is the co-founder of the Comida do Amanhã Institute (Food of Tomorrow Institute), a think tank supporting the transition towards healthy and sustainable food systems in Brazil. She is also pursuing her PhD in Sociology, Cities and Urban Cultures at the University of Coimbra in Portugal, where she studies urban foodscapes. Mónica previously studied Architecture at Oporto University in Portugal and holds an M.Sc. in Urban Planning and Management from Aalborg University in Denmark. She has over ten years of experience advocating for a sustainable development agenda, with a focus on sustainable urban development and food systems transformation from a holistic perspective. In this context, she has worked with Conservation International Brazil, the Sustainable Development Solutions Network Brazil, the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, and the Brazilian Business Council for Sustainable Development.



PUBLICATIONS

Paisagens Alimentares Urbanas – uma Possibilidade de Leitura das Urbanidades Contemporâneas. Contribuciones a las Ciencias Sociales, Vol. 17(8), No. 9242, 2024.

Critical Perspectives on Governance and Social Security Systems - Feminist Lessons from Brazil's Urban Food Systems. Urban Food Future Opinion Brief, October 2024 (with Tárzia Medeiros and Matheus Alves Zanella).

This is not (Only) Ccookbook - it is a Way to Change the World. Comida do Amanhã Institute, 2019 (Editor).

MÓNICA'S LINKEDIN
PROFILE

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT
MÓNICA GUERRA ROCHA

MARK-DAVID PINTUCAN

(PHILIPPINES)

CO-FOUNDER OF LOKALLAB, SENIOR DESIGNER ARCHITECT

Mark-David Pintucan comes from a mixture of cultures and disciplines. Growing up with a single Filipino immigrant mother in Switzerland sparked a curiosity mixed with self-consciousness about his heritage and surroundings. His design background allowses him to view these challenges through a lens of diversity and resilience which he applies to his role as co-founder of LokalLab. Here, Mark-David is building a path where sustainability becomes embedded in decision-making for the future of the island Siargao, Philippines, by empowering the community through nature-based education and showcasing successful models of sustainable development. Mark-David's design philosophy prioritises sustainability, minimalism, and cultural sensitivity. He tries as much as possible to include existing structures and local materials to minimise the environmental impact, believing that design can be functional and culturally relevant whilst contributing to a more resilient community.



PROJECTS

Lokal Lab: Tropical Knowledge, Tropical Academy

Rebuilding Siargao, Community Center and Urban Interventions: Tabo

Isda Market. Rooftop Restaurant.

MARK-DAVID'S
LINKEDIN PROFILE

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT
MARK-DAVID PINTUCAN

LILY CONSUELO SAPORTA TAGIURI

(FRANCE)

ARTIST, ECOSYSTEMIC DESIGNER,
ECO-FUTURIST

Lily Consuelo Saporta Tagiuri is an Ecosystemic Designer and Eco-futurist whose practice is aimed at public engagement, ecological equity, and joy. Her work addresses emerging climates and conditions in cities specifically pertaining to clean water, food sovereignty, fresh air, and green space. Through the construction of ecosystemic tools, material experimentation, collaborations, and installations, she responds to the ecological circumstances with which we are collectively contending. Her work has been shown internationally, including at the Museum of New York, MoMA PS1, NYC by Design, Extraperlo Madrid, and The London Design Biennale. Clients, partners, and collaborators include ATOPOS, Clearwater, Studio Lily Kwong, Pen America, A/D/O, Skinvolve, Invisible North, JW Marriott, and Generation Conscious. She currently teaches at Parsons Paris, co-directs Le Goût Workshop and has taught at Pratt, the MA in Industrial Design at Central Saint Martins, and the Innovation Design Engineering Programme at the Royal College of Art and Imperial College.



PUBLICATIONS

Food Forecast: Salt - Surviving Salinity.
MOLD Magazine, 2024.

Food Forecast: Geoengineering. MOLD
Magazine, 2024.

Breeding Sweetness. Cake Zine, 2024

LILY'S WEBSITE

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT
LILY CONSUELO SAPORTA TAGIURI

BRYANT SIMON

(USA)

PROFESSOR (HISTORY)

Bryant Simon is Laura H. Carnell Professor of History at Temple University. He is interested in the history of everyday life in the United States, including topics like food studies, public space, infrastructure, and governance. Bryant's books, research, and commentary have appeared in the New York Times, The New Yorker, New Republic, and on NPR and HBO. He is a regular contributor to the History Channel Show, "The Foods That Built America." Previously, he organised the "What is Your Food Worth?" initiative that brought together academics, cooks, journalists, and activists to talk about the costs of eating. Bryant is a former Humboldt Research Award winner, an Organization of American Historians' Distinguished Lecturer, and a board member for the American Restroom Association. He is currently writing a history of the public bathroom in the United States.



PUBLICATIONS

Public Bathrooms: A History of American Inequality (forthcoming).

Food, Power and Agency. Anthology Editor (with Jürgen Martschukat), Bloomsbury Publishing, 2017.

Everything But the Coffee: Learning about America From Starbucks. University of California Press, 2011.

BRYANT'S LINKEDIN
PROFILE

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT
BRYANT SIMON

CARL ELLIOTT SMITH

(AUSTRALIA)

SCIENCE JOURNALIST AND DOCTORAL CANDIDATE (DIGITAL JOURNALISM)

Carl Smith is a Ph.D. candidate in digital journalism at the University of Queensland and a science journalist and presenter at the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC)'s Science Unit. Carl created the series 'Pacific Scientific' and 'Strange Frontiers' and has won a Walkley Award, a 2024 Covering Climate Now award, and jointly won the Eureka Prize for Science Journalism. He was also the co-editor of the Best Australian Science Writing anthology in 2024. In 2022, Carl was part of the Humboldt Foundation's 5th Communication Lab. In 2025, Carl is taking extended leave to focus on his Ph.D., examining how non-spoken, non-music sonic elements can augment storytelling in science podcasts. Carl is trained as a geneticist with a Bachelor of Science and a Bachelor of Journalism.

Carl Smith is participating in the Humboldt Residency Programme as an unpaid, independent journalist.



PUBLICATIONS

One Atoll's Fight: Micronesian Community and Scientists Unite to Protect Remote Atoll by Reawakening Traditions. ABC Radio Australia & ABC Radio National, 2024.

Strange Frontiers 08 | One of the World's Quietest Places Listening to Earth's Mysterious Rumbles. ABC Radio National's Science Show, 2024.

Inside the Pacific's CePaCT Plant Gene Bank, a Last Line of Defence for Crop Species Loss. ABC News & ABC Pacific Scientific, 2023.

CARL'S LINKEDIN
PROFILE

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT
CARL ELLIOTT SMITH

JACK THOMPSON

(SENEGAL/UNITED KINGDOM)

JOURNALIST

Jack Thompson is a freelance journalist, editor and communications consultant specialising in food, farming, and the environment. The global food system is complex, and to analyse and communicate its importance to the public Jack uses his background as a farmer's son alongside his Master's degree in food policy and ten years across the sector. His reports have appeared – amongst others – in the Financial Times, the Associated Press, and Al Jazeera. Jack also works for the food systems platform TABLE that seeks to reduce polarisation in food debates, where he helps break down food systems research through accessible podcasts and newsletters. He currently lives in Senegal.



PUBLICATIONS

Separating the Weetabix from the Chaff – The Hidden History of Britain's Favourite Cereal. Vittles, 2024.

The Hidden Cost of Supermarket Salmon. Financial Times, 2024 (with Alexandra Heal, Lucy Rodgers, Justine Williams, Irene de la Torre Arenas and Dan Clark).

Sierra Leone Loves Rice and Wants to Free Itself from Imports. But How to Do It? AP News, 2024.

JACK'S LINKEDIN
PROFILE

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT
JACK THOMPSON

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