

Jamie Cross – Energy, Society and Sustainability

My name is Jamie Cross, I'm a social anthropologist, and my research looks at the impact of decentralised off-grid energy in parts of the global south, particularly India and increasingly East Africa.

Energy, Society and Sustainability is an attempt to grapple with one of the global challenges of our age, which is how we move from a century dominated by fossil fuels to a future in which, collectively, we have to find alternative sources of energy to power our demands and our lives. We're really committed to trying to grapple with those challenges not just here in the UK or in Western Europe but on a global scale.

One of the things that sets this MSc **(01.00)** programme apart from others in the UK and in Europe is the opportunity to combine intellectual, academic engagement with real world practice-based learning. We're really committed to creating opportunities for students outside of the university, in partnership and collaboration with organisations worldwide. We build that directly into dissertation projects and opportunities for field based study.

Some examples of dissertation projects that students here at Edinburgh have undertaken just in the last twelve months with an energy focus include projects looking at community relationships to off-grid energy infrastructures here in Scotland. They include projects that look at energy access for refugees in humanitarian emergencies in sub-Saharan Africa, and they include projects that have looked at the impacts of new kinds of solar powered devices that circulate in India **(02.00)**, like solar powered water pumps for example.

We imagine that some of our graduates will pursue careers in the energy sector, maybe working for companies or for organisations that are trying to develop new systems or technologies. We expect that others might work for research-based organisations, for think tanks, or policy institutions that are trying to expand the different ways in which governments can address and deal with energy transitions.

Some of our graduates, we anticipate, may enter the field of journalism and the media, we expect that others will enter the third sector, perhaps working for NGOs and campaign-based organisations. Other graduates, we anticipate, would become part of a world of social enterprise and social entrepreneurship, entering businesses and the private sector with a social mission. Other people, we anticipate, will use this as the basis **(03.00)** for a future research career, perhaps looking to stay in academia and take on further study at doctoral level.

Over the last five years at Edinburgh, I've had the opportunity to supervise Masters level dissertations for people who are involved in research projects that really matter to them, and involve collaborations and partnerships with organisations outside of the university. That's one of my favourite things about Masters level teaching.