



BOTANICAL UNIVERSITY CHALLENGE

Past, present and future...



Jonathan Mitchley University of Reading
Susan Medcalf Natural England
John Warren Field Studies Council

Sebastian Stroud University of Leeds
Meriel Jones University of Liverpool
Alastair Culham University of Reading

Alastair Fitter University of York
Colin Clubbe Royal Botanic Gardens Kew
Jonathan Charmley University of Reading

Sven Batke Edge Hill University
Hannah Hall University of Reading
Lauren Baker Oxford Botanic Garden




In a nutshell...

- An exciting new way to celebrate plants and the next generation of plant-aware students
- Brings together students interested in plants in a friendly and fun annual contest
- Celebrates the diversity of ways to be fascinated by plants
- Connects institutions offering plant-related courses in UK and Ireland and further afield
- Highlights the urgency to educate future generations in botany and plant science to meet global needs



Over 30 institutions have taken part!



University Teams – BUC 2016-BUC 2023

1485 UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN, PRIFYSOOL ABERYSTWYTH UNIVERSITY, UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL, UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE, University of Dundee, Durham University, UEA, Edge Hill University, eden project LEARNING, THE UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL, EXETER, COLLEGE OF GALLAGHER UNIVERSITY OF GALLAGHER, Imperial College London, Kew, Lancaster University, UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL, MANCHESTER 1824, The University of Manchester, Manchester Metropolitan University, University of Nottingham, The Open University, UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD, UNIVERSITY OF PLYMOUTH, UNIVERSITY OF PORTSMOUTH, University of Reading, RHS, University of Southampton, Trinity College Dublin, The University of Dublin, UCD, WARWICK, UNIVERSITY OF YORK

Watch the recording of the 2023 finals online!



The history of Botanical University Challenge

2016 (Kew)
Chair: James Wong
5 teams
A brand-new concept!

2019 (Reading)
Chair: Chris Preston
6 teams
Beautiful T-shirts
(now a collector's item!)

2020 (Liverpool)
Chair: Alan McCarthy
7 teams
Live material used
in questions!

2021 (Online)
Chairs: Alan Fitter
& Colin Clubbe
15 teams
Online & live streamed,
with internal funding

2022 (Online)
Chairs: Sandy Knapp, Raj
Whitlock, Honor Prentice
& Lena Struwe
18 teams
Multiple-choice
questions (1st round)
& external funding

2023: online with live finals in Nottingham!

Chairs: Leif Bersweden, Henry Ford, Paul Ashton, Tiina Sarkinen, Colin Clubbe, Amanda Rasmussen

25 teams • More external funding + the first student botany festival • Scan the QR code above to watch the recording of this year's finals!

BUC achievements

- Our open-door policy enables students to help shape the BUC community
- Launch of a student-led newsletter 'The Thymes' in 2022, connecting the community of plant-aware students, including interviews with leading botanists (scan the QR code to view online)
- First ever fully funded Student Botany Festival at University of Nottingham with a poster and networking session, BSBI plant ID field walk and a careers workshop



BUC 2024

- BUC2024 will be bigger than ever with three online rounds and live finals hosted by Oxford Botanic Garden and Arboretum
- Alongside the finals will be a 3-day student botany festival with careers showcase, botanical illustration workshop, a mini-FISC with BSBI and many other botanical attractions!
- Follow the QR code for more information
- Email botanicaluniversitychallenge@gmail.com if you have ideas for content or funding

