

PLANET TEXAS 2050

A UT Austin Grand Challenge

Making All Texas Communities More Resilient



From levee breaks during Hurricane Katrina and mass transit failures following Superstorm Sandy to the yearlong collapse of Puerto Rico's electrical grid after hurricanes Irma and Maria, one thing is clear: These are not simple technological failures. They represent the failure to connect our technology to existing ecological, economic, and social systems. But we think there's a better way forward.

That's why we're excited to share with you that Planet Texas 2050 is partnering with the [Austin Community Design and Development Center](#) (ACDDC) to create a solutions-driven community center. Our pilot project will be a place where knowledge and data meet understanding and implementation, where scientists and city planners stand alongside neighborhood advocates.

We envision a space where community members, infrastructure managers, researchers, and public and private institutions can work together to create targeted action plans that directly assist specific communities facing very real challenges.

We can't wait to share more information with you about this new collaboration over the coming months.



And we're proud to announce that [Dr. David Allen](#) from the Cockrell School of Engineering has joined Planet Texas 2050. His work focuses on accurately measuring and reducing methane emissions that escape and enter the atmosphere during oil and gas production.

Methane is the primary component of natural gas, it's more efficient at trapping radiation than carbon dioxide, and it accounts for 10–30 percent of the long-term warming caused by man-made emissions. Dr. Allen led the EPA's Science Advisory Board from 2012–2014 and in 2017 was elected to the National Academy of Engineering. We're thrilled to welcome him.



We're also proud — but more than a little sad — to share that our very own Richard Corsi, also a professor at the Cockrell School of Engineering, will be leaving The University of Texas at the end of the month to become the next [dean of Portland State University's Maseeh College of Engineering and Computer Science](#). His appointment begins Sept. 1, 2018.

Dr. Corsi has been a one of our team's pioneering researchers, committed from day one to the bold goals that define our grand challenge. And though he's leaving the 40 Acres, he's not leaving us entirely: we're grateful that he'll stay involved as part of our Advisory Committee.

[Read Dr. Corsi's latest blog post](#) and hear him talk about one of the biggest indoor air pollution experiments ever conducted — and what it could mean for science and Planet Texas 2050.





VOTING FOR PANELPICKER IS OPEN

<https://panelpicker.sxsw.com/vote/86572>

We've thrown our name into the SXSW PanelPicker hat and would love your help. With enough crowd support and some good luck, we may join many of you at Interactive in 2019 to show you the innovative way we're planning for rapid population growth in Texas.

UPCOMING EVENTS



Difficult Dialogues: A Teaching Workshop

Co-sponsored by Planet Texas 2050

August 31, 2018

Etter-Harbin Alumni Center, 3:30 – 6:30 p.m.

This workshop, for UT faculty, AIs, and TAs, explores how to teach effectively about difficult environmental issues such as climate change, extreme weather events, population growth, environmental racism, food insecurity, and gentrification. We'll be joined by guest speaker [Libby Roderick](#), associate director of the Center for Advancing Faculty Excellence at the University of Alaska at Anchorage.

Refreshments and teaching materials will be provided.

Workshop seating is limited, so [reserve your spot](#). For more information and a full list of UT presenters, please visit the [Humanities Institute](#).



Planet Texas 2050 — Austin Family Reunion

September 20, 2018

[LBJ Wildflower Center](#), 6 – 8 p.m.

Being a resilient, inclusive, and just community in the year 2050 takes all hands — now.

Planet Texas 2050 invites all members of our Austin family who are passionate about conservation, sustainability, and environmental justice to join us for an evening at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center to learn more about the work that our grand challenge research team, the Wildflower Center, and other Central Texas colleagues in the community are doing to make sure Texas is a healthy, thriving place for *all* of us to live in the year 2050.

This will be a relaxed evening with games, tours of the Wildflower Center, music, light refreshments, and a chance to ask questions, network, and see how you can get involved — all in a welcoming, family-friendly atmosphere.

Admission is free, but please [reserve your spot soon](#).

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Saturday, Sept 8: Texas vs. Tulsa Tailgate

Join us on the Perry-Castañeda Library plaza from 3–6 p.m. to meet Planet Texas 2050 researchers and find out about some of our newest projects. Then settle in and enjoy the Longhorns' first home game of the season.

Friday, Sept. 14: Hot Science – Cool Talks

[Dr. David Maidment](#) will share his behind-the-scenes experience working in the State Operations Center during Hurricane Harvey and his recommendations for how Texas can become resilient in the face of future large-scale floods. He'll be joined by [Sarah Labowitz](#) from the City of Houston's Housing and Community Development Department. [Event registration opens August 24.](#)
7 p.m., SAC 1.402

Please join us.

Over the coming months and years, we hope our research will help communities and decision-makers better prepare for, recover from, and mitigate the impacts of natural disasters. It's our boldest work yet. Please check our blog regularly for updates about each project and what we're learning.

NEW BLOG POST: Something's in Our Air

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