

# Hybrid meetings and distributed local meetups

the good, the bad, and the ugly

**Anne E. Urai**  
2 February 2022  
Leiden Astronomy  
Sustainability lunch talk



**Universiteit  
Leiden**  
The Netherlands





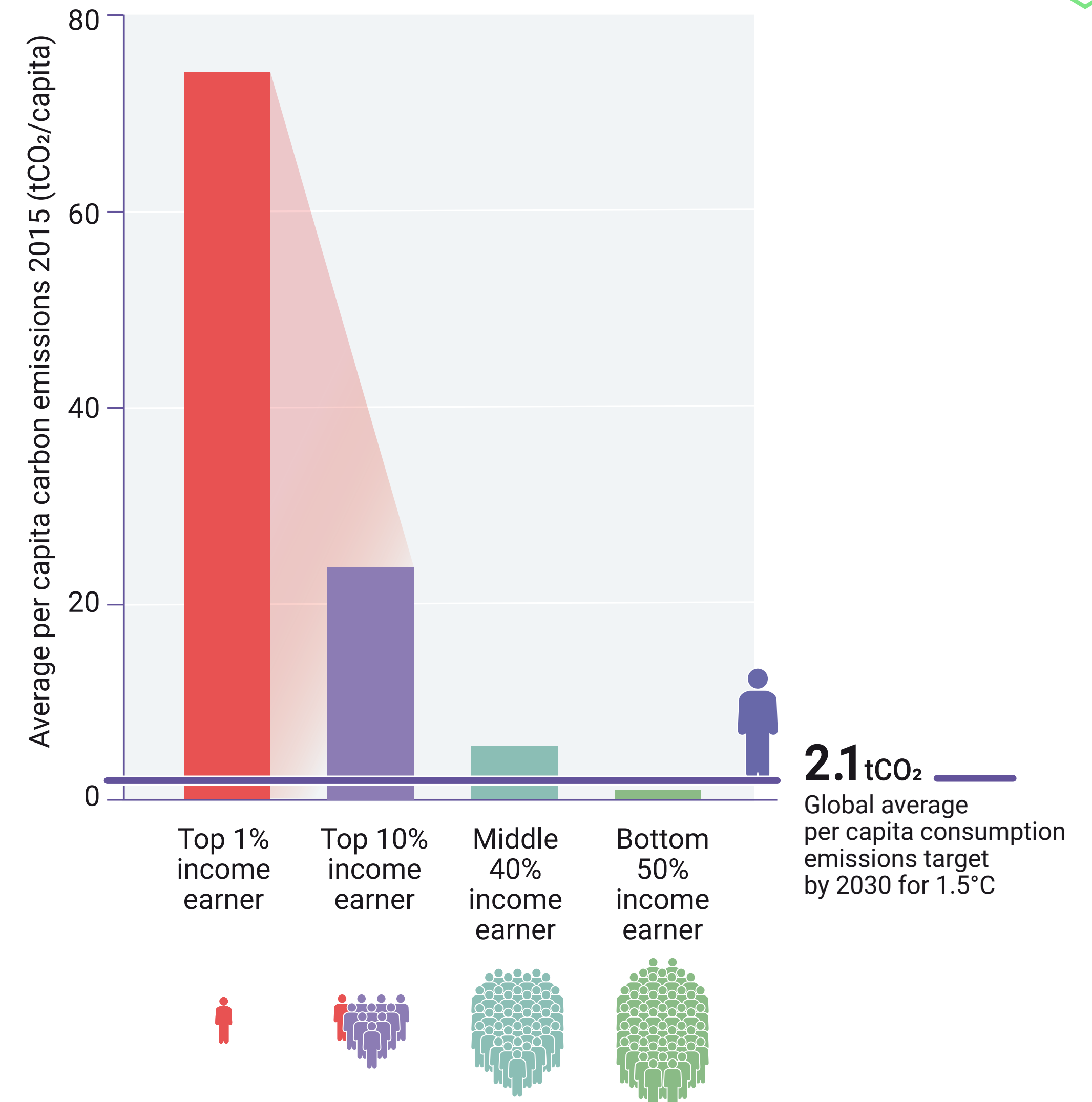
***What can (neuro)scientists do to help avert  
climate and ecological breakdown?***

# Flying less - the problem



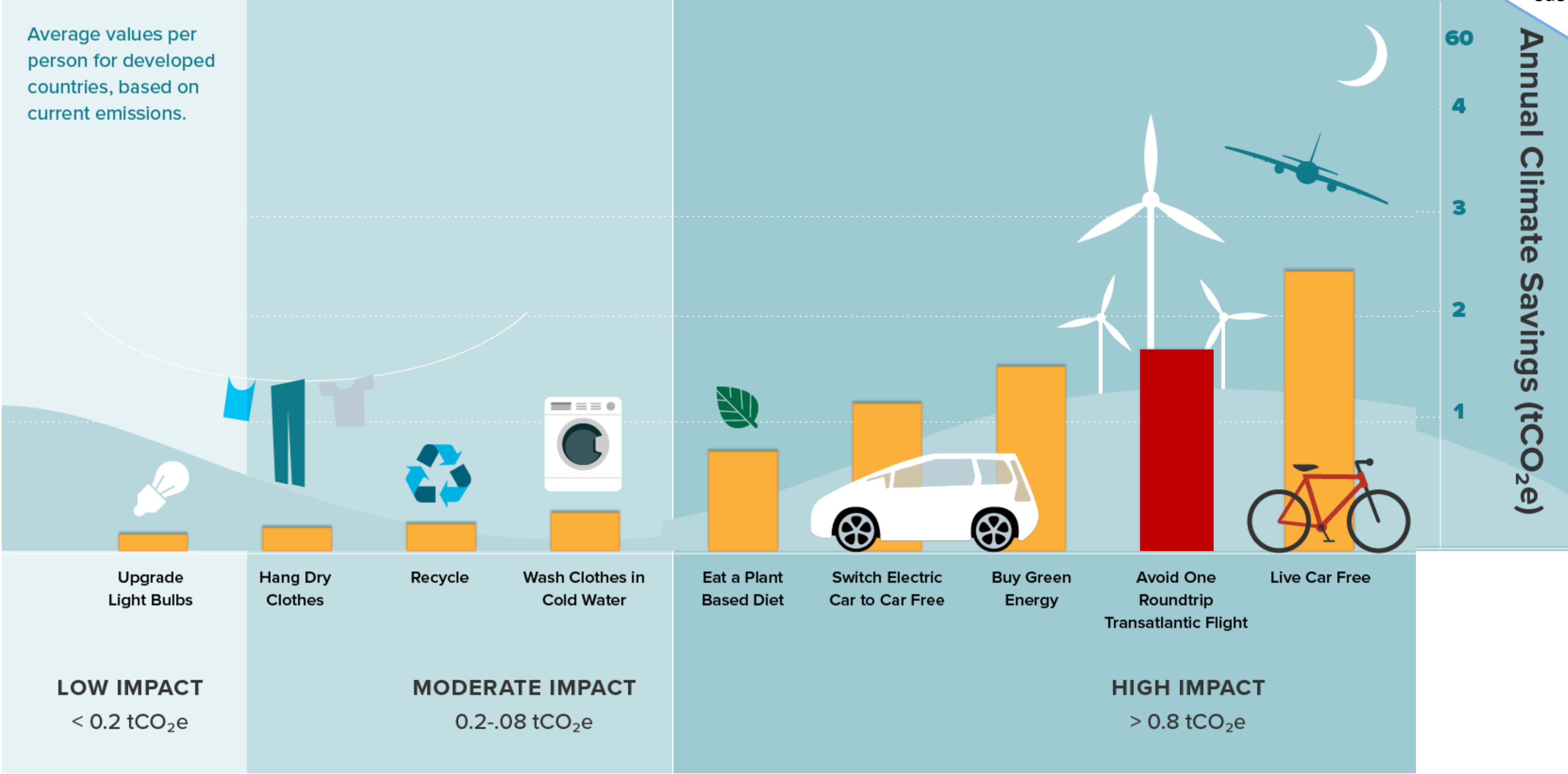
<https://wedocs.unep.org/xmlui/handle/20.500.11822/34432>

- We fly *a lot*...
  - especially senior academics
  - mostly to conferences
  - 12-27% of university emissions (KNAW)
- Travel is ingrained in our professional norms
  - prestige, hiring, networking, opportunities





# Individual behavior



Original Data from Wynes & Nicholas, 2017, Environmental Research Letters <https://doi.org/10.1088/1748-9326/aa7541>  
Original Graphic from Catrin Jakobsson

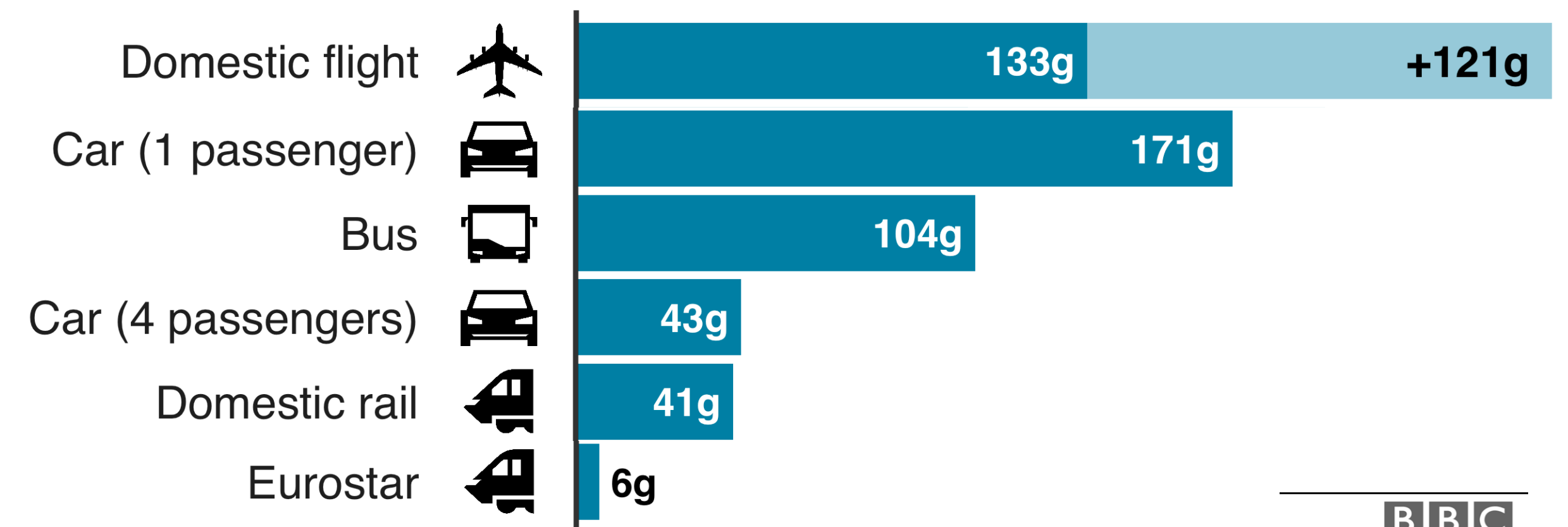
# Individual behavior



- Travel overland: rail, car(share)
  - Enjoy and take time - slow travel
- Collaborate & conference locally
- When flying:
  - combine multiple trips into one
  - don't fly first class
- *Just don't fly so much*


Emissions per passenger per km travelled

■ CO2 emissions ■ Secondary effects from high altitude, non-CO2 emissions



BBC


<https://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-49349566>

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
Wednesday, Oct 23, 2019, 21:01 

> To: Anne Urai Cc: [REDACTED]

Dear Anne,


Unfortunately, this conference does not accept any remote talk. All speakers should be at the place.

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
Monday, Mar 18, 2019, 11:01  ...

> To: Anne Urai Cc: [REDACTED]

Dear Anne,

Thanks for letting us know in advance. We think it's better to have people in the flesh for the interactions, so we will ask [REDACTED] if she's interested in taking your spot. No doubt there will be more opportunities later on.

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
Monday, Mar 9, 2020, 11:31  ...

To: Anne Urai Cc: [REDACTED]

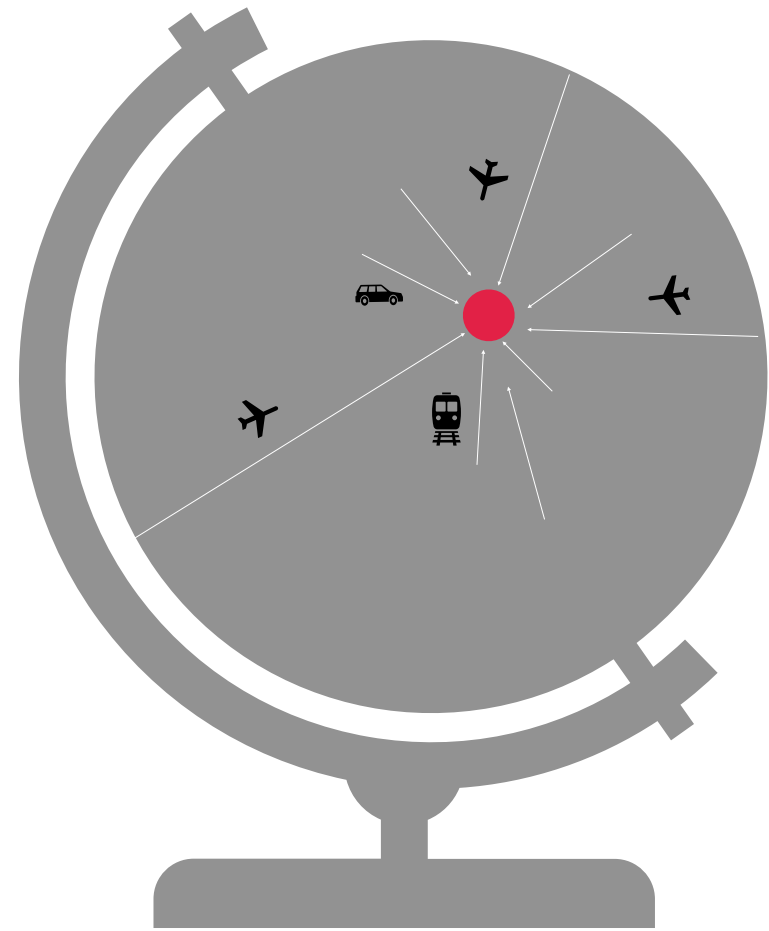
Hi Anne,

We're going ahead with those who are able to attend the conference. It's a pity to be missing you, but I am sure we will have another opportunity in the future.

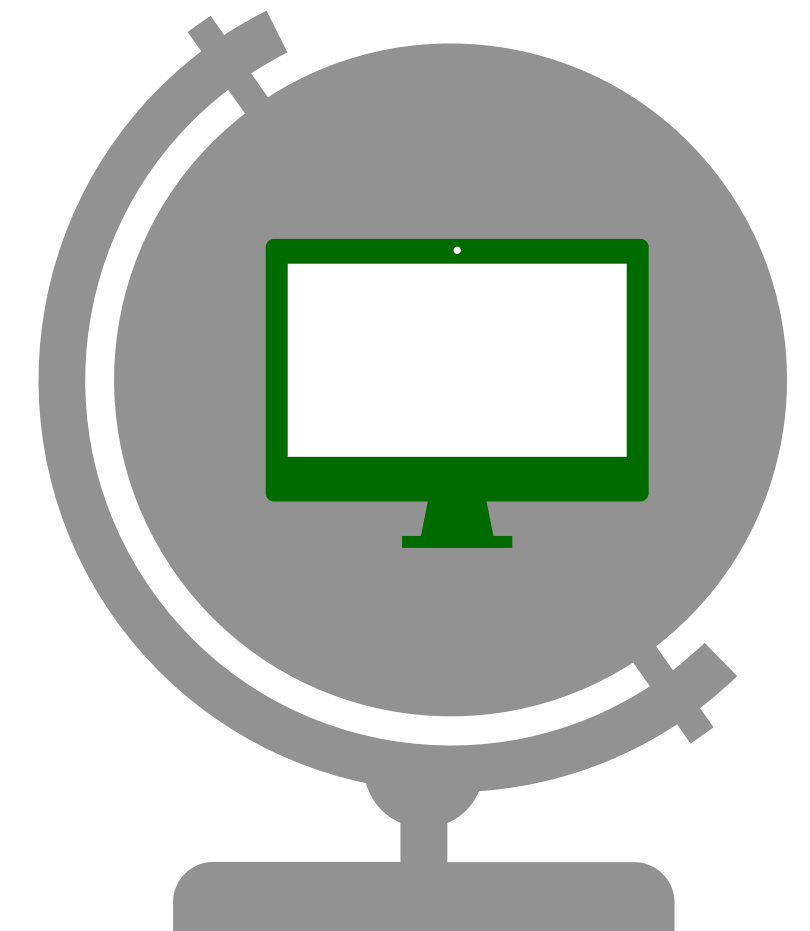
# Community norms: conferences



Traditional 'legacy'  
meeting



Virtual meeting

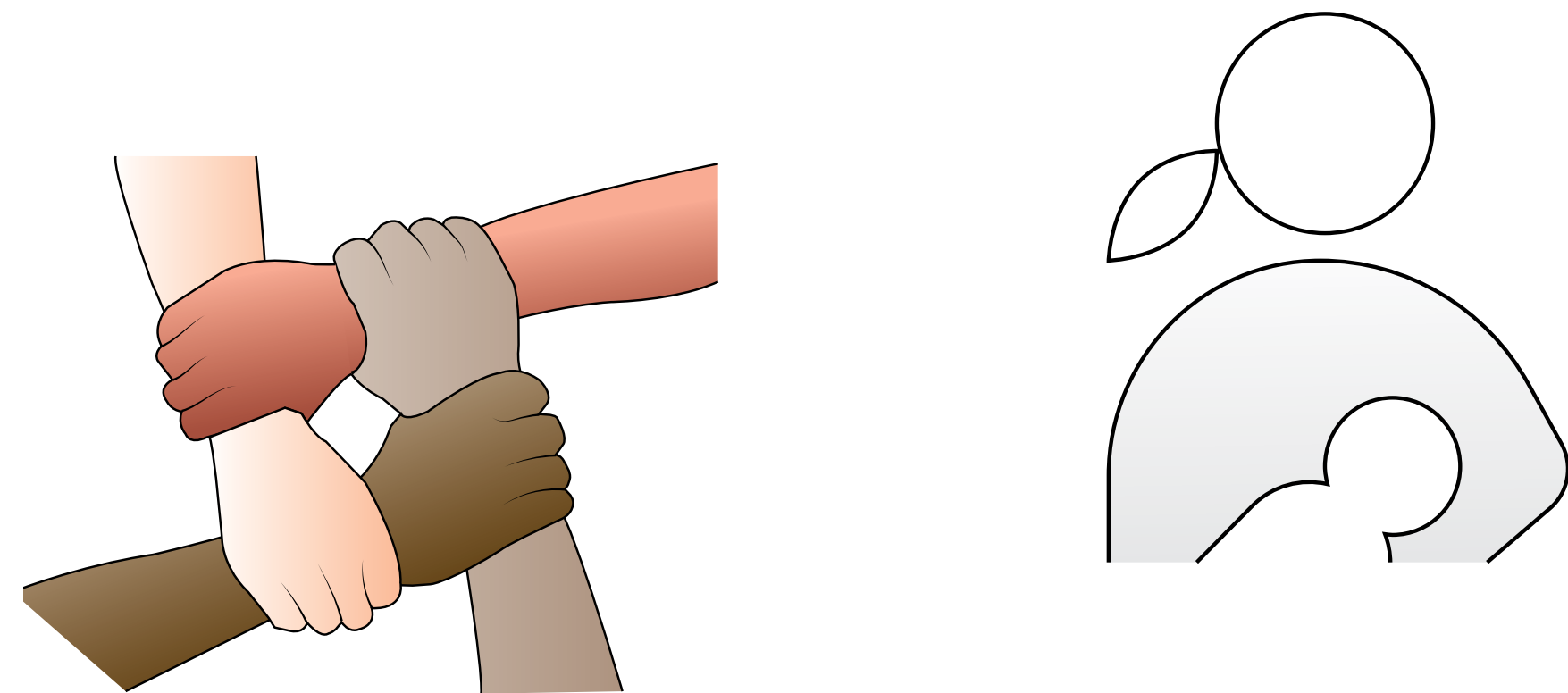


# Community norms: conferences



## Virtual conferences

- Low cost
- Accessibility
  - Visa restrictions
  - Family responsibilities
  - Travel difficulties
- *More diversity*



Sarabipour et al. (2021) Changing scientific meetings for the better. *Nature Human Behaviour* 5:296–300.



# Community norms: conferences



## Virtual conferences

- Less networking & community building
- Zoom fatigue, digital multitasking
- Less engagement: ongoing demands at home & work

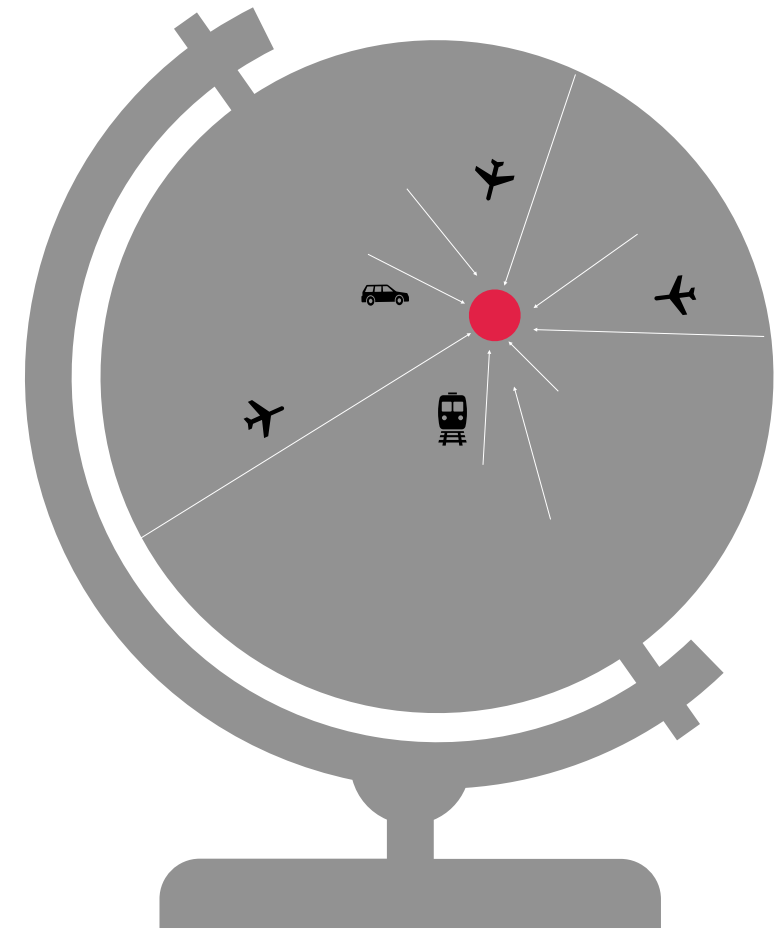


<https://twitter.com/GretchenTG/status/1305974239984484353>

# Community norms: conferences



Traditional 'legacy'  
meeting

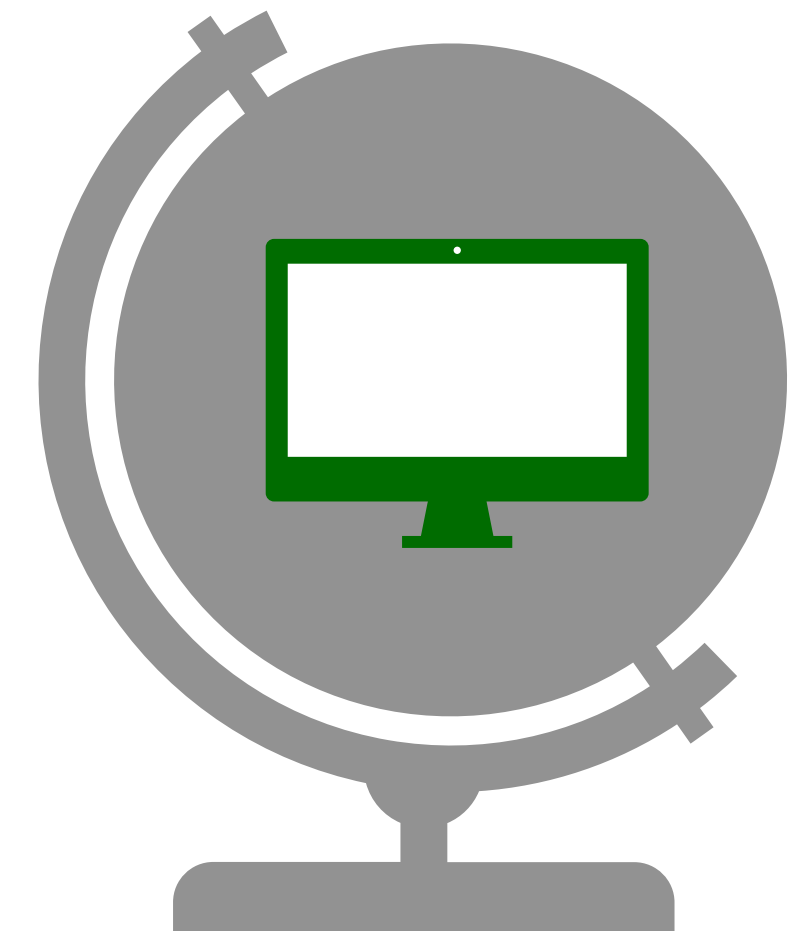


Travel sparsely

Virtual meetings as second tier

Best of both worlds

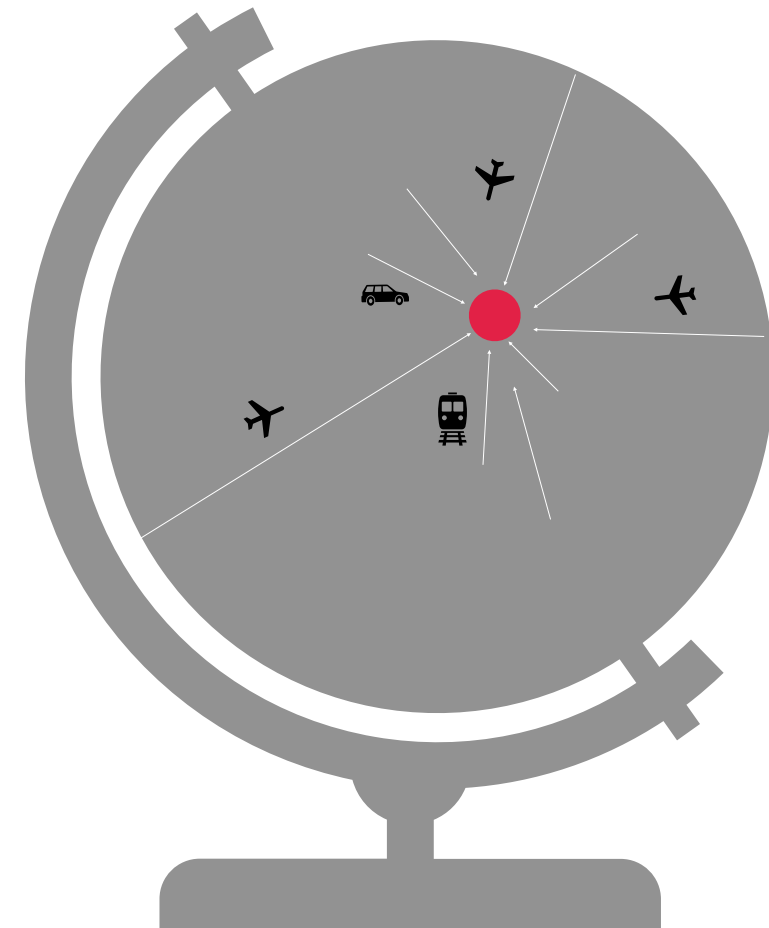
Virtual meeting



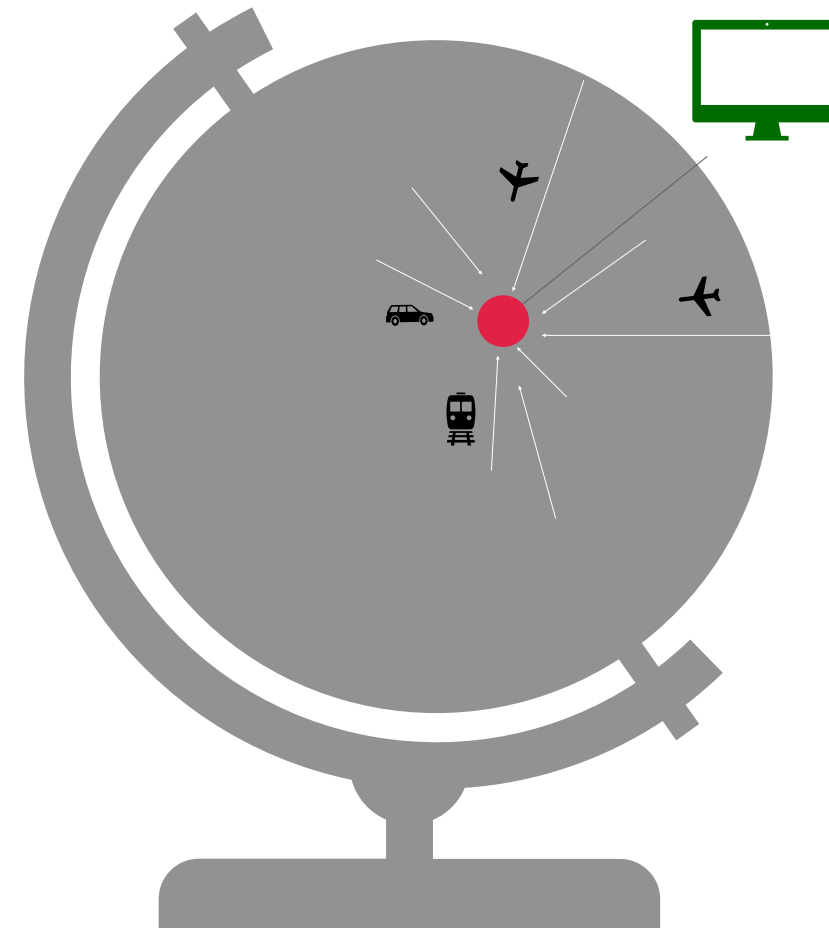
# Community norms: conferences



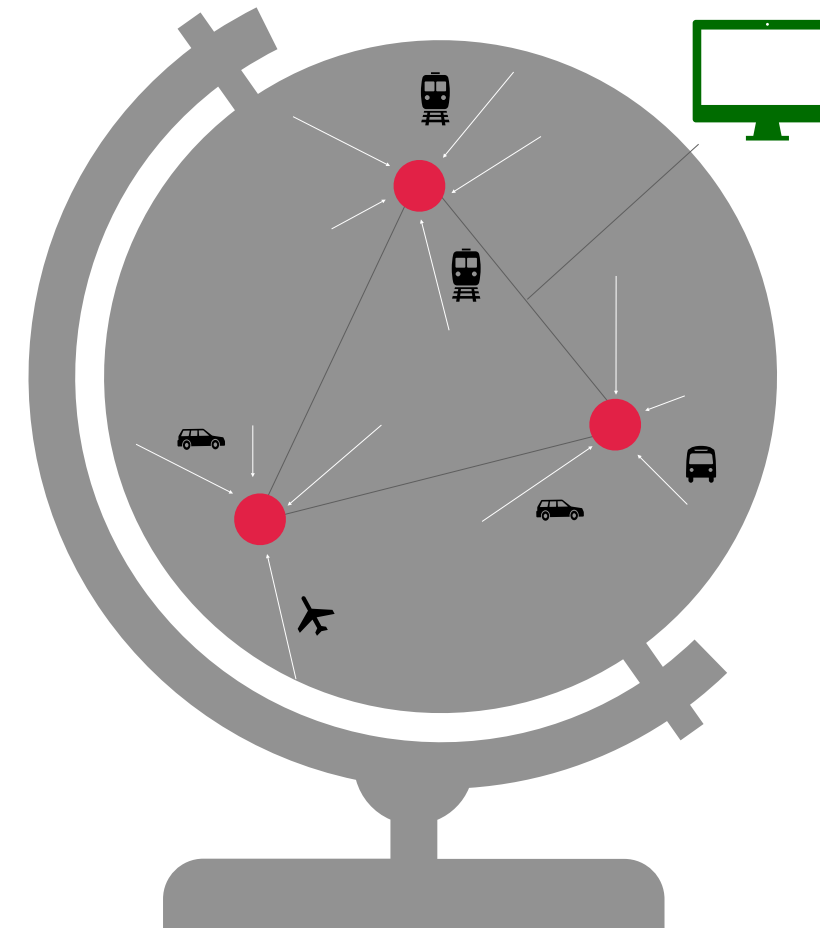
Traditional 'legacy'  
meeting



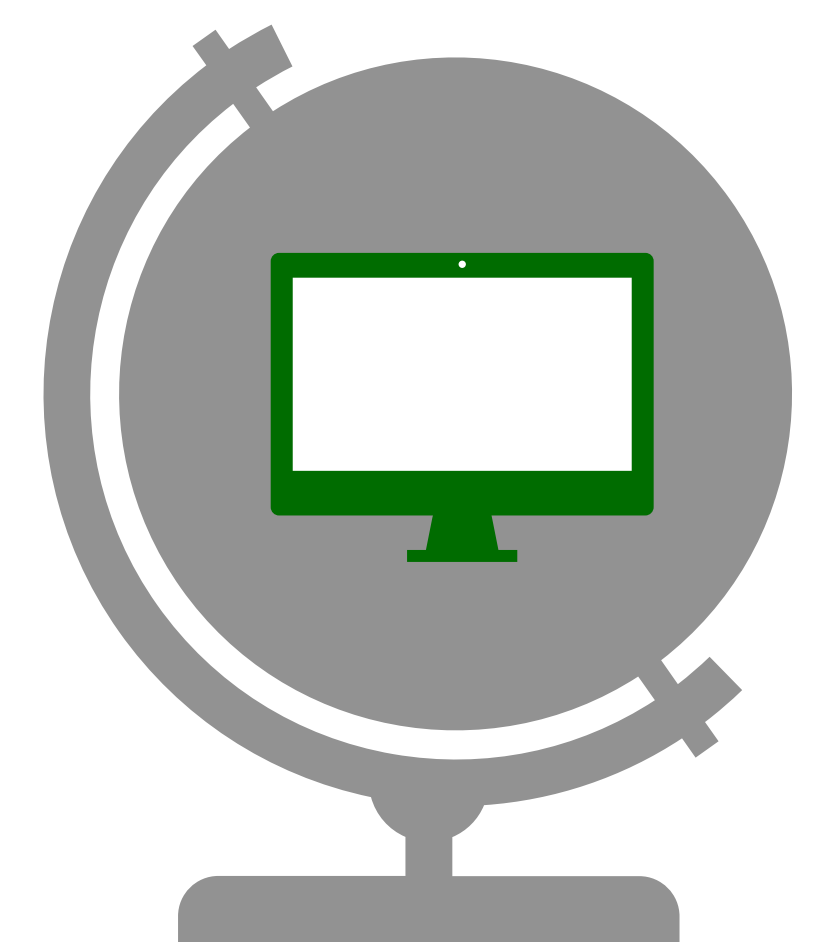
Traditional  
+ virtual option



In-person  
meeting 'hubs'

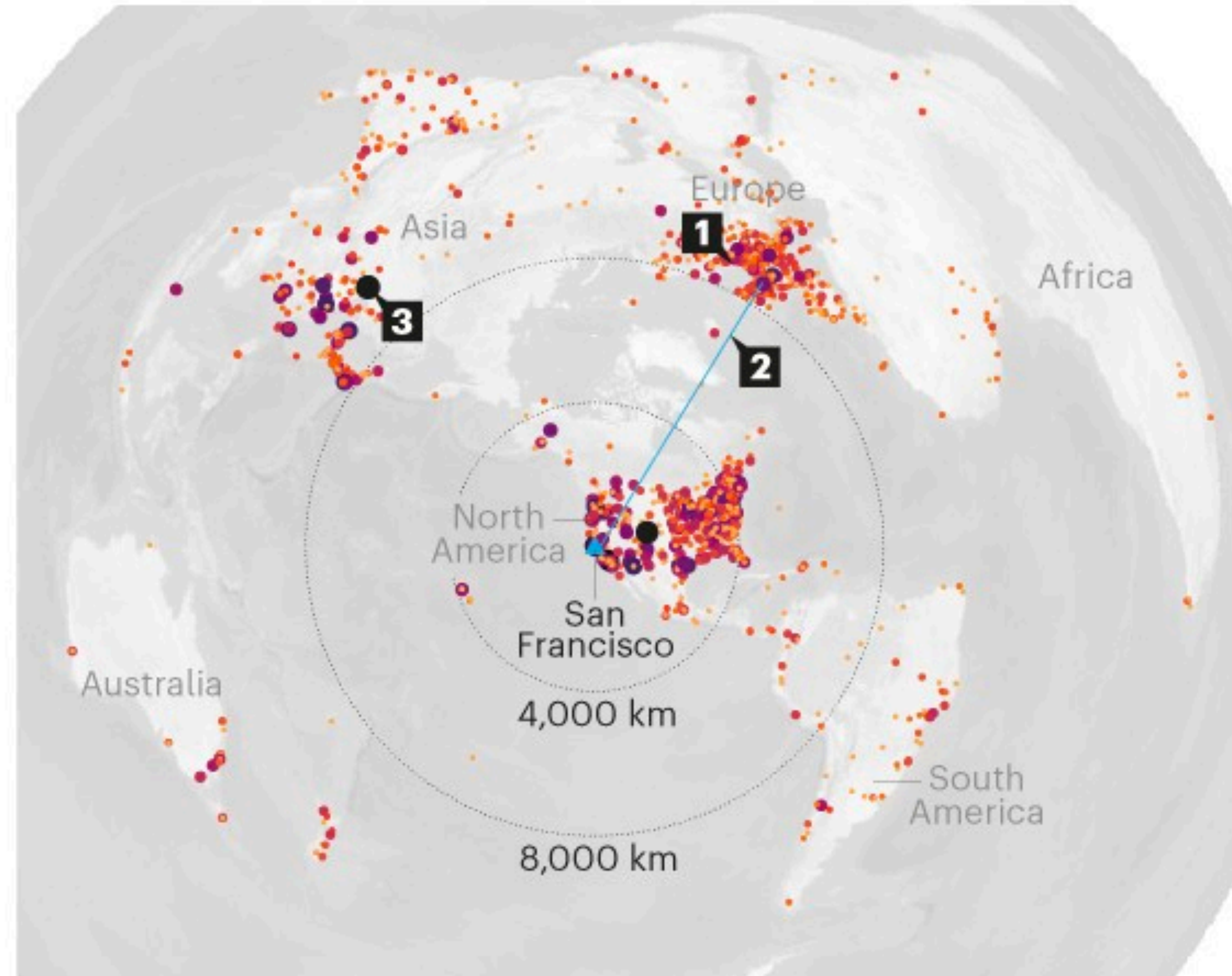


Virtual meeting

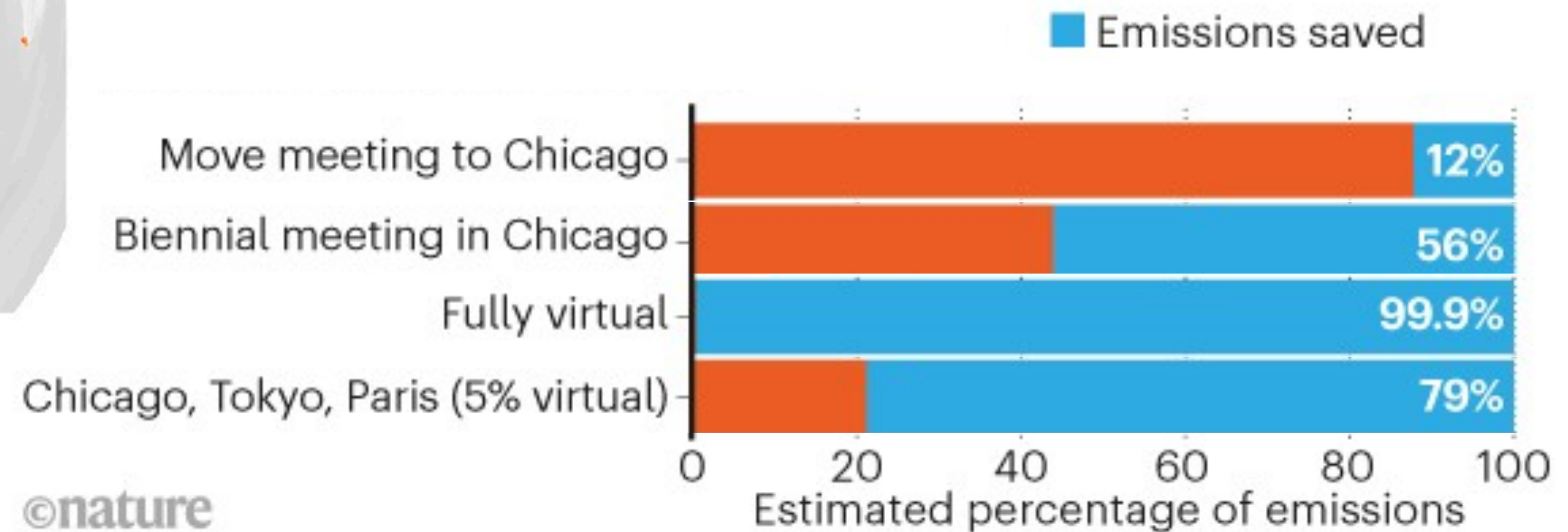
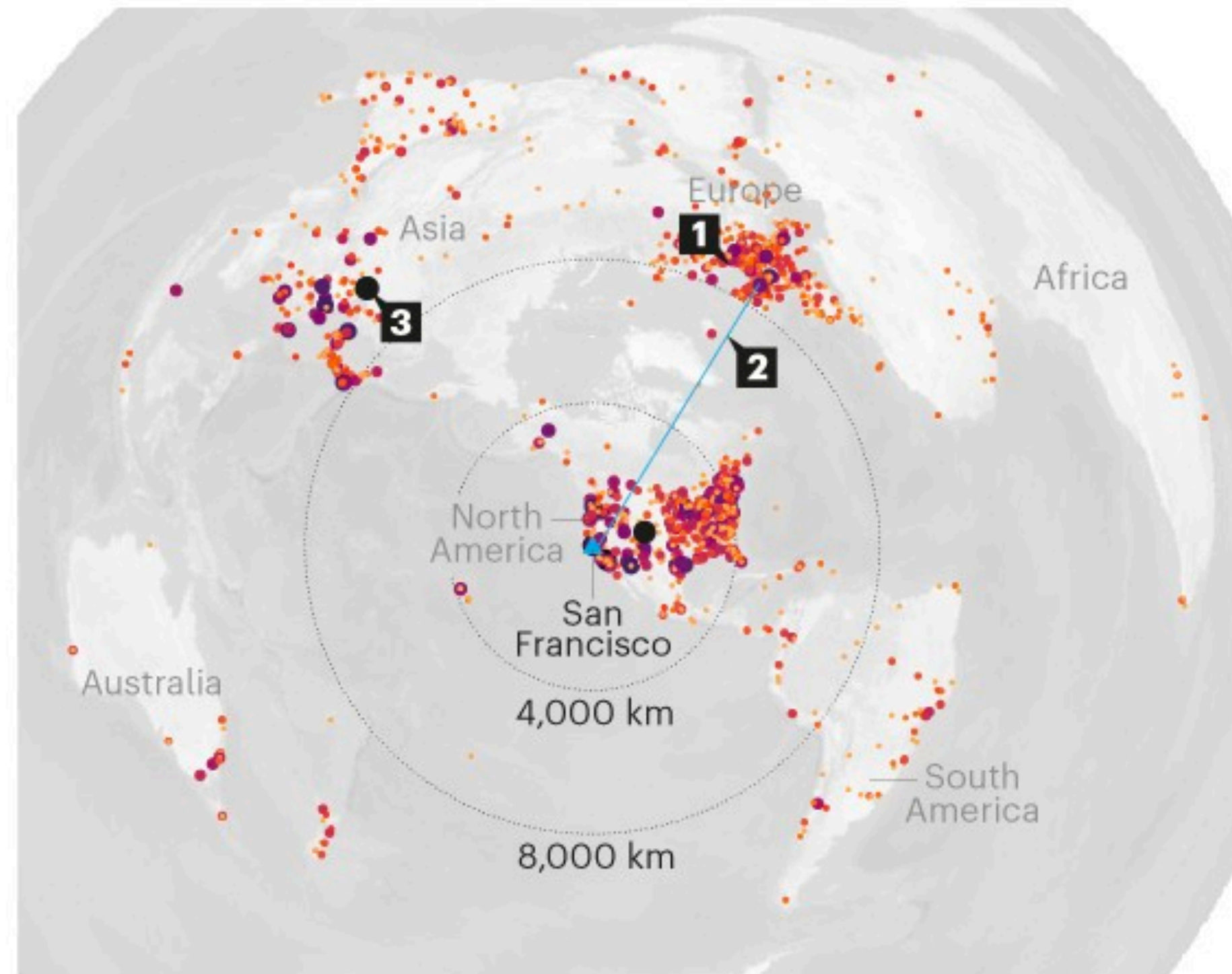




# Community norms: conferences



# Community norms: conferences



©nature

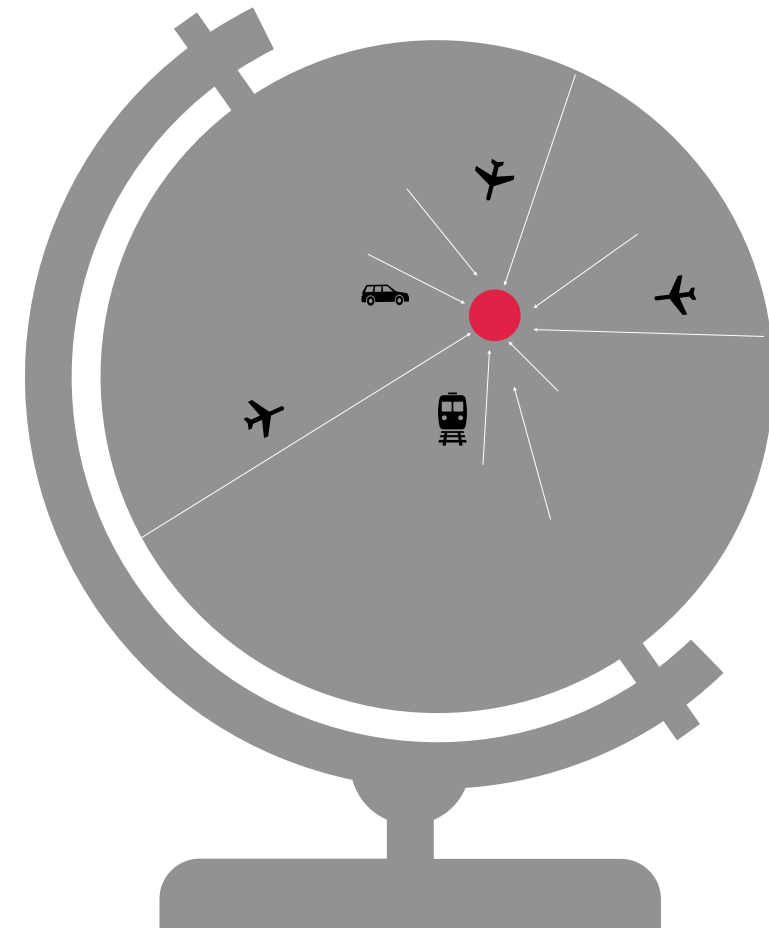
Source: M. Klöwer <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.3553784> (2019)



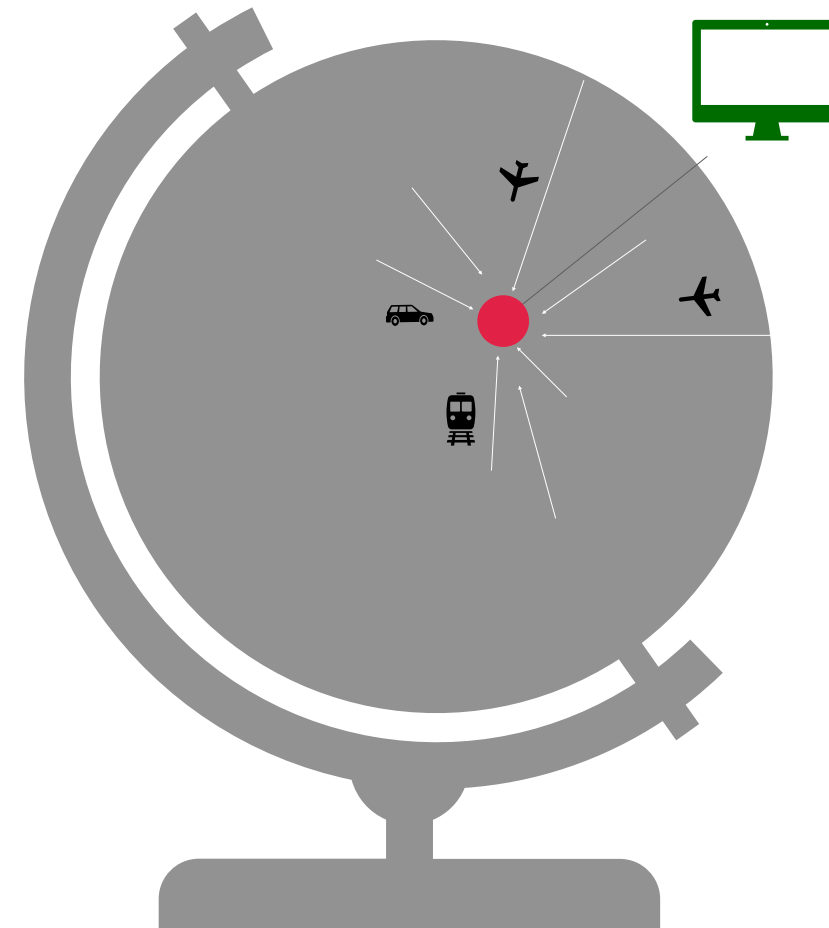
# Community norms: conferences



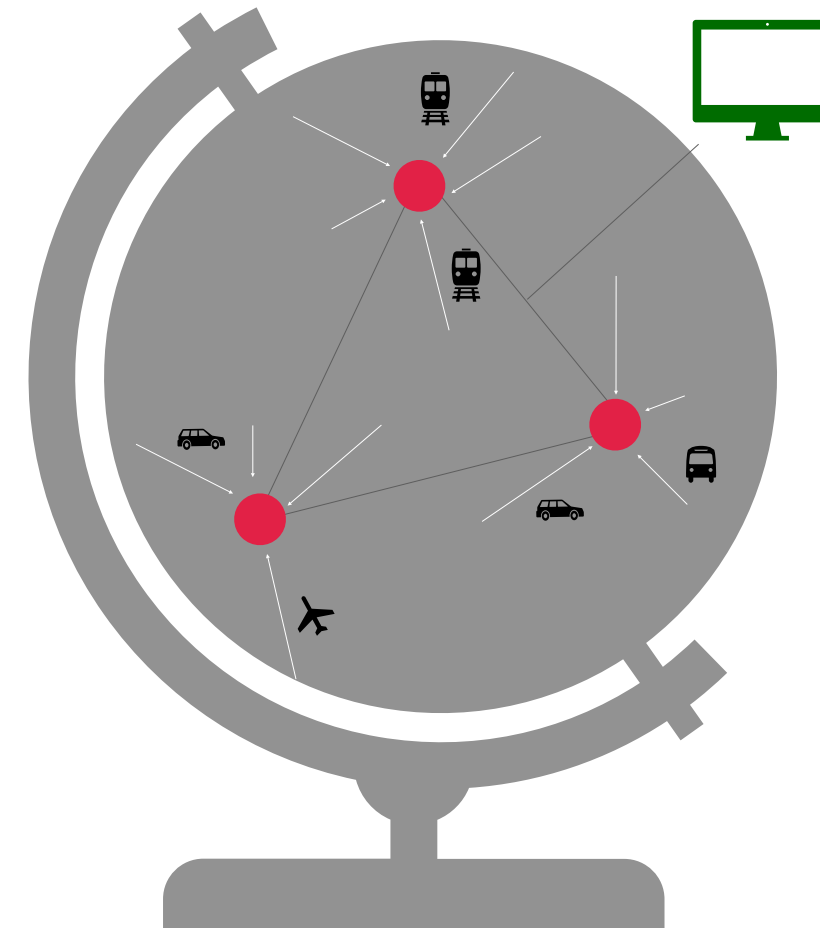
Traditional 'legacy'  
meeting



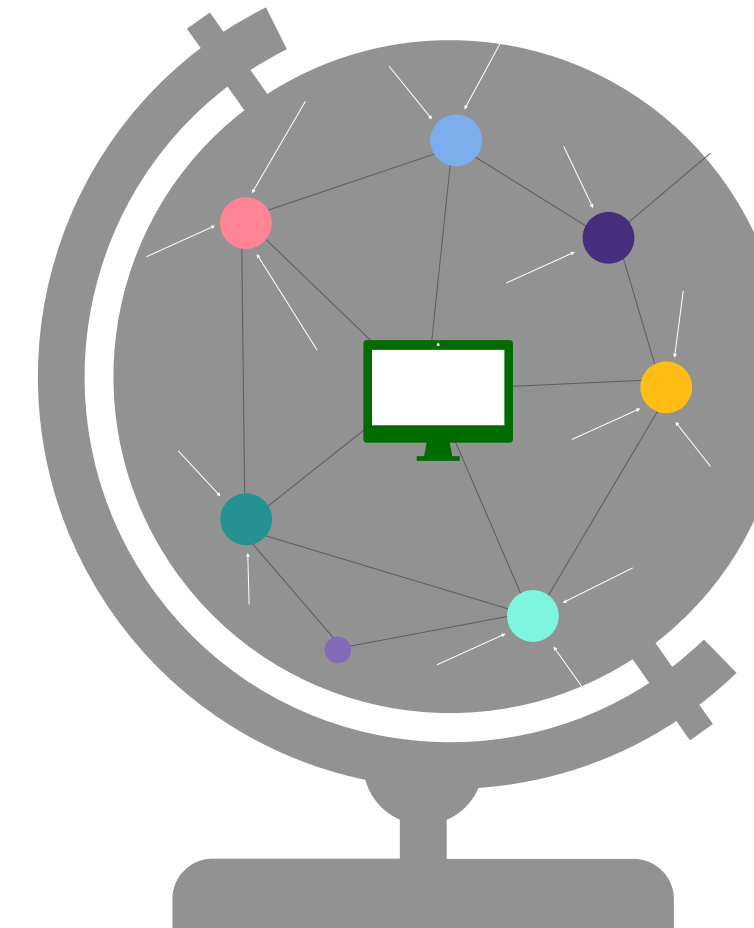
Traditional  
+ virtual option



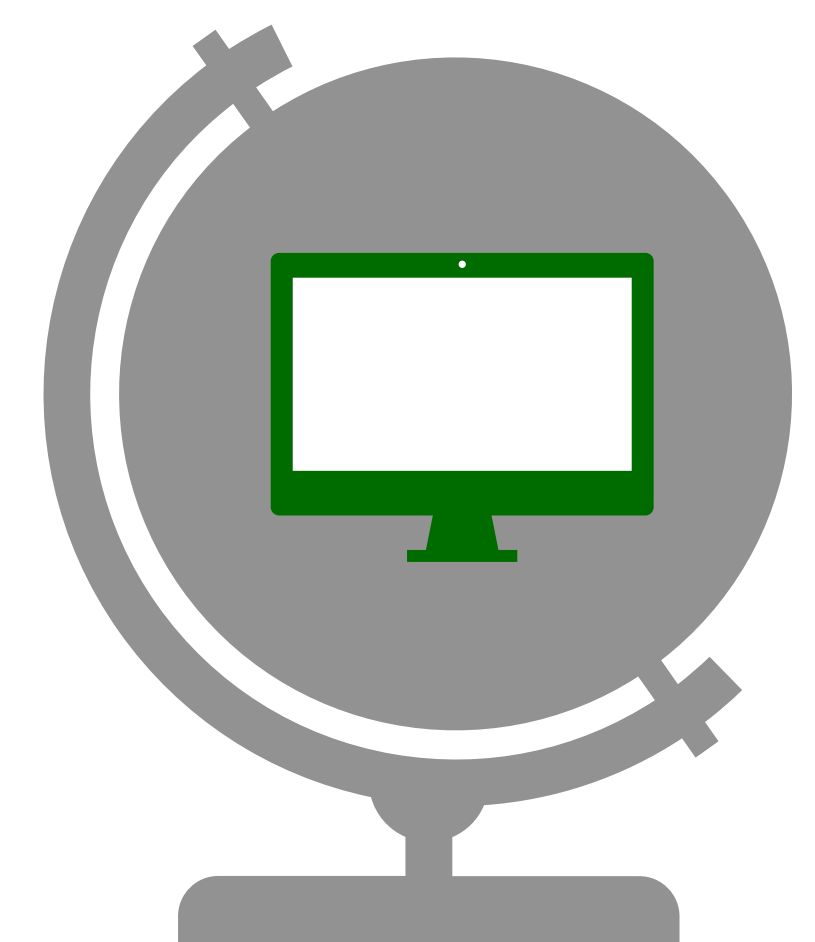
In-person  
meeting 'hubs'



Network of  
local meetups



Virtual meeting



# neuromatch

Neuromatch is a 501c3 not-for-profit organization in the United States. We are an online community of computational neuroscientists whose mission is to foster inclusive global interactions for learning, mentorship, networking, and professional development.

We run 2 organizations within Neuromatch: Neuromatch Academy ([academy.neuromatch.io](https://academy.neuromatch.io)) and Neuromatch Conference ([conference.neuromatch.io](https://conference.neuromatch.io))



# Local meetups at NMC 4.0



Instructions ▾

Agenda ▾

About ▾

Hi Anne! ▾



Instructions ▾

Agenda ▾

About ▾

Hi Titipat! ▲

## neuromatch 4.0

A conference for the computational neuroscience community

After three conferences in 2020, Neuromatch is pleased to be holding our fourth. Each of our conferences is providing new innovations to the virtual conference space, and with this one we are pleased to combine virtual and in-person experiences. Participants are encouraged to host or attend a local meetup, bringing people together to enjoy the

Host your local meetups

Join local meetups

Profile

Submission

Meetups (Host)

Meetups (Attendee)

Payment

Logout

### Register to be a local host

#### Hosting institution or location

Select a location by querying in the search box on the top-right corner of the map. We recommend a safe, accessible, public space suitable for academic mingling, preferably a room or space in your university/institute. We do not encourage hosting at your home or another private space. This information will be visible to all NMC attendees, so keep it general. Don't worry if the pinned location is not exact, you can provide more information in detailed location which will be available for accepted attendees below (e.g. building name, exact address, ...).

Search your hosting location



<https://conference.neuromatch.io/instructions/how-to-meetups>

# Local meetups at NMC 4.0



- Demand driven, bottom-up and distributed
  - Resilient to local Covid disruptions
- Accessibility
  - Low carbon impact, low cost (short travel distances)
  - Inclusive (go home at night), great for students
  - Flexibility with time-zones (no jetlag)
- Local networking & physical event with socials



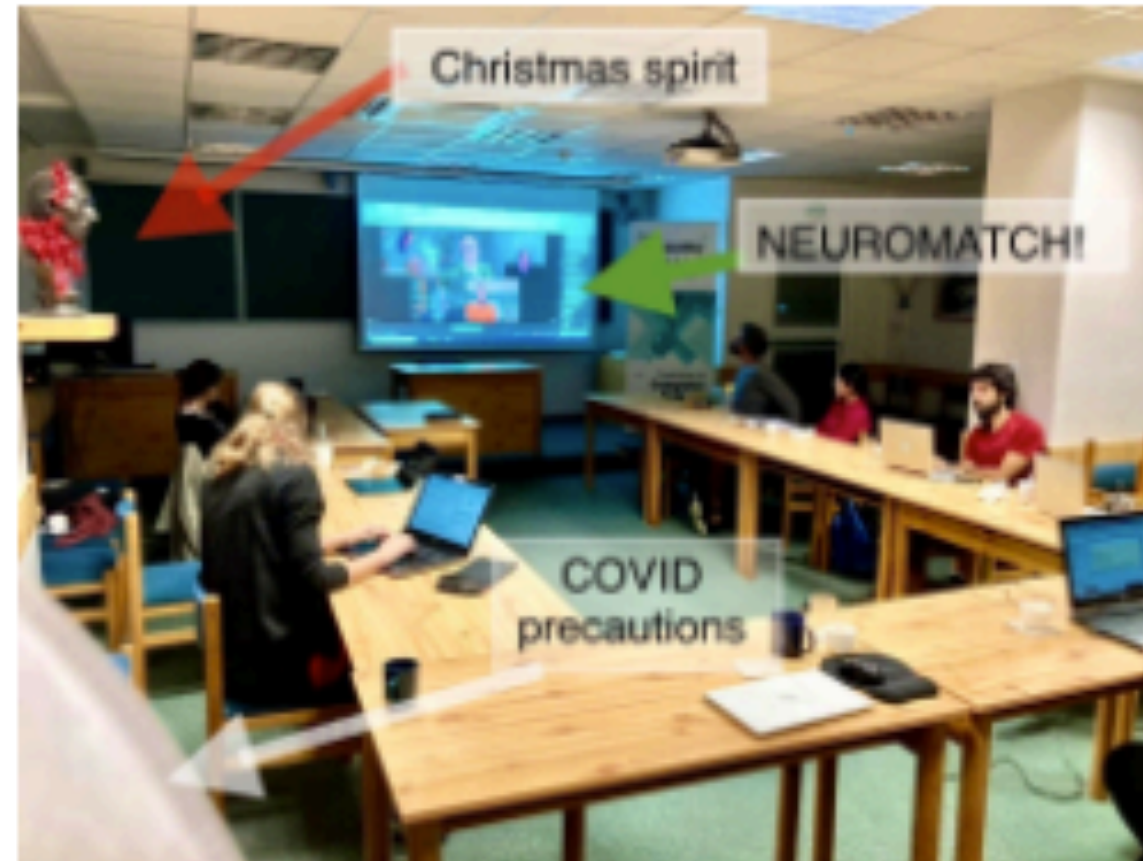
# Local meetups at NMC4



<https://conference.neuromatch.io/instructions/how-to-meetups>



# Local meetups at NMC4



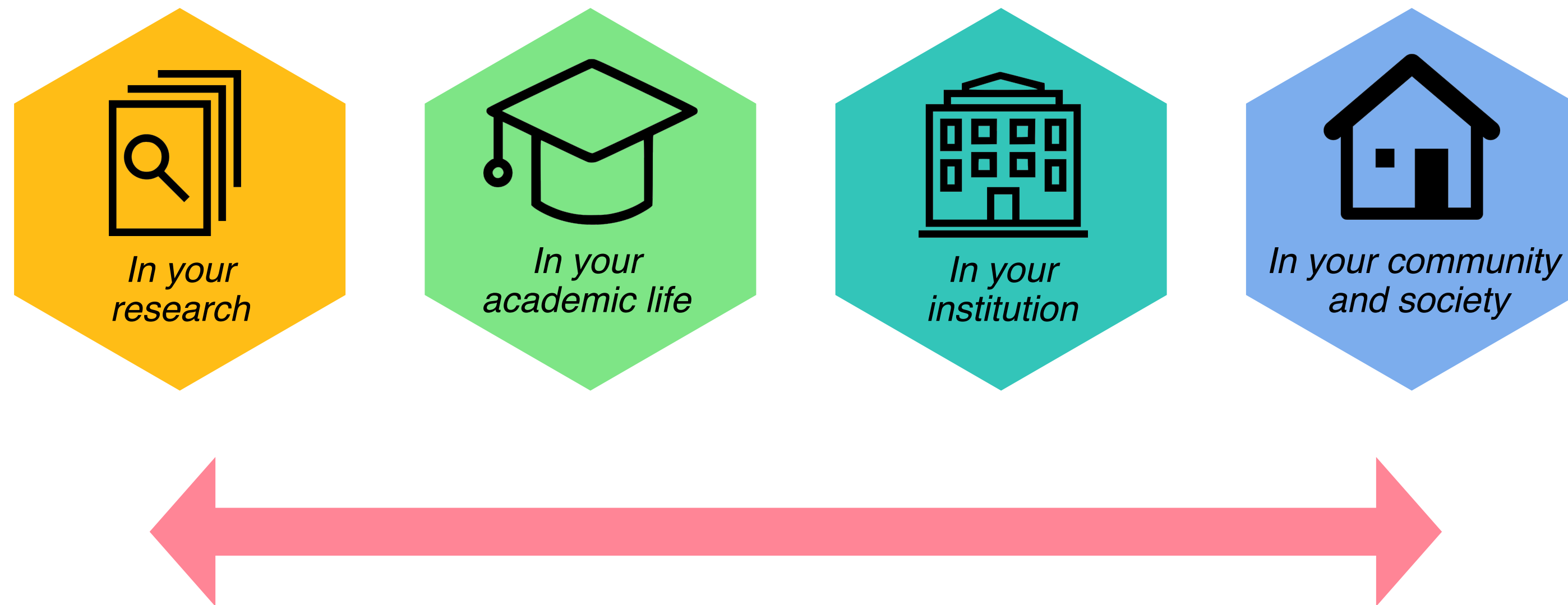


# Our experience



- Participants liked the meetups
- But: less enthusiasm than expected
  - Organising is time-consuming and difficult
- Vision for the future
  - Network of venues (Lorentz center?) with great setups
  - Tech stack ('NMC in a box')
  - Local meetups as 'watch parties' during smaller in-person meetings
- No silver bullet
- More thoughts on the meetup experiment: <https://anneur.ai.net/2022/01/20/2046/>

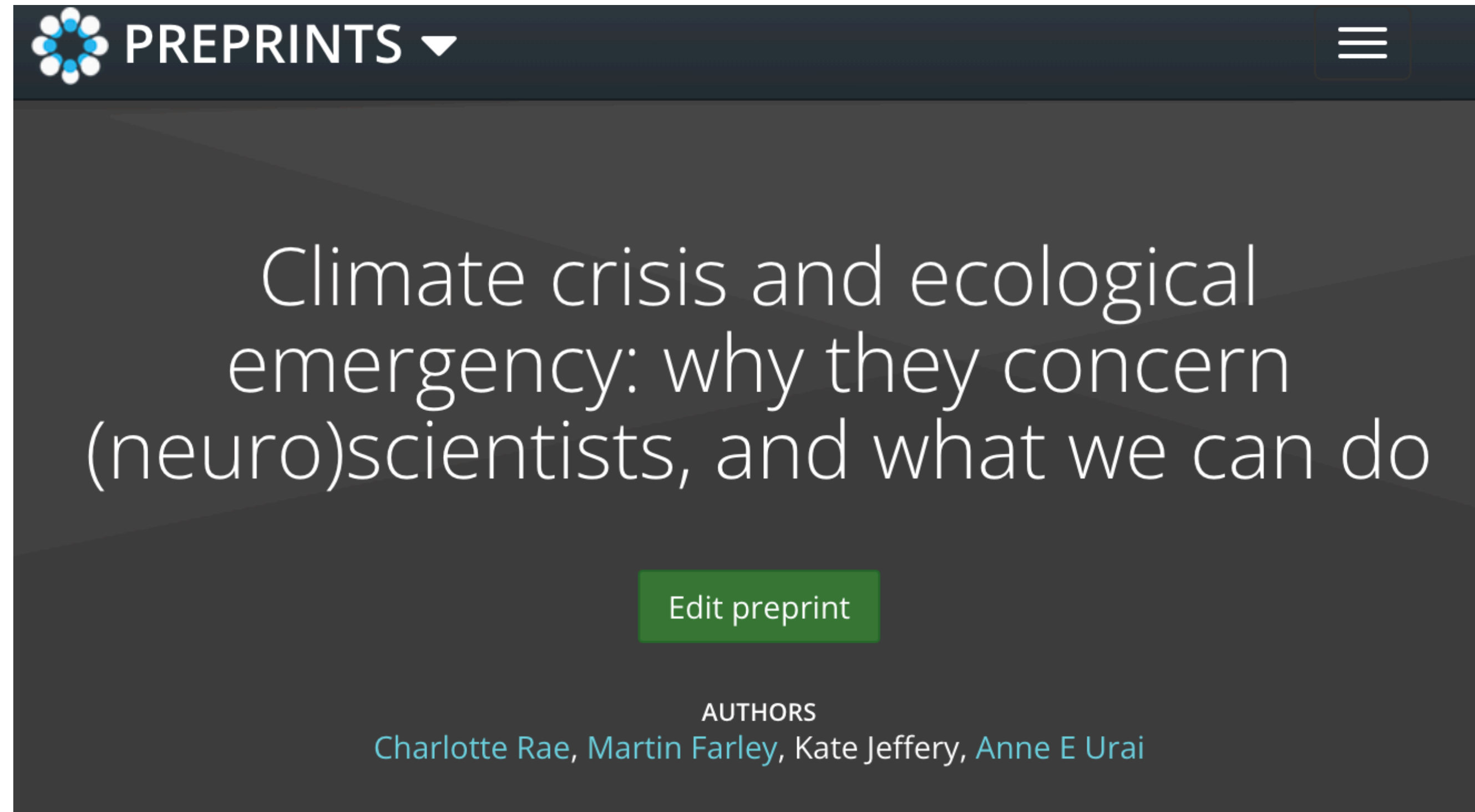
# These levels all influence each other



# How Can Neuroscientists Respond to the Climate Emergency?

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.neuron.2020.02.019>

Adam R. Aron,<sup>1,\*</sup> Richard B. Ivry,<sup>2</sup> Kate J. Jeffery,<sup>3</sup> Russell A. Poldrack,<sup>4</sup> Robert Schmidt,<sup>5</sup> Christopher Summerfield,<sup>6,\*</sup> and Anne E. Urai<sup>7</sup>



All materials and  
more resources at  
[anneur.ai.net/green-  
neuroscience](https://anneur.ai.net/green-neuroscience)

<https://osf.io/94jzh/>