

November 2023 Webinar Highlights: Rowan Blizzard, Richard Lancaster, & Tharindu Abeywardana

The [THRIVE project](#) expresses its heartfelt appreciation to Rowan Blizzard, Richard Lancaster, and Tharindu Abeywardana for their insightful presentations at the November 2023 [Thrivability Matters Webinar](#). This webinar was focused on the [United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals](#) of [No Poverty\(SDG1\)](#), [Zero Hunger \(SDG2\)](#), [Affordable and Clean Energy \(SDG7\)](#), and [Sustainable Cities and Communities \(SDG11\)](#).

Here are our November 2023 Webinar Highlights!

About Our November 2023 Speakers

Rowan Blizzard



[Rowan Blizzard](#) is currently a solution seeker for Innovation House Australia. He

has a passion for high-performance building practices, with expertise in a vast range of building products and materials. In his personal and professional life, Rowan was highly involved in his local community, 'first responding' to cyclones Larry and then Yasi. During this time, he developed an awareness of some of the impractical and remote systems that dictate our housing and our lives. Representing manufacturers and suppliers across the North Queensland region, Rowan started to seek out like-minded professionals. The idea was to demonstrate and make changes for better [housing](#) outcomes. In this role, he then began to formulate the Innovation House framework. Rowan has proven experience across a wide range of areas, including sales, service, technical, and management.

Richard Lancaster



[Richard Lancaster](#) is a retired software engineer based in the West of England. Having been an active member of Greenpeace since the 1980s, Richard initially joined to support the anti-whaling campaign. Today, he is part of the Greenpeace speaker network, giving talks to students, undergraduates, community and faith groups. He also coordinates the local Greenpeace group in Bristol and is a Non-Violent Direct-Action activist and trainer. Richard has actively campaigned on [deforestation](#), [single-use plastics](#), drift nets, deep-sea mining and [air pollution](#). He firmly believes that climate change is the biggest challenge we face. Recently, most of his campaigning efforts have been directed towards stopping oil

companies from wrecking the planet. As part of his efforts, he urges the government to stick to its [net zero](#) pledges.

Tharindu Abeywardana



[Tharindu Abeywardana](#) is an Economist with over fifteen years of experience, currently working as the Chief Economist and Head of Research at a top private bank in Sri Lanka. He holds a master's degree in Financial Economics and a bachelor's degree in Economics and Management. Furthermore, his research interests include macroeconomics, development economics, strategy, political economics, [sustainability](#), and [climate change](#).

Tharindu was previously Senior Associate Vice President at a global investment research company in Sri Lanka and a Research Assistant at the Economic Intelligence Unit of the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce. Through his professional activities and volunteering, Tharindu has gathered rich experience in how policy-level interventions and private sector activities impact poverty and the macroeconomic environment of the country. Finally, as a strong believer in the importance of 'sustainability' in everything we do, he emphasises that eliminating poverty is essential to ensuring the continued progress of humanity.

THRIVE's Mission

[THRIVE Project](#) is dedicated to humanity. We invest interest in issues fundamental to the [well-being](#) of our society. The passionate volunteers at [THRIVE](#) research, educate and advocate for all things concerning sustainability. THRIVE's mission is to safeguard human [well-being](#) in all domains and the well-being of nature and every living being. Read on to discover how our November webinar highlights can create positive, thrivable change in your life.

Rowan Blizzard On “Homes For All To Thrive”

Rowan introduced his presentation with an explanation of [People, Purpose, Place](#), a not-for-profit organisation based in Australia. He realised that his mastery and technical ability in housing wouldn't be helpful if they didn't address people's needs. Indeed, this project aims to create homes where people can become the best versions of themselves and truly thrive.

He brings to light the current housing crisis. Furthermore, he highlights that politicians and governance look at housing from a financial point of view. Rowan, however, emphasises that it is far cheaper for a government to ensure that its people have homes. In fact, homelessness costs the government much more money than housing.

Highlighting a key factor in housing; Rowan suggests that houses only serve to accommodate a person, not to enable one to excel as a human being. This is a crucial consideration when creating a thrivable society. He quotes from a book stating that homes are built for money, not people in developed nations. Indeed, a community creates a true home for a person to thrive. Because of this, Rowan focuses on meeting the psychological needs of humans through housing.

Richard Lancaster On “Electrify Everything”

To begin, Richard emphasised extreme weather events within the climate crisis and greenhouse gas emissions. Furthermore, he explained that we must leave

fossil fuels ([finite resources](#)) in the ground, transition to renewables, reduce energy waste, reform agriculture, eat less meat, and halt deforestation.

During the presentation, he explained the [UK Net Zero](#) plan and the emission cuts necessary to achieve it. In fact, he says that in order to achieve these targets, we must mobilise fast on the “Big 5 In Energy”, and focus particularly on making everything electric. With clarity and precision, Richard delivered information on various [renewable](#) energies and [storage](#) that would benefit the UK and the challenges they face in implementation.

Tharindu Abeywardana On “No Poverty In A Rich World”

Tharindu starts his presentation by discussing [poverty](#). He gives us an in-depth definition of poverty and speaks about the harsh realities that affect people without access to reasonable financial resources. Tharindu emphasises this point by presenting a fictional situation comparing two women of equal age. However, one has privilege, and one doesn't.

Tharindu also describes the various [complex wicked problems](#) behind why poverty exists. He says there are a variety of issues impacting poverty, including policy, governance and perception. He discusses various financial models and how banks and businesses decide to decrease poverty. Furthermore, he demonstrates how it is more expensive for the population to have poverty and that reducing poverty is cheaper in the long term.

Tharindu also delves deep into removing barriers for poor people to access data, technology, and education. Moreover, he discusses institutions and the challenges people living beneath the poverty line face when accessing support. Finally, he concludes with taxation and how taxation is unfair, both in how people are taxed and in the redistribution of the funds.

Thrivability Matters Beyond November 2023

The November [Thrivability](#) Matters Webinar showcased Rowan Blizzard, Richard

Lancaster, and Tharindu Abeywardana's insights into specific [SDGs](#). In summary, the November webinar highlights demonstrate how we can all build a thrivable future together. Rowan Blizzard discussed building a thrivable future for people with purpose-built homes. Richard Lancaster delved into the necessity of transitioning to renewables, and Tharindu Abeywardana shared his knowledge on ways to reduce poverty.

Indeed, to move towards a thrivable world, people need homes, humanity must transition to renewables, and poverty must be eradicated. THRIVE is invested in these issues, with dedicated volunteers who pledge to bring about thrivable change for all humans everywhere.

Further Resources After The November 2023 webinar Highlights

You can explore our [homepage](#), tune into our [podcast](#), read our [blogs](#), or engage with experts in our [webinars](#).

If you missed the presentations or the live Q&A session, you could view the recording on our [YouTube channel](#) or download the PDFs from our three speakers.

Keep an eye on our webinar page to view upcoming [webinars](#)!

Register for our January Thrivability Matters Webinar focusing on [Sustainable Development Goals](#) 4 - Quality Education, 8 - Decent Work and Economic Growth, 16 - Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions, and 17 - Partnerships for the Goals [here](#).

Thanks, and keep on thriving!

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