



Christiana Figueres

Christiana Figueres is a world-renowned leader on climate change, best known for steering the Paris Agreement to success. She brings unmatched expertise in global diplomacy, sustainable development, and systems leadership to inspire corporate and policy audiences to act with courage, urgency and optimism.

KEY TOPICS

- Leading Through Collaboration: Lessons from the Paris Agreement
- The Future We Choose: Surviving the Climate Crisis
- Optimism as a Strategic Tool for Systemic Change
- Turning Global Challenges into Collective Action
- Purpose-Led Leadership in a Rapidly Changing World

BIOGRAPHY

Introduction

Christiana Figueres is a globally recognised leader in climate diplomacy and sustainability strategy. As the former Executive Secretary of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), she was instrumental in securing the landmark Paris Agreement in 2015, galvanising diverse actors across business, government, and civil society to chart a shared path toward climate stability.

Professional Background & Credentials

Christiana Figueres assumed leadership of the UNFCCC following the failed Copenhagen conference in 2009. Over the next six years, she rebuilt trust, strengthened global alignment, and led the Conferences of the Parties in Cancun, Durban, Doha, Warsaw, and Lima, culminating in the historic adoption of the Paris Agreement, signed by 195 countries. Her collaborative approach brought together a vast coalition of stakeholders, from national and subnational governments to financial institutions, NGOs, activists, corporations, and faith communities. She has been widely credited with redefining global climate diplomacy through her unique ability to align ambition with pragmatism. Prior to joining the UNFCCC, she served for over a decade as a member of Costa Rica's climate negotiating team and played key roles in UN climate governance. She also founded and directed the Center for Sustainable Development of the Americas (CSDA) and was Director of Renewable Energy in the Americas (REIA). Today, she continues to shape the global sustainability agenda as co-founder of Global Optimism, co-host of the podcast *Outrage + Optimism*, and Chair of The Earthshot Prize Foundation. She also sits on the boards of ACCIONA and ACCIONA Energía, and is a member of The B Team.

Speaking Style & Audience Value

Christiana Figueres is a deeply compelling speaker who combines evidence-based insight with persuasive storytelling and clear calls to action. Her delivery is authoritative yet inclusive, empowering senior leaders and global teams alike to embrace their roles in addressing complex systemic challenges. Her keynotes and panel contributions are especially impactful for organisations seeking guidance on climate responsibility, cross-sectoral partnerships, purpose-led innovation, and the role of optimism in leadership.

Awards & Recognition

- Named in Time Magazine's 100 Most Influential People
- Recipient of the Legion of Honour from France
- Costa Rican commemorative postage stamp issued in her honour (2017)
- Namesake of a tropical moth, wasp, and orchid species

Books & Publications

Christiana Figueres is the author of the acclaimed *The Future We Choose: Surviving the Climate Crisis*, a thought-provoking book that has shaped conversations around leadership and climate action. Her writing has been featured in global media outlets, and her work continues to influence organisations and policymakers worldwide.

Teaching & Academic Recognition

Christiana Figueres holds an undergraduate degree from Swarthmore College and a master's in Anthropology from the London School of Economics. She also completed a certificate in Organisational Development at Georgetown University. Her contributions to climate diplomacy and global leadership have been recognised through honorary doctorates from leading institutions including Yale University, Georgetown University, the University of Edinburgh, University of Bristol, Warwick University, Concordia University, Smith College, and several others.

Personal & Social Impact

A passionate advocate for climate justice and intergenerational responsibility, Christiana Figueres brings not only policy experience but a deeply personal commitment to building a more sustainable and equitable world. Fluent in Spanish, English, and German, she connects with audiences across cultures and sectors.

[Contact us now](#) for more information on how Christiana can elevate your next team meeting!