**A Few TED talks on Creativity, Sustainability, and Global Engagement**

**Overview:** SJSU offers a program to help expand your world view and develop particular ways of thinking with the GE Pathways Program. I selected these short TED talks (Technology, Entertainment, and Design) to help you understand how these ideas operate in the “real world.” We will discuss these as arguments, as well. Feel free to search You Tube for more of them!

**Sustainability/ Global Engagement**

**A Nigerian Computer Scientist Turns a Plant Problem into a Eco-friendly Business** (7:21)The water hyacinth may look like a harmless, even beautiful flowering plant — but it's actually an invasive aquatic weed that clogs waterways, stopping trade, interrupting schooling and disrupting everyday life. In this scourge, green entrepreneur Achenyo Idachaba saw opportunity. Follow her journey as she turns weeds into woven wonders.

[](https://www.ted.com/speakers/achenyo_idachaba)

[**Achenyo Idachaba**](https://www.ted.com/speakers/achenyo_idachaba)Green entrepreneur. Achenyo Idachaba is the head of MitiMeth, a Nigeria-based company that makes handicrafts from aquatic weeds and other agro-waste.

<https://www.ted.com/talks/achenyo_idachaba_how_i_turned_a_deadly_plant_into_a_thriving_business>

**Accelerated Mini-jungles in the City (2 versions)** Forests don't have to be far-flung nature reserves, isolated from human life. Instead, we can grow them right where we are — even in cities. Eco-entrepreneur and TED Fellow Shubhendu Sharma grows ultra-dense, biodiverse mini-forests of native species in urban areas by engineering soil, microbes and biomass to kickstart natural growth processes. Follow along as he describes how to grow a 100-year-old forest in just 10 years, and learn how you can get in on this tiny jungle party.

[](https://www.ted.com/speakers/shubhendu_sharma)

[**Shubhendu Sharma**](https://www.ted.com/speakers/shubhendu_sharma) **,** Eco-entrepreneur

<https://www.ted.com/speakers/shubhendu_sharma> (9:15)

<https://www.ted.com/talks/shubhendu_sharma_how_to_grow_a_tiny_forest_anywhere#t-251288> (4:22)

**Architects use microbes to make buildings that repair themselves** (7:28)

Venice is sinking. To save it, Rachel Armstrong says we need to outgrow architecture made of inert materials and, well, make architecture that grows itself. She proposes a not-quite-alive material that does its own repairs and sequesters carbon, too.



# **Rachel Armstrong, Applied scientist, innovator**

[Home: Speaker on design and sustainability](http://www.speakerscorner.co.uk/file/6f327902939ac984a0f8eb0e138e5024/rachel-armstrong-speaker-innovation-environment-sustainability.html)

[**Are mushrooms the new plastic?**](https://www.ted.com/talks/eben_bayer_are_mushrooms_the_new_plastic) Product designer Eben Bayer reveals his recipe for a new, fungus-based packaging material that protects fragile stuff like furniture, plasma screens — and the environment.



# **Eben Bayer, Green designer**

<https://www.ted.com/playlists/28/sustainability_by_design> (9:05)

**CREATIVITY**

1. **Embrace the Remix**—on the tension between copying/stealing and creating

**Kirby Fergusen**. Discusses musicians and software developers, among others. (9:26 min)

How does the metaphorical lightbulb go off? Is it a flash of genius? The power of crowds? These heady talks explore the nature of ideas themselves: Where they come from, how they evolve, and how each of us can nurture them.

<https://www.ted.com/playlists/20/where_do_ideas_come_from>

1. **A sculptor with a global reach works with fishing nets and computers**

[**Janet Echelman**](https://www.ted.com/speakers/janet_echelman)[Taking imagination seriously](https://www.ted.com/talks/janet_echelman) (9 min)

Janet Echelman found her true voice as an artist when her paints went missing — which forced her to look to an unorthodox new art material. Now she makes billowing, flowing, building-sized sculpture with a surprisingly geeky edge. A transporting 10 minutes of pure creativity.

<https://www.ted.com/playlists/11/the_creative_spark>

1. **“Touch the Snake” and gain the courage to create.**

**Building Creative Confidence** (11:46)

David Kelley's most enduring contributions to the field of design are a methodology and culture of innovation. More recently, he led the creation of the groundbreaking d.school at Stanford, the Hasso Plattner Institute of Design, where students from the business, engineering, medicine, law, and other diverse disciplines develop the capacity to solve complex problems collaboratively and creatively. Kelley was working (unhappily) as an electrical engineer when he heard about Stanford's cross-disciplinary Joint Program in Design, which merged engineering and art. What he learned there -- a human-centered, team-based approach to tackling sticky problems through design -- propelled his professional life as a "design thinker."

<https://www.ted.com/talks/david_kelley_how_to_build_your_creative_confidence?language=en>