



Emotional Resilience Cohort

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UBC Context

Following historical frontline Indigenous Land Back movements, the increase of global attention to climate strikes, and local grassroots organizing, [UBC declared a Climate Emergency in 2019](#). Since then, the UBC [Climate Emergency Task Force \(CETF\)](#) engaged with students, staff, faculty, and community members to create a report outlining 9 strategic priorities for UBC amidst the Climate Emergency. Key components of this plan aim to operationalize climate justice education, actions, research and advocacy at UBC and to support initiatives and voices led primarily by Indigenous, Black and racialized peoples.

[The UBC Sustainability Hub](#) and their [2022-2027 strategic plan](#) collaborates with people and groups across UBC to act on the CETF report recommendations and strategic goals. Specifically, Sustainability Hub goals #7, #10 and #15 (see appendix below) will be achieved in this cohort. Many other campus groups and plans conduct sustainability and climate work such as [the UBC Vancouver Climate Action Plan 2030 \(CAP 2030\)](#), which outlines building, campus operations, energy use, waste and embodied carbon plans for UBC to reach net zero emissions and reduce greenhouse gas emissions for 2030. The newly emerging [UBC Centre for Climate Justice](#) is another climate justice research and mobilization group which sustainability ambassadors can connect with.

In partnership with [The Edith Lando Virtual Learning Centre \(VLC\)](#), this cohort aims to provide free online educational resources, workshops, and camps around climate justice, community engagement, and climate anxiety. Resources and educational opportunities will support Edith Lando VLC's goal of providing resources and understanding to learners, teachers, and community members anywhere in British Columbia. Further, they will be helping the Centre reach its goal of getting educational opportunities and resources into the hands of underserved communities.



Building Emotional Resilience at UBC

A **climate justice (CJ) framework** describes how the root causes of climate change are interconnected to systems of oppression such as colonialism, capitalism, white supremacy, patriarchy, and ableism (Xie, 2021). Furthermore, the CJ framework highlights that climate solutions require dismantling systems of oppression to create livable and liberated present and future realities for all people. This is especially important for IBPOC (Indigenous, Black and People of Colour) and systemically disadvantaged people who are least responsible for climate change but bear the worst of its impacts, including mental health struggles (Xie, 2021).

Spaces to feel, discuss, understand, and provide education on climate emotions can help people overcome climate doomism, build hope, and mobilize for action (Wise, 2022). Within many climate organizing spaces, community care, and wellness are underprioritized, and under-resourced. The UBC Climate HUB and Sustainability Scholars at UBC such as Judy Wu and Meghan Wise created comprehensive, care-centering, and trauma-informed resources on climate well-being, climate grief, climate anxiety, and mental health ([accessible here](#)) and ([here](#)). In addition, [UBC Wellbeing](#) and [Student Health Services](#) are in place for support, but may require further mobilization to reach students.

The emotional resilience cohort will address the Climate Emergency Task Force (CETF) report goals to:

- Support community wellbeing in the face of the Climate Crisis.
- Build capacity for mental health, resilience, and community care strategies
- Collaborate to expand public discourse around climate change and public health impacts
- Foster a culture of engagement & advocacy on climate action
- Expand climate education opportunities and resources for the UBC community and broader public

Theory of Change: If sustainability ambassadors organize accessible events and programming for UBC students to process their climate emotions, build community care and discuss climate wellness, then students can build climate resiliency, mobilize resources and actions, because many individuals on campus feel overwhelmed by climate change and are unsure how to take meaningful actions.

The emotional resilience cohort is aligned with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) [#3 Good Health and Well-being](#) and [#4 Quality Education](#).



Learning Objectives

Throughout the Sustainability Ambassadors program, participants will develop their self-awareness, systems awareness, interdisciplinary thinking, interpersonal and collaborative working skills, and strategically apply their learnings on emotional resilience.

Ambassadors will...

1. Identify how systems such as colonialism, capitalism, class and race impact the emotional resilience and capacity of people and groups.
2. Understand their own position within systems of oppression and identify their agency to practice hope, take actions, and accomplish their goals.
3. Work collaboratively with The Edith Lando VLC, The UBC Sustainability Hub, and specifically with other Sustainability Ambassadors from various backgrounds and perspectives.
4. Conceptualize and implement ideas and projects related to their emotional resilience learning and advance their personal problem-solving skills and organizing tactics.

Ambassador Projects

Climate Wellbeing and Arts Events

In partnership with other on and off-campus units and organizations, ambassadors will learn about trauma-informed and care-informed ways to host climate grief circles, and events that center on hope and radical care. Integrating writing workshops, art, poetry, zine-making, dance, and other artistic expressions of their choosing into the event, ambassadors will advance emotional processing and create safe or brave spaces for the UBC community. At these events, panelists can be invited, and interactive reflective activities can prompt the UBC community to make space for their climate emotions.

Develop and mobilize climate wellbeing resources

Ambassador projects can take place in classrooms and curriculum, events, or during Climate emergency week. Ambassadors will develop, modify, and/or mobilize resources from the Sustainability Hub and the Edith Lando VLC to reach faculty, staff and students. This mobilization can be through one-pager briefs on key topics, learning modules, toolkits, video or podcast creation, op-eds to Ubyyssey, social media campaigns, or through hosting booths. Ambassadors will learn how to dialogue about climate emotions and emotional resilience and offer emotional resilience strategies and care to their peers and themselves.



Supporting Climate Wellness Highschool Day Camps

Ambassadors will support curriculum development and implementation of climate wellness resources for high school aged youth. Participants can apply their learning about trauma-informed practices to host and facilitate a safe space for high school aged youth to learn about climate justice, climate emotions, and emotional resilience strategies.

Works Cited

Student Services (n.d). Student Health Services. Retrieved from <https://students.ubc.ca/health/student-health-service>

UBC Climate Emergency. (n.d). Wellbeing. Retrieved from <https://climateemergency.ubc.ca/wellbeing/>

Wise, Meghan. (2022). Climate Doom to Messy Hope. Climate Healing& Resilience. UBC Climate HUB. Retrieved from <https://ubccimatehub.ca/project/climate-doom-to-messy-hope-climate-healing-and-resilience/>

Xie, Michelle. (2021). Introduction to Community Organizing Toolkit. Retrieved from <https://linktr.ee/waterdamagedpaper>



Appendix

Organization	Goal
Sustainability Hub's strategic plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GOAL (7) Cultivate the use of transformative pedagogies, including a variety of enriched, experiential and applied learning approaches, for sustainability education across UBC and beyond. • GOAL (8) Increase the number of students and other learners from diverse communities on and off campus who participate in UBC- wide co-curricular and curricular sustainability experiences every year. • GOAL (15) Foster engagement that invites courageous dialogue and motivates urgent and intentional action to address pressing sustainability challenges.
Climate Emergency Task Force Final Report Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support community well-being in the face of the Climate Crisis. • Build capacity for mental health, resilience and community care strategies • Collaborate to expand public discourse around climate change and public health impacts • Foster a culture of engagement & advocacy on climate action • Expand climate education opportunities and resources for the UBC community and broader public
Edith Lando Virtual Learning Centre Mission and Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing resources and understanding to learners, teachers and community members anywhere in British Columbia
Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>(3) Good Health and Well-being</u> • <u>(4) Quality Education</u>