



# YOUTH CLIMATE AMBASSADOR PROJECT (YCAP) COHORT

LEAD: AKUZIKE LIMBANGA [JUNE, 2024]

PARTNER MENTOR: CAROLINE BENINGER, ANNA TOKUNGA

PARTNER UNIT: [BE THE CHANGE EARTH ALLIANCE](#)

PARTNER MENTOR: [NIDHI SHARMA](#)

SUSTAINABILITY HUB MENTOR: [KSHAMTA HUNTER](#)

## Introduction

Climate change and its consequences on societies have become well-known in the last decade. However, the increase in awareness has not been matched by an increase in the necessary tools, knowledge, and resources to combat it. This knowledge gap has contributed to climate grief, anxiety, apathy, and confusion among many people. Young people, in particular, are aware that they will inherit a significantly altered environment but are rarely consulted on these issues. As Goldman points out “too many of our youth have internalized this, and it manifests itself in eco-anxiety and climate depression.” (2022)

This cohort aims to bridge the gap between essential climate knowledge and the appropriate tools and resources young people require to address climate change in their communities effectively. We will focus on expanding knowledge by creating and mobilizing climate information on and off-campus, fostering interdisciplinary climate justice education, and supporting student climate justice leadership, engagement, and innovation.

## UBC Context

The university’s climate-related efforts and mobilizing projects have reduced energy use and emissions through several initiatives such as [Sustainability Coordinators](#). The emissions targets in [CAP 2030](#) invite our cohort to work towards exploring communication and engagement to collectively progress systemic and social changes required to meet the Paris Agreement-aligned goals that promote sustainable communities.

The following objectives as outlined in UBC campus plans, national level plans as well as worldwide institutions such as the United Nations provide a strategic framework for the Youth Climate Ambassadors Project (YCAP) cohort.

## UBC Plans

### [Integrating Indigenous Knowledge and Education](#)

#### [UBC Indigenous Strategic Plan](#)

- Goal 2: Advocating for the truth: Facilitate open dialogue about truth, reconciliation, and recognition of indigenous people’s human rights.
- Goal 4: Indigenizing our curriculum: Include Indigenous ways of knowing, culture, histories, worldviews in curriculum delivered across faculties, programs, and campuses.



## Climate Action (CAP) 2030

Beyond Mitigation: Increasing Adaptation and Resiliency:

- 2.1: Responding to climate change will [also] require the development of just, equitable and accessible adaptation strategies to reduce the impacts associated with the increasing frequency and severity of climate change events.
- 2.4: A Climate Justice Lens: The application of a climate justice lens will ensure equity, inclusion, diversity, and accountability are upheld and advanced while accelerating climate action as marginalized and vulnerable populations are often disproportionately impacted by climate change.

## SUSTAINABILITY HUB

### Sustainability Hub Strategic Plan

- GOAL 4: Build understanding and capacity to implement principles of justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI) in the Sustainability Hub's culture, policies, and work.
- GOAL 6: Evaluate and streamline our educational programs, activities, and resources to enhance impact.
- 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 11: Amplify climate change and sustainability research, learning and outcomes through a variety of knowledge translation and dissemination strategies.
- GOAL 15: Foster engagement that invites courageous dialogue and motivates urgent and intentional action to address pressing sustainability challenges.

## BE THE CHANGE EARTH ALLIANCE

- A mission to educate and empower students and teachers to take personal and collective action for a just, resilient, and sustainable world.
- A purpose to create empowering education opportunities for all learners, including equity-deserving groups.

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

- Goal 4: Quality education: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.
- Goal 10: Reduced inequalities: Reduce inequality within and among countries.



## Learning Objectives

Throughout the program, ambassadors will develop competences such as self-awareness, systems awareness, interdisciplinary integration, interpersonal and collaborative as well as strategic application to advance the goals mentioned above. The following learning objectives will be critical.

- Ambassadors can understand, interpret, and engage with key issues that pertain to sustainability and our current climate crisis by fostering interdisciplinary climate justice education that is based on compassion, multiple ways of knowing and equity.
- Work collaboratively with other ambassadors to develop resources on climate anxiety, climate justice, particularly, analyses of colonialism and capitalism that honors lived experiences.
- Through engagement and collaboration with multiple stakeholders both on campus and off campus, ambassadors will be equipped to empower participants to become “Climate Ambassadors” in their own communities.

## Ambassador Projects

### Youth Climate Ambassador’s Project Workshops

This project offers free workshops that address climate anxiety and uses climate storytelling to inspire action and change across schools in Metro-Vancouver and occasionally the rest of British Columbia albeit online.

Facilitators will gain valuable facilitation skills and storytelling techniques. Similarly, facilitators will sharpen interpersonal skills through public speaking. Since these workshops are catered towards schools, facilitators will gain valuable experience working with youth of various ages. This, in turn, will equip students with the tools to become more effective climate advocates and communicators.

As UBC student facilitators, they are typically only a few years older than the participating high school students. With their experience in climate action, they can serve as relatable role models.

### Coordinate and Organize Resources, Evaluation, and Logistics

Ambassadors will be able to take on more leadership roles within the cohort. This includes specializing in coordinating the scheduling and booking of YCAP workshops through regularly checking the online booking portal, confirming booked workshops with teachers, and communicating with facilitators about the preferences and requests of a teacher before each workshop.

Similarly, ambassadors will be able to sharpen their organizational and data analysis skills by evaluating the surveys and feedback forms from students after workshops and maintain a system for organizing files and tracking data.



### Resource Mobilization and Training

Ambassadors will have the unique opportunity to train other student volunteers in the Youth Climate Ambassadors Project (YCAP) model, sharing the facilitation skills they have acquired. Ambassadors will be encouraged to apply their own experiences as facilitators to the training process.

Moreover, ambassadors will focus on bridging the gap between academic knowledge and practical application through gathering and organizing existing resources that address climate anxiety, and grief, climate justice and injustice, colonialism, and capitalism. Once again, ambassadors will be encouraged to apply their own experiences to this process. These resources will be available for community use. In this process, ambassadors will engage in knowledge mobilization and translation, making complex climate information accessible and actionable.

### References

Be the Change Earth Alliance (2005). [bethechangeearthalliance.org](http://bethechangeearthalliance.org)

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