



# Sustainability Ambassador Program

2023-2024 Year End Report



## Land Acknowledgement

The Sustainability Ambassador Program 2023-2024 was held on the UBC Point Grey campus situated within the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the x<sup>w</sup>məθk<sup>w</sup>əy̓əm (Musqueam). As part of the larger UBC community, we are guests and settlers on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the x<sup>w</sup>məθk<sup>w</sup>əy̓əm (Musqueam), Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh (Squamish), Sel̓ílwitlh (Tsleil-Waututh) and Syilx (Okanagan) Nations.

In our pursuit of sustainability, climate action and climate justice, we understand that protecting human rights is indelibly woven into the fabric of environmental protection and sustainability. As guests and settlers on Indigenous lands, we share an important responsibility for learning with and about our host Nations and strengthening these relationships. We will continue building on existing partnerships with our host Nations through mutual respect and reciprocity.

# Acknowledgment

This report combines input from the Sustainable Ambassador Leads and incorporates insights from the six cohort reports they provided. We want to thank everyone who helped put this report together. Special thanks to:

- Clarice Tuai: Synthesized the Climate & Movement Cohort Report
- Sagorika Haque: Synthesized the Climate Cohort Report
- Fer Villasenor: Synthesized the Climate Action Cohort Report
- Vicky Kim & Nandita Valiranami: Synthesized the Climate Action Plan Cohort Report
- Naomi Leung: Synthesized the Emotional Resilience Cohort Report
- Susan Gao: Synthesized the Food Systems Cohort Report
- Leonard Zheng: Organized and edited content for this report
- Kshamta Hunter: Program Manager

We appreciate everyone's hard work in collecting and organizing the information for this report. It wouldn't have been possible without your contributions. Additionally, we extend our gratitude to [AMS Sustainability](#) at UBC for funding the projects completed by the Sustainability Ambassadors.

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# Program Overview

## Sustainability Ambassador Program

The [UBC Sustainability Ambassadors Program](#) offers an enriching learning and leadership experience for students passionate about sustainability. Designed by the [UBC Sustainability Hub](#), the program aims to increase awareness of and involvement in sustainability and climate action both on and off campus. The program falls under the Hub's [Strategic Plan 2022-2027](#) in alignment with the second core area of UBC's [Strategic Plan 2018-2028](#) – Transformative Learning.

By participating in this program, students had the opportunity to engage in experiential learning and develop 5 core sustainability competencies (self-awareness, systems thinking, strategic application, interpersonal and collaboration, interdisciplinary integration) through sustainability education and experiential learning projects. These projects not only enhance their learning but also provide practical experience in sustainability work across and beyond UBC.

## Program Timeline

Over the summer, Sustainability Leads—a group of senior UBC students with knowledge and prior experience in sustainability work—collaborated closely with community partners and the program manager. Together, they developed a curriculum based on a central theme and planned three theme-specific projects for each ambassador cohort, consisting of 8-12 Sustainability Ambassadors.

Throughout the fall and winter terms, the leads delivered the curriculum to their assigned ambassador cohort through orientations, workshops, guest lectures, field trips, and mentorship sessions. Sustainability Ambassadors from diverse backgrounds worked collaboratively as part of an interdisciplinary team to support the planning and implementation of the pre-conceived projects. These projects will be detailed later in this report.

## Program Outcomes

After completing the program, the Sustainability Ambassadors have had the opportunity to achieve the following goals:

### **Participant-Focused Goals**

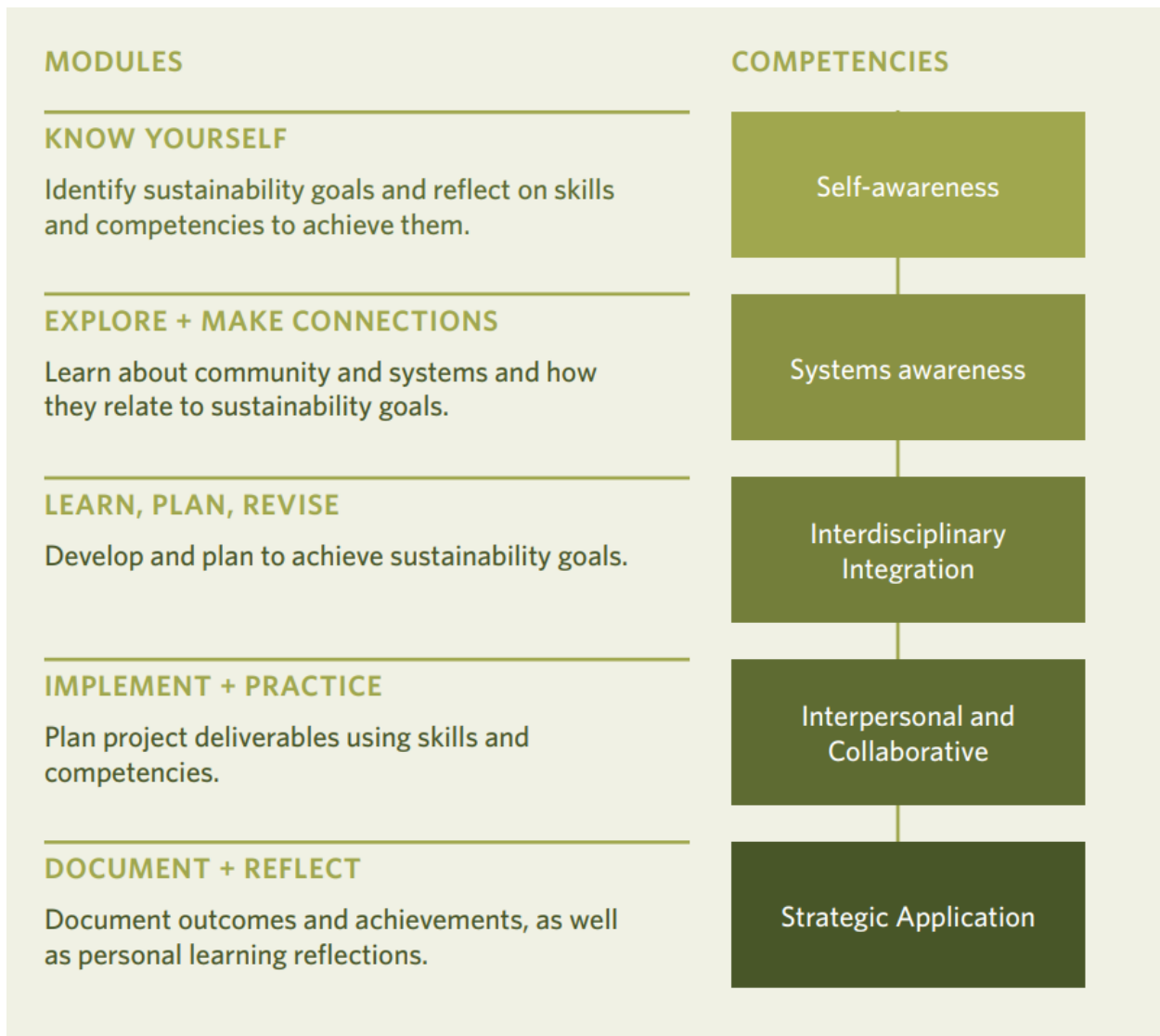
- Develop sustainability competencies and skills to foster learning, equity, and mutual respect

- Develop project management and facilitation skills

### Community-Focused Goals

- Increase awareness of, and engagement in, sustainability and climate issues on- and off-campus
- Increase involvement in sustainability and climate action

In addition, the ambassadors have had the opportunity to work on developing the five core competencies as shown below:



# Sustainability Ambassador Cohorts

## Climate & Movement Cohort

"The Sustainability Ambassadors program has significantly supported my interests in sustainability, so much that I have decided to take a Minor in it! The dialogue event on (Un)Learning Academia Through a Climate Justice Lens was one of my favourite highlights of the program. Working with different cohort members on this project was truly such a special time. Alongside, having the honour to listen to Jo-Ann Archibald and Cash Ahenakew while also facilitating an interaction event established the capacity and joy that the Sustainability Ambassadors Program has allowed me to do."

– Sustainability Ambassador, Emotional Resilience Cohort

### About

The Climate & Movement cohort is led by Clarice Tuai and consists of 10 ambassadors. Throughout the program, the cohort focused on promoting sustainable transportation and physical movement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve physical and mental well-being.

**Link to cohort brief:** [Climate & Movement Cohort](#)

### Partners

[UBC Move U Crew](#), [UBC Multidisciplinary Institute of Natural Therapy \(MINT\)](#), [Live Educate Transform Society \(LET'S\)](#), [UBC Center for Community Engaged Learning \(CCEL\)](#), [Sierra Club BC](#), [Better Environmentally Sound Transportation \(BEST\)](#) and [UBC Belkin Art Gallery](#)

### Projects

#### *Wellbeing Breaks*

The ambassadors offered a series of 5–10-minute Wellbeing Breaks intended to connect students to nature through movements of various kinds. The goal was to raise awareness and spur action on sustainability and climate change issues. With a focus on mental, physical, and emotional wellbeing, these sessions included Scavenger Hunt, Nature Art, Guided Meditation, and Directed Nature Walk. The Wellbeing Breaks project was piloted during MoveUBC Month 2024 and later integrated with [UBC Move U Crew's](#) Movement Breaks.

**Link to [Wellbeing Breaks Guides](#)**



### *Dialogue Within & Beyond the Margins*

This project was a joint effort among the ambassadors from the Climate & Movement, Climate Action and Emotional Resilience cohorts. The ambassadors collaborated on the planning and facilitation of a series of dialogues on learning and unlearning aimed at reconstructing knowledge and thinking around climate justice. This project strived to create a safe and inclusive space where students, scholars, faculty and community members can come together to learn about issues related to climate justice from one another, with a particular focus on [IBPOC](#) perspectives. Guest speakers Dr. Jo-ann Archibald and Dr. Cash Ahenakew discussed the topics of decolonization within academic and public health institutions, nature and kinship, and the power of indigenous storytelling. Following the speakers, the ambassadors facilitated an interactive story-telling session to integrate indigenous perspectives into discussions and encourage reflection on how learning and unlearning can be applied in climate justice work.

#### **Guest Speakers:**

[Dr. Cash Akenakew \(Cree\)](#): Canada Research Chair in Indigenous People’s Well-Being

[Dr. Jo-Ann Archibald \(Stó:lō\)](#): Former Associate Dean for Indigenous Education

#### **Participation:**

35 UBC students, faculty staff and community members attended

“Reflecting on the year with my cohort, I learned how to provide peer mentorship in meaningful ways. Having students in the cohort that were younger and older than me, the relationships we built in the cohort were rooted in reciprocity, trust, and care, and guided by the desire to learn and unlearn from and with each other. I am proud of the sense of community I was able to create amongst the cohort.”

– **Clarice Tuai, Climate & Movement Cohort Lead**

### *Transformative Solidarities Festival*



The [Transformative Solidarities Festival](#) is a weeklong festival that took place from March 4-8 at UBC to celebrate diverse identities and personal stories within the climate community. As part of [SDG Week Canada](#), this festival is aimed at cultivating enduring multidisciplinary, intergenerational, intersectional solidarities around climate justice and decolonial pedagogies. During the festival, the Climate cohort collaborated with the Climate & Movement on the delivery of a series of programming including panels, workshops, film screenings, networking and cultural performances to advance community building and sustainability knowledge mobilization.

### **Participants:**

202 UBC students, faculty staff and community members attended

"I had a great time this past year as a Sustainability Ambassador. I learned a lot about climate justice, solidarity, and crises occurring around the world that I would not have previously known about. It was a very deep level and unique array of information and teachings that has truly changed my perspective on climate work!"

– **Sustainability Ambassador, Climate Cohort**

## Climate Cohort

### About

The Climate cohort is led by Sagorika Haque and consists of 8 ambassadors. Throughout the program, the cohort focused on creating an interdisciplinary and collaborative space for (un)learning and deepening understanding of climate justice. This effort aimed to move away from Eurocentric and ethnocentric approaches to knowledge production, embracing diverse possibilities and adopting feminist and indigenous frameworks that prioritize lived experiences and emotional knowledge.

**Link to cohort brief:** [Climate Cohort Brief](#)

### Partners

[UBC Sustainability Hub](#) and [Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions \(PICS\)](#)

## Projects

### *Dialogue on Collective Liberation*

The Dialogue on Collective Liberation is a component of the Dialogue Within & Beyond the Margins project. The Climate cohort focused on fostering a community where individuals can come together to reflect on the interconnectedness of present-day crises with historical and ongoing ones. Experts from various academic and geographic backgrounds joined to facilitate discussions to explore how shared oppressions and liberations can be connected, enabling collective engagement.

**Link to [Workshop Resources](#)**

### **Participation:**

80 UBC students, faculty staff and community members attended

“Enrolling in the Sustainability Ambassadors program was the single best decision I made for my second year (and life) at UBC. Sagorika’s lectures opened my mind and enabled me to view the world differently; I was provided with a community of passionate and kind individuals from all disciplines, ages, and places in the world; and I feel so fortunate to have had the opportunity to organize events alongside my peers, developing skills that I believe will help me in all my future endeavours.”

**– Sustainability Ambassador, Climate Cohort**

### *Transformative Solidarities Festival*

This project is a collaboration with the Climate & Movement cohort. More details can be found at [Transformative Solidarities Festival](#) under the Climate & Movement cohort.

## Climate Action Cohort

“Just over a year ago, my idea of what counted as “real” climate action was too narrow, focusing mostly on policy initiatives and direct emissions reductions, and I was conceptualizing education as a supportive strategy to achieve these goals. However, this program helped me realize that education is the work itself, and that storytelling and community building are the key to ensuring sustainability is achieved alongside social, environmental and economic justice.”

**– Fer Villasenor, Climate Action Cohort Lead**

## About

The Climate Action cohort is led by Fer Villasenor and consists of 8 ambassadors. Throughout the program, the cohort followed three guiding principles: climate justice, collective leadership, and ethical community engagement. By using these guiding principles, the ambassadors were able to explore climate action at different levels (i.e. individual, community, national and global) and recognize its connections to systems of oppression.

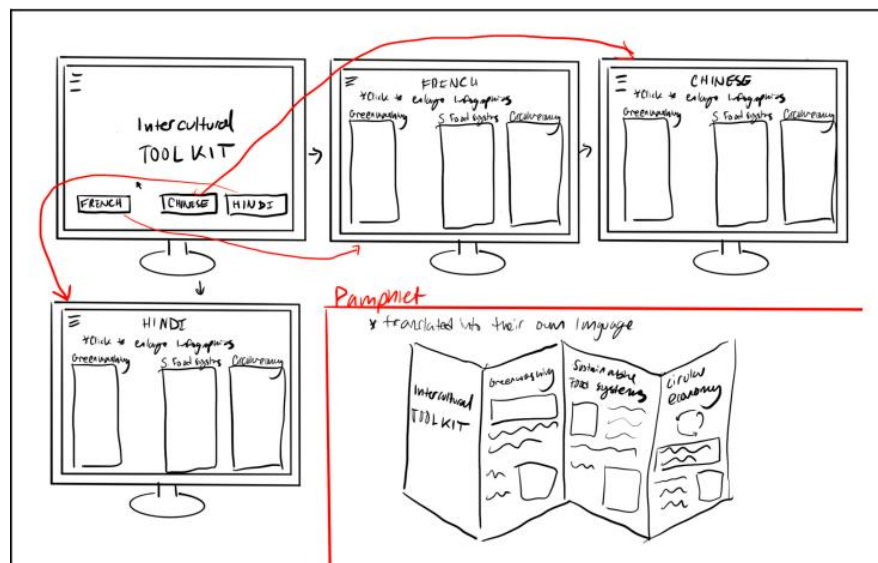
**Link to cohort brief:** [Climate Action Cohort Brief](#)

## Partners

[UBC Center for Community Engaged Learning \(CEEL\)](#), [UBC Climate Emergency](#), [UBC Learning Exchange](#) and [UBC Edith Lando Virtual Learning Centre](#)

## Projects

### *Intercultural Toolkit*



This project was a joint effort among the ambassadors from the Climate Action and Emotional Resilience cohorts. The Intercultural Toolkit is aimed at making culturally relevant well-being and climate-preparedness resources easily accessible, especially for migrant, racialized, and lower-income communities who are most affected by climate change.

The ambassadors collected 52 survey responses from individuals with non-English backgrounds to identify the climate-related topics of greatest interest. The result highlighted the need for more easily accessible and multilingual materials with a greater focus on Greenwashing, Sustainable Food Systems, and the Circular Economy.

By incorporating diverse experiences and cultural perspectives into mainstream climate resources, the Intercultural Toolkit could empower marginalized communities to share their stories, raising awareness and enriching our understanding of the climate crisis. This project is currently in development. For further details, please refer to [Infographic Information](#).

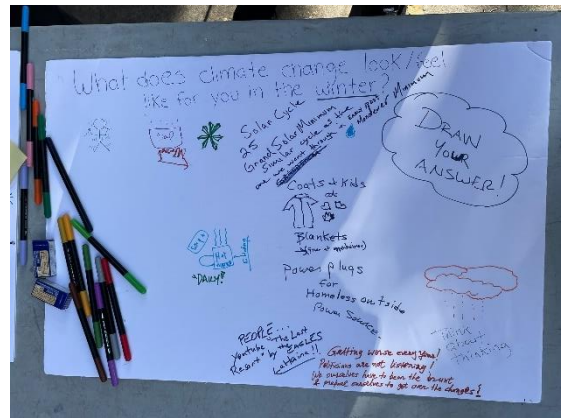
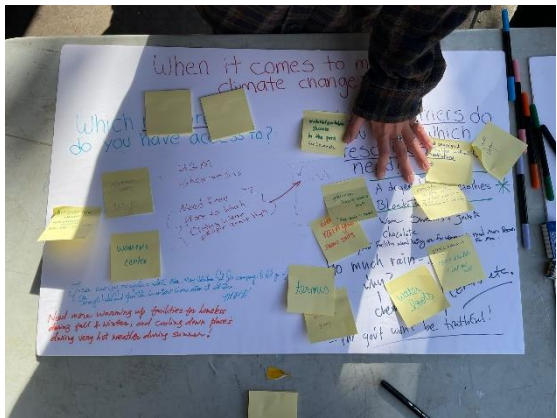
**"I enjoyed my time as a Sustainability Ambassador a lot. Working with diverse individuals to learn more about the topics and themes were a really great way to challenge my beliefs and mindsets and push my thoughts beyond what I already knew."**

**– Sustainability Ambassador, Emotional Resilience Cohort**

### *Dialogue Within & Beyond the Margins*

This project is a collaboration with the Climate & Movement and Emotional Resilience cohorts. More details can be found at [Dialogue Within & Beyond the Margins](#).

### *The CLEAR (Climate Equity Action and Resilience) Outreach Project*



In this outreach project, the ambassadors shared climate research with residents and local organizations in the Vancouver Downtown Eastside and helped them advocate for their needs through activities like drawing and word jumble. This initiative was aimed at empowering vulnerable residents and local organizations to engage in advocacy for policy reform and action on climate change.

### **Participation:**

150 people attended the outreach event

### *Homegrown Climate Justice*

The ambassadors contributed to the City of Vancouver’s initiative to re-green the areas of Vancouver Downtown Eastside. In this initiative, they introduced traditional Coast Salish ecological knowledge and indigenous ways of knowing into the planting of culturally rooted plants and trees.

### Climate Action Plan (CAP 2030) Cohort

“I thought that leading the Climate Action Plan 2030 cohort was an amazing journey that strengthened my time management, organizational, and creative skills and taught me the value of effective communication, community building, and creating a safe and brave space for my ambassadors.”

– **Nandita Valiranami, Climate Action Plan (CAP 2030) Cohort Lead**

### About

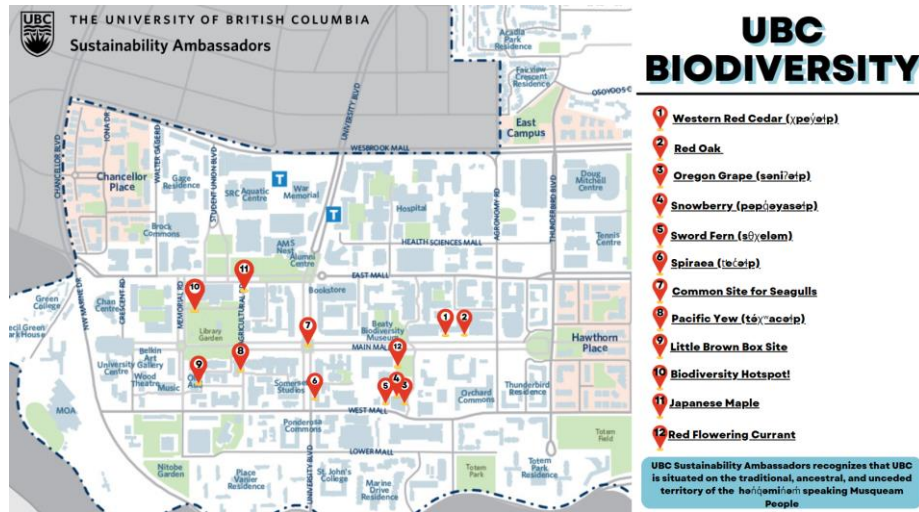
The Climate Action Plan cohort is led by Vicky Kim and then Nandita Valiranami and consists of 12 ambassadors. Throughout the program, the cohort explored the goals and actions necessary for achieving UBC’s Climate Action Plan 2030, with a particular focus on biodiversity and the circular economy. This enabled the ambassadors to deepen their understanding of and critically reflect on current systems that impact and are impacted by biodiversity and the circular economy.

### Partners

[UBC Sustainability Hub](#) and [UBC Campus + Community Planning \(C+CP\)](#)

## Projects

### Biodiversity Project



The Biodiversity Project is aimed at addressing the lack of information and attention regarding local urban biodiversity and its importance for the ecosystem. The ambassadors created two narrated Instagram reels showcasing the biodiversity and daily life on UBC campus. Additionally, they developed a digital map highlighting the locations and descriptions of UBC's biodiversity-rich areas for students to explore.

Link to [UBC Biodiversity Map](#)

### Circular Economy Project



The Circular Economy Project aimed to support and amplify UBC’s [Zero Waste Food Ware Strategy](#) by implementing initiatives such as the “Bring Your Own Mug (B.Y.O.M)” event during [Climate Emergency Week](#) and SDG Week. This initiative provided the opportunity for people to learn about the environmental, social, and economic benefits of using reusable mugs and incorporating reusable food ware into their daily campus routine.

“Meeting likeminded individuals who are passionate about sustainability, the chance to create our own project with support from leads and other members of the hub, the chance to speak during workshops to share new ideas, the workshops from other leads about important topics like how gender and race are impacted by sustainability/climate change.”

– Sustainability Ambassador, Climate Action Plan (CAP 2030) Cohort

### *A Dialogue on Circular Food Systems*



This project was a joint effort among the ambassadors from the Climate Action Plan and Food System cohorts. The ambassadors collaborated on the planning and facilitation of a series of dialogues on learning and unlearning aimed at reconstructing knowledge and thinking around climate justice. Two guest speakers, Claire Kremen and Duncan Chambers, discussed sustainable and equitable approaches to circular food systems. Following the panel, participants engaged in a hands-on exercise in the UBC Orchard Garden to learn about food systems and explore the useful applications of plants grown at UBC. This project aimed to create safe, intergenerational, and multidisciplinary spaces where students, scholars, faculty and community organizers can come together to collectively learn and connect on climate justice issues.

#### **Guest Speakers:**

[Claire Kremen](#): Professor and President’s Excellence Chair in Biodiversity at UBC



Duncan Chambers: City Beet Farm and Teacher at the UBC School of Architecture

**Participation:**

29 UBC students, faculty staff and community members attended

## Emotional Resilience Cohort

"I am so proud of my ambassadors for organizing a spring break climate justice camp for youth, an unlearning dialogue centering Indigenous knowledge and storytelling, and for surveying community members on intercultural understandings of climate change."

**– Naomi Leung, Emotional Resilience Cohort Lead**

## About

The Climate Action Plan cohort is led by Naomi Leung and consists of 9 ambassadors. Throughout the program, the cohort aimed to support community wellbeing in the face of the Climate Crisis by building capacity for mental health, resilience, and community care strategies. They created free online educational resources, workshops, and camps focused on climate justice, community engagement, and climate anxiety, making these resources available to learners, teachers, and community members across British Columbia.

## Partners

[UBC Sustainability Hub](#), [UBC Social Ecological Economic Development Studies \(SEEDS\)](#), [UBC Hatch Art Gallery](#) and [UBC Edith Lando Virtual Learning Centre](#)

## Projects

### *Cultivating Climate Justice Day Camp*



The Cultivating Climate Justice Day Camp is a free, five-day program for pre-teens and teens to learn about climate action, solutions, and collective engagement. Youth and the ambassadors had the opportunity to collectively (un)learn and connect on climate justice issues.

The camp has four main objectives:

- Provide accessible education on climate justice.
- Promote emotional resilience and youth activism.
- Learn from historical justice movements.
- Foster intergenerational social connections and advance climate justice research.

By emphasizing collective (un)learning, action-based solutions, and community-building, the camp aimed to help pre-teens and teens understand their climate emotions, build resilience, and take collective action.

#### **Participation:**

15 youths participated (30 registered)

“My experience as a Sustainability Ambassador was truly such an insightful and meaningful time to develop, (un)learn, and dive into a variety of topics regarding sustainability and climate justice. Each week, I was always excited to learn about a new topic, especially the meetings where our cohort dialogues would go beyond the designated workshop to connect to all aspects of our lives. To navigate different topics surrounding climate work and climate justice has been such a privilege and welcoming avenue to continue my interest in sustainability.”

– **Sustainability Ambassador, Emotional Resilience Cohort**

### *Dialogue From Within/Beyond the Margins*

This project is a collaboration with the Climate & Movement and Climate Action cohorts. More details can be found at [Dialogue Within & Beyond the Margins](#) under the Climate & Movement cohort.

### *Intercultural Toolkit*

This project is a collaboration with the Climate Action cohort. More details can be found at [Intercultural Toolkit](#) under the Climate Action cohort.

### *Climate Slamposium*

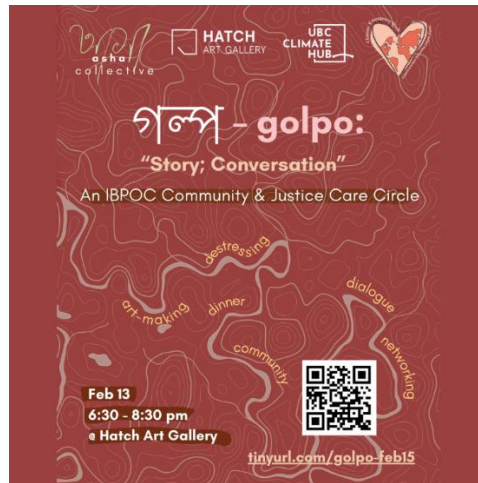


The Climate Combining elements of slam poetry and symposium vibes, the Climate Slamposium cultivated a space for student researchers, activists, artists, and others engaging in climate justice to share their work in fun and creative ways. As part of the [Climate Emergency Week](#), this was an opportunity to showcase, explore and uplift the climate grief, love, activism, advocacy, hope and voice of student leaders and storytellers at UBC.

Participation:

50+ UBC students, faculty staff and community members attended

## গল্প – golpo: “Story; Conversation” – An IBPOC Community and Justice Care Circle

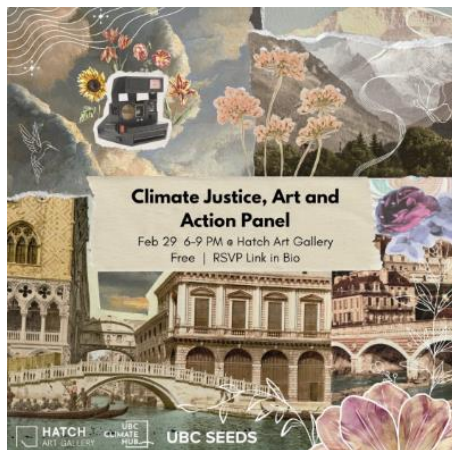


গল্প is a Bangla word, speaking to how this event specifically centres and is spearheaded by IBPOC identifying folks to engage in a safe & brave space for cultivating community, collective processing, & (un)learning through conversation over food to honour the historical, persistent, systematic, & ongoing marginalization uniquely faced & experienced, often shaping respective journeys & levels of access.

### Participation:

40+ UBC students, faculty staff and community members attended

### Climate Justice, Art, and Action Panel



A panel that touches on art, creativity, and climate justice! Panelists from [Vancouver Black Library \(VBL\)](#), [UBC Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights \(UBC SPHR\)](#), [Asha Collective](#), and [The Only Animal](#) theatre will share their perspectives & projects regarding: art as resistance, storytelling, and public commentary in the era of climate emergency and injustice; creative

place-making; art as documenting, remembering, and sharing our perspectives and histories; and art as integral to wellbeing, liberation, and reclamation.

### **Participation:**

50+ UBC students, faculty staff and community members attended

## Food System Cohort

“Developing and facilitating so many workshops on important topics like food security, I was able to gain knowledge about sustainability that I otherwise would not be able to in my academic studies. I had the privilege of creating and implementing a curriculum for the Food Systems cohort, an experience that provided me with project management and leadership skills. In addition, being a leader to a group of UBC students and taking responsibility for their progress in the program allowed me to hone in my administrative and organizational skills.”

**– Susan Gao, Food System Cohort Lead**

### About

With 35% of undergraduate students at UBC Vancouver facing food insecurity, the resulting harm to their physical and mental health can severely diminish their capacity to learn and work. Exploring how environmentally sustainable food systems can support food security and prioritize social justice is therefore crucial. Led by Susan Gao, the Food System cohort, consisting of 6 ambassadors, aimed to advance UBC's efforts in environmental sustainability and food security.

### Partners

[UBC Sustainability Hub](#), [UBC Agora Cafe](#), [UBC Food Hub Market](#), [UBC Sprouts](#), [UBC Farm](#), and [UBC Roots on the Roof](#)

## Projects

### *Food System Video*



The ambassadors created three 8-minute educational videos to inform students and UBC faculty about the prevalence of food insecurity on campus and highlight various community and student-led initiatives that promote sustainability and provide food resources. The videos also showcased diverse opportunities for campus involvement in efforts to eliminate food insecurity and address other sustainability issues within the food system.

**Videographer:** Theodore Yu

### **Link to the Videos:**

[Agora Cafe and Food Hub video](#)

[UBC Farm video](#)

[Sprouts and Roots on the Roof video](#)

“I really enjoyed getting to engage on topics of sustainability with such an enthusiastic and diverse group of students. The relationships we all formed with one another exceeded any expectations I had going into the program. I had such a great time during all the weekly meetings and presentations/discussions, as well as in the project team meetings when I got to work closer with ambassadors from multiple cohorts.”

– **Sustainability Ambassador, Food System Cohort**

### *A Dialogue on Circular Food Systems*

This project is a collaboration with the Climate & Movement and Emotional Resilience cohorts. More details can be found at [A Dialogue on Circular Food Systems](#) under the Climate Action Plan cohort.