



**UNIVERSITY
OF ALBERTA**



2024-25

Annual Report

Sustainability Council

Sustainability Council Members



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Associate Director for the
Certificate in Sustainability



Arlene Oak,
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Candace Nykiforuk



**Guillermo Hernandez
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Matthew Wildcat



Rhonda Breitkreuz

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The Sustainability Council's mission is to **uplift people and planet.**

We are doing this by growing a vibrant community engaged in interdisciplinary teaching, learning, research, and active citizenship at the University of Alberta. We host speaking events and conferences, develop and promote courses and academic programs, support research, provide opportunities for student leadership and spark interest in sustainability issue.

The University of Alberta, its buildings, labs and research stations are primarily located on the territory of the Néhiyaw (Cree), Niitsitapi (Blackfoot), Métis, Nakoda (Stoney), Dene, Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) and Anishinaabe (Ojibway/Saulteaux), lands that are now known as part of Treaties 6, 7 and 8 and homeland of the Métis. The University of Alberta respects the sovereignty, lands, histories, languages, knowledge systems and cultures of all First Nations, Métis and Inuit.

Message from the Academic Director

It has been another strong and rewarding year for sustainability at the University of Alberta. Across teaching, research, experiential learning, and engagement, the Sustainability Council continues to see growing interest from students, faculty, and partners who are committed to building a more sustainable future.



**CHECK OUT OUR
SDG INFO HUB**



Our reputation and impact remain a source of pride. In the most recent Times Higher Education Impact Rankings, the University of Alberta ranked 8th globally out of 2,318 institutions, and in the Quacquarelli Symonds Sustainability Rankings we placed 58th out of 1,743 institutions worldwide. These results reflect the depth and quality of sustainability scholarship, teaching, and practice taking place across our campus, and the collective efforts of many units, faculty members, staff, and students.

One of the most encouraging trends this year has been continued growth in student engagement. Undergraduate enrolment in sustainability courses and programs has increased again, with particularly strong demand for our SUST courses and the Certificate in Sustainability. In parallel, we made important progress on the development of new graduate pathways. In partnership with the College of Natural and Applied Sciences and faculties across campus, we advanced the Graduate Certificate in Sustainability through governance, with courses scheduled to begin in January 2026. This milestone represents an important step in expanding flexible, interdisciplinary sustainability education at the graduate level.

This year also marked a new chapter for the Sustainability Council as we moved into our new home in University Commons in January 2025. The space has quickly become a hub for collaboration, events, and student engagement, strengthening our visibility and accessibility within the heart of campus.

I would like to thank our outstanding staff, instructors, affiliates, and student leaders for their dedication and creativity, as well as our many campus and community partners whose collaboration continues to amplify our impact.

Looking ahead, we are entering an exciting phase of growth and consolidation. With strong undergraduate momentum, new graduate credentials on the horizon, and an expanding network of partners, our focus is on deepening academic integration, strengthening pathways from learning to practice, and supporting interdisciplinary leadership for sustainability across the university.

We welcome your engagement as we continue to advance this shared work.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'RJS' followed by a long horizontal line.

Robert J. Summers

Academics

An important part of the Sustainability Council's mission is to support sustainability-focused learning. To achieve this goal, we work with departments and programs across campus to support sustainability teaching and learning in their programs. Additionally, we develop and offer sustainability-focused programs and courses.

Some of our key initiatives include the Certificate in Sustainability, our sustainability (SUST) courses, support for sustainability-focused student research, support for the reinvigoration of the BA Environmental Studies degree program, and the development of a new course-based Master's of Sustainability degree.

Certificate in Sustainability

The Certificate in Sustainability is an embedded credential that recognizes students who integrate sustainability learning within their degree program. Open to undergraduates in 10 faculties, it is designed for students to develop interdisciplinary, problem/transition-focused thinking about sustainability within their standard course load. As part of the certificate, students complete a capstone integrative project, which they must present publicly. The Certificate in Sustainability is a valuable credential for any student wanting to kick-start a career or pursue graduate studies in sustainability.

Requirements

Students enrolled in the Certificate in Sustainability are required to complete:

- Three units in core courses
- Three units in focused courses
- Six units in related courses
- An independent integrative project on a sustainability topic
- Attendance at 12 hours of approved sustainability lectures, tracked through a Google form

Student Presentations (in-person)

Certificate students presented their integrative projects to various in-person and online audiences in the 2024-25 academic year. They delivered in-person poster or oral presentations at the following events:

- Foundations Summit for Sustainability & Leadership (November 2024)
- Bentley Lecture (February 2025)
- Festival of Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities (March 2025)
- SustainSU Research Night in Sustainability (March 2025)
- Celebrate Sustainability Awards (April 2025)
- Augustana's Student Academic Conference (April 2025)
- Faculty of Engineering Dean's Research Awards

Students also shared their work online via Instagram, YouTube, and LinkedIn posts distributed by the Sustainability Council.

Each presentation offered students the opportunity to share their work and engage with a broad, interdisciplinary audience.

Advising and Support

Academic advisors play a vital role in supporting certificate students as they complete their integrative projects and meet program requirements. In 2024–25, 122 students from North Campus, Campus Saint-Jean, and Augustana were assigned to advisors between July 1, 2024, and May 14, 2025.

The academic advisors included Guillermo Hernandez Ramirez (Renewable Resources, ALES), Arlene Oak (Human Ecology, ALES), Natacha Louis (Campus Saint-Jean), Sarah Pelletier (Campus Saint-Jean), Varghese Manaloor (Augustana – Social Sciences)

Howie Harshaw, the certificate’s associate director, supported the program by providing guidance to advisors and the academic sustainability coordinator, reviewing course addition and exception requests, and attending meetings with the academic advisors.

Systems and Tools

In 2024–25, the Certificate in Sustainability was integrated into the Academic Advisement Report (AAR) tool in collaboration with the College of Natural and Applied Sciences (CNAS).

Awards and Graduates

The annual Sarah Ford Award in Sustainability was offered for the first time in 2024–25. This scholarship provides \$2,500 to one Certificate in Sustainability student per year. It aims to reduce financial barriers for students and inspire them to strive for excellence in sustainability.

In the 2024–25 academic year, 98 students successfully completed all certificate requirements and graduated with the Certificate in Sustainability.

From July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025, 190 new students enrolled in the Certificate in Sustainability, reflecting growing interest and engagement in sustainability education across the university.

The Certificate in Sustainability allowed me to really understand what sustainability is from a multitude of perspectives. As an engineering student, many of my views were specifically related to the engineering profession, so in a lot of ways, this program gave me the full picture.

Jayman Cannataro, BSc in Mechanical Engineering, Fifth-year student

Certificate enrolment by faculty in the 2024-25 academic year (as of June 30, 2025):

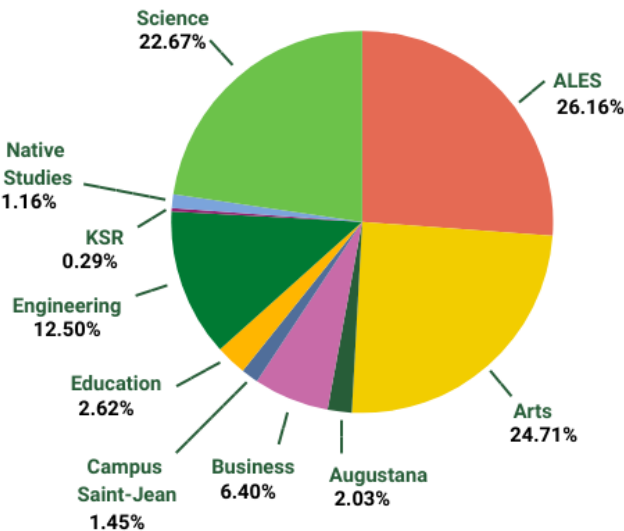


Figure 1. Certificate enrolment by faculty in the 2024-25 academic year.

STUDENT INTEGRATIVE PROJECTS IN 2024-25 (ONLINE)

59 Instagram presentations, YouTube videos and LinkedIn posts shared on our official social media accounts.

Featured integrative projects (available on the Sustainability Council website, on the Certificate Stories & Profiles page, under the Library of Integrative Projects):



Empowering Households with Solar Solutions: A Path to Sustainable Living by Dingcheng Liang.



Overconsumption: Is There a Cost to Being 'That Girl'? by Sadie Ouellet.



The Many Ways to Mitigate Wildfire! by Zoe Cinnamon

Is Renewable Energy Stimulating the Economy? by Maya Krizan

Sustainability Course Offerings

 2024-25 HIGHLIGHTS

- Students from **over 30 different degree programs** enrolled in SUST 201 and SUST 202
- **453 students enrolled** in SUST 201 and SUST 202 in 2024–25, and enrolment **surpasses 575 students** for the 2025–26 academic year
- **Four offerings each of SUST 201 and SUST 202,** and **one offering of SUST 300** over the last three academic years

SUST COURSES

One of the ways the Sustainability Council has expanded sustainability learning on campus is by launching new sustainability (SUST) courses, the first of which went live in Fall 2021. These institution-wide courses introduce students from diverse academic programs to scholarship. They are designed to help students better understand sustainability-related challenges at both global and local scales and introduce students to alternative approaches scholars and policymakers use to address these challenges.

During the last four academic years (2020–21 through 2024–25), the Sustainability Council developed and offered its first suite of SUST courses, including:

- **Four offerings each of SUST 201 and SUST 202**
- **One offering of SUST 300**

SUSTAINABILITY COURSES

SUST 201

Introduction to Sustainability

An introduction to the history of sustainability as a concept, contemporary sustainability issues, and the diverse perspectives that disciplines and professions take when approaching sustainability.

SUST 202

Global Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals

An introduction to sustainable development with a global perspective and a focus on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

SUST 300

Topics in Sustainability

Topics for this course vary, and it may be taken more than once for credit, provided that no topic is repeated.

SUST 410

Directed Study in Sustainability

Directed research or study in a sustainability area defined by the student and supervising instructor. May be used to fulfill the integrative project requirement of the Certificate in Sustainability. Registration requires approval.

Enrolment Trends and Course Demand

Collectively, SUST 201 and 202 were very well received by students and operated near full capacity in 2024–25. To meet growing demand, additional sections will be offered in future years. The first SUST 300 course, on Environmental Conflict and Social Ecological Systems, was offered in Fall 2023, and a second offering, “Energy and Policy in Alberta: Past, Present, and Future”, is planned for Fall 2025. An additional section of SUST 201 will also be offered in Winter 2026 for the first time.

Integration of SUST Courses Across Degree Programs

In 2024–25, students enrolled in these courses came from more than 30 different degree programs, demonstrating the wide interest and reach of sustainability education. We will continue to work to expand access to these two courses.

French-Language and Augustana Offerings

DEVDU 201 and 202, two French-language courses that cover material aligned with SUST 201 and 202, are offered at Campus Saint-Jean. DEVDU 202 is cross-listed with SC PO 364/SOCIE 364. At Augustana, AUENV 220 is an introduction to sustainability that includes some of the content from SUST 201 and 202.

Community Service-Learning (CSL)

In the Winter 2025 term, 12 SUST 202 students participated in Community Service-Learning (CSL) placements with three organizations. One pair of students created digital and physical marketing materials related to climate change and health to assist with a media campaign for the Climate Change and Global Health Research Group. Another group worked with the Energy + Climate Action department at the University of Alberta, conducting interviews with local food providers to understand barriers to meeting the university’s sustainable operations certification. Students reported that the CSL placements offered valuable and engaging experiences, allowing them to apply course concepts and gain first-hand knowledge of integrating sustainability into a business setting.

Student Research and Independent Projects

Twenty-one students have successfully completed SUST 410 since the Winter 2022 term, including 10 students in the 2024–25 academic year alone. Under the supervision of professors from across the university, students in 2024–25 completed projects on diverse topics, such as regenerative agriculture, waste management, sustainable housing, ecological restoration, local climate governance, textile sustainability, and ecological network analysis for conservation.

Future Course Development

SUST 300 will be offered for the second time in Fall 2025. The topic will be “Energy and Policy in Alberta”, and students will explore Alberta’s energy landscape—past, present, and future—through the lens of sustainability, public policy, and innovation.

Next up will be the development and launching of new graduate-level SUST courses, which will be available to graduate students across the university. The first of these courses will be offered during the Winter 2026 term.

Sustainability/ Sustainable Development Goals Across the Curriculum

The Sustainability Council continues to work on the integration of sustainability and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) across academic disciplines. This work includes the rollout of a small pilot grant for Sustainability Across the Curriculum, SDG integration across curricula, the delivery of SDG-themed guest lectures, and upcoming engagement with undergraduate programs that address environmental sustainability.

Two Sustainability Across the Curriculum pilot grants (\$6,500 each) were awarded in 2024–25 to Arlene Oak (Human Ecology) and Kevin Jones (Resource Economics and Environmental Sociology).

Arlene Oak is redeveloping two Human Ecology courses (HECOL 201 and HECOL 662) to emphasize sustainable production and consumption, including “cradle to cradle” cycles of disposal, recycling, and renewal. The redesign integrates sustainability as a concept, research area, and mode of practice, and contributes to the course-based Master of Sustainability.

Kevin Jones is redesigning R SOC 365/665 Sociology of Environment and Development, a longstanding course in the Department of Resource Economics and Environmental Sociology. The course examines the relationship between development and the environment at local, regional, national, and international levels. It is currently offered at both the undergraduate and graduate levels as part of the course-based Master of Agriculture. The redesign will provide students with interdisciplinary perspectives and practical sustainability knowledge.

As part of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Week, the Sustainability Council hosted a panel discussion titled *Building SDGs into Curriculum*. Panelists represented a cross-section of faculty members who have integrated the SDGs into their curricula, including Breanne Aylward (Public Health), Greg King (Augustana), Leo Wong (Business), and Mustafa Gül (Engineering). Panelists shared their experiences, key takeaways, and strategies for bringing SDG content to life in the classroom.

The Sustainability Council’s project planner – SDG Engagement supported the integration of SDG content in classrooms through the delivery of SDG-themed guest lectures. One lecture was delivered for the Augustana course AUENV 220 (Applications in Sustainability) and focused on SDG reporting and rankings. The second lecture was delivered for NU FS 377 (Introduction to Population and Public Health Nutrition) and focused on University of Alberta programs addressing SDG 2: Zero Hunger.

Over the next year, the Sustainability Council will continue engaging undergraduate programs across campus that address environmental sustainability. Guided by the concept of “One University,” these efforts aim to increase awareness, coordinate course offerings, and facilitate access to sustainability courses across programs. In addition to expanding learning opportunities, this work may foster new partnerships, program specializations,



On the right: **FURCA Winner for Outstanding Sustainability Research Award, Jasmine Sekhon**

and potentially new academic programs.

Support for Student Research

FESTIVAL OF UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH AND CREATIVE ACTIVITIES OUTSTANDING SUSTAINABILITY RESEARCH AWARDS

The Festival of Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities (FURCA) is the University of Alberta's annual campus-wide celebration of undergraduate research. Organized by the Undergraduate Research Initiative (URI), the event gives undergraduate students from across disciplines an opportunity to showcase their research. As an annual sponsor and collaborator, the Sustainability Council recognizes outstanding sustainability-focused research by awarding \$300 per project, to a maximum of three projects. This amount was increased from \$250 per project last year.

In 2025, more than 160 students presented at FURCA. Of these presentations, 22 poster presentations and 10 oral presentations were sustainability focused.

FURCA 2025 was held from March 11–13, 2025. Judges from the Sustainability Council selected three outstanding projects with a sustainability focus. These projects demonstrated innovative approaches and integrated systems thinking across the environmental, social, and economic dimensions of sustainability. The 2025 award recipients were:

- **Tony Yuen**, whose research examined the social and environmental impacts of community gardens and their role in advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- **Luke Beattie** (Augustana), who explored how perceptions, attitudes, and knowledge influence urban forest dynamics in Camrose, Alberta.
- **Jasmine Sekhon**, whose research examined the effects of climate change on the health and resilience of the LGBTQIA+ community and highlighted the need for continued research at this intersection.

Support for the BA in Environmental Studies Program

The BA in Environmental Studies is an interdisciplinary degree program focused on environmental sustainability and offered through a partnership between the Faculties of Arts, Science, and Agricultural, Life & Environmental Sciences (ALES). While the program has successfully attracted and graduated students, its complex institutional structure has posed governance challenges.

In the 2021–22 academic year, the Sustainability Council supported the re-establishment of the Environmental Studies Committee and continues to assist with program changes, program promotion, and support for both the committee and the Environmental Studies Students Association (ESSA).

In the 2024–25 academic year, the Environmental Studies Committee began developing a fourth concentration on climate change for the program, with plans to introduce this new concentration in coming years. The committee identified potential courses across the university and consulted with faculties, departments, and students who may be impacted by this change.

The Sustainability Council and the Environmental Studies Committee increased program visibility through several initiatives. In 2024, they met with recruiters from Arts and ALES to discuss program promotion, and several identified

strategies have since been implemented. These included promotion at the 2024 Open House, where Environmental Studies chairs delivered a presentation to prospective students and their parents, and current Environmental Studies students shared their experiences at the Sustainability Council table.

In partnership with the Environmental Studies Committee and recruitment teams from Arts and ALES, the Council produced a promotional video for the University of Alberta On-Demand Videos Library. Featuring alumni testimonials, the video highlights the program's interdisciplinary strengths, skill development, and career pathways. It is now featured in Open House and recruitment presentations and on the University of Alberta and Sustainability Council YouTube channels, with more than 330 views to date.

The Sustainability Council and the Environmental Studies Committee provide ongoing support to ESSA, which serves students in both the Arts and ALES faculties. Established in September 2022, ESSA aims to foster community and connection among Environmental Studies students.

In September 2024, the Council co-organized a pizza gathering with ESSA to connect new and returning students with committee members and peers. During SDG Month, the Council partnered with the Career Centre to deliver an online "Careers in Sustainability" panel featuring Environmental Studies alumni, open to the broader

The Environmental Studies program delivered a rich, multidisciplinary education, blending insights from ecology, economics, and policy. This comprehensive approach not only deepened my understanding of environmental challenges but also empowered me to envision and craft solutions that address the complexities of these interconnected issues from multiple angles.

Tidjani Assad Abdelhakim, BSc in Environmental Studies, Graduated 2016



Sarah Gomez, a Certificate in Sustainability student who had presented her integrative project with a poster during Celebrate Sustainability Awards.

university community.

The Sustainability Council also supported ESSA-led events, including a December 2024 careers event with representatives from 15 environmental and sustainability organizations, allowing students to explore career and volunteer opportunities. In March 2025, ESSA organized an SDG Month panel titled *Exploring Perspectives on Intersectional Environmentalism*, with promotional and logistical support from the Council. In recognition of its leadership and commitment to sustainability, ESSA received a Campus Sustainability Leaders Award in April 2025.

Course-Based Master's in Sustainability

In partnership with the College of Natural and Applied Sciences, a steering committee was formed in May 2023 to plan and develop an interdisciplinary, course-based Master's in Sustainability with multiple streams. The proposed program has progressed through university governance and has been submitted to the provincial government for approval, with an anticipated launch in

2026. The Sustainability Council will deliver the program's four core sustainability courses, while concentration courses will be offered by academic units across the university.



ESSA hosted the SDG Month panel 'Exploring Perspectives on Intersectional Environmentalism' in March 2025.

Experiential Learning

Experiential learning connects students to their fields of study through experiences that lead to challenge, reflection and personal growth. Students engage in self-discovery and learn how to use their talents, creativity and curiosity to contribute to collective action on sustainability.



2024-25 Experiential Learning Highlights

94

Active Participants

Includes SC Interns & Volunteers, Adaptation Resilience Training PAs, Sustainability Scholars

Sustainability Scholars

Sustainability Scholars are current University of Alberta graduate students who complete four-month applied sustainability research internships.

In 2024, we continued our partnership with Mitacs by facilitating applications for the Mitacs Business Strategy Internship (BSI) program. The BSI program offers two matching funding options: \$10,000 and \$15,000. For accepted projects, the partner organization contributes \$5,000 or \$7,500, respectively, and Mitacs matches this funding. For Spring/Summer 2024, we established 10 Scholar positions with five different hosts, 8 of which were funded by Mitacs. These positions cover a range of topics, including the identification of gaps in active transportation with Paths for People, mapping community gardens for the City of Edmonton, and assessing the impacts of greenhouse gas emissions on hybrid and electric equipment for Clark Builders.

The Sustainability Council serves as the employer for Sustainability Scholars, reducing the administrative work for our host organizations. According to our established wage rate, scholars would work

approximately 359 hours on \$10,000 Mitacs projects and 539 hours on \$15,000 Mitacs projects. However, the University of Alberta Energy + Climate Action project titled University of Alberta Zero Waste Process Map and the Clark Builders project titled Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impacts on Hybrid & Electric Equipment were fully funded by the host organization and not supported by Mitacs. These projects were funded for 525 hours and 300 hours, respectively.

Adaptation Resilience Training

The Adaptation Resilience Training (ART) is a multi-year initiative that advances understanding of climate change adaptation and emphasizes its relevance across diverse sectors and professions. Launched in 2019 through a formal collaboration between the Sustainability Council and Environment and Protected Areas (EPA), ART has been administered by the Sustainability Council since its inception. The program is funded by EPA, with additional funding from Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) in its earlier years.

Through the ART program, students and recent graduates are hired as Project Assistants (PAs) and connected with partner organizations to work on projects that advance climate adaptation and resilience in Alberta. Since its inception, the program has supported five cohorts of PAs, with participation from over 100 students and recent graduates. Across these years, 45 partner organizations have participated, including the Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation, the City of Edmonton, the City of Calgary, watershed organizations such as the Bow River Basin Council and the Old Man Watershed, and nonprofit organizations including the International Festival of Winter Cinema and Organic Alberta.

The fifth and final cohort of the ART program began in September 2024, with 8 Project Assistants collaborating with 8 unique partner organizations. Their projects spanned diverse topics, including headwaters and

downstream user adaptation needs, low-tech riverscape restoration, climate change and health hub development, and the creation of climate adaptation materials for audiences ranging from elementary students to working professionals. This cohort completed their internships in September 2025.

Over the past five years, the ART program has achieved significant milestones. Key highlights include:

- **ClimateWest Training Modules:** Developed by PAs as part of the BRACE initiative, these include five foundational courses and four modules tailored to specific practice areas.
- **ART Summit for the Future:** Organized by the first two cohorts in 2021 and 2022, featuring workshops, guest speakers, panel discussions, and final PA presentations.
- **Showcasing at ClimateWest Forum:** In 2024, three PAs from Cohort 4 presented posters in Edmonton, sharing their innovative work and connecting with professionals from Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba.
- **Emerald Award Nomination:** The ART program was shortlisted in the Shared Footprints category, recognizing its contributions to climate adaptation and resilience.

As the ART program concludes, the Sustainability Council reflects with pride on its years of impact, fostering a new generation of professionals skilled in climate adaptation and resilience.

“This is an outstanding program. Everything from the focus of the program, the caliber of PAs, the ART communication, and beyond was exceptional. The value of this program is exceptional: it provides career development opportunities for PAs, as well as high quality support from PAs on critical projects. This is the best program of its kind that I have ever participated in.”

ART Program Mentor

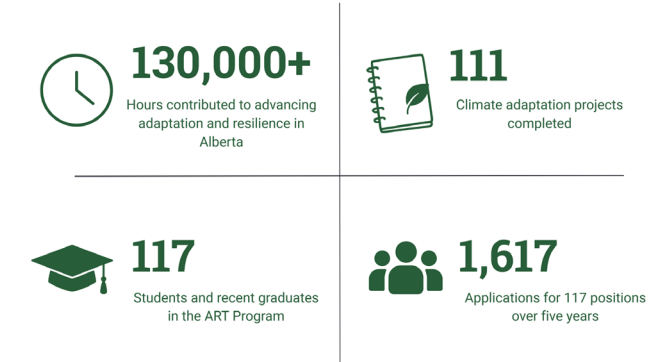


Figure 2. ART Impact Statistics

Internships with the Sustainability Council

The Sustainability Council internships provide undergraduate and graduate students with part-time work experience throughout the academic year. Interns gain valuable skills supporting applied projects, communications, marketing, and outreach activities. They also develop leadership and workplace skills by overseeing volunteers and collaborating with Sustainability Council staff, as well as University of Alberta faculty, staff, and students.

Our internships are an investment in promising students and often lead to careers in sustainability. Many interns are former Sustainability Council volunteers.

For the 2024–25 academic year, three Sustainability interns joined our team:



Jenna Paré (BSc in Environmental and Conservation Sciences) led the planning and delivery of the 2025 Celebrate Sustainability Leaders Awards, including a redesigned nomination process that resulted in a record number of nominees. Jenna also coordinated programming

for Sustainability Central during Week of Welcome, supported the Council's booth at the U of A Open House, and organized the annual Volunteer Appreciation Event. She supported data collection for the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings (THE IR), design and outreach initiatives, and event tabling throughout the year. A previous Sustainability Council volunteer, Jenna is heading to the Netherlands in Fall 2025 to study abroad at Wageningen University and Research.

One of my goals through this position was to get more involved with the campus community, and I've been able to develop, plan and implement many activities especially for SDG Month, that have allowed me to engage not only with students but also faculty, staff and community members. The knowledge and skills gained through working with the Sustainability Council this year are invaluable and very transferable to other current and future opportunities.

Anagha Devkota, Master of Public Health



Spencer Wearden (MSc in Urban and Regional Planning) played key roles in planning and delivering the Lecture Series, SDG Month Intro Fair, and Foundations Summit for Sustainability and Leadership (FSSL). He supported data collection for both the rankings, namely Times Higher Education Impact Rankings (THE

IR) and the Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) Sustainability Rankings. He also helped with outreach, logistics, and engagement events like Week of Welcome and the RE Peter Conference. Spencer authored two stories highlighting sustainability in academics and contributed to social media analytics and design projects. He will return to campus next year to continue his graduate program.



Sustainability Council interns for the 2024-25 academic year from L to R: Spencer Wearden, Jenna Paré, and Anagha Devkota.



Anagha Devkota (Master of Public Health candidate) led the conceptualization, planning, and delivery of the University's first-ever SDG Month, featuring over 22 campus-wide events. She supported the Council's Lecture Series, recruiting speakers and delivering events in the

winter term. Anagha also led data collection for THE IR and contributed to initiatives including Week of Welcome, the RE Peter Conference, a Climate Change and Health film screening, Earth Day, and promotional work. She will enter the second year of her master's program in Fall 2025 and intends to maintain a connection with the Council.

Volunteer Program

The Sustainability Council (SC) Volunteer Program serves as a hub for sustainability-oriented volunteer opportunities on campus. In collaboration with campus partners, the program promotes a diverse range of volunteer opportunities that offer students meaningful and engaging ways to contribute to sustainability within the university community.

To support ongoing communication with the volunteer base, the Sustainability Council distributes a monthly Volunteer Newsletter to a subscriber list of over 500 individuals. The newsletter highlights SC-led volunteer opportunities as well as opportunities from campus partners, including Energy + Climate Action, the Clothing Repair Café, and SustainSU. In addition, the newsletter features external volunteer opportunities, professional development resources, and upcoming sustainability-related events.

The Sustainability Intern position has provided me with valuable opportunities to develop my skills in project coordination, writing and design. It has also been an opportunity to build my network within the sustainability community, fostering meaningful relationships with academics and professionals across the field.

Spencer Wearden, MSc in Urban and Regional Planning

Throughout the 2024–25 academic year, more than 70 SC volunteers contributed their time and skills at 12 events, including Week of Welcome, Open House, and SDG Month. Volunteer roles spanned outreach, engagement, event planning, and facilitation, each playing a vital part in the success of these events.

In recognition of their dedication and impact, the Sustainability Council hosted a Volunteer Appreciation Lunch in March 2025 to thank volunteers for their continued support and commitment to campus sustainability.

The Sustainability Council also provides support to, and fosters collaboration with, Sustain SU's Volunteer Program, enhancing the range of opportunities available for students to engage with sustainability.



Campus as a Living Lab

Campus as a Living Lab (CALL) is a collaborative program between the Sustainability Council and Energy + Climate Action (formerly Energy Management and Sustainable Operations). CALL connects the University of Alberta's core academic functions (education and research) with campus operations. The program offers staff, faculty, and students experiential learning and research opportunities focused on sustainability. These projects use the university's campuses, including grounds, buildings, biodiversity, and communities, as a testing ground for innovation and knowledge generation, with the aim of developing creative solutions to existing and emerging

sustainability challenges.

CALL relies on partnerships with many University of Alberta programs and initiatives to advance opportunities for students. As such, CALL is currently implemented through the following programs and initiatives, directly and indirectly: Campus Sustainability Grants, administered by Energy + Climate Action; Sustainability Scholars, the Adaptation Resilience Training Program (ART), and the Certificate in Sustainability, all administered by the Sustainability Council (ART is funded and supported by the Government of Alberta); and the Undergraduate Research Initiative (URI) Campus as a Living Lab Stipend, a collaboration between URI, Energy + Climate Action, and the Sustainability Council. In the coming year, we will work collaboratively with Energy + Climate Action to streamline access to CALL opportunities and to further strengthen university-wide connections and coordination.

CAMPUS SUSTAINABILITY GRANTS (Managed by Energy + Climate Action)

The Campus Sustainability Grants program is funded by recouped energy savings and managed by Energy + Climate Action. Supported projects align with the “campus as a living lab” model, which uses university infrastructure and programming as a test bed for sustainability innovation. The Sustainability Council supports the program through promotion and by holding a seat on the adjudication committee. In the 2023–24 academic year, Mustafa Gül (Engineering), a collaborator on several Sustainability Council initiatives (e.g., Lecture Series, SDG Curriculum Panel), served on the adjudication committee. Additional details about funded projects are available on the Energy + Climate Action website.

The following projects were funded in 2024-25:

- Reducing energy consumption in the Department of Art & Design (completed)
- A bright light future: fluorescence in undergraduate biology labs
- Sustainable water baths for physical chemistry labs
- Zero waste renewal with Campus Community & Recreation
- Enhancing sustainability in the University of Alberta

Sculpture Studio (completed)

- Analyzing building effects on wind energy potential using the University of Alberta's North Campus
- Utilizing advanced drone and thermal imaging technologies for campus building energy efficiency mapping
- Upcycling University of Alberta-branded waste textiles

On June 3, 2025, Energy + Climate Action hosted a Campus Sustainability Mixer. The event provided an opportunity to learn about innovative projects from Campus Sustainability Grant recipients and to connect with sustainability-minded colleagues from across the campus community.

Sustainability Scholars, Adaptation Resilience Training Program and Certificate in Sustainability

An example of a Campus as a Living Lab (CALL)-oriented Sustainability Scholars project from the Spring/Summer 2024 cohort is the *University of Alberta Zero Waste*

Process Map, managed by Energy + Climate Action.

Under the Adaptation Resilience Training Program (ART), the Sustainability Council collaborates with University of Alberta partners as host organizations, some of which qualify as CALL projects. For example, in the 2024–25 ART cohort, a project assistant (PA) worked with the Climate Change + Health Hub on a project titled *Expanding the Climate Change and Health Network in Alberta*. Through this project, the PA is creating a map and network of active climate change researchers on campus across disciplines, faculties, and departments.

Undergraduate students in the Certificate in Sustainability complete a variety of integrative projects under the guidance of an academic advisor. Some of these projects are applied or research-oriented, and some use the University of Alberta campus as the subject of their research.

Examples of CALL-oriented integrative projects in 2024-25 include:

- **Building a Campus Culture of Waste Reduction through Student Exchange Systems:** In this project, a student identified that waste is generated when students move out of University of Alberta residences and lack the time or ability to find new homes for usable items. The student's YouTube video proposed and demonstrated a student-run free exchange system that allows students who wish to discard items to communicate directly with students

My internship with the Adaptation Resilience Training program was pivotal in my career development. I had the privilege of engaging with esteemed water management experts, agricultural producers, and nonprofit leaders who generously dedicated their time to amplifying the message of adaptation. These experiences have provided me with an invaluable foundation, and I am excited to carry these tools and skills with me.

Project Assistant, Adaptation Resilience Training program

who need them, creating an accessible way to exchange goods.

- **Rainwater collection for irrigation and greywater use on Augustana campus:** In this project, an Augustana student used data from the Augustana campus and nearby weather stations to understand the environmental and economic benefits of developing a rainwater collection system on campus. The aim of the project was to understand how to save money and reduce water consumption on the Augustana campus.

Undergraduate Researcher Initiative Campus as a Living Lab Stipend

In partnership with the Undergraduate Research Initiative (URI) and Energy + Climate Action, the Sustainability Council provides undergraduate students with opportunities to conduct paid, sustainability-focused research with an on-campus emphasis. In the 2024–25 academic year, nine applications were considered for funding, with one project selected for support through the URI Campus as a Living Lab Stipend.

The selected recipient will complete a project titled ***Green, Gold, and Hungry: Prioritizing food insecurity mitigation in U of A's sustainability initiatives***. The project will establish a baseline understanding of food insecurity within the campus community, which will be used to assess whether hunger alleviation on campus can be addressed through existing university sustainability frameworks. The research will use an interdisciplinary approach and will culminate in the submission of a scholarly article, a report detailing comparative analyses of campus programs, and a presentation to the Sustainable Food Network.

The project began on May 1, 2025, and is expected to be completed by August 31, 2025. The student received \$15,000 to support the project.

Engagement and Events

Sustainability Council events are designed to play a number of roles in the University of Alberta community. Our events connect students, staff, faculty and community members who are interested in sustainability.



2024-25 at
a glance

29

sustainability events
in 2024/25

2.9k

attendees at
our events

91

students presented
their work

Our events raise awareness of sustainability and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), empowering researchers to disseminate knowledge to new audiences, and they encourage engagement with the exemplary sustainability-related work being done at the University of Alberta.

This year has seen a shift to hybrid or fully in-person events; given there's still a sizable audience that joins events virtually, our aim was to offer hybrid events whenever possible.

Our initiatives this academic year included participation in Week of Welcome, Open House, the Sustainability Lecture Series, the Foundations Summit for Sustainability & Leadership (FSSL), collaborative events with the City of Edmonton, ESSA, and SDG Month (new this year).

Sustainability Central at Week of Welcome

The Sustainability Council hosted a table during fall student orientation between September 5–8, 2024. Located in Main Quad, the table was hosted alongside Sustain SU, Energy + Climate Action, and Zero Waste to create "Sustainability Central." The goals for the week included promoting the Sustainability Council's programs and events to new and returning students, as well as incentivizing



Anagha Devkota volunteering at a Sustainability Council table during the 2024 Week of Welcome, where she engaged students in sustainable practices at the University of Alberta.

participation in a sustainability literacy assessment. Volunteer recruitment was highly successful, with a total of 33 volunteers and four Sustainability Council staff members delivering outreach during Week of Welcome. By the end of the week, volunteers and staff engaged with 1,065 individuals, resulting in 209 newsletter sign-ups and the completion of 432 sustainability literacy assessment surveys.

Open House

On October 19, 2024, the Sustainability Council hosted a table at the Open House, an annual event that provides the community with an opportunity to learn about the University of Alberta's faculties, programs, and services. The primary goal was to engage prospective students and raise awareness of how the Sustainability Council integrates sustainability into academic pathways.

To support these goals, we engaged with parents and prospective students, distributed bookmarks and other print materials related to Sustainability Council programs, and facilitated interactive activities, including a Plinko game and a gift card raffle. Two staff members, one faculty member, and 16 Sustainability Council volunteers interacted with 724 attendees. In total, 45 individuals signed up to receive additional information about the Certificate in Sustainability. Two Environmental Studies volunteers also tabled alongside the Sustainability Council to

promote the BA in Environmental Studies degree program. Overall, Open House was a successful event that resulted in increased volunteer participation and meaningful engagement with prospective students.

Sustainable Development Goals Month

2024-25 HIGHLIGHTS

- **Over 925 attendees** directly engaged throughout the month
- **22 events** organized across campuses
- **Partnered with 32** on-campus and community organizations



Volunteers, tabling partners, and community attendees gathered together for SDG Month 2025.

SDG Month (formerly SDG Week) is a national initiative led by the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) Canada, hosted at the University of Calgary in collaboration with Colleges and Institutes Canada and the Sustainability Hub at the University of British Columbia. The program engages post-secondary institutions across Canada to foster collaboration, raise awareness, and promote action on the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In March 2025, the Sustainability Council launched the University of Alberta's first official SDG Month, building on the foundations of previous SDG Week and Sustainability Awareness Week (SAW) programming. In collaboration with 32 campus and community partners, we hosted 22 interactive events throughout the month, engaging over 925 participants from the University of Alberta community, including students, faculty, staff, and local community members, across a broad range of sustainability topics.

The month kicked off with the SDG Intro Fair, held in the central atrium of the newly opened University Commons building, the new home of the Sustainability Council. The fair featured 21 partner organizations from both campus and the local community, offering attendees the chance to explore sustainability initiatives through interactive booths, activities, photo stations, and giveaways. This event created an engaging and accessible space for the university community to connect with sustainability efforts and discover new ways to get involved.

A highlight of the month was the SDG Trivia event, which brought

students together from six post-secondary institutions across Alberta: University of Alberta, University of Calgary, SAIT, Bow Valley College, Norquest College, and MacEwan University. The event encouraged friendly competition, tested SDG knowledge, and fostered cross-campus collaboration and learning.

Additional collaborative programming included a session co-hosted with the City of Edmonton on climate resilience and heritage preservation, where participants explored how built heritage can adapt to climate risks through thoughtful retrofits. Another key event was a panel hosted with the Faculty of Law and the Environmental Law Centre, which examined how Canada's legal and constitutional frameworks can support sustainable development.

Other notable events included a green building tour of the LEED Silver-certified Centennial Centre for Interdisciplinary Science (CCIS),

a Careers in Sustainability panel, a Clothing Repair Café, and workshops on pressing issues such as food security, youth mental health in the context of climate change, affordable housing, and intersectional environmentalism.

Looking ahead to 2025–26, the Sustainability Council plans to continue building on the success of SDG Month. We will focus on delivering fewer, yet more impactful events, strategically distributed throughout the month. This approach aims to further enhance engagement and broaden the impact of sustainability efforts within the University of Alberta community.

Lecture Series

The Sustainability Council's ongoing Lecture Series continues to provide a platform for meaningful dialogue on sustainability, equity, and climate action. Throughout the 2024–25 academic year, the series featured presentations and panel discussions by researchers and practitioners from a range of disciplines, including public health, political science, Indigenous studies, urban planning, environmental science, and law.

In total, 14 lectures were hosted during the year, featuring 22 speakers and drawing 513 attendees from across the university and the broader community. Seven of these lectures were part of the 2025 SDG Month programming held in March. While most events took place in person, three were offered in a hybrid format in response to strong demand for virtual access, helping to expand the reach and accessibility of the series.

While the Sustainability Council led the logistical coordination of the Lecture Series, the events were made possible through collaboration with a range of partners, including the Climate Change + Health Hub, the Sustainable Development Goals Student Alliance, the Alberta Council for Global Cooperation, the City of Edmonton, the Fyrefly Institute, the Environmental Studies Students' Association, and the Affordable Housing Solutions Lab. These partnerships enhanced the series by expanding capacity, broadening audiences, and fostering deeper engagement across diverse communities and areas of expertise.

Several events stood out for their unique formats and

high levels of engagement. The Climate Café and Lip Balm Making Workshop, hosted in partnership with the Sustainable Development Goals Student Alliance, provided a hands-on and reflective space for students to explore climate anxiety and take tangible action, and it was the most highly attended event of the series. Another highlight was the hybrid lecture Indigenous Peoples and Environmental Stewardship, in which speaker Sarah DeLano shared insights on urban sustainability and food sovereignty from the perspectives of immigrant and Métis women in Edmonton.

The 2024–25 Lecture Series underscored the value of creating consistent, accessible spaces for sustainability dialogue. While event planning went smoothly overall, coordinating hybrid sessions required additional support. Looking ahead, the Council plans to build on this momentum by deepening post-event engagement, expanding outreach to other campuses and broader audiences, and continuing to offer lectures in both in-person and hybrid formats.

A few featured guest speakers this year:



Wajed El-Halabi,
**Global Citizens not Global Robbers:
In Classrooms, Internships, Travel,
and Beyond**



Huong Le,
**Economic Expectation and Support
for Renewable Energy in Alberta's
Power Grid**



Sydney Gross,
**Retrofitting the Narrative Around
Climate Resilience and Heritage**



Interactive lecture with Breaune Aylward and Hannah Baynei on climate change and our health.

International Week

International Week (I-Week), organized by the University of Alberta International's (UAI) Global Education Program, brought global perspectives to the forefront by exploring international issues and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The 2025 event lineup centered around the theme of *Hope in Action*, providing attendees with opportunities to engage in inspiring lectures, insightful panels, and collaborative discussions.

This year, the Sustainability Council proudly supported I-Week by assisting with speaker suggestions, promoting events through our social media channels and newsletter, and encouraging participation across campus. Many of our team members also attended I-Week sessions, engaging in discussions and gaining valuable insights on sustainability challenges and solutions from a global perspective.

A standout session during I-Week 2025 was the *Truth Seekers & Storytellers* panel, where global journalists shared insights on how country and culture influence news. Moderated by Karen Unland, COO of Taproot Edmonton, the session featured journalists from Botswana, Lebanon, and Kazakhstan. One of our team members attended and found the discussions

both thought-provoking and valuable, gaining fresh perspectives on responsible news consumption and the role of journalism in shaping global understanding, particularly in an era where misinformation and fake news are widespread.

The 2025 I-Week was a powerful reminder of the importance of global dialogue in advancing sustainability and equity. We look forward to continuing to support and engage with this impactful initiative in future years.

Foundations Summit for Sustainability and Leadership (FSSL)

The Foundations Summit for Sustainability and Leadership (FSSL) is an annual one-day event that was hosted in person by Sustain SU and the LEAD Centre on November 30, 2024. This year was the 16th annual summit, with the event being split into two streams: *Sustainability* and *Leadership Fundamentals*. These streams worked together to give attendees the stepping

stones they need to leap forward as sustainability leaders. The **Sustainability** stream focused on four pillars of sustainability: social, environmental, economic, and human. According to the FSSL organizers, the human pillar focuses on fostering personal and professional growth and enabling participants to improve their own quality of life. The summit was open to both high-school and post-secondary students and included workshops and knowledge translation sessions that are valuable for people at all levels of sustainability expertise. Overall, FSSL had a total of 65 attendees this year.

As a main contributor to FSSL, the Sustainability Council hosted a volunteer-led, interactive workshop on the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This included a knowledge translation and open discussion portion to hear attendees' thoughts on the SDGs and concluded with a game of **Kahoot!** that rewarded players for their SDG knowledge. Along with the Sustainability Council's presentation, the **Sustainability** stream also offered workshops on how to tackle the different SDGs and how the University of Alberta campus is striving toward zero waste.

FSSL attendees also had the opportunity to attend the Involvement Fair over lunch, where they could speak with different organizations and student clubs on campus that are working toward a more sustainable future. The Sustainability Council attended the Involvement Fair to promote various programs, such as the Certificate in Sustainability. Two current certificate students also presented their integrative projects during a poster presentation at FSSL, fulfilling their presentation requirements.

One-Offs Events

Climate Change and Health Hub

In November 2024, the Sustainability Council supported the Climate Change and Health Hub's evening panel on ecological grief, hope, and collective action. This event brought together climate experts from the University of Alberta and special guest Edmonton city councillor Keren Tang.

Following the panel, attendees were invited to a screening

of National Geographic Impact Story Lab's recent film **FOR WINTER**. The documentary followed National Geographic explorer, ice core scientist, and University of Alberta professor Alison Criscitiello on an expedition to the summit plateau of Mount Logan to collect a record-breaking ice core. This powerful documentary aimed to inspire support for climate science, diversity in science and exploration, and hope for collective climate action.

The Council supported outreach and promotion for the event and took part in the tabling session, helping connect the campus community with opportunities for engagement in climate science and sustainability.

RE Peter Conference

The Sustainability Council was pleased to support the 2025 Dr. Richard E. Peter Biology Conference, an annual research showcase hosted by the Biological Sciences Graduate Student Association at the University of Alberta. The conference highlights graduate student research in the biological and life sciences and draws participation from institutions across Alberta.

This year's collaboration included co-organizing the keynote speaker, supporting outreach and promotional efforts, and participating in the conference's tabling session. These initiatives provided meaningful opportunities to engage the academic community in dialogue at the intersection of sustainability and scientific research.

A highlight of the event was the keynote address by Dr. Victor Shegelski, Teaching Professor and Collection Manager at the E.H. Strickland Entomological Museum. His presentation, *Make the Connection: Sustainability Science through Conversation*, emphasized the critical role of science communication in building public trust and advancing sustainability goals.

The session was well attended by students, faculty, and community members, reflecting growing interest in interdisciplinary approaches to sustainability. The Council's participation in the conference underscores its ongoing commitment to fostering sustainability across academic, research, and community settings at the



Dr. Victor Shegelski addresses attendees during the 2025 RE Peter Conference.

University of Alberta.

Day of Service - Volunteer Village

On Aug. 23, 2024, the Sustainability Council returned for another year at the Day of Service Volunteer Village event at the Lister Centre. This was an orientation initiative that introduces first-year residents to campus engagement opportunities.

At the Volunteer Village fair, we connected with 92 incoming students, highlighting volunteer roles, experiential learning, and sustainability-focused courses and programs. The event served as an important opportunity to build early awareness of our work and inspire students to explore sustainability throughout their time at the University.

Admitted Student Day

The Sustainability Council hosted a table at Admitted Student Day on March 22, 2025, where over 800 students who were newly admitted to the University of Alberta explored the campus, learned about their faculties, and connected with the campus community.

Engaging with over 130 new students, volunteers ran a Plinko game, handed out materials on SUST courses and the Certificate in Sustainability, and spoke about how to get involved with the Sustainability Council's initiatives.

Together Ensemble 2025

In May 2025, members of the Sustainability Council attended the Together|Ensemble conference, Canada's national gathering focused on advancing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The conference offered valuable opportunities to engage in panel discussions, build connections with sustainability practitioners across sectors, and explore ideas for collaboration and capacity building. Attending Together|Ensemble helped strengthen our understanding of national sustainability priorities and continues to inform our thinking as we develop future programming and partnerships on campus.

Climate Ready Prairies

In February 2025, the Project Planner: Internships and Experiential Learning attended Climate Ready Prairies, a training workshop hosted by ClimateWest and Re.Climate. The workshop explored climate communication strategies and provided participants with practical tools and insights. The training also includes two additional Community of Practice meetings and a follow-up session, which will be attended by the Project Planner. Overall, the training provided a valuable opportunity to connect with professionals and build relationships across Alberta.

Leadership and Active Citizenship

As one of Canada's leading universities, the University of Alberta has an important role to play in the transition to a more sustainable world. As a unit, the Sustainability Council works to ingrain the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and sustainability into our governance, research and teaching.



2024-25 at
a glance

8th

ranking globally for
the Times Higher
Education Impact
Rankings

58th

ranking for the
Quacquarelli
Symonds (QS)
Sustainability
Rankings

69

key collaborative
partnerships within
and outside of
campus

Reporting, Reputation and Rankings

The Sustainability Council undertakes sustainability reporting and tracking by co-leading submissions to the Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) Sustainability Rankings, the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings (THE IR), and the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System (STARS).

In Summer 2024, the Sustainability Council, in partnership with University of Alberta International (UAI), jointly assembled the 2025 submission for the QS Sustainability Rankings. These rankings assess institutions on their environmental impact, social responsibility, and governance practices, using indicators such as sustainable research, environmental education, equality, and community engagement. The University of Alberta was ranked 58th out of a total of 1,743 institutions, with an overall score of 91 out of 100.

In Fall 2024, the Sustainability Council, in partnership with UAI, jointly led and submitted data to the THE IR. The THE IR seeks to capture and assess world universities' success in advancing and delivering the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In our fifth submission of this annual ranking, we provided data for all 17 SDGs, and jumped from 6th (out of 2,152 institutions) to 8th in the world (out of 2,318 institutions). This continues the upward trajectory that was established in the first two THE IR submissions, in which we were ranked 11th (out of 1,406 institutions) and 64th (out of 1,118 institutions), respectively.

This was a boon for the Sustainability

Council as it allowed us to once again celebrate the impact of our researchers and students at a local and global scale. For all five submissions, the dedicated submission team was composed of key Sustainability Council and UAI staff, who collaborated primarily with Energy + Climate Action in gathering data from Facilities and Operations.

There are several benefits to using the THE IR to publicly identify and publicize the University's efforts in advancing the SDGs. These include:

- Enhancing the University's reputation and performance in other rankings
- Providing university leadership with an additional sustainability tracking and reporting mechanism
- Driving internal momentum for sustainability research and initiatives
- Helping to raise awareness of the SDGs across the institution

The triennial STARS submission is being led by Energy + Climate Action. The Sustainability Council and Energy + Climate Action collaborate closely on this reporting effort that involves both units' staff members. At the time of publication of this report, the Sustainability Council has completed the data collection and uploaded all of the data for their credits of the submission. Energy + Climate Action completed the STARS submission in Summer 2025.

Sustainable Development Goals at the University

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS COMMUNICATIONS WORKING GROUP

This year, the Sustainability Council deepened its collaboration with External Relations to enhance how the University of Alberta communicates its progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

To support the university's international reputation and improve visibility of the Sustainable Development

Goals (SDGs), the SDG Communications Working Group—comprised of representatives from Strategic Communications, Rankings & Reputation and the Sustainability Council—was established to develop a more integrated, collaborative communications strategy. Recognizing that impact rankings influence broader international rankings, the group created a one-year plan to build on earlier tactics and now meets regularly to align efforts and evaluate progress.

A key outcome was the refinement of SDG keyword tagging within Cascade, the university's content management system. In partnership with Digital & Creative, we helped improve tagging functionality so that stories now appear not only on their primary channels (Folio, The Quad, YouAlberta, Faculty News), but also on the Sustainability Council homepage and the relevant SDG pages of the SDG Info Hub. We also retroactively tagged 65 stories to improve the visibility of previously published content. This functionality helps surface relevant stories for readers, supports rankings submissions, and provides more integrated, consistent sustainability storytelling.

We also partnered closely with the Editorial Strategy team, who developed and launched a new Q&A-style series in The Quad titled Sustainability in Action. The Council contributes by suggesting potential story subjects and helping to amplify published articles through our newsletters and social media. This collaboration helps highlight researchers, educators and staff across campus whose work aligns with the SDGs, while building awareness and understanding of sustainability impacts in our community.

We continue to support opportunities for timely storytelling—for example, the January 2025 feature on Greg King, a past Campus Sustainability Award recipient, coincided with the call for 2025 award nominations. That feature played a role in garnering a record-breaking 75 applications received this year.

Together, these efforts contribute to a more cohesive and visible SDG communications strategy that supports both institutional storytelling and our performance in global sustainability rankings.



Robert Summers, Academic Director of the Sustainability Council, addresses affiliates at a networking luncheon.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS INFO HUB

Launched in 2021, the SDG Info Hub serves as a one-stop resource for students, faculty and the broader community to explore commitments, programs, courses and media stories aligned with each goal. Recent updates have enhanced usability through visual infographics and dynamic news feeds that automatically surface SDG-specific stories from platforms like Quad, Folio, NewTrails, University News and YouAlberta—making it easier than ever to see how the university is driving progress on each SDG.

Affiliate Network

The Sustainability Council is uniquely positioned to foster interdisciplinary collaboration across campus. One of the key ways this is achieved is through the Affiliate Network, an engaged community of academics who integrate sustainability into their teaching and research. Launched in Fall 2019, the network includes faculty members, instructors, technicians, librarians, and other academic staff from a wide range of disciplines and at all career stages.

Affiliates receive regular communications about funding opportunities, collaborative initiatives, and ways to engage with Sustainability Council programs. In addition to staying informed, members of the network contribute meaningfully to the direction of sustainability teaching and research at the University of Alberta by participating in events, consultations, and cross-campus discussions.

In March 2025, during SDG Month, the Sustainability Council hosted an Affiliate Luncheon. This in-person event provided an opportunity for

affiliates to connect with one another, share ideas, and engage directly with Council staff. The luncheon also included a presentation on current and upcoming initiatives, including the development of the University's new Master of Sustainability program, which generated significant interest and discussion among attendees.

AFFILIATES BY FACULTY IN 2024-25:

- Agricultural, Life & Environmental Sciences
- Arts
- Augustana Campus
- Alberta School of Business
- Campus Saint-Jean
- Education
- Engineering
- Kinesiology, Sport, and Recreation
- Law
- Medicine & Dentistry
- Native Studies
- Nursing
- Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences
- Public Health
- Science
- Libraries



Group shot of the 2025 CSA winners taken during the Celebrate Sustainability Awards event on April 10, 2025.

Photo credit:
Evyonne Jha

Celebrate Sustainability Awards

The Celebrate Sustainability Awards (CSA), formerly known as the Campus Sustainability Leaders Awards, recognize individuals and groups at the University of Alberta who are making outstanding contributions toward a socially, environmentally, and economically sustainable world. Presented annually by the Sustainability Council, in close collaboration with Energy + Climate Action, the awards were established in 2012 to honour sustainability champions who are shaping the future through enhanced services and operations, transformative research and teaching, and fostering a sustainable campus community.

This year, 75 nominations were submitted across the Campus Sustainability Leaders and Michael Rawson Clark Award categories. This strong response was supported by External Relations, who helped promote the call through the *Sustainability in Action* series on The Quad and joint SDG communications with the Sustainability Council. The adjudication process was led by a five-member committee composed of faculty, staff, students, and representatives from the Sustainability Council and Energy + Climate Action. Three recipients were selected for the Michael Rawson Clark Award, and four for the Campus Sustainability Leaders Award. One group received the Green Spaces Award.

The 2025 awards ceremony was held on April 10 in two beautifully restored lecture halls within the newly opened

University Commons, now home to the Sustainability Council. The formal presentation took place in Gregory Abel Community Hall (2-450) with 115 guests in attendance, followed by a reception in Alfred Sorensen Community Hall (2-350). The reception featured food, poster presentations by nine Certificate in Sustainability students, and opportunities for networking and community-building.

The Celebrate Sustainability Awards continue to affirm and amplify the work of individuals and groups driving meaningful change across the university. This year's event not only celebrated the winners, but also acknowledged the contributions of the Sustainability Council's many on- and off-campus partners, volunteers, and supporters. It reflects the growing collective momentum toward a more sustainable future at the University of Alberta.



Volunteers ready to welcome guests at the 2025 Celebrate Sustainability Awards.

2025 Michael Rawson Clark Award



Talah Hasanni,
a third-year Honours Physiology student and a Certificate in Sustainability student.



Kiera Greenaway,
a Master's student in Environmental Engineering, focusing on reducing the impacts of microplastics.



Hadi Mekarizadeh,
a PhD candidate in Environmental Engineering, whose research focuses on sustainable water treatment in Northern Alberta's oil sands

2025 Campus Sustainability Leaders Award



Josephine Marie Godwyll,
an Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Kinesiology, Sport, and Recreation at the University of Alberta, and a geospatial scientist.



Reza Popari,
a Physical Chemistry Laboratory Coordinator in the Faculty of Science and has made outstanding contributions to sustainability.



Environmental Studies Students Association (ESSA), (From L to R: Sage Kuehn, Hamdi Noor, Isiri Jayatilake, Amy Smith, Maya Carr, Ethan Erickson, Sean Hansed)



University of Alberta EcoCar, (From L to R: Zeeshan Haque, Abinash Singh, Andrei Kourilov, Essiyah Weis, Stella Simpson, Wesley Ngo, Golie Masoumian)

Green Spaces



Prairie Immune and Vaccine Optimization and Testing Lab

From L to R: Adil Mohamed, Grace Melvie, Janelle Nordin

In 2022, we established a CSLA student award category to commemorate the late sustainability champion, Michael Rawson Clark.



**LEARN MORE ABOUT
MICHAEL'S CONTRIBUTION**



Key Partnerships and Sustainability Leadership

The Sustainability Council serves as a key connector for sustainability efforts across campus and beyond. We actively engage with university leadership at the central level, as well as within colleges, faculties, and departments. Our collaborations extend to Facilities and Operations, University of Alberta International (UAI), Sustain SU, and other organizations, including the Kule Institute.

We extend the University's reach through memberships in the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN), the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE), the Environmental Studies Association of Canada (ESAC), the Canadian College and University Environmental Network (CCUEN), and the City of Edmonton-led Energy Transition Leadership Network. As an institutional member of SDSN, faculty, staff, and students can access resources such as SDSN Mobilize and the SDG Academy. The Sustainability Council also participates in SDSN Canada member meetings and explores new opportunities for the University of Alberta community.

We maintain a strong network of external partners, including NGOs, private companies, advocates, and municipalities, and frequently help bridge connections between researchers, students, and these groups.

The Sustainability Council continues to lead across all Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Council leadership collaborates closely on SDG integration, communications, reporting, and rankings, in partnership with UAI. This work is supported through collaboration with the SDG Working Group and ongoing engagement in climate action efforts across the institution. SDGs are also featured prominently in *Shape: The University Strategic Plan 2023–2033*, reinforcing this work.

As part of a pilot grant initiative, the Sustainability Council is supporting knowledge mobilization from the academic community to policymakers, NGOs, and the public. A \$5,000 pilot grant for 2023–24 supports Damian Collins (Department of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences) in producing a briefing-style report on the role of community housing in achieving the SDGs, expected to be shared broadly in Fall 2024.

Finally, we look forward to continuing to build strong relationships with faculty, students, and others across campus as we advance the University's commitment to the SDGs. Effective relationships and communication are central to this work.

Thank You to Our Partners

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA PARTNERS AND COLLABORATORS

Affordable Housing Solutions Lab
 ALES Student Services
 Alberta Council for Global Cooperation (ACGC)
 Alberta Environment and Protected Areas (AEPA)
 Alberta Native Plant Council
 Association Internationale des Étudiants en Sciences Économiques (AIESEC)
 Augustana Campus
 Biological Sciences Graduate Student Association
 Blenderz Garment Recyclers
 Business Undergraduate Office – Engagement
 Campus Food Bank
 Campus Operations & Services
 Campus Saint-Jean
 Campus Vert
 Career Centre
 City of Edmonton
 Climate Action Coalition U of A
 Clothing Repair Café
 College of Natural + Applied Sciences (CNAS)
 Community Service-Learning (CSL)
 Consul General of Switzerland
 Daily Grind
 Departments and Faculties across the Colleges
 Earth Warrior
 Edmonton and Area Land Trust
 Enactus UAB
 Engineers for a Sustainable World
 Engineers Without Borders – U of A Chapter
 English Language School, Faculty of Education
 Environmental Law Centre
 Environmental Studies Students Association
 Faculty of Agricultural, Life & Environmental Sciences (ALES)
 Faculty of Education – Education Undergraduate Events
 Faculty of Kinesiology, Sport, and Recreation

Faculty of Law
 Freshwater Canada
 Fyrefly Institute for Gender and Sexual Diversity
 Future Energy Systems
 Hope Lives Here
 International Education and Enrolment (IEE) (formerly under University of Alberta International)
 Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)
 Leftovers Foundation
 NAIT
 Office of the Associate Vice-President (Research Development and Services)
 Office of the President
 Office of the Registrar- Convocation and Ceremonies Office
 Office of the Vice-President, External Relations
 Office of the Vice-President, International + Enterprise (formerly under University of Alberta International)
 RWTH Aachen University
 SDSN (Sustainable Development Solutions Network)
 Solar Alberta
 Sustainable Development Goals Student Alliance (SDSA)
 SustainSU
 The Prairie Hub for Pandemic Preparedness
 UCOMM Building Operations Committee and Sub-Committees (Shared Spaces & Postering)
 Undergraduate Research Initiative (URI)
 University of Alberta Energy + Climate Action
 University of Alberta Students' Union
 University of Alberta Students' Union Bike Library and Workshop
 University Services, Operations and Finance (USOF)

**ADAPTATION RESILIENCE TRAINING
AND SUSTAINABILITY SCHOLARS HOST
ORGANIZATIONS**

Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation
Athabasca Watershed Council
Bow River Basin Council
Clark Builders
O'Hanlon Paving
Organic Alberta
Parkland County
Paths for People
University of Alberta Climate Change +
Health Hub



Sustainability Council Office Staff

From L to R: Ishaan Sachdeva, Anagha Devkota, Danusia Bialowas, Spencer Wearden, Jenna Paré, Apryl Brereton, Shannon Heaney, Keltie Gower, Evonne Tran, Maja Osmanagić, Robert Summers

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Photo credit:
Evonne Tran

Leading with Purpose.



**UNIVERSITY
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