



LEADING
CHANGE

FELLOWSHIP

MEET THE FELLOWS

2024 Cohort

Meet the fellows!

We are proud to introduce the remarkable fellows who make up this year's cohort. These passionate individuals represent a diverse array of backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives, all united by a shared commitment to sustainability and positive change. As you explore their bios, you'll see the unique contributions they bring to our collective mission. These fellows are not just participants in our program—they are leaders, collaborators, and visionaries who are poised to make a lasting impact on our world.

Aalekhya Vasantavada

Greenhouse Gas and Sustainability Analyst



Aalekhya is a motivated sustainability analyst at AET Group experienced in greenhouse gas quantifications/verifications and ESG program development and reporting. She's action oriented, having implemented solutions towards climate action, volunteered with non-profits and collaborated with young professionals in conferences and case-competitions. She has mentored students and young professionals looking to transition to the sustainability space at Voiz Academy. She's passionate about contributing to the climate space from diverse lived experiences.

Alondra Karam

Junior Engineer, ABB



Electrical Engineering 2024 graduate from McGill University, now exploring sustainable solutions in ABB's Discovery Program

Alyssa Obrand

Managing Director, FES (Finance-Engage-Sustain)



Alyssa has experience working in environmental consulting, green startups, the UK climate politics sector, and is passionate about working in advocacy. Alyssa is now fulfilling her passion for environmental activism and reimagining the philanthropic sector for youth with FES as their Managing Director. From years of working with youth in different capacities, she has seen first-hand the power and strength of young minds, and believes that her own generation is the greatest force for change.

Alyssa has a Bachelor of Commerce at McGill University's Desautels Faculty of Management, where she majored in Managing for Sustainability, and a Masters of Science in Environment, Politics and Society at the University College London in the United Kingdom.

Angela Ijeoma Sunday

Sustainability Specialist, Clark Builders



Angela is a sustainability specialist with over six years of experience in helping businesses to achieve their sustainability objectives. Her expertise includes developing corporate sustainability strategies, greenhouse gas quantification and reporting, sustainable infrastructure, developing and implementing circular economy initiatives. In her current role, she is deeply involved in advising businesses on their sustainability journey from strategy to implementation. In her free time, she enjoys reading, writing, listening to music and hiking.

Annabelle Liao

Research Analyst



Having recently completed her BSc Global Resource Systems at UBC with a specialization in Sustainability & Social Impact, Annabelle's experience includes designing and launching a university-wide capacity-building program for student groups to embed more sustainable best practices into their operations, managing sustainability projects for Canada's largest student union, and attending COP28 as a youth delegate. She is currently working at the intersection of climate action and clean technology at Foresight Canada while continuing to advocate for more youth-led climate education, and she is passionate about creating climate messaging that resonates with diverse audiences.

Balqees Jama

Facilitator & Community Developer, PeerNetBC



Balqees is a facilitator at PeerNetBC who also leads in developing anti-oppressive policies and practices in her communities. She delivers interactive workshops providing skills for thoughtful engagement and peer-based learning. As a Communications student attending Simon Fraser University, she led milestone achievements such as establishing the SFU VP People, Equity, & Inclusion office, cluster-hiring of at least 15+ Black faculty, and developing the upcoming Black Student Support Centre. Balqees organized with climate justice group SFU 350 to successfully campaign for SFU to declare a climate emergency and divest from fossil fuels. She also spearheaded a campaign to retain spaces for six core community groups, including Embark Sustainability Society. In her free time, Balqees engages in mentorship, community care, and solidarity work on a variety of decolonial issues. Balqees was nominated for the YWCA Women of Distinction Award this year and named one of Canada's Top 100 Black Women to Watch in 2022 (CIBWE) in recognition of her national impact. Through this Leading Change Fellowship, Balqees hopes to deepen her understanding of community-based financial models for sustainable and ethical practices.

Calvin Trottier-Chi

Research Associate, Canadian Climate Institute



As a Research Associate with the Canadian Climate Institute's Clean Growth team, Calvin is dedicated to drawing out policy solutions for clean economic growth and low-carbon competitiveness. He has produced recommendations for improving Canada's climate finance landscape, integrating material circularity and climate mitigation, streamlining regulatory processes, and ramping up responsible investment into critical minerals. Prior to joining the Institute, he worked as an analyst at Sustainable Energy for All, where he evaluated commitments from UN Member States and other stakeholders to action on SDG7: Affordable and Clean Energy.

Calvin holds an M.Sc. in Environmental Technology from Imperial College London and a B.A. in Political Science and Economics from McGill University. Throughout, he has always been eager to join communities and help share stories with a purpose, and his experiences include managing News and SciTech reporting at The McGill Tribune newspaper, researching telecommunications and sustainable development in Uganda, and contributing towards social impact standards in the United Kingdom.

Chloe Wu

Master's Student, University of Toronto



Chloe is a Chemical Biology graduate from McMaster University, currently pursuing a Master's in Sustainability Management at the University of Toronto. A strong advocate for experiential learning, she has gained diverse experience across multiple disciplines, including supply chain management in pharmaceuticals, marketing at a biotech startup, and consulting in the energy sector. These experiences have shaped her into a versatile generalist with a knack for process improvement and adaptability—skills that are crucial in climate action, which impacts every industry.

Chloe's background and interests converge at the intersection of the natural environment, social justice, and climate justice, with a particular focus on how culture and infrastructure lay the groundwork for sustainable communities. Her passion for these areas has been deeply influenced by her love of travel and the people she has encountered along the way. In her free time, she enjoys chasing waterfalls, spending time with cats, and trying new foods.

Clara Phillips

Technical Project Lead, Nunavut Nukkiksautiit Corporation



Clara Phillips is an Engineer-In-Training working as the Technical Project Lead at Nunavut Nukkiksautiit Corporation (NNC), a 100% Inuit-owned clean energy developer. NNC is dedicated to leading the energy transition in Nunavut's Qikiqtani region by partnering with communities to create sustainable, clean energy solutions that offer social, economic, and environmental benefits.

Clara earned her Bachelor of Engineering from Memorial University of Newfoundland before relocating to Iqaluit, NU, to join NNC's team. In her role, she manages building-scale microgrid projects and community-scale renewable energy initiatives. Notably, Clara is the Deputy Project Manager for the Anurijuak Nukkiksautiit Project, a wind and energy storage project in Sanikiluaq, NU. She has a strong passion for project management and is excited to join the Leading Change Fellowship Program to enhance her financial literacy skills in this area. Clara is particularly eager to connect with other young professionals who share her enthusiasm for sustainability.

In her spare time, Clara enjoys cooking, hiking, and traveling, which provides her with a well-rounded perspective and a break from her professional responsibilities. Her dedication to both her career and personal interests fuels her commitment to advancing clean energy and contributing to Nunavut's sustainable future.

Daniel Hanrahan

Senior Advisor, Environment and Climate Change Canada



Daniel is a Senior Advisor in Sustainable Finance at Environment and Climate Change Canada, where he provides advice to senior officials on the development and implementation of environmental finance policies and strategies.

Previously, Daniel supported the development of several national climate change funding programs and Indigenous initiatives at Natural Resources Canada and Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs. He has a Master's degree in climate change science and policy and a Bachelor's in Commerce, is a Project Management Professional (PMP), and holds GARP's Sustainability and Climate Risk certificate.

Outside of work, Daniel is an avid hiker, camper, and runner. He volunteers with Connecting Environmental Professionals Calgary and is a musician who performs regularly at venues across Alberta.

Ese Okereka

Sustainability Program Manager, Black Engineers of Canada



Dr. Ese Okereka is a passionate sustainability leader with over ten years of hands-on experience in leading sustainability and environmental impact projects, managing regulatory reporting, and driving strategic environmental management. With a PhD in Environmental Biology from the University of Benin, she is a seasoned Project Management Professional (PMP) and Senior Lead Auditor for Environmental Management Systems (ISO 14001).

Ese's global career spans roles in academia at the University of Benin, development at the United Nations, and energy at Shell. Currently, she is advancing her career in sustainability advisory while actively leading within Toastmasters International and empowering girls and women in STEM. In her free time, Ese enjoys reading romantic fiction, hiking, and exploring museums.

Fawas Parol

Business System Analyst, Co-operators



Driven by a vision for a greener future, I am committed to sustainable innovation and impactful change. 'We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children.'

Hamid Dwyer



As an aspiring sustainability expert specializing in environmental sustainability, my mission is to harness strategic thinking and applied research to drive impactful sustainability initiatives. At the heart of my approach lies a dedication to integrating environmental governance into specialized sectors, a commitment evidenced by a key project where my team and I mapped out the environmental initiatives of affiliate organizations in the healthcare sector, leading to actionable insights and recommendations for board members. My competencies in sustainability strategy and tools have been essential in my roles, enabling my teams to pioneer environmental sustainability in specialized sector transformation.

I have a bachelor's degree in Environmental Governance from the University of Guelph. I completed my master's degree in Geography - focusing on fossil fuel divestment decision making among Canadian universities (also at the University of Guelph). With a blend of martial arts instruction and sustainability analysis, my unique skill set fosters a culture of discipline, resilience, and continuous improvement, vital for navigating the complexities of environmental governance and organizational strategy.

Jan Rosete

Supervisor, Carleton University



My name is Jan Rosete and I am a 24 year old settler immigrant to Canada. I have an undergraduate degree in Political Science and Environmental Science, with a Masters degree in Canadian Studies. I aim to pursue my PhD studying and researching how capitalism and the growth of markets have impacted the natural environment. I am super excited to be a part of this year's Leading Change fellowship to learn from many esteemed mentors what environmental prosperity and resilience means to them. I hope to learn valuable information that will not only help me develop the tools I need for my PhD but to also share what I have learned with future generations in a classroom setting.

Kexin Sun

Associate Project Engineer, ABB



Hello, my name is Kexin. I am an engineer dedicated to sustainability and making a meaningful impact.

Kurt Bandy

Policy System Specialist, Cooperators



Kurt Bandy is an insurance professional and leader who loves collaborating with others to make a difference. He loves the outdoors and has a desire to engage with and promote sustainable practices that will keep natural spaces alive in well for generations.

Lucy Lu

Climate Change Advisor, Peter Gilgan Foundation



Today, Lucy channels her expertise and creativity towards combating climate change as her professional *raison d'être*- working as a Climate Change Advisor for a private family foundation, she manages a dynamic portfolio of climate change grants and impact investments. She firmly believes that fostering relationships and collaborative conflict resolution are part of the solutions in achieving our net-zero future. She boasts an academic journey spanning diverse fields: geology, soil science, hydrology, wetlands, and biogeochemistry. With a Bachelors in Earth Sciences and a Master of Science in Geography from McGill University, she first built a career as a technical environmental consultant specialising in river restoration before switching to sustainability and climate change.

Nakia Randle

Environmental Consultant



Ngāti Kahu, Ngāti Kahutianui, tihei mauri ora!

From the far north of Aotearoa New Zealand, Nakia is a passionate advocate for Indigenous sovereignty and the restoration of whakapapa. Her work is guided by a vision to restore the ancestral relationships between ourselves and the environment.

Nakia enjoys combining her legal training with environmental strategy and climate change expertise to create meaningful impact for future generations. She is currently based in lhq'á:lets, Vancouver.

Nicole Ellerbeck

Indigenous Relations Lead, Women Building Futures



As a proud member of the Métis Nation of Alberta, Nicole has a deep understanding of Indigenous Identity and the connection that community holds. Nicole believes in equality and is passionate about breaking down barriers for underrepresented communities. She has a caring and understanding

approach when working with others, allowing for the elevation of feelings and experiences. Nicole brings a community-focused approach to knowledge building and engagement and believes that in order to build connections, we must first build relationships.

Nicole's understanding and ability to communicate the why support her success in guiding organizations to create and act on the how. From personal experience and project work, she has so much knowledge to share and is able to create a constructive space for sharing, learning, and meaningful action.

Nicole has dedicated her professional journey to cultivating relationships and fostering sustainable practices within our systems. As a Reconciliation Practitioner, her passion lies in bridging the gap between the energy sector, trades, and Indigenous communities, advocating for positive change through inclusive and sustainable approaches. Throughout her career and personal life, she's cultivated an appreciation for the intersection of Indigenous traditional knowledge and contemporary energy practices. These experiences have shaped her conviction that embracing Indigenous ways of being is pivotal in steering the energy sectors toward a sustainable, inclusive, and culturally respectful future.

Sara Fontaine

Operations Coordinator, SevenGen Energy



Sara Fontaine is an Anishinaabekwe who currently works at Student Energy as the SevenGen Operations Coordinator where she assists the SevenGen Youth Council in their duties of making clean energy education and opportunities accessible and inclusive to Indigenous youth and communities across the nation. She worked as a Liaison Officer for her reserve where she focused on land use studies, environmental assessments and negotiations with proponents on their traditional territories. Sara believes Indigenous voices belong at the forefront of environmental protection as they have the

Indigenous knowledge of sustainability and their identities are rooted in caring for the land. Sara's position within Student Energy is empowering youth to use their voices to ensure Indigenous inclusion in the clean energy transition. She believes environmental protection should be top priority for all peoples and encourages us to all come together to protect the earth and its invaluable resources.

Sara McQuaid

Creative Content Specialist, Threading Change



Sara McQuaid (she/her) is a writer, environmental activist and teacher currently working in Montreal, Quebec. She has a Honours Bachelor degree in History from Trent University and a Master's Degree in History from KU Leuven. She has been fortunate to have worked and taught across the world in Finland, South Korea, Vietnam and Belgium, where her love for international cooperation, sustainability and equitable development blossomed. Her appreciation for contemporary challenges and love of fashion has inspired her to shift into the sustainable industry. Sara's aim is to shape history by helping to change the future of fashion into one that is fossil-free and equitable through her Leading Change learnings. When not writing, she can be found wandering the city with her beloved animals, cycling, or doing something involving art.

Seanne Stickley

Energy Specialist, Simon Fraser University



Seanne Stickley is a Sustainable Business joint major graduate and currently works as an Energy Specialist. In her role she actively engages with water conservation, energy efficiency, innovation, and major reporting standards. Seanne is passionate about the energy nexus and the interdisciplinary nature of decision making in many sectors.

Sumit Chaudhary

Senior Manager – Data Management, Coast Capital Savings Federal Credit Union



I thrive at the intersection of Strategy, Data and People. The career experiences I have enjoyed the most have been at companies going through periods of growth and change and I appreciate the balance required to manage the status quo and push for better while bringing the people along.

My strength is to balance constraints with the possible outcomes and lead towards better team culture, drive higher performance, and deliver tangible business value.

Taylor Ball

University of Toronto



I'm on a mission to make business better for people and our planet. During my University of Toronto Master's degree in Sustainability Management (aka my 'MBA in Sustainability'), I became obsessed with how to future-proof business and develop long-term sustainable strategies. I'm relentlessly curious and always eager to learn, whether in a classroom or out in the world. This curiosity helped me excel at top institutions. In addition to my Master's degree, I graduated in the top 10% of my class at the Smith School of Business at Queen's University. I aced a four-course certificate in Corporate Sustainability and Innovation at Harvard. I've also gained international experience thanks to 3 semesters abroad at the London School of Economics, HEC Paris, and the University of Copenhagen.

As a clear and confident communicator, I can bridge the gap between business and science. Whether delivering a TEDx talk or crafting research-heavy articles for national and regional publications, I'm known for my ability to connect seemingly unrelated ideas into a coherent argument. As I look to build my career in sustainable finance, I'm excited to participate in this fellowship. I am eager to expand my community of sustainability professionals and learn more about the intersection of financial decisions and environmental impact.

taylor velehna



taylor is a passionate sustainability advocate with a diverse background in design, marketing, coordination, and community engagement.

With a strong foundation in sustainability and design principles cultivated through their design education, LEED Green Associate accreditation, and sustainable business education, taylor brings a comprehensive understanding that incorporates design thinking into every project.

Their involvement in environmental initiatives spans various projects, including consulting on a circular economy strategy and curating films selected for an environmental film festival.

Their communication expertise has been refined through roles in media marketing and with a magazine publisher focused on improving the social and economic well-being of Vancouver's under-housed population while providing a platform to share their stories.

taylor is deeply invested in the intersection of storytelling and design to drive purposeful social and environmental change, aiming to create a more equitable and sustainable future.

Their unique perspective and hands-on experience in community-focused projects empower them to address complex challenges creatively and empathetically.