

UBC Centre for Climate Justice ANNUAL REPORT



2021-23



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MESSAGE FROM THE CO-DIRECTORS

It was a banner inaugural year (and a half) for the Centre for Climate Justice. We grew from the ground up into a vibrant new organization with 30 faculty and 21 graduate student members, a team of staff and student employees, and an active community of research collaborators. Unfortunately, it was also a banner year and half for climate devastation. It's all happening as per the predictions of climate scientists, but for both of us it feels much faster and more brutal than we were prepared for.

We held our first CCJ event on November 25, 2021, a few weeks after the catastrophic floods in the Fraser Valley and the militarized raids on land defenders in Wet'suwet'en territory, and a few months after the summer wildfires and heat dome. For many of us it was the first time that we gathered in the same space since the advent of Covid-19. It was galvanizing to hear insights from journalist Brandi Morin, Kanahus Manuel of Tiny House Warriors, Kai Nagata of Dogwood, Anjali Appadurai of Sierra Club BC, and Yasmina Seifeddine of Climate Justice UBC. Many colleagues and students told us that they left the Town Hall with a renewed sense of purpose.

Our experiences since then have only strengthened our sense of purpose regarding UBC's role in collaborative, justice-informed climate action. The CCJ has been working since before its official founding to build relationships with First Nations leaders, frontline organizations, and community partners to learn what just and effective climate action means locally, nationally, and internationally, including through our Climate Justice Study Collective inaugurated this year. For instance, our collaboration with the Tenants Resource and Advisory Centre has developed advocacy tools and resources to better understand and address the intersections of the climate and housing crises through the lens of tenants' rights. In collaborative research with multiple First Nations and Indigenous governance organizations, we are mobilizing UBC research capacity to support Indigenous-led climate action and planning. We are approached almost weekly by community groups, labour federations, and Indigenous Nations looking to collaborate. In short, the interest in justice-informed climate research is overwhelming, inside the university and out, and we are working to enable UBC researchers to better respond to the demand.

A highlight of the last 1.5 years was hosting a lecture by Chief Roland Wilson of the West Moberly First Nations, in the First Nations House of Learning at UBC. Chief Wilson showed a packed audience what it looks like to have "green" energy solutions like large mega dams layered on top of, rather than replacing, fossil fuel extraction. The recently completed Site C dam—soon to be filled—abuts a landscape filled with (subsidized) active and abandoned oil and gas wells, crisscrossed pipelines that accelerate caribou extinction, and toxic fracking ponds. The situation in WMFN territory exemplifies a troubling trend worldwide of the missing transition, in which renewable

energy is being layered onto existing fossil fuel extraction infrastructure, increasing cumulative impacts. While the problems they face on their territory are warnings to us all, WMFN leadership on responses to these cumulative impacts is an inspiration.

The knowledge, experience, and networks of our community partners are essential to fostering effective and impactful climate research at UBC. It is well established that meaningful climate action implies society-wide, structural change. Catalyzing change on this scale requires working across issue areas and knowledge approaches, inside the university and beyond. This core CCJ objective is now crystalized in our mission and mandate, which makes clear that there is no response to the climate emergency that does not demand attention to issues of justice and injustice. As climate justice proponents have pointed out for decades, the 'choice' between either rapid or just climate action is a false one: if our solutions perpetuate inequities and meet resistance, they won't be successful. If they address multiple problems at once, they will reach more constituencies and gain more momentum. Grounding climate action in ongoing movements is essential to mobilizing people for ambitious political and economic change.

At the same time, the increased criminalization of environmental defenders around the world has made it more apparent than ever that international solidarity across linked struggles is essential in the fight for climate justice. As we insisted in our October 2022 panel contesting Egypt's role as host of the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties, there can be no climate justice without political freedoms.

To these goals, we are looking forward to ramping up our capacity to address the urgent need for justice-informed climate scholarship and advocacy, and to continue to implement UBC's Climate Emergency Goals. We know that we cannot do this work alone. We will continue to work with our partners both on and off campus to ensure that justice is centred in all climate action.



Naomi Klein



Jess Dempsey



Candis Callison

OUR MISSION AND MANDATE

CCJ Affiliate Faculty collectively approved the Centre's Mission, Mandate, and Guiding Principles at our Fall 2022 retreat.

Mission:

The Centre for Climate Justice works with movements, communities, students, and policy makers to develop research and analysis that addresses climate breakdown in connection with multiple, interlinked, and cascading crises. We believe that climate justice at its best is the labour of repair, redistribution, and world building.

Mandate:

The world is awash in crises: cost of living, war, infectious diseases, ecological decline, climate change, systemic racism, and gender-based violence, to name a few of many. At the CCJ, we recognize the interlocking nature of these crises and hold that treating them in isolation can often entrench and deepen existing inequalities and injustices. Our work therefore illuminates connections among common drivers of crises, and supports responses that redress multiple crises at once. We work with movements, communities, and policy makers to develop research and analysis that is focused on ways that the post-fossil fuel age can open unprecedented opportunities for redistribution and reparation. This work is conducted in accordance with our <u>guiding principles</u>.

As a Centre for Climate Justice, we aim to utilize the university's resources and capacities in innovative ways, in service of those working beyond the bounds of the academy. The CCJ is a place of translation and mobilization, bringing together activists, policy makers, Elders, artists, scholars, and community groups to foster critical research and engagement that addresses emerging demands for climate justice. Our focus is both local and global because nationalist responses to a planetary crisis are inherently unjust and are insufficient to address the scale of the climate emergency.

As a Centre operating on unceded ancestral territories of the x*mə θ k*ə \dot{y} əm ($\underline{Musqueam}$), S \underline{k} w \underline{x} wú7mesh ($\underline{Squamish}$), səlilwəta $\frac{1}{2}$ ($\underline{Tsleil-Waututh}$), and nsyilxcən speaking \underline{Syilx} Okanagan Nation and their peoples, this work takes place in the spirit of repair and transformation. That includes an ongoing attempt to repair the damage done to our collective knowledge by the systemic exclusion of Indigenous, Black and non-European experts and knowledge holders, often created by extractive, unaccountable research practices in frontline communities.

Our work addresses four primary challenges with regard to climate crisis and action:

- The climate crisis disproportionately impacts Indigenous, racialized, working class, displaced, and other communities and peoples already impacted by ongoing injustices endemic to colonialism and capitalism, in Canada and around the world.
- Many frontline communities have intimate experience and knowledge of the climate crisis, but
 their expertise is not adequately reflected in climate-related research and policy. Moreover,
 these communities may not have access to the research tools and associated resources to
 advocate for and enact a just adaptation and transition. Barriers to this access and engagement
 include the harmful legacies of extractive and colonial academic research.
- UBC faculty members and students have the skills and desire to do more to advance climate
 justice, but may lack the connections or training for research in service of community needs.
 Relatedly, academic research that serves the needs of communities is not often adequately
 supported in the academy.
- Just and effective climate action requires critical research that breaks through disciplinary silos and foregrounds the role of power and inequity in shaping climate crisis and action. This means building new bridges among qualitative and quantitative approaches across the humanities, social, and physical sciences as well as between previously siloed issues to ensure that justice is front and centre in all climate action and that no one is left behind.

With these challenges in mind, the Centre's primary aims are:

- To diversify the expertise and perspectives represented in climate justice theory, policy, and research.
- To connect often-siloed issue areas (e.g. between climate and housing, or climate and care work), and the researchers and communities organized around them.
- To support community-led climate action by facilitating actionable and accountable community-partnered research that addresses pressing issues of climate justice.
- To translate and amplify the research, needs, and challenges of community partners and climate justice movements into wider policy, political, and economic transformation.
- To enhance the ability of UBC faculty, staff, and students to collectively support climate justice, through research, collaborations, and advocacy.

We pursue these goals through the following areas of activity:

- Research support and facilitation
- Knowledge sharing and collaborative learning with community partners
- Public engagement and events
- On-campus engagement, training, and mentorship

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

We ask that researchers and other practitioners working with the CCJ agree to work in alignment with the following principles:

- Climate change is the result of colonial and extractive ideologies with racial, gender, and class hierarchies at their core. Climate change is also experienced highly unevenly, with the most severe impacts often falling on those who have least contributed to the crisis. For these reasons, efforts to address climate change have the potential to alleviate or exacerbate existing inequities and injustices, and a climate justice perspective is relevant to climate responses at all scales.
- Perspectives on climate justice vary, and may not always be in agreement. We commit to engaging respectfully and transparently with our research partners to identify shared goals and values, and to forge collaborations based on principles of solidarity and accountability.
- Climate justice requires diverse forms of knowledge and expertise, including many not traditionally represented in the academy.
- Climate justice scholarship must be non-extractive. This requires that community-engaged
 research be guided by and accountable to community partners, with care taken to cultivate
 ethical relationships and culturally-appropriate processes of accountability and transparency.
 Theory and concepts from knowledge traditions that are under-represented in academic
 scholarship must also be engaged in respectful, culturally-appropriate, and non-extractive
 ways.
- The Centre for Climate Justice is committed to cultivating right relation with the Indigenous peoples on whose ancestral and unceded lands our work is situated, including the xwmə\textbf{0}kwə\textbf{y}\text{om} (Musqueam), S\textbf{k}w\textbf{x}w\textbf{v}\text{w}\textbf{v}(Tmesh (Squamish)) and səlilwəta\textbf{4} (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations, and the nsyilxcən speaking Syilx Okanagan Nation and their peoples. We are committed to the ongoing accountabilities involved in building our respectful, reciprocal relationships with these Nations, and to ensuring that our actions and principles align with Nations' laws, priorities, and self-determination.



Co-Directors



Naomi Klein

Naomi Klein is Associate Professor of Climate Justice at the University of British Columbia. Her research and teaching take place at the intersection of crisis and political transformation. At UBC, she focuses on how the climate emergency can and must act as a catalyst for bold, justice-based transformation in our bioregion and beyond, with particular attention to the intersections between climate justice and Indigenous land rights; the gendered and racialized labour of care; and the rights of migrants. Prior to joining UBC, she was the inaugural Gloria Steinem Endowed Chair in Media, Culture and Feminist Studies at Rutgers University, and she co-founded The Leap.



Jess Dempsey

Jessica Dempsey is Associate Professor in the Department of Geography at the University of British Columbia. Her research centres on the political economic drivers of biodiversity loss and seeks to understand escalating ecological decline in a time of unprecedented efforts to arrest them. This work is in dialogue with diverse methodologies and literatures, including political ecology, feminist political economy, economic geography, science studies, and green finance.



Candis Callison

Candis Callison is the Canada Research Chair in Indigenous journalism, media, and public discourse and Associate Professor in the School of Journalism, Writing, and Media, and in the Institute for Critical Indigenous Studies. Her research and teaching are focused on understanding how climate change becomes meaningful for diverse publics, journalism ethics, and Indigenous and environment-focused social movements. Candis is a citizen of the Tahltan (Tałtan) Nation, located in what is now Northwestern British Columbia. She is a regular contributor on the podcast, Media Indigena.

Executive Committee



Rafi Arefin Assistant Professor

Geography



Gastón Gordillo Professor

Anthropology



Leila Harris Professor

Institute for Resources, Environment, and Sustainability



Avi LewisAssociate Professor

Geography



Jarret MartineauCurator-in-Residence

Chan Centre



Bernard PerleyDirector & Assoc.
Professor

Critical Indigenous
Studies



Kavita Philip Professor

English Language and Literatures



Onyx Sloan MorganAssistant Professor

Community, Culture, and Global Studies



Jocelyn StaceyAssociate Professor

Allard School of Law

Staff



Sara Nelson Research Manager



Jack SuchodolskiProgram &
Administrative Assistant

Student Staff



Rachel SternGraduate Engagement
Coordinator



Annika OrdClimate Justice Study
Collective Coordinator



Hann ScurlockGraduate Engagement
Coordinator

Former Staff and Former Student Staff

Dalya Al Masri

Program & Administrative Assistant

Samantha Loo

Communications Assistant

Atlanta-Marinna Grant

Emergent Climate Response Network Coordinator

CCJ Faculty Members

* CCJ Executive Committee member

UBC Vancouver Campus

ARTS

Anthropology

Gastón Gordillo*

Central, Eastern, and Northern European Studies

Tim Frandy

Institute for Critical Indigenous Studies

Pasang Sherpa cross appointed, Department of Asian Studies Bernard Perlev*

Educational Studies

Vanessa Andreotti

English Language and Literatures

Kavita Philip*

Paroma Wagle, Postdoctoral Affiliate, cross appointed, Geography

Geography

Rafi Arefin*
Jemima Baada
Jessica Dempsey*
Avi Lewis*
Geraldine Pratt
Naomi Klein*

School of Information

Lisa Nathan

School of Journalism, Writing and Media

Candis Callison* cross appointed, First Nations and Indigenous Studies

Philosophy

Kimberley Brownlee

Public Policy and Global Affairs

M. V. Ramana

Political Science

Glen Coulthard cross appointed, First Nations and Indigenous Studies

UBC Centre for Climate Justice

Sociology

Emily Kennedy Renisa Mawani Ethan Raker

APPLIED SCIENCE

Mechanical Engineering

Amanda Giang

Community and Regional Planning

Maggie Low

PETER A. ALLARD SCHOOL OF LAW

Jocelyn Stacey

FORESTRY

Forest Resources Management

Lorien Nesbitt

SCIENCE

Institute for Resources, Environment, and Sustainability

Leila Harris* cross appointed, Institute for Gender, Race, Sexuality and Social Justice Hannah Wittman cross appointed, Centre for Land and Food Systems Evan Bowness, Postdoctoral Affiliate

MEDICINE

Pediatrics

Srinivas Murthy

Population and Public Health

Daniel Steel

UBC Okanagan Campus

ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Community, Culture, and Global Studies

Onyx Sloan Morgan*

English and Cultural Studies

Astrida Neimanis cross appointed, Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies

Affiliate Graduate Students

UBC Vancouver Campus

ARTS

English Language and Literature

Fiana Kawane - PhD Program Hann Scurlock - PhD Program

Anthropology

Felix Giroux - PhD Program

Geography

Judith Burr - PhD Program
Max Cohen - PhD Program
Annika Ord - MSc Program
Isabella Pojuner - MA Program
Erik Post - PhD Program
Lorah Steichen - MA Program
Rachel Stern - MA Program
Maggie O'Donnell - MA Program
Audrey Irvine-Broque - MA Program

Interdisciplinary Studies

Lara Aysal -PhD Program

Public Policy and Global Affairs

Elena Gordillo Fuertes - MPPGA Program Tim Linsell - MPPGA Program Alida Oegema Thomas - MPPGA Program Timothy Linsell - MPPGA Program Divija Madhani - MPPGA Program

Sociology

Parker Muzzerall - PhD Program

SCIENCE

Resources, Environment and Sustainability

Rona MacNicol- MA Program

UBC Okanagan Campus

ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Interdisciplinary Studies

Fabiola Melchior - MA program



IMPLEMENTING UBC'S CLIMATE EMERGENCY GOALS

The CCJ was inaugurated in November 2021 in response to UBC's Climate Emergency Declaration. The Centre is a critical partner working alongside many units across campus to serve the strategic priorities articulated in UBC's Climate Emergency Task Force Report.

UBC Strategic Priorities*

Goal 1: Operationalize UBC's commitments to climate justice: Support climate leadership and initiatives led by Indigenous, Black, and People of Colour

Goal 3: Establish mechanisms and processes that ensure Indigenous perspectives, communities, and worldviews shape the development and implementation of climate related initiatives and policies

Goal 8: Develop new and strengthen existing partnerships to tackle the climate emergency

*from UBC Climate Emergency Engagement Final Report and Recommendations, January 2021

CCJ 2022 Contributions

SOUTH TO THE STATE OF THE STATE

- Amplifying and supporting Indigenousled climate research, planning, and policy through research collaborations with 3 BC First Nations
- Developing and nurturing partnerships in research, public engagement, and advocacy linking climate justice to other key justice issues (housing, food, human rights)
- Initiating the Climate Justice Study
 Collective to diversify perspectives on
 climate justice and enable accountability
 to community partners in developing
 CCJ's research agenda

UBC Strategic Priorities*

CCJ 2022 Contributions

Goal 2: Demonstrate institutional leadership on climate justice

Goal 4: Expand, strengthen and coordinate climate research at UBC

Goal 5: Foster a culture of engagement & advocacy on climate action

Goal 7: Expand climate education opportunities and resources for the UBC community and broader public

Goal 9: Accelerate emissions reductions at UBCV and UBCO in response to the Climate Emergency: Climate Action Plan 2030

*from UBC Climate Emergency Engagement Final Report and Recommendations, January 2021

- Modeling community-led climate justice research
- Creating clear pathways for faculty and students to be involved in CCJ work and community
- Providing key trainings and professional development opportunities in reciprocal research practices for students and faculty
- Collaborating on training, mentorship, and public engagement activities with allied units to increase mutual capacity and impact
- Contributing to the evaluation framework for UBC's progress on its Climate Emergency commitments

Capilano Suspension Bridge. By Michelle Lee, licensed under CC BY 2.0.

YEAR AT A GLANCE

Membership

31

2

Affiliate faculty and postdoctoral members

Graduate student affiliates

Campus Engagement

23

Departments

10

Faculties

2

UBC campuses

Public and Community Engagement

18

Public and Community Engagement Activities

700

Instagram followers

15

Popular Media Pieces

1,000

Twitter followers

10

Climate Justice Study Collective Participants

130

Newsletter subscribers

Research and Scholarship

\$5M

\$25k

Research funding secured by CCJ faculty

Partner Organizations in Collaborative Research

Awarded to new research and knowledge mobilization

This year, our affiliate faculty published over 30 research papers, reports, and popular media articles, and secured over \$5M in funding for research across seven research themes:

Indigenous-led climate action and planning

Emergent climate response research

Labour of climate adaptation and mitigation

Debt and reparations

Climate just housing, transport, and infrastructure

Just transitions in energy, water, and agriculture

Narratives, visions, and vocabularies of climate justice

Select Affiliate Publications

Ali Ahmad, Andrei Covatariu, **M.V. Ramana**, "A stormy future? Financial impact of climate change-related disruptions on nuclear power plant owners." *Utilities Policy*.

Vanessa Andreotti, Sharon Stein, Chief Ninawa Huni Kui, "Beyond doomism and solutionism in response to climate change." *University Affairs*.

David Boyd, Kai Chan, **Amanda Giang**, Navin Ramankutty, "**The UN just recognized access to a healthy environment is a universal human right. It's time for Canada to take action**." *The Globe and Mail*.

Jess Dempsey, Rosemary Collard, "Giving forestry corporations what they want means sacrificing everything." The Narwhal.

Jess Dempsey, Rosemary Collard, "'Extractivism' is destroying nature: to tackle it COP15 must go beyond simple targets." The Guardian.

Jess Dempsey, **Audrey Irvine-Broque**, Patrick Bigger, Jens Christiansen, Bhumika Muchhala, **Sara Nelson**, Fernanda Rojas-Marchini, Elizabeth Shapiro-Garza, Andrew Schuldt, Adriana DiSilvestro, "**Biodiversity targets won't be met without debt and tax justice**." *Nature Ecology & Evolution*.

Jess Dempsey, **Audrey Irvine-Broque**, Patrick Bigger, Jens Christiansen, Bhumika Muchhala, **Sara Nelson**, Fernanda Rojas-Marchini, Elizabeth Shapiro-Garza, Andrew Schuldt, Adriana DiSilvestro, "**Beyond the Gap: Placing Biodiversity Finance in the Global Economy**." *Third World Network*.

Sara Elder, **Hannah Wittman**, **Amanda Giang**, "Building sustainability research competencies through scaffolded pathways for undergraduate research experience." *Elementa: Science of the Anthropocene*.

Emma Feltes, **Jocelyn Stacey**, T**ŝ**ilhqot'in National Government, "**Crisis, Colonialism and Constitutional Habits: Indigenous jurisdiction in times of emergency." Canadian Journal of Law and Society.**

Gastón Gordillo, "Hostile terrain: on the spatial and affective conditions for revolution." *Territory, Politics, Governance.*

Diana Hernández, **Liv Yoon**, Neil Simcock, "Basing "Energy Justice" on Clear Terms: Assessing Key Terminology in Pursuit of Energy Justice." *Environmental Justice*.

Select Affiliate Publications

Naomi Klein, "Greenwashing a police state: the truth behind Egypt's COP27 masquerade." The Guardian

Naomi Klein, Andrea Krombein, Zuzana Modrovic, Robert Patterson, Mohammed Rafi Arefin, Geraldine Pratt, "Renters Face Another Hot Summer with Scant Protections." *The Tyee*.

Avi Lewis, "Big Oil: We Are Coming to Collect." *National Observer*.

Hadrian Mertins-Kirkwood, **Max Cohen**, **Isabella Pojuner**, **Avi Lewis**, "Don't wait for the state: A blueprint for grassroots climate transitions in Canada." *Policy Commons*.

Sara Nelson, Patrick Bigger, Micah Elias, Andrew Schuldt, "**High roads to resilience: building equitable forest restoration economies in California and beyond**." *UBC Centre for Climate Justice and Climate + Community Project*.

Susan O'Donnell, **M. V. Ramana**, "COMMENTARY: Moltex's nuclear ransom note should be rejected." *NB Media Co-op*.

Aishwarya Ramachandran, Klara Abdi, **Amanda Giang**, Derek Gladwin, Naoko Ellis, "Transdisciplinary and interdisciplinary programmes for collaborative graduate research training." *Educational Review*.

M.V. Ramana, "Infeasible: Nuclear Energy as a solution to Climate Change." APS Forum on *Physics & Society*.

M.V. Ramana, "Clean energy or nuclear weapons? What the "breakthrough" in nuclear fusion really means." *The Wire Science*.

Christopher Reimer, Sarah-Louise Ruder, Michele Koppes, **Juanita Sundberg**, "A Pedagogy of Unbecoming for Geoscience Otherwise." *Annals of the American Association of Geographers.*

Select Affiliate Publications

Onyx Sloan Morgan, Kimberley Thomas, Laura McNab-Coombs, "**Envisioning healthy** futures: Youth perceptions of justice-oriented environments and communities in Northern British Columbia Canada." *Health & Place*.

Sharon Stein, "Moving from climate action toward climate justice." University Affairs.

Sharon Stein, "Universities confronting climate change: Beyond sustainable development and solutionism." *Higher Education*.

Madeleine de Trenqualye, "'It's inequality that kills': **Naomi Klein** on the future of climate justice." Interview. *The Guardian*.

Paroma Wagle, **Kavita Philip**, "Climate Justice is Social Justice: Articulating Peoples' Rights to the City in Mumbai." *Environment & Urbanization*.

CCJ Research Funds

This year we provided \$27,000 in research funding to support new collaborative research, with a particular focus on partnerships that enabled us to co-learn and grow our community with knowledge holders and practitioners in the climate justice field outside of UBC. We supported 5 projects across our research themes.

Housing Justice in a Climate Emergency seeks to understand how climate change impacts and climate injustice intersects with the housing crisis in British Columbia. This project emerged in the devastating aftermath of the 2021 heat dome, where over 600 people died in the deadliest weather event in the history of the modern Canadian settler state. Almost all of the deaths occurred indoors in homes or hotels, and seniors, people with disabilities, and economically-vulnerable people were most affected (B.C. Coroner's Report 2022). In partnership with the BC Tenant Resource & Advisory Centre (TRAC), we are exploring how extreme weather events such as this impact vulnerable tenants in Vancouver and B.C., especially in an increasingly insecure rental landscape. This project supplements existing quantitative data with qualitative data gathered through focus groups and oral histories with vulnerable tenants. The project will inform TRAC's advocacy for tenants rights, and support community organizations that we partner with in their own work and knowledge building.

CCJ project members: Dr. Rafi Arefin, Dr. Geraldine Pratt, Naomi Klein, Rachel Stern, Amelia Linett, Rona MacNicol, Isabel Siu-Zmuidzinas.

Research themes: Climate Just Housing, Transport, and Infrastructure

"Don't wait for the state: A blueprint for grassroots climate transitions in Canada" is the fruit of the CCJ's first collaboration with the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, and the first report of its kind in Canada. It addresses a need at the grassroots level: in the absence of ambitious, justice-based climate policy from most levels of government, it provides a framework for communities to kickstart their own just transition processes.

The report is published in collaboration with the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives and led by Prof. Avi Lewis and CCPA's Hadrian Mertins-Kirkwood, with writing, research, and stakeholder engagement by graduate students Max Cohen and Isabella Pojurner. It is available on the Publications page of the CCJ website.

Research themes: Just Transitions in Energy, Water, and Agriculture; Transforming Institutions and Governance for Climate Justice

CCJ Research Funds

Nun ke' Daahwéhsats (Dancing with the Land)

Dunne-za (Beaver people), the ancestors of West Moberly First Nations (WMFN), have successfully navigated climatic and ecosystem changes for the past 15,000 years. But colonial systems have significantly increased the pace and scale of change.

WMFN is working in collaboration with Prof. Jessica Dempsey and PhD student Audrey Irvine-Broque to develop a climate change research agenda that will inform collaborative climate and ecosystem research in WMFN territories, through a process of ongoing community feedback and revision. This research aims to advance meaningful and consequential relationship-building, knowledge exchange and research planning around climate change impacts and policies.

Research theme: Indigenous-Led Climate Action and Planning

Alhgoh 'uts'ut'en (We all work together): Enlivening Binche Whut'en Traditional Communication in the Shadow of Intergenerational Impacts from Mining

Since 1940 and formally closed in 2010, the Pinchi Mine operated across Binche Whut'en Consultative Boundaries, traditional territories (lands and waters) governed by Binche families and clans. At no point during Pinchi Mine's history, however, did Binche Whut'enne provide free and informed consent to mercury mining activity or enter into any legal process that would relinquish their collective Aboriginal rights and Interests in their territories.

In accordance with B.C. Mines Act, a post-closure plan is being created for the Pinchi mine; yet, the painful history of the mine continues to impact Binche Whut'enne. The CCJ supported Binche Whut'en in their work to enliven traditional governance and communication rooted in Dakelh law and principles as the Nation works to ensure a self-determined approach to the legacy of the site. Funding from the CCJ contributed to research development activities that have led to a First Nations Health Authority funded multi-phase project on environmental contaminants.

CCJ team member: Dr. Onyx Sloan Morgan

Research themes: Indigenous-Led Climate Action and Planning; Transforming Institutions and Governance for Climate Justice

CCJ Research Funds

Contesting Energy Discourses through Action Research (CEDAR)

The climate crisis is bound up with socially-constructed systems of power that require high levels of energy use tied to economic growth. These systems encourage the reckless extraction of natural resources and exploitation of nature, promote mass consumerism, and lead to a biodiversity crisis, social and economic inequality, militarism and war. The CEDAR project research uses critical social science approaches and media interventions to reveal, critique, and challenge the power structures involved in energy transitions and the messages they promote, with a focus on New Brunswick. Its four linked studies, each co-led by several investigators, includes one on energy transition discourses in mass media and independent media; one that aims to map out the dominant actors and institutions involved in energy transitions in Canada; a participatory action research component aimed at producing stories for different media formats to counter the dominant discourses; and one aimed at developing media strategies for climate justice actors to challenge the hegemony around energy transitions.

CCJ team member: Dr. M.V. Ramana

Research theme: Just Transitions in Energy, Water, and Agriculture

Collaborative Flood Research with Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation)

Emerging from the 2021 atmospheric river events, the Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) and CCJ began collaborative flood and emergency research. With the support of Atlanta-Marinna Grant (CCJ Emergent Climate Response Network Coordinator) and Lerato Chondoma (IRSI), the CCJ entered into a Collaborative Research Agreement with the Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw. This spring Prof. Jocelyn Stacey and CCJ Graduate Affiliate Alida Thomas (SPPGA) worked with the Nation to develop a report and action plan on emergency support services for Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw members who live off-reserve. Guided by Skwxwú7mesh principles and incorporating recent experiences of emergencies, the report identifies six priorities and 38 recommendations for reducing disaster risk and emergency vulnerability for off-reserve members. The recommendations are currently being implemented in Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw's emergency plan. Additional collaborative flood research is still underway with support from the CCJ.

Research themes: Indigenous-Led Climate Action and Planning; Transforming Institutions and Governance for Climate Justice

SUPPORTING STUDENTS

We joined the CCJ in November 2022 with the goals of creating community for graduate students around climate justice work and creating a space for interdisciplinary exchange and support among faculty and graduate affiliates. Our programming included bi-weekly lunches, monthly works-in-progress meetings, and funding for graduate research. By Spring 2023, we had approximately 20 graduate affiliates from diverse departments such as English, Geography, Public Policy, Microbiology, Land and Food Systems, and more.

Our bi-weekly gatherings have been opportunities for affiliated faculty and students to share their work in an informal, low-pressure environment. Over the term, we hosted faculty affiliates Daniel Steel, Amanda Giang, Jessica Dempsey, and M.V. Ramana, as well as Meghan Wise from the UBC Climate Hub. We also held two works-in-progress meetings where four graduate students presented work and received feedback from fellow affiliates. Each of these presentations were later presented at conferences.

Throughout our engagements with graduate students, we consistently heard the desire for supportive community spaces for climate justice scholarship, training opportunities, and connections among students and faculty across departments. We are currently building out our graduate programming for the coming year to address these needs, including initiating CCJ graduate community on the UBC Okanagan campus.







Hann Scurlock

CCJ Graduate Research Awards

This year, the CCJ dedicated \$3500 to awards supporting graduate research, professional development, and/or artistic interventions around climate justice, environmental justice, and community-oriented responses to the climate crisis.

Felix Giroux	Green hydrogren train ethnography
Elena Gordillo Fuertes	Summer Research trip to Mongolia
Fiana Kawane	Conference memberships: ASLE, MLA, and Dance Centre
Fabiola Melchior	Honoraria for participants of thesis research
Margaret ODonnell	A Political Ecology of Mold Remediation training course
Erik Post	Field Work in the Sierra Norte de Puebla
Lorah Steichen	2023 DOD Climate Resilience Workshop

November 2021

With Climate Justice UBC

• Climate Emergency Town Hall

March 2022

with CCP

 Research Seminar: Fiscal Justice for Caribbean Climate Action - A talk by Patrick Bigger

September

with PWIAS and CSIAR

Guest lecture by Farhana Sultana: Climate Coloniality

October

with The Intercept

• Virtual panel, Egypt's Carceral Climate Summit

with the Centre for Law and Environment

 NECESSITY: Documentary Screening and Discussion

with SFU CERi, SFU VOCE

• Symposium on Community Engaged Research in the Climate Crisis

with PWIAS, SPPGA, CISAR

• Floods in Pakistan: Considering Colonialism and Climate Change

with PSI, PWIAS, Sustainability Hub, Climate Hub

Climate Stories from UBC

with Chan Centre

• David Suzuki x Brandi Morin, in conversation with Naomi Klein

November

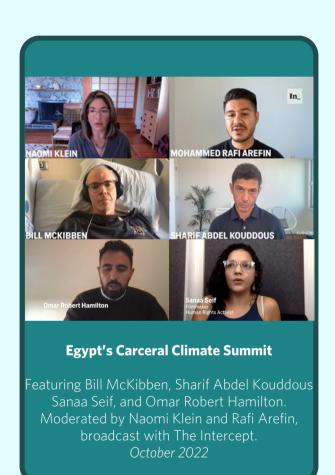
with UBC Geography

 AbdouMaliq Simone - No Arrival: The Afterlives of Climate Justice

December

with Climate and Community Project and Third World Network

 Debt, Biodiversity and the Climate Crisis: Addressing fiscal barriers to transformative change





January

with Allard School of Law

 Guest Llecture by Sebastien Jodoin: Disability-Inclusive Climate Action: Principles, Process, and Pathways

with The Weather Station

• Guest Lecture by Tamara Lindeman: The Weather Station

with The Weather Station, Chan Centre

Concert

with First Nations House of Learning

• Guest lecture by Chief Wilson of the West Moberly First Nation: Dancing with the Land



Chief Roland Wilson,
West Moberly First Nations.
A Critical Balance: Land,
Culture, and Cumulative
Effects.

Co-hosted with First Nations House of Learning. January 2023

Climate Emergency Week, February 2022

During UBC Sustainability Hub's Climate Emergency Week, the CCJ hosted full-house talks by Omar Tesdell and Thea Riofrancos.

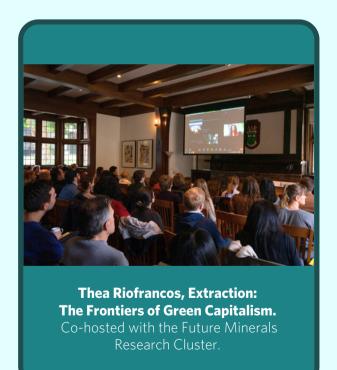
Tesdell gave us a moving political ecology of olive agroforestry in Palestine, and the visions it offers for future ways of living through climate crisis.

Riofrancos took us to the frontiers of the so-called "green" economy, where the rush for rare earths critical to renewable energy economies - in particular lithium - is redrawing geographies of extraction.



Climate Adaptation in Palestine.
Co-hosted with the Peter Wall Institute for
Advanced Studies.

Omar Tesdell, Land-Based Research and



Photography by Jacob Power

February

With PWIAS
Omar Tesdell, Land-Based Climate Adaptation in Palestine.

With Future Minerals Cluster Thea Riofrancos, Extraction: The Frontiers of Green Capitalism.

March

with Centre for Migration Studies

 Racial Capital and Climate Migration with Andrew Baldwin and Neel Ahuja, in conversation with Jemima Baada



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



Symposium on Community Engaged Research in the Climate Crisis

Oct 20th 2022

In collaboration with SFU's Community Engaged Research Initiative and VanCIty Office of Community Engagment.

This symposium brought together community organizers, movement and youth leaders, media makers/storytellers, researchers, and other practitioners of climate justice to share practices, stories, and lessons to collectively strengthen our ability to advance climate justice. The one-day event will foster discussion and connection among initiatives centred on three themes:

Collaborative research and climate responses that advance Indigenous sovereignty; Storytelling for community resilience and policy change; and Youth-driven research and engagement for climate justice.

A full report from the symposium is available for download on Publications page of the CCJ website.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Climate Justice Study Collective: Inaugural Cohort

The Climate Justice Study Collective (CJSC) was inaugurated in 2022 to support climate justice practitioners and knowledge holders from the greater Vancouver area to engage in collective study with UBC and SFU faculty on what climate justice means in our region, to identify and build connections among disparate climate- and justice-related issues locally, and to forge new research partnerships.

The Climate Justice Study Collective is motivated by the guiding questions:

- How do we build solidarities among diverse movements or initiatives engaged broadly in struggles for climate justice, in order to increase our collective power to make positive change?
- How do we cultivate shared desires and visions of a future world worth fighting for?

Toward these ends, our inaugural cohort of 10 community members and 8 SFU and UBC researchers met monthly to discuss and connect around local issues of climate justice over the course of six months. Members of the collective took turns both leading and co-creating the content of our monthly discussions.

Cohort Members



Jim Leyden

(he/him) is currently the elder at Kwekwecnewtxw, the Coast Salish watchhouse on Burnaby Mountain as part of his resistance to the TMX Pipeline. He is also involved on a volunteer basis with the setting up of an Aboriginal Council at Oppenheimer Park in the DTES in an effort to support and find solutions for Indigenous people



Robert Nahanee

(he/him) is a Squamish Nation Elder, and has supported Jim Leyden in the Watch House, and worked with the nation to address the issue of the clear cutting of the forest in Squamish traditional territory.



Janelle Lapointe

(she/her) is an Afro-Indigenous climate justice and Indigenous rights activist from Stellat'en First Nation, currently the interim Director of Public Engagement and Mobilization at the David Suzuki Foundation and a guest on Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), Səlílwəta?/Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) and xwməθkwəýəm (Musqueam) territories. She leans on her lived experience growing up on her small reserve in Northern British Columbia to ensure that intersectionality is at the forefront of environmental narratives, to build power and help others see their stake in fighting back against the status quo. She has spent the last few years Frontloading* a new mass movement organization, to unite everyday people from Canada, Quebec and many Indigenous Nations across the lands to demand a Green New Deal that takes power from the hands of the billionaires and returns it to us all. (Easy stuff!)



Cheryl Cameron

(she/her) is a veteran climate organizer, recently resigned from her role as Director of Organizing for Dogwood Initiative. She is well connected in the climate movement, and has taken part in designing and implementing a wide variety of politically oriented campaigns to reign in fossil fuel extraction, ranging from ending fossil fuel subsidies to electoral campaign finance reform. In her youth, Cheryl spent five seasons working on a commercial salmon seine boat on the North Coast, the decline of which incited her passion for environmental activism. Cheryl has 3 adult children, two of whom are professionals focused on climate justice – one as a policy analyst with IISD, another a physicist working at General Fusion working toward long term clean energy sources.



Tara Ehrcke

(they/them) is an educator, teaching secondary math in the Lekwungen speaking territories (Greater Victoria) and facilitating union workshops across the province to colleagues in the BC Teachers' Federation. Tara is currently a member of the BCTF Committee for Action on Social Justice, as well as the BC Federation of Labour Climate Justice & Jobs Committee. A life long trade union activist, Tara is excited to work with others to strengthen relationships between labour and the community so that we can collectively build the power to change the world.



Nicolas Crier

(he/him, Cree) is a Peer Co-Lead, Writer and Research Assistant with the UBC Transformative Health & Justice Research Cluster. This highly innovative group of academics, elders, and community members with Lived Experience are quietly helping to guide bold new conversations on how we as a society can change the outcomes of urgent health and justice determinants such as penal incarceration, social stigmatization and the criminalization of Indigenous Drug Users. In all these efforts, Nicolas realizes that Climate Change Justice is what is going to continue to make them possible for him at all.



Robert Patterson

(he/him) is a lawyer and tenant advocate with the Tenant Resource & Advisory Centre (TRAC). The focus of his work is on protecting tenants' right to safe, adequate, and accessible housing, primarily through direct legal representation at the Residential Tenancy Branch and BC Supreme Court, as well as through systemic advocacy to different levels of government about housing issues that affect residential tenants. TRAC's recent work with the UBC Centre for Climate Justice has turned our attention towards the intersection of the climate crisis and the housing crisis.



Christine Boyle

(she/her) is a second term City Councillor with OneCity Vancouver. In 2018 Councillor Boyle led Vancouver to declare a Climate Emergency, and since then has led the city's effort to act at the scale of the climate crisis, rooted in equity and justice. Before running for Council Christine spent many years doing climate justice organizing, particularly among diverse faith communities, including at COP21 and the Vatican. She is an ordained United Church minister, and a parent to a kid and a teen.



Zoha Faisal

(she/her) is a teenage climate and community organizer residing on the unceded lands of the Katzie, Semiahmoo, and Kwantlen First Nations, so-called "Surrey, B.C." She is a co-founder of Climate Recentered, a local movement of BIPOC working to build long-term mutual aid projects and communities of care in order to grow climate resilience and action, with racialized and marginalized people leading the charge. She is also a core organizer with Sustainabiliteens, a grassroots organization bringing teenagers together from across the Lower Mainland to organize mass mobilizations and campaigns targeting those responsible for climate injustice.



Meesh QX

(they/them) is an interdisciplinary artist whose work spans visual arts, writing, and performance. Over the past year they've been exploring ways that "listening" is a part of their art practice across textiles, writing, drawing, and making music. They are currently studying voice and piano, and composing new music.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT





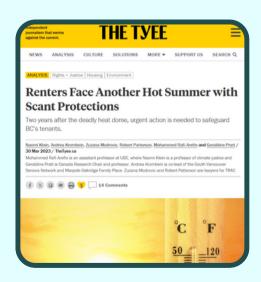
Research Workshop with West Moberly First Nations

In January 2023, CCJ co-director Jessica Dempsey and Graduate Affiliate Audrey Irvine-Broque hosted a research generation and exchange workshop with the Chief and Lands Department staff of WMFN. The objective of this workshop was to advance meaningful and consequential relationship-building, knowledge exchange, and research planning around climate change impacts and policies. Through exchanges between WMFN Chief and staff and UBC professors with expertise in climate-related research, we contextualized what is known and unknown about existing and projected climate change and charted some initial directions for research to support Indigenous self-determination and climate justice in WMFN territory.

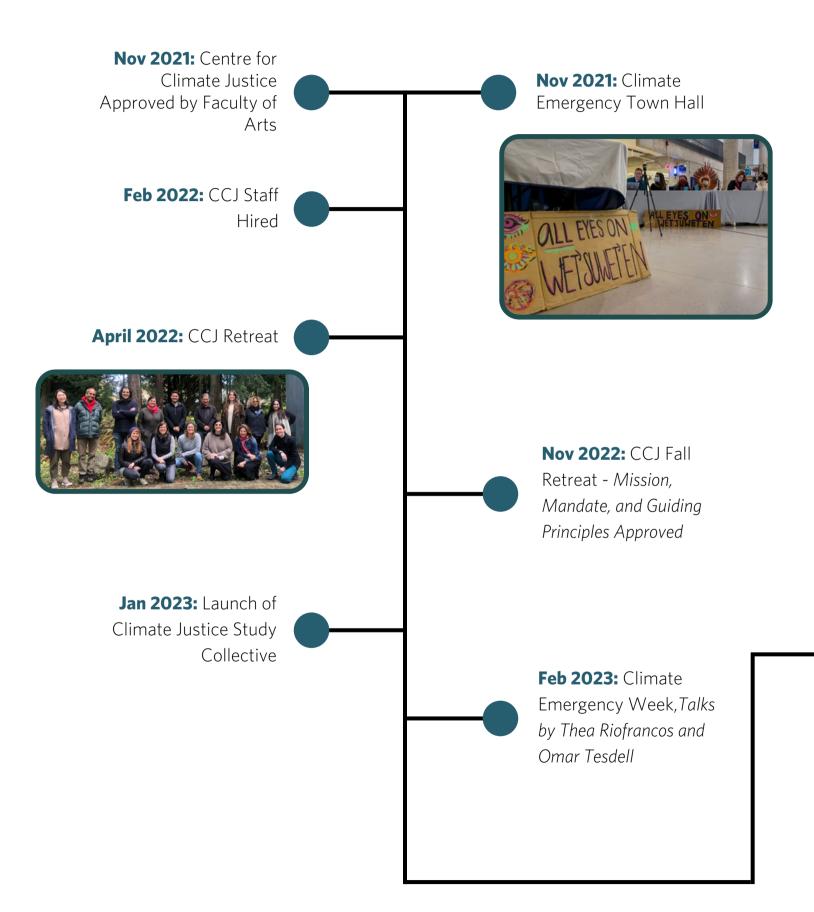
A report from the workshop is available on the Publications page of the CCJ website.

Spotlight: Housing Justice in a Climate Emergency

This year the Housing Justice in a Climate emergency team, led by Rafi Arefin, Geraldine Pratt, and Naomi Klein, held a series of research workshops and focus groups with partner organizations the Tenants Research Advisory Centre (TRAC) and the South Vancouver Seniors' Network (SVSN) to develop and research questions and priorities, and to understand seniors' and other vulnerable tenants' experiences of 2021 heat dome. Members of the project, including community partners from TRAC and SVSN, published an op-ed in The Tyee, "Renters Face Another Hot Summer with Scant Protections". The piece drew lessons from the survival strategies of senior low-income tenants that can scaled to other buildings and neighbourhoods.



TIMELINE



MESSAGE FROM INCOMING INTERIM CO-DIRECTORS:

Looking Forward

The Centre has developed a shared leadership model to allow for a vibrant and interdisciplinary team to guide our work. We are excited to welcome Kavita Philip and Hannah Wittman as the incoming faculty co-directors for the 2023-2024 academic year, while Jessica Dempsey will step down from this role and remain an active member of CCJ's Executive Committee. Naomi Klein will focus her leadership role as Director of Public Engagement.

We are honoured and excited to join the CCJ's collective leadership team as its faculty co-directors for the coming year. Our disciplinary homes in the Faculties of Science, Arts, and Land and Food Systems mark CCJ's commitment to bridging the humanities and social and natural sciences in dialogue, solidarity, and climate action. However, disciplinary monikers don't do justice to the broad interdisciplinary work that we both do. We look forward to bringing together our distinct and complementary perspectives to guide the CCJ's work in the coming year.

Hannah approaches her community based research on agroecology from the perspective of food sovereignty, a framework that emerged on the global stage in the mid-1990s as diverse social movements representing peasant, Indigenous, fisher, and small-scale farming communities were experiencing a confluence of crises—structural adjustment, rising threats to biodiversity, climate change, rural poverty, and growing levels of world hunger—that continue to accelerate into the present day. The food sovereignty framework foregrounds social and climate justice in food systems. Kavita's research seeks to learn from the ways in which activists articulate demands and critiques of the scientific, ecological, and technical systems we live in. She directs her labour towards the intellectual task of forging methods to connect techno-scientific, social scientific, and humanistic inquiry, as well as towards the institutional task of building these collaborative spaces. Together, we are excited to utilize our networks in the environmental humanities and physical sciences to expand the CCJ community across both of UBC's campuses.

The foundations established by Jess and Naomi this past year have given us a solid basis on which to build the CCJ's next phase. Our priorities for the coming year will include expanding our community at UBC Okanagan and completing a 3-year Strategic Plan, with the support of UBC's Office of Strategy and Decision Support, in alignment with UBC's priorities articulated in the Indigenous Strategic Plan, UBC Strategic Plan, and Climate Emergency Task Force Report. This plan will chart a path for the Centre's long-term financial sustainability and staff capacity to meet our ambitious mandate.

We are committed to the essential role of the UBC Centre for Climate Justice in generating an engaged community for climate action across UBC campuses, increasing the accessibility and impact of UBC climate research, and enabling the university to achieve its climate emergency goals. We are grateful to the Faculty of Arts, the Office of the Provost, the Office of the Vice President of Research and Innovation, and the multiple departments who have supported us in our first years. We especially thank the Department of Geography for its donation of our CCJ offices.



Kavita Philip

Dr. Kavita Philip is the President's Excellence Chair in Network Cultures at UBC, Professor of English, and Associated Faculty in Geography and STS. She has written about nineteenth-century environmental knowledge in British India, information technology in post-colonial India, and the intersections of art, science fiction, and social activism with science and technology. She is author of Civilizing Natures (2004), and co-editor of five volumes curating new interdisciplinary work in radical history, art, activism, computing, and public policy.



Hannah Wittman

Dr. Hannah Wittman's research examines the ways that the rights to produce and consume food are contested and transformed through struggles for agrarian reform, food sovereignty, and agrarian citizenship. Her projects include community-based research on farmland access, transition to organic agriculture, and seed sovereignty in British Columbia, agroecological transition and the role of institutional procurement in the transition to food sovereignty in Ecuador and Brazil, and the role that urban agriculture and farm-to-school nutrition initiatives play in food literacy education.

APPENDIX PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS

We are deeply grateful to the campus partners who have financially supported the CCJ's work in its initial years.

UBC Academic + Provost

UBC Research + Innovation

UBC Faculty of Arts

Department of Anthropology

Department of English Language and Literatures

Department of Geography

Department of History

Department of Sociology

Institute for Critical Indigenous Studies

School of Public Policy and Global Affairs

The Social Justice Institute - GRSJ

APPENDIX

Grants secured by CCJ faculty

PI and Partners	Grant	Amount
Housing Justice in a Climate Emergency Arefin, Klein, Pratt, TRAC	UBC CUES Explore	\$12,858
Nun ke' Daahwéhsats (Dancing with the Land) Dempsey, West Moberly	UBC CUES Explore	\$12,833
Urban freight system emissions: improved characterization for mitigation planning Giang, Kirchen	Environment and Climate Change Canada (Environmental Damages Fund, Climate Action and Awareness Fund)	\$2,433,660
Makers' Lab: Art/Research Collaborations & Solutions for the Climate Crisis Harris, Artists Brigade, The Only Animal	PWIAS Catalyst Funds	\$10,000
Indigenizing Climate Justice in British Columbia Klein, Dempsey, Stacey, UBCIC	UBC CUES Explore	\$13,000
Housing Justice in a Climate Emergency Klein, Arefin, TRAC	MITACS Accelerate	\$10,000
CCJ Climate Justice Study Collective 2024 Cohort Nelson	PWIAS Catalyst Funds	\$10,000
Charting New Pathways to Achieving Recognitional Justice in Urban Greening Nesbit, Harris	SSHRC Insight	\$259,000
Contested Discourses of Energy Transition and Climate Justice Ramana, O'Donnell	SSHRC Insight	\$375,000

APPENDIX

Grants secured by CCJ faculty

PI and Partners	Grant	Amount
Alhgoh 'Uts'ut'en (we all work together): Binche Whut'en Health and Wellness in the Shadow of Intergenerational Impacts of Mercury Mining Sloan Morgan, Binche Keyoh Bu Society	First Nations Health Authority	\$200,000
GAA salary on development of climate disaster response research model Stacey	PWIAS Catalyst Funds	\$5,000
Community-based alternative urban transportation decarbonization pathways and cobenefits for climate resilience, air quality, health, and equity Giang (Co-PI), Hosseini (PI, SFU), and three other Co-PIs, City of Burnaby, Evo, MobiBikes, TransLink	NSERC Alliance Grants – Missions – Anthropogenic GHG research	\$979,000
Air pollution and Asthma in Canada: Projections of burden and the value of climate adaptation strategies Johnson (PI), Giang (Co-PI) and five other Co-PIs	CIHR Catalyst Grant	\$100,000
A Community-based, Inter- and Trans-disciplinary Approach to Indoor Heat and Air Pollution Yoon (PI) and 3 other co-PIs	PWIAS Catalyst Fund	\$10,000
(Re)imagining Information Policy Through a Climate Justice Lens Nathan (PI)	UBC Climate and Wellbeing Education Grant	\$3,996
Climate Justice Partnerships Klein (PI)	GCRC Cluster grant	\$100,000
Dancing with the Land Dempsey and West Moberly First Nations	Chapman and Innovation Grant	\$10,000
Documentary, Visual Methods and Social Justice Walsh and Lewis (team member)	Public Humanities Hub	\$10,000
Incorporating a virtual/augmented reality field trip in "GEOG 302: Climate Justice" Lewis and Dempsey (team member)	UBC Sustainability Initiative Climate Education Grant	\$5,000

We respectfully acknowledge that the UBC Vancouver campus is situated on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the x^wməθk^wəýəm (Musqueam), and that UBC's Okanagan campus is situated on the traditional, ancestral, unceded territory of the nsyilxcən speaking Syilx Okanagan Nation and their peoples. These lands have been places of learning for Indigenous peoples for thousands of years.





THE UNIVERSITY
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Centre for Climate Justice

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