

Climate Solutions Summit



Net Impact Undergraduate and ReThink are excited to announce the return of the *Climate Solutions Summit*, a two-day event that will engage 150+ UW students, professionals, and policymakers to identify, improve, and implement transformative climate solutions. This year, our focus is representation in the climate space.

Dempsey Hall & Founders Hall, University of Washington, Seattle
Friday, May 2nd, 2025 – Leadership Summit
Saturday, May 3rd, 2025 – Case Competition

Background

Last year, with the help of a coalition of sustainability and business organizations, we launched the second [Climate Solutions Summit](#). The event explored scaling and implementing distributed solar in underserved communities locally and nationwide in the wake of the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA).

The centerpiece was a cross-disciplinary conference that connected enthusiastic students with clean energy professionals. The conference featured a keynote speech from Governor Bob Ferguson and panel discussions on Disruptive Innovation and Community Solar.

The second element was a community solar case competition. Sixteen student teams learned about the IRA's policy incentives and proposed solutions to increase the speed and scale of distributed solar projects in opportunity zones, including tribal constituencies. Teams presented their ideas to expert judges, and the top teams competed in a final round for cash prizes.

Representation in the Climate Space

Uplifting diverse voices to create a more sustainable future

We are focusing on developing intersectional solutions to climate justice by amplifying diverse leaders' insights, perspectives, and lived experiences. We hope the knowledge developed and shared during this event will provide better representation in climate leadership and support successful implementation both locally and nationwide.

Why Attend?

The Climate Solutions Summit offers a unique opportunity to connect with bright and passionate students while learning about the latest developments in climate solutions and community-owned renewable energy solutions.

Whether you are a university researcher seeking real-world applications for your work, an activist driving change in your community, or a professional in the energy sector, utilities, non-profit leadership, banking, or government decision-making at all levels, this conference is for you.

Join us to be part of a diverse and action-oriented community committed to building local resilience to climate change. Mark your calendar for this enlightening and empowering event.

Together, we can drive change, overcome barriers, and pave the way for a more sustainable future. Don't miss your chance to be at the forefront of climate solutions. See you there!

Summit Conference: Afternoon of Friday, May 2nd, 2025

Connect climate-conscious students with industry professionals and policymakers over a catered lunch, keynote speaker, dynamic panel discussion, and networking activities.

Perspectives on Environmental Justice:

This panel highlights the intersectional voices driving diverse sustainability projects across various sectors. Featuring a dynamic group of leaders, the discussion will explore how environmental justice intersects with equity, community development, and systemic change. Attendees will leave inspired to adopt a holistic approach to tackling climate challenges, drawing on inclusive and innovative solutions to create meaningful change.

Confirmed Speakers: Kris Nelson (Senior Director & Head of Sustainable Investing Management, Russell Investments), Gus Williams (Climate and Workforce Advisor, City of Seattle), Lisa Dulude (Director of Sustainability, UW)

Fireside Chat:

Our keynote speaker, a trailblazer in climate leadership, will share their insights on advancing gender equity and fostering inclusion in sustainability work. Drawing from their experiences, they will discuss leadership in environmental innovation and systemic transformation. With a focus on actionable strategies and empowerment, this conversation will inspire attendees to lead boldly in the fight against climate change.

Kara Hurst (Chief Sustainability Officer, Amazon; Keynote), Maya Tolstoy (Dean, College of Environment; Moderator)

Activities:

A thoughtfully curated lunch will blend delicious fare with impactful discussions. Structured prompts and guided questions will spark meaningful conversations about climate equity and environmental justice. This unique session bridges disciplines, connecting students, professionals, and policymakers to explore collaborative solutions and innovative approaches to sustainability.

Case Competition: Saturday, May 3rd, 2025

Undergraduate student teams from various academic backgrounds and experience levels will have a week to develop innovative approaches to advancing gender equity within the climate space. The case charge will task student teams to develop recommendations for a local organization to improve its sustainability initiatives through promoting gender equity and intersectionality.

Like last year, teams will present their ideas to expert judges, and the top teams will compete in a final round for cash prizes. Most importantly, the student-generated strategies will be available to relevant stakeholders with the goal of real-world implementation.

Endorsements

"We see the intersection of business and policy determining the success of decarbonizing aviation and other industrial sectors. The UW Climate Solutions Summit takes this and adds a third important ingredient: Ingenuity through idea exchange. Boeing is delighted to be a partner and are looking forward to the event!"

– Ryan Faucett, Director of Environmental Sustainability,
Boeing

"At the Foster School we strive to better humanity through business. The *Climate Solutions Summit* is a wonderful example of how we are collaboratively and collectively achieving that purpose by directly addressing the real-world, unstructured problems, like climate change, that are so critically important to our future."

– Frank Hodge, Dean,
UW Foster School of Business

"The Climate Solutions Summit is a shining example of how collaboration between students, businesses, and sustainability organizations can drive meaningful progress towards a more sustainable future. Together we can scale clean energy technology to address the urgent challenge of climate change."

– Gus Williams, Workforce Development Manager,
CleanTech Alliance

Sponsorship

Due to many expenses required to organize and host events at this scale, the continued success of the Climate Solutions Summit depends on the financial support of its generous sponsors. In addition to showing your organization's commitment to sustainability efforts, sponsors also receive the following benefits:

- Your logo on event branding and promotional materials.
- Access to case competition presentation slides, recordings, and participant resumes.
- Opportunity for an organization representative to present or participate on a panel.

Contact: phitran5@uw.edu

Previous Sponsors



Schedule of Events (Location: UW Business School)

Friday, May 2nd, 2025

Climate Solutions Summit Convention

12:00 pm	Doors Open & Food Available
12:30 pm	Introduction
12:45 pm	Perspectives on Environmental Justice
1:15 pm	Programming Break
1:30 pm	Structured Discussion and Lunch
2:00 pm	Keynote Speaker
2:30 pm	Conclusion
2:45 pm	Networking
3:30 pm	Close Doors

Saturday, May 3rd, 2025

Morning, Case Competition Preliminaries

Coffee and pastries provided, 64 students (16 teams), 12 judges

9:30 am	Judge Briefing
10:00 am	Flight 1
10:30 am	Flight 2
11:00 am	Flight 3
11:30 am	Flight 4
12:00 pm	Deliberation and Lunch
1:00 pm	Finalists Announced

Afternoon, Case Competition Finals

Lunch provided, 4 teams (top of each flight), 3 judges

1:30 pm	Judge Briefing
2:00 pm	Final Round Presentations
4:00 pm	Deliberation
4:30 pm	Announcement of Winners
5:00 pm	Closing