



CIFAL Victoria

IMPACT REPORT

2025





*We acknowledge and respect the Ləkʷəŋən (Songhees
and Xʷsepsəm/Esquimalt) Peoples on whose territory
the university stands, and the Ləkʷəŋən and ƵSÁNEĆ
Peoples whose historical relationships with the land
continue to this day.*

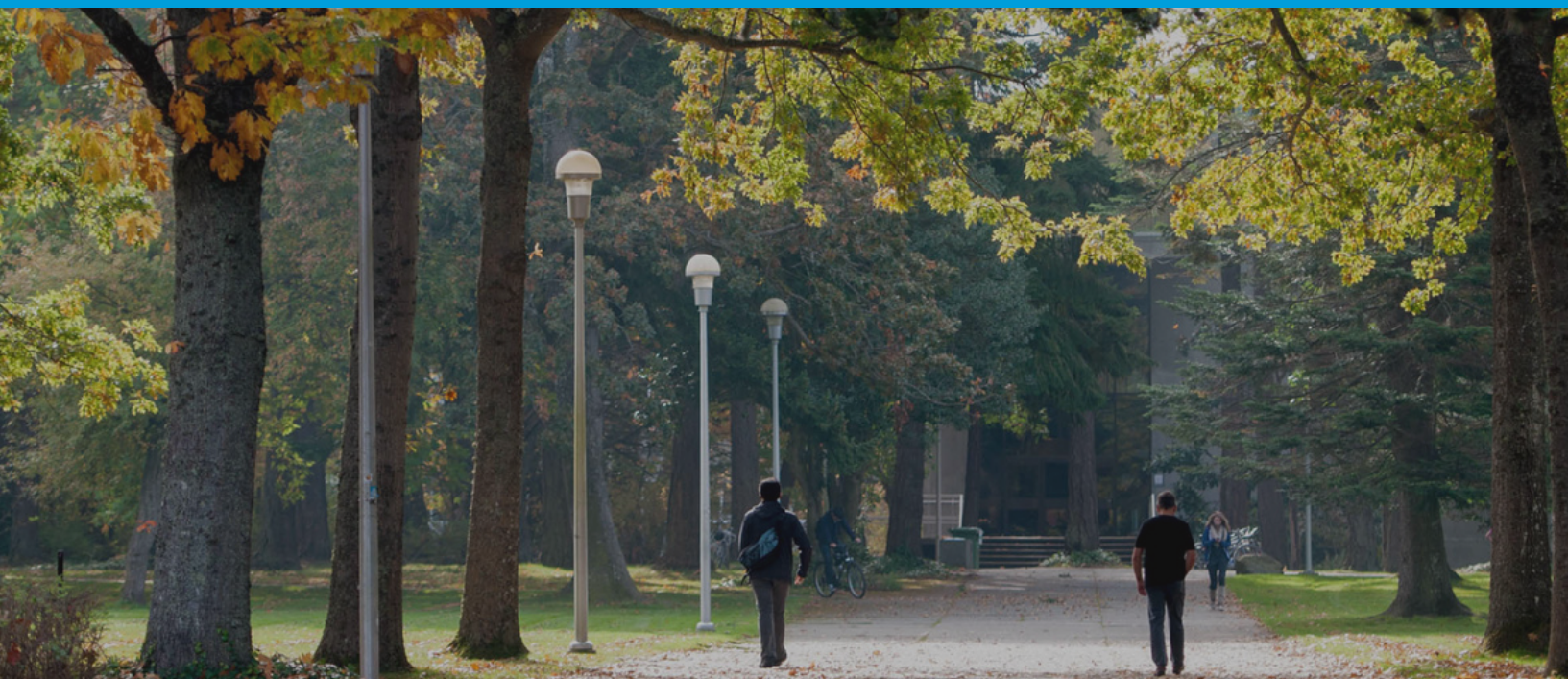


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About CIFAL Victoria

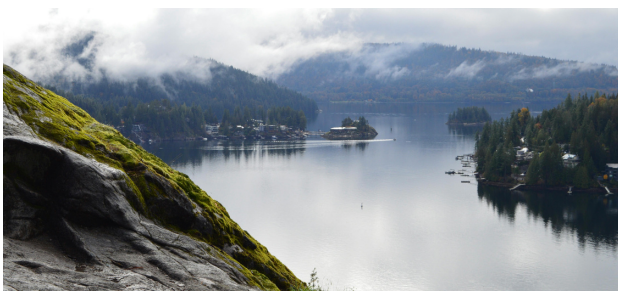
In 2022, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) and the University of Victoria (UVic) established the first accredited International Training Centre for Authorities and Leaders (known by the French acronym CIFAL) on North America's west coast.

UVic's CIFAL Victoria joins a global network of more than 30 CIFAL training centres around the world. The purpose of these centres is to develop local capacity to take on global challenges. Through partnership building and knowledge sharing, CIFAL centres empower communities and support officials as they advance sustainable development.

CIFAL Victoria's mission is to drive sustainability transformations at UVic and beyond through training and research. Our programs help build the knowledge, skills, and capacities required for a more just, equitable, and sustainable world. We connect UVic and our region to a global community through knowledge-sharing, partnerships, and collective action.

Our work strengthens local and international capacity for change, focused on four thematic areas:

- Oceans, climate, and sustainability
- Decolonization and Indigenous knowledges
- Global health and well-being
- Innovation and entrepreneurship



Director's Message

CIFAL Victoria expanded its reach in 2025 to include more partners, more programs, and a deeper impact in the communities we serve.

Writing this message, I find myself reflecting on what inspires me to do this work. Change happens at the local level, through our connections and relationships and through communities coming together to solve the challenges that matter most to them. This is also why we anchor our work in the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs offer one of the few frameworks that holds climate, rights, and justice together, and with four years remaining in the 2030 Agenda, these commitments have never felt more important and urgent. Now is the time to deepen our partnerships and our collective dedication to people, to place, and to equity.

This report provides a snapshot of CIFAL Victoria's training and research between January to December 2025. Key highlights from this year include the publication of our report "Living and Learning with Climate Change", new funding to support work with the BC Senior Advisors to the Indigenous Leadership Initiative, and welcoming new cohorts with the Coastal Climate Solution Leaders and Impact Investing Summer School programs. These achievements are owed in large part to our network of partners, whose inspiring work drives local action for global challenges.

We are proud of what 2025 brought, and we are building on that in 2026 with gratitude and energy for the work ahead together.

Dr. Crystal Tremblay
Director, CIFAL Victoria



Training and Events

CIFAL Victoria's fourth year of operations was one of growth and collaboration. We deepened our commitment to sustainable development, community-led innovation, and Indigenous reconciliation and self-determination across our region and internationally.

We expanded our community of collaborators to 51 local and global partnerships, more than doubled from 2024. Through these partnerships, we accredited 23 courses and trained 369 learners through certificate programs, professional diplomas, and workshops. We also supported 27 public awareness events, including public lectures, webinars, and conferences, and participated in 25 strategic partnership meetings, roundtables, and grant development processes. Across all activities we reached 1,833 total beneficiaries, our highest annual number to date.

At UVic, we have increased our presence across campus by developing new research initiatives, supporting student engagement, and building awareness on how to partner with us. CIFAL Victoria continues to serve as a key strategic partner for research and training that advances a more just, inclusive, and sustainable world.



640+
TRAINING HOURS

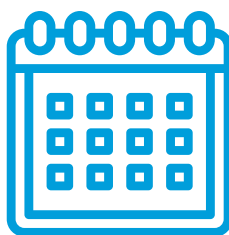


1,833
BENEFICIARIES



51

PARTNERS



77

TRAININGS & EVENTS

DEVELOPING A SUSTAINABILITY MINDSET

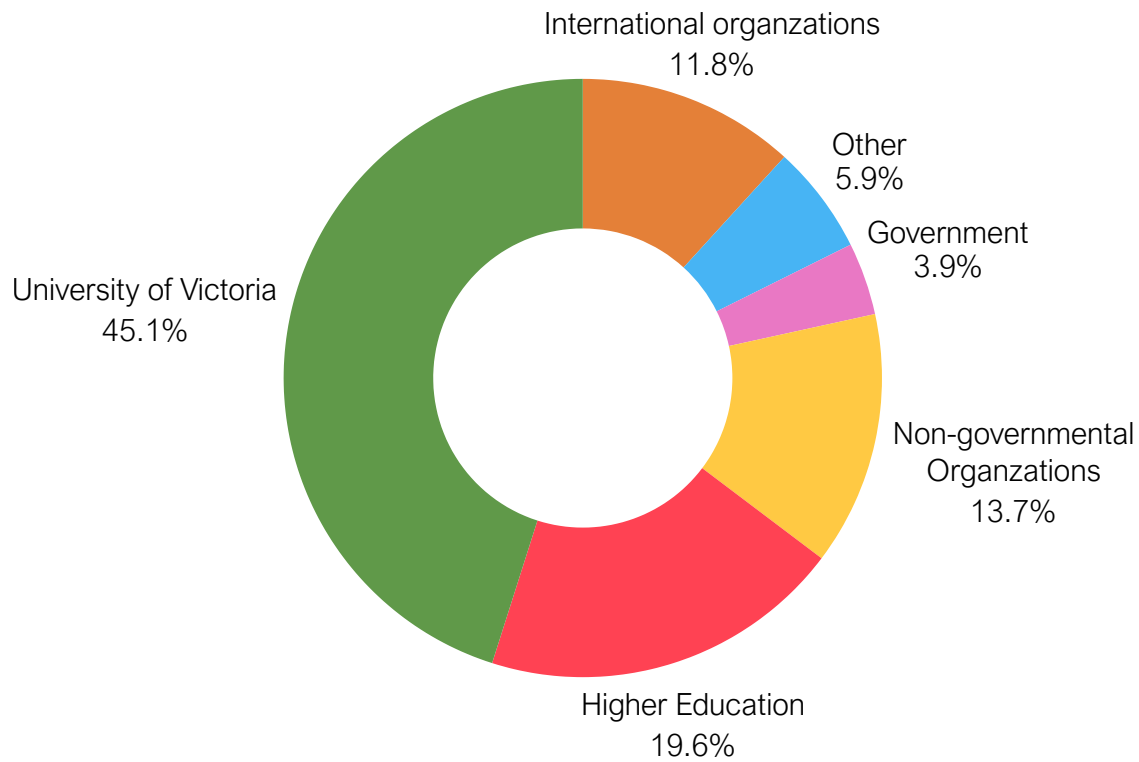
with Mahidol University — January 27 to February 1



Photo credit: Mahidol University

In January 2025, for the second year in a row, we delivered our signature training program, “Developing a Sustainability Mindset” with Mahidol University in Bangkok, Thailand. A cohort of 100 undergraduate students participated in two days of action-oriented, youth-empowerment learning. This was followed by three days of sustainability leadership training for executives from across Mahidol campus. Building on this training, the executive cohort continued their learning journey at UVic in June 2025, engaging in a knowledge exchange with UVic leadership on sustainability transformations in higher education.

Partnerships by Sector



CCSL GRADUATE TRAINING PROGRAM

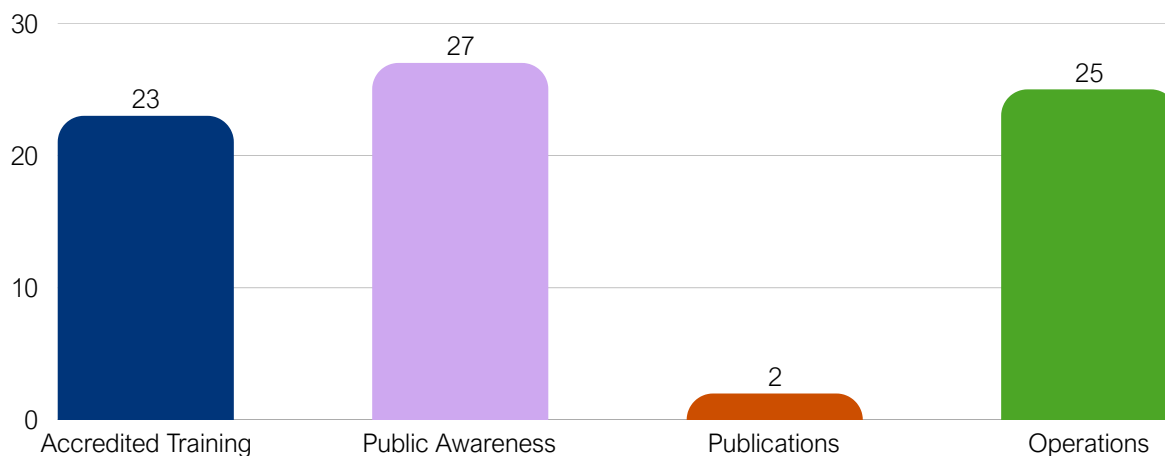
with Coastal Climate Solutions Leaders — September 2024 to April 2025



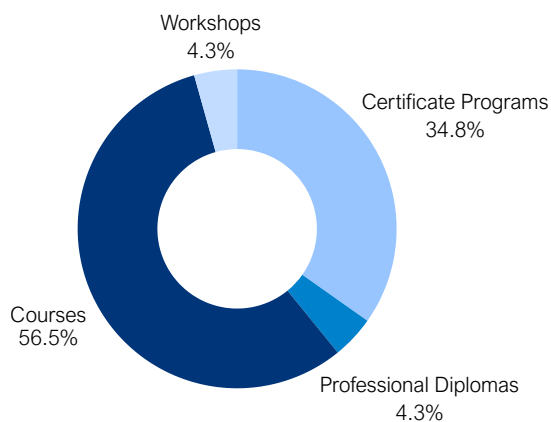
Photo credit: CCSL

Coastal Climate Solutions Leaders (CCSL) is an NSERC-CREATE training program led by Dr. Julia Baum offering UVic graduate students an immersive, multidisciplinary learning experience that builds cross-cutting skills for advancing climate solutions. This CIFAL-accredited program bridges engineering, the natural and social sciences, and business to prepare student leaders for the complex challenges of climate change. The 2024–25 cohort of 13 master's and doctoral students completed the program in April 2025, and a new cohort began the program in September. Learn more at coastalclimatesolutionsleaders.org.

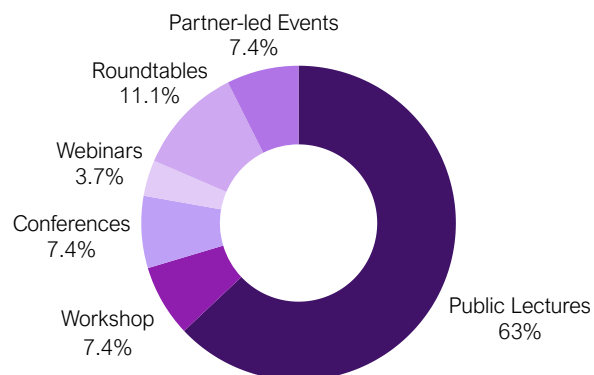
CIFAL Victoria Activities by Type



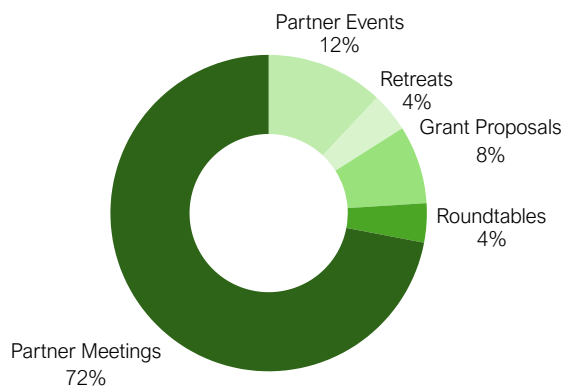
Accredited Training



Public Awareness Events



Operations



Publications



IMPACT INVESTING SUMMER SCHOOL

with the UVic Impact Investing Hub — August 21 to 28, 2025



Photo credit: Basma Majerbi

In August 2025, a cohort of 28 graduate and undergraduate students from across Canada met at UVic to participate in the annual Impact Investing Summer School, an eight-day intensive delivered by the Impact Investing Hub—led by Dr. Basma Majerbi—in collaboration with Propel Impact and certified by CIFAL Victoria. Students engaged in hands-on learning with researchers and industry experts, and emerged with new training and experience empowering them with practical knowledge and tools to explore careers in finance with a focus on mobilizing capital to accelerate the net-zero transition. Learn more about this program and future opportunities to participate at impactinvestinghub.ca.

I am grateful to be connected to a group of like-minded individuals that are driven to do good in our world. I am also incredibly grateful for the exposure to such a wide array of industry experts! I can't imagine another context where I would have this opportunity of a lifetime.

— Anonymous, Impact Investing Summer School 2025

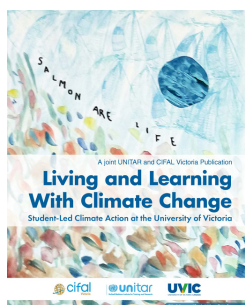
Publications & Research

CIFAL Victoria supports impactful research that advances the UN SDGs and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDIRP). We work with UVic researchers and community organizations to support ongoing research programs and partner on new research funding proposals that align with our mission.

CIFAL VICTORIA PUBLICATIONS & RESEARCH GRANTS

In 2025, CIFAL Victoria co-published two reports, and secured two research grants to support our work in the coming years.

PUBLICATIONS



Living and Learning With Climate Change

Edited by Thomas Heyd, Michael Lines, & Crystal Tremblay with Eckert, A., Inch, J., Suddaby, T., et al.

Climate change is an increasingly anxiety-provoking issue, especially for youth. This publication explores the outcomes of an event series held in 2023-24, using the arts to examine youth relationships with climate change and climate anxiety.



Architects of Belonging: Civil Society Impact Study

Victoria Foundation, CIFAL Victoria, & University of Victoria

Charitable organizations play a vital role in our communities, supporting local employment, generating millions in municipal tax revenue, and driving hundreds of thousands of jobs. This publication captures the role of these organizations and the breadth of people they serve in the Greater Victoria region.

RESEARCH GRANTS

From Recognition to Action: Co-Creating Municipal Accountability Tools for Indigenous Health and Reconciliation

Vancouver Foundation Participatory Action Research (PAR) Investigate Grant (\$248,150 | 3 years)

In partnership with University of Victoria (Geography, Libraries, & KULA Library Futures Academy), Victoria Native Friendship Centre, Salish Sea Hub, City of Victoria and District of Saanich.

This Vancouver Foundation PAR grant supports research bringing urban Indigenous communities and municipalities together to co-create practical reconciliation tools.

LANDS - Leadership and Nationhood Through Decolonial Stewardship: Building Capacity for Indigenous Climate Action

SSHRC Partnership Engage Grant (\$23,936 | 1 year)

In partnership with Indigenous Leadership Initiative (ILI)

This SSHRC Partnership Engage Grant supports ILI's BC Senior Advisors in developing an accredited, Indigenous-led stewardship training program.

PARTNER-LED PUBLICATIONS, RESEARCH GRANTS, & AWARDS

In 2025, individuals and organizations across our network published valuable research, received awards recognizing their innovative work, and secured funding to support impactful projects. We are pleased to highlight a selection of these below.

PUBLICATIONS

CFGS Annual Report: July 2024–June 2025

By the UVic Centre for Global Studies

Grassroots Innovations from Youth: Making our Waste Visible

By Gutberlet, J. in Detritus for the UVic Community-Based Research Lab (CBRL)

Indigenous Guardian Capacity Building: Strengthening Boots-on-the-Ground for Reconciliation, Self-Determination, and Advancing of Indigenous Regenerative Stewardship Economies

By Brown, F., Porter, D., Sellars, B., & Kassi, N. (Indigenous Leadership Initiative) for the BC First Nations Energy and Mining Council

Indigenous Knowledge-Bridging to Support Ecological Stewardship in Canada and Tanzania

By Bell, E., Tremblay, C., Carodenuto, S., et al. in People & Nature

Reconciliatory Water Governance: Reflections on the Collaborative Leadership Initiative as a Means of Transforming Water Governance in Canada

By Phare, M.-A., Kapron, B., Hoppe, E., et al. in Ecology & Society for the POLIS Water Sustainability Project

Ripples 2025: An Arts Zine Created by Youth

By the UVic Sustainability Project, Nature Kids BC, Students for a Green University UNBC, & POLIS Water Sustainability Project

Sensing the Ocean Through the Exquisite Corpse ArtScience Method

By Jung, J., Cherkasheva, A., Corporeau, C., et al. in Elementa for ONC

Teaching Community-Based Participatory Research: Socially Responsible and Ethically Anchored

By Tandon, R. & Hall, B. for Participatory Research in Asia & UNESCO Co-Chair in Community-Based Research and Social Responsibility in Higher Education

The Peer Teaching Methodology of the University of and for Waste Pickers: How Teaching is Learning

By Carvalho Vallin, I., Palma da Silva, F., & Gutberlet, J. in Convergence for UNICATA

RESEARCH GRANTS

Project Funding for "Aging Well in a Changing Climate: Co-Creating an Agenda for Planetary Health and Climate Action with Indigenous Worldviews."

Awarded to Matilde Cervantes UVic CFGS; funded by the UVic Institute on Aging & Lifelong Health (IALH)

New Relationship Trust - Indigenous Labour Market Fund for "Indigenous Guardians Labour Market Study"

Awarded to the Indigenous Leadership Initiative; funded by the BC First Nations Energy and Mining Council

Business Strategy Internship Grant for "Advancing Climate Finance & Social Entrepreneurship"

Awarded to Basma Majerbi, UVic Impact Investing Hub; funded by MITACS

AWARDS

2025 Canadian Bureau for International Education (CBIE) Sustainable Development Leadership Award

Awarded to UVic Co-op & Career Services' International, Indigenous and Accessibility (IIA) Team, for the CIFAL-accredited learning program "Advancing UN SDGs Through Co-operative Education".

2025 Canadian Bureau for International Education (CBIE) North Star Award

Awarded to Sarah McQuillan, UVic Co-Op and Career Services, for the CIFAL-accredited program "Advancing UN SDGs Through Co-operative Education".

2025 Canada Clean50 Education & Thought Leadership Award

Awarded to Basma Majerbi for work on the UVic Impact Investing Hub.

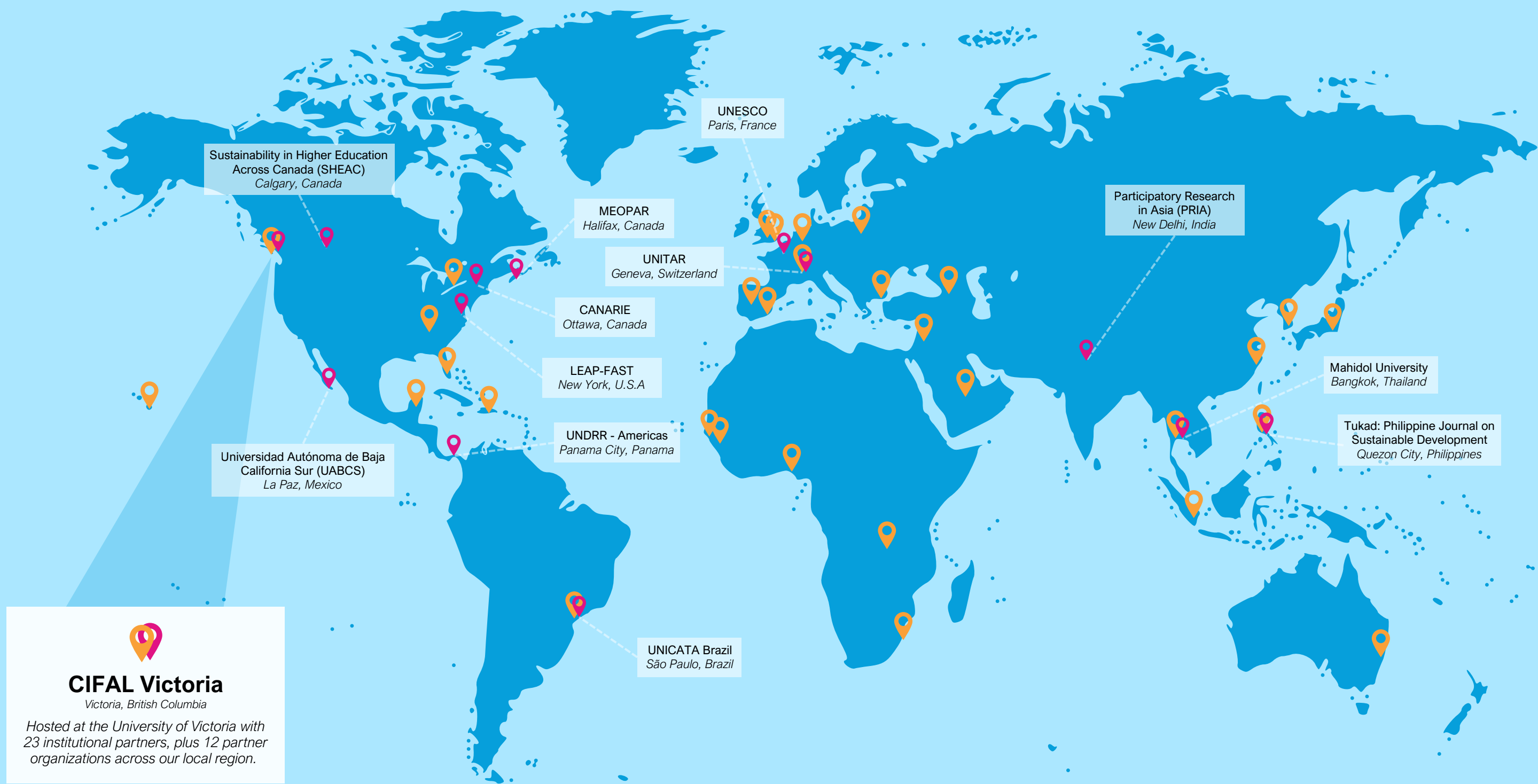
2025 National CRABO Award for Breaking Barriers

Awarded to Queer Histories and Futures radio show, hosted by Matilde Cervantes, Nicola Watts, and Andrew Sybom.

King Charles III Coronation Medal

Awarded to Basma Majerbi, UVic Impact Investing Hub, for outstanding contributions to climate action and sustainable finance.

CIFAL Victoria 2025 International Partners



CIFAL Global Network

- | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------|----------------|--------------------------|----------------|--------------|---------------|-----------------|-------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| CIFAL Atlanta | CIFAL London | CIFAL Doha | CIFAL Flanders | CIFAL Japan | CIFAL Lebanon | CIFAL Merida | CIFAL Nigeria | CIFAL Saudi Arabia | CIFAL Surrey |
| CIFAL Bangkok | CIFAL Curitiba | CIFAL Dominican Republic | CIFAL Honolulu | CIFAL Jeju | CIFAL Madrid | CIFAL Miami | CIFAL Philippines | CIFAL Shanghai | CIFAL Tbilisi |
| CIFAL Banjul | CIFAL Dakar | CIFAL Durban | CIFAL Istanbul | CIFAL Kigali | CIFAL Malaga | CIFAL Newcastle | CIFAL Plock | CIFAL Singapore | CIFAL York |

Partnerships

CIFAL Victoria works closely with a diverse network of organizations, institutions, and individuals focused on positive action towards the UN SDGs and UNDRIP, both in Victoria and internationally. At UVic we are a cross-campus connector, working in partnership with 23 units across a wide range of faculties and departments to deliver training, events, and research. We include a list of partners below with whom we were actively supporting or actively developing a partnership in 2025.

UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA

Balance Co-Lab
 BIOSCAN UVic
 Campus Planning and Sustainability
 Centre for Global Studies
 Centre for Regenerative Futures
 Climate Disaster Project
 Coastal Climate Solutions Leaders
 Community-Based Research Lab
 Community and Government Relations
 Co-Operative Education & Career Services
 Division of Continuing Studies
 Faculty of Humanities
 Global Development Studies Program
 Impact Investing Hub
 International Centre for Students
 KULA: Library Futures Academy
 Ocean Networks Canada
 Office of the Vice-President Indigenous
 Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions

POLIS Water Sustainability Project
 School of Indigenous Governance
 UVic Libraries
 WASH Canada

HIGHER EDUCATION

Canadian Network for the Advancement of Research, Industry and Education (CANARIE)
 CIFAL York
 Mahidol University
 Salish Sea Hub
 Sustainability in Higher Education Across Canada (SHEAC)
 Sustainable Development Solutions Network Canada (SDSN)
 Tukad: Philippine Journal on Sustainable Development
 UNESCO Co-Chair in Community-Based Research and Social Responsibility in Higher Education
 University for and with Waste Pickers (UNICATA)
 Universidad Autónoma de Baja California Sur (UABCS)

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Global Pax Collective

Leaders in Higher Education Alliance
and Programme – For Accelerating
Sustainability Transformations (LEAP-
FAST)

Society for Participatory Research in
Asia (PRIA)

United Nations Institute of Training
and Research (UNITAR)

United Nations Education, Social and
Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

United Nations Office for Disaster Risk
Reduction (UNDRR) - Americas

NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

BC Senior Advisors to the Indigenous
Leadership Initiative

Habitat Acquisition Trust (HAT)

Marine Environmental Observation
Prediction & Response (MEOPAR)

Vancouver Foundation

Victoria Foundation

Victoria Native Friendship Centre

Women Leaders of Tomorrow

GOVERNMENT

City of Victoria

District of Saanich

OTHER

St. George's School

St. Margaret's School

Vancouver Island Wave Program

Our Team

CIFAL VICTORIA CORE TEAM



Dr. Crystal Tremblay

Director

Dr. Crystal Tremblay is Director of CIFAL Victoria and an Associate Professor in UVic Geography. A social geographer and community-based scholar, her research and teaching focus on environmental sustainability, participatory resource governance, and decolonial methodologies to amplify local voices and co-create knowledge.



Dr. Nicole Bates-Eamer

Associate Director

Dr. Nicole Bates-Eamer is Associate Director of CIFAL Victoria and an Adjunct Professor in UVic Political Science. Her research interests include the human impacts of climate change, and policy responses to them. Nicole works with partners across campus and beyond to advance research and training for a more just, sustainable and inclusive world.



Bethany Woodbridge

Program Officer

Bethany Woodbridge is the CIFAL Victoria Program Officer and a research associate in UVic Geography supporting work exploring Indigenous-led conservation mechanisms.

2025 Work Study Students

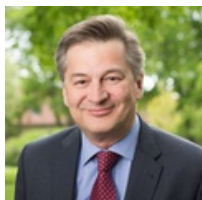
Max Wu

October 2024 - April 2025

Sepideh Abbasi

October 2025 - April 2026

BOARD OF TRUSTEES



Kenneth Macartney
Canadian Diplomat (retired)



Basma Majerbi
University of Victoria



Alex Mejia
UNITAR



David Miller
C40 Cities



Heidi Kiiwetinepinesiik Stark
University of Victoria



Robina Thomas
University of Victoria

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Esi Edugyan, *Author*

Kevin Hall, *University of Victoria*

Lisa Helps, *BC Housing*

Mina Hoorfar, *University of Victoria*

Christopher MacLennan, *Global Affairs Canada*

**These board members completed their terms in 2025. CIFAL Victoria is currently renewing the Board of Trustees. Our thanks to both past and continuing board members for their dedication and support.*

Acknowledgements

CIFAL Victoria extends our sincere gratitude to our partners, collaborators, and participants who have supported our mission of driving sustainability transformations and strengthening local capacities for change across our region and globally.

We acknowledge the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) and the CIFAL Global Network for their invaluable guidance, leadership, and support for CIFAL Victoria's activities in 2025. We also acknowledge the University of Victoria (UVic), our host institution, for its continuous support and collaboration in advancing our research and training endeavours.

Special thanks to the Centre for Global Studies, which houses CIFAL Victoria at UVic, and whose assistance has been essential to the successful delivery of our events and training programs.

Finally, we offer our gratitude to the CIFAL Victoria Board of Trustees, whose leadership and generous contributions to our strategic planning and operational direction have been invaluable for our success to date.

Sincerely,

The CIFAL Victoria Team

CONTACT US

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