

SUSTAINABILITY & CLIMATE ACTION PLAN 2021



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
OISE | ONTARIO INSTITUTE
FOR STUDIES IN EDUCATION



Living Wall in OISE's lobby

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DEAN'S MESSAGE

We are in the midst of a climate crisis! We are rapidly moving past the point of no return in terms of the impact that climate change will have on our planet.

As one of the world's leading faculties of education, the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education has a responsibility to take action, and this plan is designed to outline a pathway forward. We have a rich history of engagement in issues of environmental education and sustainability, but there is little doubt that we need to do much, much more. The basic proposals underscoring this plan emerged from a Climate Action Summit in early 2020, and those proposals were prioritized and refined through the thoughtful contributions of an advisory committee that met into February 2021. Their efforts led to the development of this three-year plan which focuses attention on key actions, organized into five strands. The plan provides a starting-point for what we hope will be a sustained commitment to action on sustainability and climate change across the Institute.

Importantly, this plan signals our shared responsibility. There are certainly steps that each of us can take as individuals to reduce our carbon footprint, but much more can be accomplished if we think collectively about how to address climate change, if we consider ways of dealing with the systemic issues that underscore this emergency, and if we can harness the tremendous academic resources and reputation of OISE to advance environmental and sustainability education within our local, provincial, national and global communities.

My thanks to the advisory committee for their commitment and hard work. The plan would never have emerged without the leadership of Hilary Inwood and David Montemurro, as well as a wonderful team of students and staff who provided background research and support to this process. Thanks to their hard work OISE now has a plan, and it is now up to each and every one of us to play our roles, individually and collectively, in ensuring the survival of our planet.

Dean Glen A. Jones

FOUNDATIONS

In developing this Sustainability & Climate Action Plan, OISE has been inspired by the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement between the Haudenosaunee Confederacy and Confederacy of the Anishinaabe and allied nations to peaceably share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes. This agreement is centred on taking only what we need and leaving enough for others, reminding us that we all have responsibilities to Lands and Waters in creating a culture of reciprocity and sustainability that respects and ensures the well-being of all forms of life.

Focusing on broad understandings of sustainability has come at a critical time. This plan has been developed in the middle of the COVID19 pandemic, which has underlined the deep injustices that continue to be wrought by settler colonialism and systemic racism. These intergenerational, interspecies, socio-economic and geographic injustices are the legacy of colonization, industrialization and globalization, and must be addressed as integral components of the climate crisis. In moving towards a 'just' recovery and a more sustainable future, reducing the impacts of climate change and ensuring climate justice for all people and living beings must be prioritized and enacted by communities around the world.

This Sustainability & Climate Action Plan builds on the existing work of OISE scholars, staff and students to engage all members of our community in working towards climate justice. As part of this ongoing process, learning from Indigenous Knowledge and diverse perspectives that make up our community will broaden and deepen our understanding of and experience with sustainability. Incorporating different sources of knowledge in meaningful and equitable ways will involve learning from these different worldviews and evolve our problem-solving abilities in the process. For this Plan to be fully implemented, members of our community will need to remember and enact the tenets of the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant and help to embed responsibility for climate justice and climate action into our individual and collective work at OISE.



Installation commemorating the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant in OISE's lobby

VISION

Sustainability and climate action are integral components of OISE's work and commitment to both individual and collective wellbeing, and to a more just, equitable and sustainable world.



Seed-saving in the OISE Community Learning Garden



OISE students & TDSB teachers sharing climate action projects

Over the last decade, OISE has been taking steps to address growing concerns about climate change. Acknowledging that our world is now in a state of climate emergency and that there is a very limited time to shift to low-carbon ways of living (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2018), we recognize that all organizations must actively contribute to a more sustainable future. As one of the largest and most research-intensive faculties of education in North America, and as an integral part of the University of Toronto, OISE is well-positioned to support and mobilize the education sector in this critical mission. This Plan is the next step; with it we aim to align with the shifts towards sustainability taking place across the university while simultaneously recognizing the responsibility of each division to activate their expertise and networks to accelerate this transition.

This plan signals a new level of commitment to align OISE's work with Climate Action. As a leading faculty of education, we commit to utilizing our influence in teaching, research and advocacy to address the climate crisis by embedding Sustainability and Climate Action into our curriculum and teaching, research, governance, and facilities and services. By drawing on the knowledge, perspectives, and expertise of OISE's students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community partners, we will minimize our carbon footprint and amplify our contributions to a more just, equitable and sustainable world.

CONTEXT

OISE has a long history of working towards sustainability. From OISE's internationally respected *Global Education Initiative* in the 1990s, to our current leadership in the praxis of social justice, equity and anti-oppression education, our mission to prepare scholars, teachers, and professionals to develop and lead policy and practice towards progressive educational change is respected around the world. In our most recent Academic Plan, OISE has deepened its commitments to **Indigenization, Wellbeing and Mental Health, Equity, Diversity and Accessibility, Transformative and Innovative Pedagogy, Scholarship, Collaboration and Internationalization**, furthering our role as an influential change agent in the field of education.

Since 2009, OISE has also supported the growth of the *Environmental and Sustainability Education (ESE) Initiative*, formed in response to the Ontario Ministry of Education's policy on environmental learning. Founded by a dedicated team of faculty and students, this Initiative aimed to better integrate ESE into OISE's teacher education programs through co-curricular learning, but quickly expanded to include ESE in courses, conferences, a Community Learning Garden, environmental art installations, graduate student training, and research. This aligned with the work of the *Sustainability Advisory Committee*, which focused on upgrading facilities in the OISE building to minimize our carbon footprint. Most recently, OISE's focus on ESE has resulted in an innovative collaboration with the Sustainability Office of the Toronto District School Board which provides integrated professional development for OISE students and TDSB teachers in ESE.



OISE students working on an environmental art installation in OISE's main stairwell

Inspired by the global climate strikes in 2019, the process of developing this Sustainability & Climate Action Plan began in early 2020 with OISE's first Climate Action Summit. Over a hundred members of the OISE community – students, staff and faculty - were actively engaged in identifying ways to minimize OISE's carbon footprint and deepen its commitment to climate action. Aligned with the work of the University's new Committee on the Environment, Climate Change and Sustainability and its Low Carbon Action Plan, the OISE community embraced its responsibility to bring its knowledge and expertise as a faculty of education to the global transition toward sustainability. In the spring of 2020, the Dean established OISE's first [Climate Action Advisory Group](#) to guide the development of this plan. This group moves OISE closer to honouring its commitment in the Academic Plan "to preserving our earth for future generations...as models and teachers of environmentally sustainable practices for our own community and beyond."



The OISE Library's Jayson Meghie stocking OISE's Seed Library with seeds from our Community Learning Garden



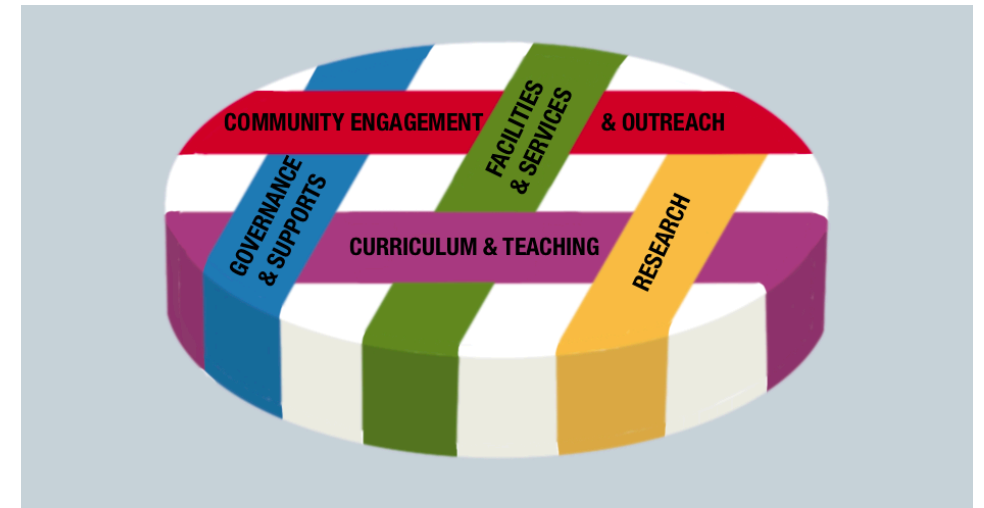
OISE Faculty, Staff and Students at the 2020 Climate Action Summit

"...education must be at the heart of that project... To disrupt the current pace of environmental destruction and climate change, we cannot continue to do the same things that we've been doing; we cannot continue to be the same people; and, we cannot continue to be the same teachers." (Jickling & Blenkinsop, 2020)

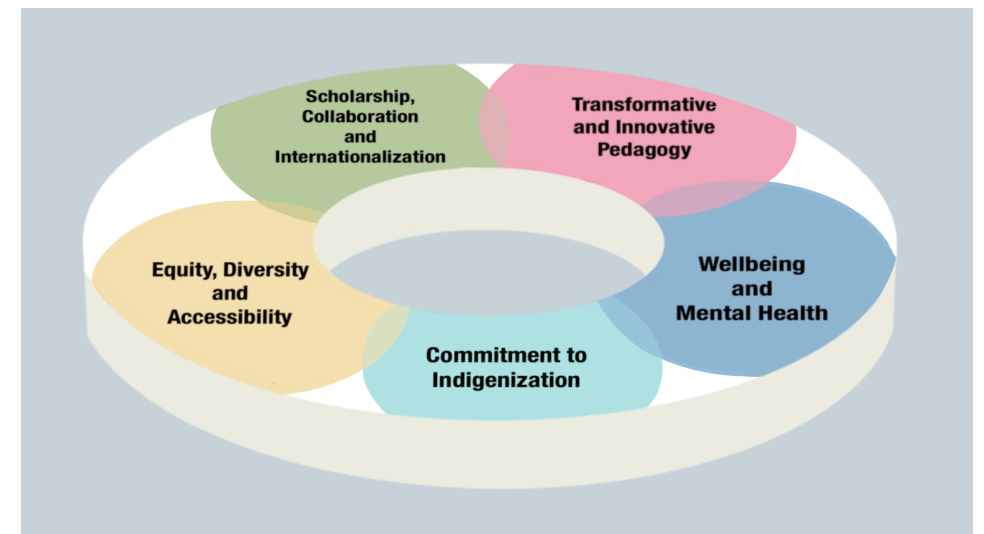
FRAMEWORKS

We recognize that OISE's focus on educational research, curriculum development, and pedagogy, distinctive from other faculties at the university, have informed the development of this Sustainability & Climate Action Plan (SCAP). Arrived at through broad consultation, this plan embeds Sustainability & Climate Action into five strands of the Institute's work: **Governance & Institutional Supports, Facilities & Services, Curriculum & Teaching, Research, and Community Engagement & Outreach.** It brings a systems-thinking approach to how this plan can build on the key priorities of OISE's Academic Plan to address the climate crisis through implementing adaptation and mitigation measures, minimizing OISE's carbon footprint, and maximizing our local and global impact on the field of education.

A variety of definitions of sustainability have informed the development of this SCAP. The United Nation's (UN) definition, drawn from its 1987 *Brundtland Report*, focuses on "meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." This is at the centre of the UN's concept of sustainable development, which has been challenged for being anthropocentric and rooted too deeply in oppressive and capitalist ideologies. Recent discourse about 'critical sustainability' aligns more closely with the stance of the OISE community in its connections to critical race, class and gender analysis in understanding and addressing the climate crisis.



Five Strands of OISE's Sustainability & Climate Action Plan



Key Priorities in OISE's Academic Plan: Indigenization, Wellbeing and Mental Health, Equity, Diversity and Accessibility, Transformative and Innovative Pedagogy, Scholarship, Collaboration and Internationalization

The University's *Committee on the Environment, Climate Change and Sustainability* adds another layer to this, by drawing on Robinson & Coles (2015) concept of 'regenerative sustainability' - moving beyond reducing negative human impacts (a 'net-zero' approach) to improving both human and environmental wellbeing (a 'net-positive' approach).

The United Nations has more recently broadened its conception of sustainability with the launch of the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, which are now being integrated into the University of Toronto's approach to climate action. The SDGs acknowledge that ending poverty, tackling inequalities, improving education and health care, and addressing climate change must all be addressed in the transition to a more just, equitable and sustainable world. Since its inception, OISE's teaching, research and advocacy have significantly contributed to SDG 4 (*Quality Education*), along with SDG 5 (*Gender Equality*), SDG 3 (*Good Health & Wellbeing*), SDG 10 (*Reduced Inequalities*) and SDG 16 (*Peace, Justice & Strong Institutions*). With the launch of this plan, we aim to add SDG 13 (*Climate Action*) and SDG 11 (*Sustainable Cities & Communities*) into our purview.



As part of a 'nested systems' approach, OISE's Sustainability and Climate Action Plan (top layer) is embedded in the work of OISE's Academic Plan (middle layer) and the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (bottom layer).

PROCESS

OISE's Sustainability and Climate Action Plan (SCAP) has been in development for over a year, and involved consultation with a wide range of OISE faculty, staff, and students, as well as members of the broader university community. This work shifted online in March 2020 due to the closing of the OISE building during the COVID-19 pandemic. A variety of groups at different events and meetings provided input and feedback on the Summit, its recommendations, and the strategies and actions of this SCAP:

- May – Dec. 2019 - Climate Action Working Group meetings (Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Department)
- Jan. 2020 - Climate Action Summit, attended by over 100 members of the OISE community
- Feb. 2020 – OISE-wide survey for feedback and input
- June 2020 – Climate Action Advisory Group formed by the Dean
- July – Sept. 2020 – consultations with key stakeholders
- Sept. 2020 – Feb. 2021 – Climate Action Advisory Committee meetings
- Jan. 2021 – review of the SCAP by key stakeholders
- Feb. 2021 – launch of the SCAP



OISE's Verne Ross, Katie Cassidy & Jeff Stickney at the Climate Action Summit 2020

“If we take care of the Land, the Land will take care of us.” (Verne Ross, Climate Action Summit, 2020)

GOVERNANCE & INSTITUTE SUPPORTS



VISION

Prioritize Sustainability & Climate Action by ensuring Institute supports and practices are in place to embed these into OISE's governance structure and institutional culture.




STARTING POINTS

OISE has been supportive of a growing interest in sustainability across the institution over the last decade. Its *Environmental & Sustainability Education (ESE) Initiative* has been active in supporting advocacy, programming and research in this area since 2009, by focusing on educational programming in courses and co-curricular learning for OISE students. In tandem, the *Sustainability Advisory Committee* has been working towards upgrades to facilities in the OISE building. This interest is reflected in the Academic Plan of the Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Department, and supported by its *Climate Action Working Group*. OISE's Academic Plan also calls for positioning "OISE as a community hub of environmental and sustainability education that brings together partners from across society". These led to OISE's first *Climate Action Summit* in January 2020, and the subsequent establishment of the Dean's *Climate Action Advisory Committee*, both of which have been central to the development of this Sustainability & Climate Action Plan.



ACTIONS

STRATEGIES



1: Prioritize Sustainability & Climate Action at OISE

- Make a declaration of climate emergency at OISE that aligns with those of federal and municipal governments and universities in Canada 
- Establish OISE as a 'Living Lab for Education into Sustainability & Climate Action' in alignment with other Living Labs across the university 
- Embed Sustainability & Climate Action into the governance structure and institutional culture of OISE 



2: Establish a Dean's Advisory Committee on Sustainability & Climate Action

- Ensure representation from OISE's academic departments and main business units on a Dean's Advisory Committee to inform the implementation of the Sustainability & Climate Action Plan 
- Hold regular meetings of the Dean's Advisory Committee to provide feedback to the Dean on how best to prioritize Sustainability & Climate Action at OISE 




3: Embed Sustainability & Climate Action into OISE roles and responsibilities

- Consult with the OISE community as to where and how Sustainability & Climate Action is best embedded into staff, faculty and students' roles and responsibilities 
- Formalize and enact roles and responsibilities in relation to Sustainability & Climate Action 



4: Advocate for Sustainability & Climate Action policies

- Support the development and deepening of sustainability policies at the University of Toronto 
- Engage with key educational partners and advocate for the development of sustainability policies in their jurisdiction (e.g. Ontario school boards, the Ontario Ministry of Education and other provincial & federal ministries, the Ontario College of Teachers, the Ontario Association of Deans of Education, the Association of Canadian Deans of Education, etc.) 

5: Initiate an OISE fund for Sustainability & Climate Action

- Set up an OISE fund dedicated to supporting Sustainability & Climate Action initiatives for students, staff and faculty in the Institute 
- Establish terms of reference for allocating funds to support Sustainability & Climate Action initiatives 
- Identify and secure sources of funding for this fund 

6: Create a new community hub for Sustainability & Climate Action at OISE

- Investigate the pathway to establishing a new community hub to prioritize and embed Sustainability & Climate Action in OISE's governance, facilities & services, curriculum & teaching, research, and community engagement & outreach 
- Establish terms of reference, financial supports, and space for the community hub 

TO BE COMPLETED BY YEAR:



FACILITIES & SERVICES



VISION

Minimize the environmental footprint and support the health and wellbeing of OISE's community by bringing the lenses of Sustainability & Climate Action to the forefront of the building's operations and procurement practices.

STARTING POINTS

The University of Toronto has begun to implement its 'Low Carbon Action Plan' (2019) across campus, including in the various buildings that OISE operates in. However, the OISE Building was constructed in the late 1960s, making retrofits towards sustainability difficult and costly. To date energy conservation measures have been put into place, including improving the efficiency of the HVAC system, installing motion sensor lights, LED light bulbs and Dyson hand dryers. Supports for waste minimization have been implemented, found in designated recycling and green bins on all floors, in a shift to double-sided printing and paperless courses, and in the proper recycling of e-waste. Improvements have been made to conserve water, such as switching to low-flow toilets and taps, and ensuring filtered water is available on every floor to encourage the use of refillable bottles. Recently the installation of a 'living wall' in the OISE lobby serves as a prominent reminder of the importance of ensuring wellbeing and sustainability for all forms of life on the planet.

ACTIONS

STRATEGIES

1: Develop campus partnerships to support Sustainability & Climate Action at OISE

- Investigate, establish and deepen opportunities for campus partnerships focused on embedding Sustainability & Climate Action in conjunction with OISE's Space Planning, Facilities & Services team

2: Establish baseline data and targets to minimize OISE's environmental footprint

- Collect baseline data related to OISE's environmental footprint (e.g. energy, water, waste, recycling, indoor air quality, etc.)
- Explore how to establish and work towards targets that minimize OISE's environmental footprint

3: Develop resources to support sustainable procurement practices at OISE

- Review procurement processes at OISE to identify opportunities for enhancing sustainability practices
- Develop a resource guide to support sustainable procurement practices at OISE

4: Develop supports for sustainable transportation

- Monitor bike parking utilization at OISE and advocate for additional capacity as needed
- Establish an advisory committee to identify strategies to educate and encourage OISE students, staff and faculty to use sustainable forms of transportation for travelling to and from OISE
- Identify ways that staff and faculty can minimize CO₂ emissions on OISE-related travel

5: Amplify a culture of conservation at OISE

- Develop educational campaigns to support the OISE community in growing awareness and taking action on conservation practices
- Deepen a culture of conservation at OISE in relation to the use of energy, water, and waste

6: Improve OISE spaces to support well-being

- Support the revitalization of the 5th floor patio to create new community space, a garden, and an Indigenous education and learning space
- Follow principles established by the OISE's academic leadership and Space Planning Committee to foster the health and wellbeing of OISE community members

TO BE COMPLETED BY YEAR:



CURRICULUM & TEACHING



VISION

Broaden and deepen curricular and co-curricular learning centred on Sustainability & Climate Action at OISE to enhance education's critical role in creating a more just, equitable and sustainable future.

STARTING POINTS

OISE has been growing its dedication to Curriculum & Teaching centred on Sustainability & Climate Action over the last decade. Inspired by the *Global Education Initiative* at OISE in the 1990s, an increasing number of courses have been focused on aspects of Environmental & Sustainability Education (ESE), and more recently, Land-based Learning and EcoJustice Education. Two departments, Social Justice Education and Leadership, Higher & Adult Education, offer Environmental Studies (ES) Collaborative Specializations in their degree programs. In addition, OISE's Master of Teaching Program is one of the few teacher education programs in the country with core courses related to ESE, as well as having two cohorts focused on Social Justice & EcoJustice Education (elementary) and Global Education (secondary). To complement course-based learning, an intensive program of co-curricular learning has been offered by OISE's *ESE Initiative*, housed in the Curriculum, Teaching & Learning department, including an annual ESE conference, EcoFair, talks, workshops, and an extensive series of webinars.

ACTIONS

1: Develop Community-Engaged Learning opportunities related to Sustainability & Climate Action for OISE students

- Conduct an inventory to identify how the SDGs and CEL (community-engaged learning) are being supported in OISE courses
- Encourage OISE's academic departments to review course offerings to potentially expand course-based opportunities for real world, experiential learning (e.g., 'Agent of Change' learning) connected to Sustainability & Climate Action
- Increase opportunities for Community-Engaged Learning connected to Sustainability & Climate Action through course work, teaching practica and internships

2: Support curricular innovation towards sustainability

- Infuse Sustainability & Climate Action into a variety of existing courses in each OISE department
- Explore new curricular pathways and programs for OISE students related to Sustainability & Climate Action (e.g. collaborative programs with the School of the Environment; etc.)
- Construct a community of practice to support the development of critical, transformative, culturally-responsive pedagogy in relation to Environmental & Sustainability Education
- Develop programming to support teachers' professional learning related to Sustainability & Climate Action

3: Expand professional learning opportunities for students

- Secure funding for paid professional learning opportunities for OISE students that develop knowledge and skills related to Sustainability & Climate Action (e.g. Graduate Assistantships, Research Assistantships, Work-Study Positions, etc.)
- Connect OISE students with educational partners for professional learning opportunities related to Sustainability & Climate Action

4: Strengthen staff and faculty capacity in relation to Sustainability and Climate Action

- Provide professional learning opportunities identified by staff and faculty in their shift to sustainability
- Help to build understanding about climate justice, particularly in relation to Indigenous communities, Indigenous environmental practices and sovereignty
- Consider sustainability expertise as an asset in the hiring of new staff and faculty

TO BE COMPLETED BY YEAR:



RESEARCH



VISION

Enrich OISE's capacity for and mobilization of educational research related to Sustainability & Climate Action while raising awareness about the sustainable management of research projects.

STARTING POINTS

As a faculty of education, OISE has been at the forefront of researching aspects of education related to Sustainability & Climate Action, as framed by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The fourth SDG, *Quality Education*, has been at the heart of research conducted by OISE researchers for decades, with impressive contributions to knowledge and understanding on SDGs such as *Gender Equality*, *Good Health & Wellbeing*, *Reduced Inequalities*, and *Peace, Justice & Strong Institutions*. Research into the SDG on *Climate Action* has been manifested at OISE through scholarship focusing on the theory and practice of Environmental & Sustainability Education. Inspired by OISE faculty who mobilize evidence-based praxis in these areas, OISE graduate students are learning to conduct and share their own research as the next generation of scholars to contribute to a more equitable and sustainable future for all.

ACTIONS

STRATEGIES

1: Provide supports for OISE research in Sustainability & Climate Action

- Encourage OISE's academic departments to review their capacity for educational research focused on Sustainability & Climate Action and pedagogy
- Establish a new community hub that provides a supportive environment for transdisciplinary, participatory educational research into Sustainability & Climate Action
- Initiate and support research partnerships related to Sustainability & Climate Action with educational partners across the university and in the community

2: Support knowledge mobilization of OISE research in Sustainability & Climate Action

- Mobilize Sustainability & Climate Action research in the OISE community and with its educational partners
- Promote Sustainability & Climate Action research from OISE through publications, events, conferences, celebrations and social media

3: Take action to address the environmental impacts of educational research at OISE

- Raise awareness about the environmental impacts of research activities (e.g. research-related travel)
- Advocate for Sustainability & Climate Action to be considered as part of the university's and the Tri-Council's ethics applications for research studies
- Raise awareness about minimizing CO₂ emissions related to OISE research projects

4: Expand OISE's capacity for educational research related to Sustainability & Climate Action

- Secure funding for graduate student involvement in research studies related to Sustainability & Climate Action (e.g. graduate and research assistant positions, work-study positions)
- Provide supports for a university-school board action research team related to Sustainability & Climate Action
- Encourage the hiring of research-stream faculty at OISE to expand capacity for educational research related to Sustainability & Climate Action

TO BE COMPLETED BY YEAR:



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & OUTREACH



VISION

Engage the OISE community and its partners in the collaborative development of Sustainability & Climate Action praxis to share through local and global outreach.

STARTING POINTS

OISE has a strong foundation from which to develop Community Engagement & Outreach in relation to Sustainability & Climate Action. Its *ESE Initiative* helps to raise awareness and encourage action on a range of sustainability issues. Its projects include the OISE Community Learning Garden, the *Take the Stairs* campaign that promotes energy conservation and wellness, and over a dozen environmental art installations. The *Natural Curiosity* project, affiliated with the Jackman Institute for Child Studies, provides professional learning for teachers focused on environmental inquiry through an Indigenous lens. Educational partnerships with organizations like Evergreen and Foodshare have proved fruitful for all involved. An innovative partnership with the Toronto District School Board's *Sustainability Office* has brought many opportunities for OISE students to connect with EcoSchools teachers to share ESE praxis, as well as engage in professional learning through co-curricular programming, an Action Research Team, and Additional Qualification (AQ) courses in Environmental Education. An online presence, including an [ESE website](#), List Serv, and social media provide virtual meeting places to bring together those interested in strengthening engagement with the SDGs across and beyond the OISE community.

ACTIONS

STRATEGIES

1: Improve communications about Sustainability & Climate Action across OISE

- Share ongoing information about events, curricular/co-curricular learning and resources related to Sustainability & Climate Action with students, staff, faculty and OISE partners
- Create an OISE Sustainability Guide to welcome students to OISE during Orientation by raising awareness about sustainability-related practices, courses, resources, and co-curricular learning
- Develop an OISE Sustainability Guide for staff and faculty to raise awareness about sustainability & Climate Action practices, guidelines, and resources

2: Deepen connections between OISE priorities and Sustainability & Climate Action

- Collaborate with the Dean's Advisory Council on Indigenous Education (DACIE) to ensure that the voices of Indigenous staff, students and scholars are integral to Sustainability & Climate Action at OISE
- Collaborate with DACIE to guide investments in Land-based Education
- Develop and expand connections between Sustainability & Climate Action and the existing priorities of OISE's Academic Plan (Indigenization, Equity, Diversity & Accessibility, Wellbeing & Mental Health, Transformative & Innovative Pedagogy, Scholarship, and Collaboration & Internationalization)
- Ensure that Sustainability & Climate Action reflects the diversity of the OISE community and its long-standing commitments to equity, anti-racism and inclusion

3: Embed opportunities for community engagement in Sustainability & Climate Action across OISE

- Provide multiple access points for students, staff & faculty to become involved in Sustainability & Climate Action at OISE
- Host an annual event to share OISE's ongoing progress on Sustainability & Climate Action

4: Strengthen outreach related to Sustainability & Climate Action within and beyond the OISE community

- Build and leverage campus and community partnerships to support Sustainability & Climate Action at OISE
- Support and deepen the collaboration between OISE and the TDSB and other school boards to support Sustainability & Climate Action across the education sector
- Extend OISE's impact on Sustainability & Climate Action with educational partners locally, regionally, nationally and globally

TO BE COMPLETED BY YEAR:



NEXT STEPS

Implementation Process

OISE has committed to forging new directions in Sustainability & Climate Action through identifying needs within the community at the first Climate Action Summit. These needs have been prioritized through the establishment of the Dean's Climate Action Advisory Committee, which has engaged in both realistic and aspirational goal-setting to devise related actions to come into fruition through this Sustainability & Climate Action Plan. The implementation of this Plan with its specific actions and strategies has been situated within a three-year timeline. The pandemic may interfere with this anticipated timeline, especially in regards to collecting baseline data related to OISE's environmental footprint (e.g., energy, water, waste, etc.) as the building has been empty for most of this year. However, there are both tangible and intangible actions that can be taken in the short-term to re-orient OISE towards sustainability; one example is to more fully explore how Indigenous Knowledge and environmental practices will inform this work moving forward.

From a realistic standpoint, we know that one key strategy needed now is to identify roles and responsibilities to implement this Plan. It will be imperative for all members of our community to be engaged in the implementation process in multiple ways to deeply embed Sustainability & Climate Action into OISE's institutional culture.

**“Hope is a verb with its sleeves rolled up.”
(David Orr, 2013)**



OISE students Yana Lee & Em Hayes measure a tree at a TDSB partner school

Progress Indicators and Reporting

As this Sustainability & Climate Action Plan outlines concrete actions and strategies in five strands, a set of qualitative and quantitative progress indicators will be devised to track growth and change in each area. The identification of progress indicators will be enriched by attention to how the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant is being enacted, and ongoing commitment to learning how Indigenous Knowledge informs sustainability principles and actions. These may include indicators such as:

- Governance & Institute Supports - analyzing the impacts of an OISE fund dedicated to supporting Sustainability & Climate Action;
- Facilities & Services - tracking how OISE is meeting targets to minimize its environmental footprint;
- Curriculum & Teaching - tracking the number of courses related to Sustainability & Climate Action, the number of students engaged in them and the quality of their learning experience;
- Research - monitoring how actively a Sustainability & Climate Action community hub engages and supports related research activities;
- Community Engagement & Outreach - tracking the number of community members engaged in collaborative partnerships and studying the depth and quality of learning that these offer.

A critical part of achieving powerful change through this Sustainability & Climate Action Plan is transparency; ongoing reporting is one way to ensure open communication with the OISE community and its involvement in the implementation of this Plan. Transparency is critical to encourage OISE students, staff, faculty, alumni and community partners to get involved in this work. Regular reporting will be one facet of knowledge mobilization around this Plan. Sharing regular progress reports has the potential to inspire members of the OISE community to engage their own spheres of influence inside and outside the Institute in Sustainability and Climate Action, in addition to encouraging other faculties of education to bring sustainability into their work as well.



OISE students lead a water education activity at a TDSB partner school

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CTL's Climate Action Working Group members

OISE Community Members who participated in the Climate Action Summit 2020

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Orr, D. (2007). Optimism and hope in a hotter time. *Conservation Biology*, 21(6) 1392-1395.



OISE/ TDSB Action Research Team in Environmental & Sustainability Education



Tim Grant of Green Teacher Magazine at OISE's annual EcoFair with a TDSB teacher



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