



Royal Roads
UNIVERSITY


SUMMARY
2022-2027

CLIMATE ACTION PLAN





FIVE PRIORITIES, THREE GOALS AND ALL HANDS



Royal Roads University's Climate Action Plan 2022-2027 is an ambitious five-year plan to address the climate emergency and amplify the university's influence and impact to ignite a groundswell of climate actions on our campus, in communities across the province and around the world.

Anchored in our values of caring, courage and creativity, the Climate Action Plan builds on our strengths in applied learning, our innovative and entrepreneurial culture, the diversity of people and ideas, our respectful relationship with Indigenous knowledge keepers and leaders and our focus on the UN Sustainable Development Goals—from operations, policies and leadership to education, research, engagement and partnerships.





A TIME FOR BOLD ACTION

Climate change is the biggest social, environmental, health and economic threat in human history. The window of opportunity for taking action to reduce impacts is rapidly closing.

According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the recently released update to the *National Adaptation Strategy* (Government of Canada, 2021), Canada is on the frontline of climate change, with our climate warming twice as fast as the global average.

At the heart of climate solutions work, we need to make space for the wisdom, experience and leadership of people and communities who have contributed the least to climate change yet experience the greatest adverse impacts.

Here in BC, we have already witnessed the risks and impacts of climate change—the 2021 heat dome, wildfires, and floods. Climate change will continue to create increasingly severe and cascading disruptions on human and natural systems, impacting human development, security, economic systems, biodiversity, and planetary and regional ecosystems. It is critical that every government institution and citizen takes bold climate action now.



Leading Transformation

Extraordinary times demand transformational leaders—creative, collaborative and critical thinkers who do not retreat from complex challenges. Royal Roads’ vision – inspiring people with the courage to transform the world—is central to the Climate Action Plan’s own vision and has guided the development of the plan’s purpose, priorities and objectives.

The Climate Action Plan is a living, iterative, university-wide plan with leadership and accountabilities distributed across all portfolios and departments. It remains adaptive to the rapidly changing eco-socio-political landscapes and changes in action and priorities to new or cascading developments.

Toward An Equitable Future

Transformative climate action will only be possible through meaningful relationships and alignment with the wisdom, experience and leadership of Indigenous peoples and other marginalized or underrepresented communities. A diversity of backgrounds and experiences is critical for moving toward a more equitable and safe future for all of us.

Royal Roads’ Climate Action Plan frames a way forward that is grounded in the principles of justice, equity, diversity and inclusion. It delivers strategies for increasing the resilience of our extended community, along with the natural and built systems for which we are responsible.

We are committed to collaboration, engagement and outreach in our climate action work and the journey ahead. The plan will work with Indigenous leaders and communities to explore, identify and implement community-engaged climate action based on our shared goals.



BUILDING ON STRENGTHS

The Climate Action Plan 2022-2027 builds on the solid foundation of the university's sustainability and changemaking leadership which has been part of the university's values since its inception 25 years ago. It also aligns with the university's forward-looking vision for the next 25 years. The *Sustainability Plan 2015-2020* guided initiatives in 10 target areas that focused on reducing the university's climate impact and environmental footprint, together with engagement, curriculum, research and partnerships.

**Academic and research initiatives launched following
RRU's Sustainability Plan 2015-2020:**

- The Master of Arts and Graduate Diploma in Climate Action Leadership
- Increased courses and programming in the School of Environment and Sustainability
- The ResiliencebyDesign Research Innovation Lab's Adaptation Learning Network (ALN) and the climate adaptation competency framework
- The Cascade Institute
- Canada Research Chair positions
- AshokaU Changemaker Campus designation



People and Planning

The Climate Action Plan 2022-2027 is the culmination of thousands of hours of work and leadership across a wide network of engaged contributors to develop bold and strategic initiatives to accelerate climate action on campus efforts, education, research, and community and global impacts.

September 2020, the Climate Action Task Force launched and led a multi-phased planning process that included regular engagement with and contributions from the Task Force Leadership Team (consisting of staff, faculty, associate faculty, students and the Office of Indigenous Engagement), two advisory councils (faculty, staff and students), and the university's executive.

Consultation also occurred through meetings with senior managers and stakeholders, a Campus Conversation (Feb 2021), a university-wide survey (sent to more than 4,300 people), and discussions with the President's Steering Committee on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.

Throughout the process, the task force was conscious of the need to align the emerging Climate Action Plan with other university initiatives and priorities such as Indigenous-led stewardship and Equity Diversity and Inclusion.

Transparent and Accountable

Accountability and transparency are built into the Climate Action Plan process through a system of monitoring, measuring and reporting on activities and progress toward our climate action goals.

The university will publish an annual report that includes:

- Mandatory disclosures as per provincially legislated requirements in the *Climate Change Accountability Act*;
- Voluntary disclosures, including disclosure of performance against all approved key performance indicators included in the Climate Action Plan; and
- Climate risk reporting, including the management approach to each risk.

Through the Climate Leadership Committee, Royal Roads' Board of Governors will be updated semi-annually on progress toward the climate action targets.

VISION, PRIORITIES AND GOALS

As a purpose-driven university, Royal Roads' greatest potential for impactful climate action lies in our ability to foster local and global changemaking through knowledge generation and collaboration, by imagining and implementing integrated solutions, and by being prepared to pivot and adapt to ongoing changes and impacts.

Inspiring people
with the courage to
transform the world.

Vision



Goals

For the university to have a true impact, we must reimagine ways of being and doing that support new patterns of behavior, habits and mindsets. Strong, sustained, and committed leadership on the part of the president and the Board of Governors, will signal both the importance of this plan and the institutional support for the ongoing engagement and empowerment of staff, faculty and students from all our units. The following three goals of Royal Roads' Climate Action Plan define a pathway forward, Lead and Enable, is seen as a critical and fundamental foundation for enabling and activating the success of the other two goals.

GOAL 1

LEAD AND ENABLE

Make urgent climate action core to the university's purpose and business by establishing climate-driven governance, policies and competencies. Be a leading example of mitigation and resilience.

GOAL 2

BUILD KNOWLEDGE AND CAPACITY

Increase climate change awareness and action through education, research and engagement. Advance learning that is responsive to place, people and nature.

GOAL 3

COLLABORATE FOR SOLUTIONS

Co-create climate action solutions, leverage resources and amplify positive impact through relationships, partnerships and dialogue.

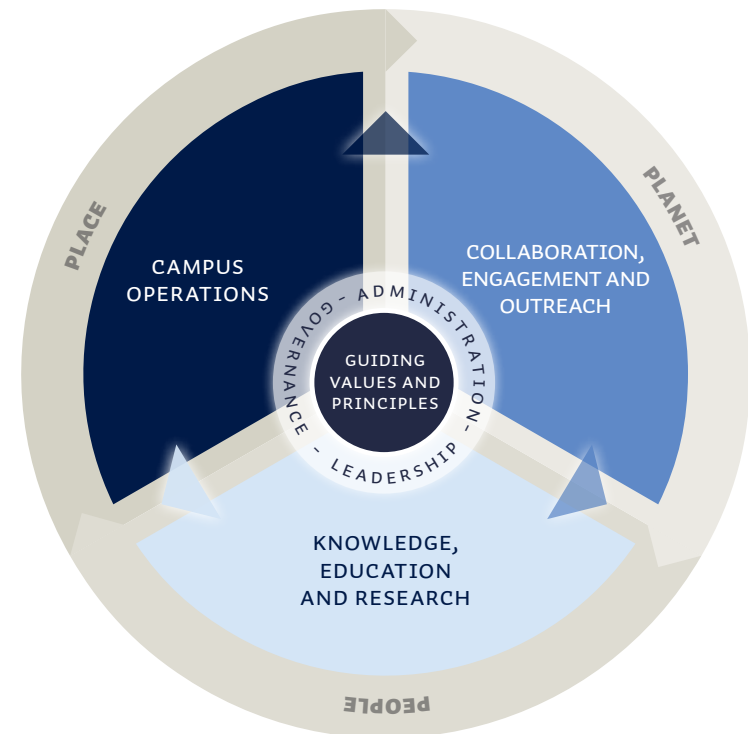
Priority Areas

The RRU Climate Action Plan has been organized into five priority areas:

- 1) leadership and governance;
- 2) administration;
- 3) operations;
- 4) education, knowledge and research; and
- 5) collaboration, engagement and outreach.

Each priority area has associated outcomes and actions that Royal Roads will implement in a phased approach.

Figure 1. RRU Climate Action Priority Areas of Focus



CLIMATE LEADERSHIP MODEL

The ambitious and broad-reaching goals set out in the Climate Action Plan will require that we integrate this work into all we do at the university. This will also demand a new and transformative model that extends accountability and leadership beyond the president, executive team and Board of Governors to include other actors. Figure 2 illustrates a distributed leadership model and the four key components that will support and implement action. These include 1) the Climate Leadership Committee, 2) the Climate Action Hub, 3) working groups and advisories, and 4) partners and Indigenous rights holders.

The Climate Leadership Committee provides strategic oversight and guidance to this plan's implementation. The committee will help integrate this work across the university, report on progress, foster a culture of climate action and will ensure our plan is responsive and adaptive to future challenges and opportunities.

The Climate Action Hub will serve as a physical and digital information centre, focal point, and connector at RRU for climate-informed and focused education, research and partnerships.

The hub will enable greater collaboration and engagement, including supporting innovative projects and initiatives for mitigation and adaptation such as those envisioned as part of a living lab initiative.

A living lab program model provides nature-based, climate change-related education and research opportunities, where students learn, test and apply knowledge in a real-world context.

Students can learn from the campus and the lands at Royal Roads linking to projects like our Kitchen Garden, which aims to turn fertile garden space back into a thriving producer of fruits and vegetables for both the university and the Vancouver Island community around it.

As the Climate Action Plan evolves, the hub will coordinate new actions and serve as one of several important resources designed to amplify and support faculty, staff and student leadership work.

Figure 2. Royal Roads' Climate Action Leadership Model



CLIMATE ACTION GOAL HIGHLIGHTS

LEAD AND ENABLE

Make urgent climate action core to the university's purpose and business by establishing climate-driven governance, policies and competencies. Be a leading example of mitigation and resilience.

- Embed climate action throughout the institution
- Build momentum and connect people, information and activities through the Climate Action Hub
- Weave reconciliation, equity, diversity, inclusion, and justice throughout our work approach
- Include Indigenous knowledge and leadership

BUILD KNOWLEDGE AND CAPACITY

Increase climate change awareness and action through education, research and engagement. Advance learning that is responsive to place, people and nature.

- Launch climate teaching connector program
- Test solutions through nature-based and innovative living lab programs
- Increase and create climate-related curriculum and research opportunities
- Host and support climate action knowledge-sharing and empowerment events

COLLABORATE FOR SOLUTIONS

Co-create climate action solutions, leverage resources and amplify positive impact through relationships, partnerships and dialogue.

- Cultivate reciprocal relationships with Indigenous rights holders
- Create connections with organizations, businesses, governments and other schools
- Foster engagement and action on campus and beyond
- Share and communicate stories and progress

MOVING FORWARD WITH VISION

2022

- Embed climate action leadership commitments throughout the university
- Climate-related events, courses, onboarding and research supported, developed and available
- Climate Action Hub established

2023

- Create tools, programs, and resources to build climate literacy, skills and networks
- All new buildings will rely primarily on energy that isn't from fossil fuels
- Climate considerations are a key part of RRU decisions, policies and processes
- Nature-based Living Lab programs engage the community, test solutions and build relationships
- Partnerships and alliances accelerate provincial, national and international leadership on climate action

2025

- Greenhouse gases (GHGs) down 65% (from 2010 levels)
- Climate Preparedness and Adaptation Strategy in place; knowledge and resources shared with others

2030

- GHGs down 80%, and on track for net zero campus by 2050
- RRU community and regional climate resilience well supported

Higher education plays a pivotal role in shifting mindsets and decision-making to accelerate and amplify climate action across all sectors and help build a climate-ready society.

As an innovative and nimble university, with courage, creativity, and caring at its core, Royal Roads is uniquely positioned to empower transformative actions and solutions for climate mitigation and adaptation.

Through learning, teaching, research and partnerships, Royal Roads can help foster the necessary skills, climate competencies, relationships and dialogue to accelerate the deep changes needed to address the climate emergency.

Through the collective work ahead, we will unleash the power of reimagining and restructuring systems to achieve a resilient, vibrant and just future for all.

GET INVOLVED

LEARN MORE!

Read the full

[Climate Action Plan 2022-2027](#)

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