



UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

INSTITUTIONAL SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY ACTION PLAN 2025-28

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Universities play a key role in accelerating progress toward a sustainable future. The complexity and urgency of today’s interconnected ecological, social, and economic challenges necessitate unparalleled collaboration and innovation across teaching, research, and campus operations. Sitting at the forefront of knowledge and innovation, UCalgary is uniquely positioned to rise to this challenge.

The updated Action Plan for the *Institutional Sustainability Strategy* (ISS) articulates how UCalgary will continue to act on our commitment to sustainability as we advance *Ahead of Tomorrow*, the University of Calgary’s 2023-2030 Strategic Plan.

OUR COMMITMENT

UCalgary’s long-term foundational commitment to Sustainability, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility; Global Engagement; Indigenous Engagement; and Mental Health and Well-Being are woven into the fabric of our institution.

We recognize the interconnectedness of these foundational commitments and work collaboratively to create a just and caring community, living interdependently with one another and all our relations in the natural world. Through these foundational commitments, we advance reconciliation and work together to transform systemic inequities to create a just, sustainable, and thriving future for present and future generations.

OUR ISS GOALS

1

Advance Sustainability Education

2

Advance Sustainability Research and Innovation

3

Enrich Engagement for Sustainability

4

Grow Campus Sustainability

OUR VALUES

We value authenticity, inclusivity, diversity and critical thinking.

We celebrate curiosity-driven investigation, fostering collaboration so all can achieve their potential.

We aim to spark global change, to solve what seems unsolvable.

We strive for community-focused excellence and accessibility, a sense of belonging, where all can thrive.

We commit to recognition and reconciliation, to walking a parallel path together with Indigenous partners.

OUR APPROACH

UCalgary seeks to understand and advance sustainability from diverse Indigenous and Western perspectives. Learning from the Elders and Knowledge Holders, we are creating parallel pathways for Indigenous ways of knowing and doing for sustainability.

Sustainability at UCalgary is not a new endeavour. We have a strong foundation to build upon, but there is much more to do to achieve the global Sustainable Development Goals in communities at home and afar.

Our renewed Action Plan reflects a whole-of-campus approach. Together, we are building capacity for a sustainable future through education, research, and community engagement while embedding sustainability in operational practices. Together, we are igniting local and global impact.



WESTERN PATH FOR SUSTAINABILITY ACTION

1 Advance Sustainability Education

Through a renewed Academic Sustainability Advisory Committee, we will:

- Establish campus sustainability literacy goals and undertake a sustainability literacy assessment.
- Explore how the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and key sustainability objectives can be applied to teaching and learning.
- Provide resources to enhance delivery of sustainability-focused curricula while expanding course offerings, research opportunities and experiential learning in sustainability.

2 Advance Sustainability Research and Innovation

As the new host of Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) Canada, we will:

- Establish collaborative spaces to foster connections and partnerships for sustainability research between Indigenous groups, students, faculty and researchers.
- Create initiatives that engage transdisciplinary scholarship to advance sustainability goals.
- Develop skill-enhancing programs for training in sustainability innovation and experiential learning.

3 Enrich Engagement for Sustainability

Through a renewed Sustainability Engagement Advisory Committee and as host for SDSN Canada we will:

- Provide forums for engagement with the SDGs while increasing resources to help people take action for sustainability.
- Increase resources, such as an open-source sustainability data system, to support sustainability research, practices, and reporting.
- Foster understanding and awareness by sharing UCalgary's sustainability impact stories and engaging in global sustainability rankings.

4 Grow Campus Sustainability

Through shared leadership and collaborative action, we will:

- Advance targeted action on climate change, ecohealth and responsible consumption, including supporting policies, practices and performance metrics.
- With guidance from Indigenous Elders, create parallel pathways in ways of doing in land and building approaches.
- Engage UCalgary scholars in design sprints for campus sustainability challenges.
- Identify international declarations, that UCalgary can participate in, to increase sustainability collaborations.

INDIGENOUS PATH FOR SUSTAINABILITY ACTION

From the Elders' Circle for Sustainability

- Explore processes to protect and sustain Elders' teachings, and to transfer oral teachings to an oral library and a written system at UCalgary.
- Create spaces to build a common understanding of trust and respect. Ethical spaces come after trust and respect.
- Recognize and connect the parallel paths; deepen understanding of invisible traditional infrastructure and our shared path.
- Identify cultural symbols to teach and guide sustainability action, and create a parfleche starting with UCalgary's sustainability creation story to inform the symbols.

From the Sustainability Dialogue Circles with Indigenous students, faculty and staff

** An action also recommended by the Elders' Circle for Sustainability.*

Ways of Being & Connecting

- Explore ways to share the teachings of older relatives to deepen understanding of sustainability action, including caring for land and community, relational thinking, reciprocity, balance, and being a good relative; maintaining our relationship with older relatives.*
- Build trust and relationships with Indigenous communities to better connect UCalgary's research and teaching for sustainability with Indigenous perspectives.
- Learn about our role in taking care of our current kinships and future relatives; develop resources for relationality in sustainability.

Ways of Knowing

- Expand the understanding of sustainability values and principles from Indigenous knowledge systems, and share them with the campus community.*
- Create pathways and spaces that immerse students in learning about trust, respect and parallel knowledge, including both visible and invisible traditional infrastructure.
- Create safe spaces for truth-telling about sustainability and reconciliation.

Ways of Doing

- Develop courses, including land-based opportunities, for students to learn about sustainability from traditional Indigenous perspectives.
- Establish traditional gardens and healing spaces at UCalgary for relationship learning.
- Within an Elders' Circle, further explore how to promote gratitude and reciprocity.