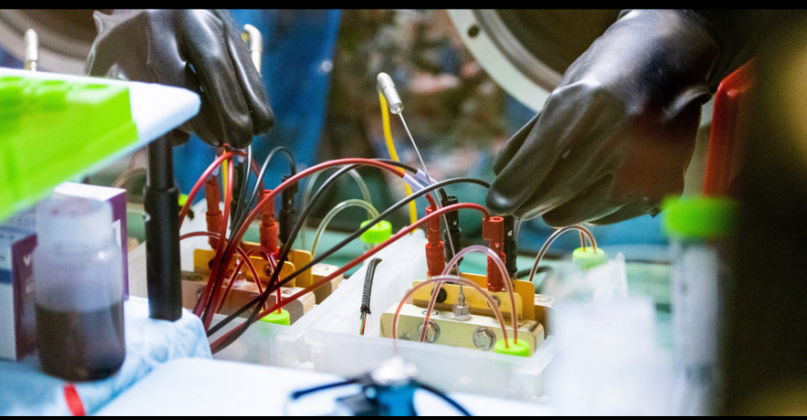




**THE SALATA INSTITUTE
FOR CLIMATE AND SUSTAINABILITY**
at Harvard University

IMPACT REPORT

MARCH 2024



LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR



The creation of the Salata Institute for Climate and Sustainability in June 2022 was the fulfillment of a transformative vision to galvanize Harvard University’s wide-ranging strengths, which would accelerate climate research and education as well as help drive a University-wide strategy to produce crucial new knowledge. In just its second year, the Salata Institute is changing how Harvard is addressing the climate crisis.

Thirty faculty across eight Schools are now involved in the institute’s [Climate Research Clusters Program](#), launching ambitious, three-year projects that promise real-world impact on climate. The array of challenges the clusters address—from climate adaptation in South Asia to the impacts of the changing energy system on communities in the United States—demonstrates Harvard’s potential to make a lasting difference. Moreover, the complexity of these challenges speaks to both the need for interdisciplinary research collaborations

and the value of the Salata Institute in forging such partnerships.

The Salata Institute is also now providing [seed funding](#) for research in climate change and sustainability that covers early-stage projects, interdisciplinary collaborations, and support for Harvard faculty to expand their investigations in this area. The funding will also support workshops on understudied or emerging topics. In early September 2023, the institute announced the first 14 grants under this new program, and the second cohort of seed grant recipients was announced in February 2024.

Students, too, are benefiting from a variety of new co-curricular programs that enhance their study of climate and sustainability and better prepare them for careers in these fields. For example, the Salata Institute is encouraging collaboration among student organizations by funding joint projects and events. It is also facilitating summer research projects and student travel to annual conferences and events off campus. In November 2023, 15 students were awarded travel grants to attend the Conference of Parties (COP) 28 that took place in Dubai. In addition, the institute is generating new opportunities for career advancement in climate and sustainability by funding an increasing number of summer internships, bringing practitioners in the climate field to campus to address students, and working with Schools to organize the first-ever [Salata Institute Climate and Sustainability Career Expo](#) that took place on December 1, 2023. This information—and much more—is now easily accessible to students on the [Student Hub](#), a newly created section of our website.

This work is taking place in a spirit of greater coordination and collaboration among the Salata Institute, Harvard’s Schools, centers, and other partners focused on climate and sustainability efforts. In just the first two months of the fall 2023 semester, the Salata Institute [organized events](#) with numerous University entities, including the Harvard Radcliffe Institute, the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, the Lakshmi Mittal and Family South Asia Institute, and the David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies. Planning is also underway for the 2024 Harvard Climate Symposium (June 10–11, 2024), which will comprise sessions organized by the Salata Institute in partnership with Schools.

These are just a few examples of our accomplishments this year. Under the strategic direction of the Salata Institute Advisory Board—which is in the process of being formed—we will press forward. I speak for numerous colleagues involved in this University-wide endeavor when I say that we feel both a sense of excitement about what we can accomplish together and a greater determination to help the world meet the climate change challenge. I am heartened by the progress that we have made and eager to take on the important work that lies ahead.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James H. Stock'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial 'J'.

James H. Stock
Director, The Salata Institute for Climate and Sustainability

EDUCATION

Providing students with resources and opportunities that will strengthen their studies and future careers in climate and sustainability



The Salata Institute continues to support and complement the efforts of the Office of the Vice Provost for Climate and Sustainability in academic planning on climate change and sustainability across Harvard University. In partnership with Schools, the institute is exploring new degree programs in this area both at the undergraduate and graduate levels. In response to student feedback, the Salata Institute has also made it easier for students to find existing climate and sustainability courses across the University by introducing a [course finder tool](#) on its website.



The Salata Institute, in consultation with students, is also creating additional co-curricular programs that enrich students' study of climate and sustainability and make it easier to pursue careers in these fields. In the fall 2023 semester, the institute introduced the [Travel Grant Pilot Program](#), which funds students who are traveling off campus for educational or professional development purposes. The program will fund up to 22 students this academic year.

The [Conference of Parties \(COP\) Student Observers Funding Pilot Program](#), another new initiative, made it possible for more Harvard students than ever to travel to the annual COP conference. In collaboration with the Harvard University Center for the Environment and the Harvard Project on Climate Agreements, the Salata Institute awarded grants of \$2,000 to 15 students who attended COP28 in the United Arab Emirates. COP offers a one-of-a-kind learning experience, giving students the opportunity to engage with climate stakeholders and observe discussions on a global stage.



The [Salata Institute Student Organization Funding Program](#), which the Salata Institute introduced nearly a year ago, is also having a big impact on campus. To date, it has funded 14 projects involving 33 student organizations. For example, this program will support the Environmental Justice Student Organization (at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health) and the Environmental Law Society (at Harvard Law School) so that they can co-host a conference on environmental justice in spring 2024.



The Salata Institute is also helping with student demand for additional career advancement services in climate and sustainability. Working in partnership with the Mignone Center for Career Success in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences and similar offices in the other Schools, Harvard hosted the [Salata Institute Climate and Sustainability Career Expo](#) on December 1, 2023. The expo represented the first-ever, University-wide career fair in climate and sustainability. The event, for which some 1,100 students registered, brought more than 60 employers to campus.

The institute also continues to increase its funding of student internships. In the summer of 2023, the [Harvard Climate Internship Program](#), a joint program of the Salata Institute and Harvard Kennedy School, served 41 graduate students from Schools across the University (up from 17 students the previous year). The institute also placed an undergraduate intern in the Office of Massachusetts State Representative Joan Meschino as part of the [Climate Policy Summer Internship Program](#), which entailed building relationships across state government to promote Representative Meschino's climate policy objectives.

Throughout the 2023–24 academic year, the Salata Institute is hosting the [Careers in Climate Action Speaker Series](#). The series features leading practitioners in climate and sustainability—many of whom are Harvard alumni—who visit campus and make presentations to students about their careers, the skills needed in the job market, and employment opportunities.

To make it easier for students to learn about these opportunities and many other programs offered by Harvard's Schools, the Salata Institute launched the [Student Hub](#). This section of the institute's website serves as a central source for funding options and career advancement programs, related news, courses, and an events calendar (where students themselves can post student-led activities).



RESEARCH

Promoting cross-University research that advances evidence-based and real-world solutions to all aspects of the climate crisis



CLIMATE RESEARCH CLUSTERS PROGRAM

The Salata Institute funded five Climate Research Clusters in March 2023, investing \$8.1M over three years in ambitious projects that promise real-world impact.

The clusters, which involve 30 faculty, across eight Schools, are focusing on advancing climate adaptation in the Gulf of Guinea and South Asia, strengthening communities confronting the impacts of changes to the U.S. energy system, evaluating corporate net-zero emissions targets, and reducing global methane emissions. Some of the early outputs of this research include:

- The launch of an initiative to build on new scientific research on measurement and attribution of emissions in order to help understand legal, regulatory, and political opportunities and constraints to methane-emissions reductions in the United States and some other countries; design policies that might best contribute to methane-emissions reduction; work effectively through existing international venues, such as the Global Methane Pledge; and define roles that businesses and international and multilateral organizations can play in these efforts.
- A forthcoming “Grid Study” that examines the political and social obstacles to building long-distance power lines that will be necessary in changing the energy system from fossil fuels to renewable energy.
- A workshop in New Delhi where Harvard researchers and local stakeholders worked to identify key challenges in climate mitigation and adaptation, and to seek input on research and academic priorities.
- A launch trip to Lagos, Nigeria; Accra, Ghana; and Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire to discuss with local stakeholders the examination of rising sea levels and its impact on the people of these cities, as well as a workshop in Cambridge with Harvard researchers and their counterparts from universities in these countries.



The next call for proposals for Climate Research Clusters is now underway.

SEED GRANT PROGRAM IN CLIMATE AND SUSTAINABILITY

With a gift from the Troper Wojcicki Foundation, the Salata Institute has introduced the Seed Grant Program in Climate and Sustainability, with a specific focus on supporting interdisciplinary research. Grants up to \$25,000 are awarded for the following purposes:

- Early-stage research in climate change and sustainability
- New project funding that will enable faculty in any discipline to approach their research through the lens of these areas
- Interdisciplinary investigations in climate change and sustainability
- Explorations on understudied or emerging topics in these areas
- Early-stage interdisciplinary research on quantifying health outcomes after solutions or interventions in climate change mitigation or adaptation

In the first round of funding, the Seed Grant Program funded [14 projects](#) involving 19 faculty members across seven Harvard Schools. The projects range from exploring a new algae-based building insulation material to researching the carbon footprint of AI-driven computing.

The Salata Institute announced its [second cohort](#) of seed grant recipients in February 2024.

2023 SEED GRANT PROGRAM AWARDS: PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS



Top row: Carlos Argüelles-Delgado, Martin Bechthold, Joe Blatt, Rema Hanna, Gage Hills, Frank Keutsch, Michèle Lamont

Bottom row: Megan Murray, Vijay Janapa Reddi, Holly Samuelson, Karen Thornber, Stéphane Verguet, Amy Whitesides, Gu-Yeon Wei

RESEARCH TO ACTION

Engaging with climate leaders from the public, private, and nonprofit sectors to ensure Harvard's cutting-edge climate research is translated into actionable solutions



THE CLIMATE ACTION ACCELERATOR

The mission of the Climate Action Accelerator is to identify critical climate problems, build consensus for solving them, home in on promising solutions, and convene decision-makers who have the authority and the resources to act. In its first year, the Accelerator was successful at hosting the [first Harvard Climate Symposium](#), which was attended by over 600 students, faculty, and climate practitioners, with approximately 1,300 joining virtually for live-streamed sessions. Following a nationwide search, [Lindi von Mutius was named the director](#) and spent her first few months meeting with key partners, representing the Accelerator at conferences, and developing a strategic framework for 2023–2025.

In its second year, the Climate Action Accelerator will focus on hosting convenings and measuring its impact and value to climate practitioners. It will also recruit project managers who will focus on organizing large meetings, building relationships with external partners, and ensuring that the Accelerator meets its overarching goals of translating research into action. Knowing that the Accelerator's work can provide meaningful learning opportunities for students, one recent graduate fellow, six student interns, and one graduate capstone student are being invited to join the team in 2024—there will be two students in the spring, two in the summer, and four in the fall semester.



MEASURING THE ACCELERATOR'S IMPACT

The success of the Climate Action Accelerator rests on achieving four key goals:

1. Engage and inspire external partners
2. Play a critical role as convener
3. Develop, implement, and scale climate solutions
4. Maximize the real-world impact of Harvard's climate research

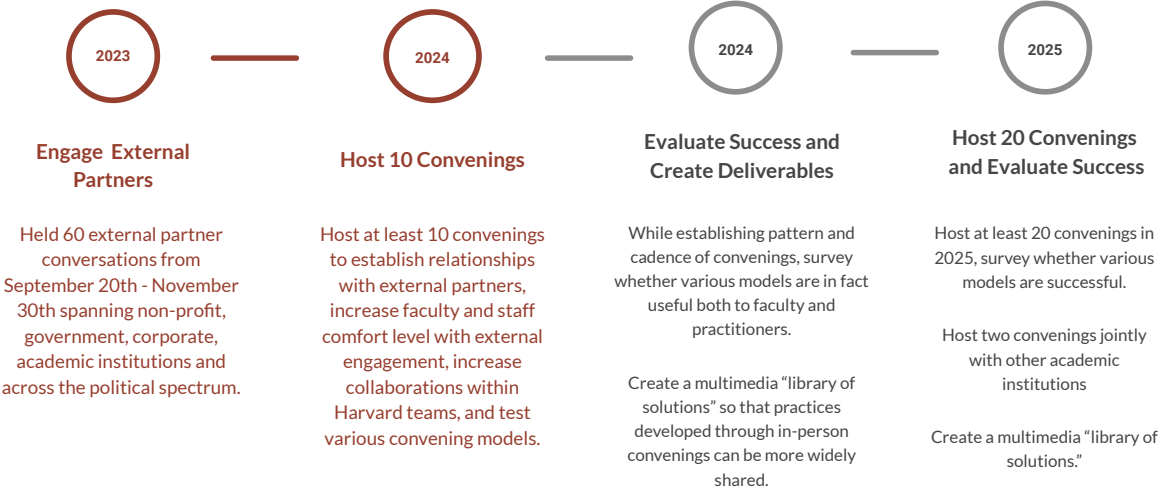
To reach its first two goals, the Accelerator plans to host convenings that connect Harvard with climate practitioners. Research-based meetings with these partners will take several forms, including faculty-led teach-ins and small group gatherings among faculty, staff, and relevant outside collaborators and alumni specialists. The Accelerator will also organize meetings with Congressional staff and government agencies, and it will connect students with external partners for research and experiential learning opportunities.

In 2024, the Accelerator began testing the efficacy and value of its convenings, which will number approximately 20 each year. To measure its success and impact in the short term, the Accelerator is developing a set of evaluation tools, which will entail follow-up with practitioners at three-, six-, and twelve-month intervals. It is also critical for the Accelerator that those who collaborate and attend its convenings benefit in the long term. Several large climate nonprofit organizations that the Accelerator currently works with are being connected to various Harvard Schools and departments to help these organizations cultivate beneficial collaborations with Harvard University experts.

In order to reach goals three and four, the Accelerator will advance the efforts of the five faculty-led Climate Research Clusters by delivering their results to external partners and practitioners and ensuring that the faculty meet with and are informed by these collaborators as they develop research objectives. By establishing and strengthening these networks, the Accelerator will have a strong foundation upon which to build future goals aimed at action-oriented solutions.

In addition to the clusters, the Accelerator has identified the following areas where Harvard has expertise and potential to drive research-informed climate action in the near term and has already begun planning events and convenings in some of these areas in 2024:

- Mapping heat vulnerability
- Electrifying transportation / EV charging
- Climate finance
- Mitigating emissions in agriculture
- Public health responses to climate disasters and migration
- Environmental and climate justice toolkits (data and regulatory framing)
- Sustainable aviation fuels
- Urban adaptation strategies
- Nature-based solutions
- Protecting biodiversity in a changing climate
- The politics and justice of energy transition
- Youth activism and climate education in urban public-school curricula



2024 GOALS

10	CONVENINGS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 RESEARCH/SOLUTIONS BASED CONVENINGS • 4 BI-PARTISAN CONVENINGS • 1 CONVENING OF ACADEMIC PARTNERS
1	HARVARD CLIMATE ACTION WEEK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SURPASSING ATTENDANCE AND EVENT GOALS ACHIEVED IN 2023 • LAUNCH MULTIMEDIA LEARNINGS AND DELIVERABLES
3	EVENTS AT GLOBAL CLIMATE CONVENINGS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYC CLIMATE WEEK • COP 29 • (2025 WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM PLANNING)
11	STAFF AND INTERNS ADDED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 FTEs and 1 CAPSTONE STUDENT • 6 STUDENT INTERNS • 1 YEAR-UP INTERN
3	FACULTY ADDED TO CAA ADVISORY BOARD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • REPRESENTING RESEARCH AREAS WHERE HARVARD CAN LEAD

HARVARD CLIMATE SYMPOSIUM

Building on the success of the 2023 Harvard Climate Symposium, the Climate Action Accelerator has begun planning the next symposium. This two-day event will anchor the 2024 Harvard Climate Action Week, which will feature a set of solutions-oriented discussions organized by Schools and centers throughout the University from June 10–14. The symposium will engage external speakers as well as experts from across Harvard Schools, research centers, innovation labs, and institutes. Academics, policymakers, entrepreneurs, and advocates for climate solutions will convene and explore the central question of which steps to take following the implementation of the Inflation Reduction Act at a symposium entitled, “What’s next after the IRA?”

The Accelerator Faculty Steering Committee—chaired by Professor Joseph Aldy (Harvard Kennedy School) and comprising faculty members Stephen Ansolabehere (Faculty of Arts and Sciences), Jody Freeman (Harvard Law School), Peter Tufano (Harvard Business School), and Jim Stock (Faculty of Arts and Sciences and Harvard Kennedy School)—is guiding the development of the symposium’s program.







LINDI VON MUTIUS

Director, Climate Action Accelerator

The Salata Institute appointed Lindi von Mutius as director of the Climate Action Accelerator in September 2023. Under her leadership, the Accelerator will serve as a resource and partner to the full spectrum of stakeholders wrestling with the most challenging climate questions, building consensus for solutions grounded in Harvard's research and expertise.

In her previous role, Lindi served as director of the Sustainability and Global Development Practice graduate programs at the Harvard University Division of Continuing Education. She has held senior leadership positions at the Trust for Public Land, the Sierra Club, and the Environmental Defense Fund. Before her work in the nonprofit sector, she practiced environmental, corporate, and bankruptcy law—and she worked with the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action on expanding renewable energy tax credits for corporations. Lindi embraces the Accelerator's mission, having spent most of her career broadening environmentalism's tent to include voices from the grassroots, grassroots, academics, practitioners, and both sides of the political spectrum in service of climate action.

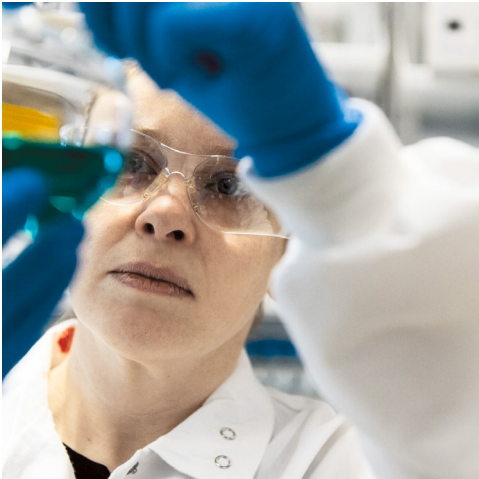
In her first few weeks on the job, Lindi participated in New York Climate Week, speaking at events and strengthening relationships with other organizations. She also engaged faculty associated with the Salata Institute's Climate Research Clusters and others working on sustainable alternative fuel technologies and policies, decarbonization in U.S. urban areas, electric vehicle expansion, implementation of the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and Infrastructure Investments and Jobs Act (IIJA), and climate adaptation—especially in vulnerable and historically marginalized communities.

"Addressing the world's most pressing challenge, climate change, is tough work. But our work does not have to be painful. This is joyous work because the solutions only make life better for millions of people and nature, especially when we center communities in our solutions. **We truly excel when we bring people into this work and convene them to increase the scale of the solutions.** We are best when we are working together, and Harvard has the unique potential to do that."

Lindi von Mutius, Director, Climate Action Accelerator

GROWING THE FACULTY

Recruiting the world's best scholars and advisors in climate and sustainability is a high priority for the Salata Institute



Working with Harvard's Schools to recruit the world's best scholars in climate and sustainability is one of the Salata Institute's top priorities. The contributions made by newly recruited faculty and their collaboration with faculty already working in climate and sustainability at Harvard are essential to achieving the institute's mission.

In January 2023, a new University-wide Standing Committee on Climate Education (CCE) was established to implement the recommendations of the report entitled [The Future of Climate Education at Harvard University](#). Under the auspices of the Office of the Vice Provost for Climate and Sustainability and in partnership with the Salata Institute, Dustin Tingley—professor of government and deputy vice provost for advances in learning—and 21 faculty members and senior teaching administrators are working to strengthen climate and sustainability education offerings across the Schools. In addition, they seek to develop innovative programs and internal and external partnerships, as well as to provide research, internship, and career advancement opportunities for students. In this [newly released update](#), CCE summarizes reflections and recommendations to improve climate education at Harvard.

"It is an honor to continue to work alongside my colleagues from across Harvard's Schools who not only bring a deep subject matter expertise but also a heartfelt commitment to use Harvard's unique resources to significantly contribute to building a more sustainable and resilient world."

Dustin Tingley, Professor of Government, Deputy Vice Provost for Advances in Learning, and Chair, Harvard Standing Committee on Climate Education

