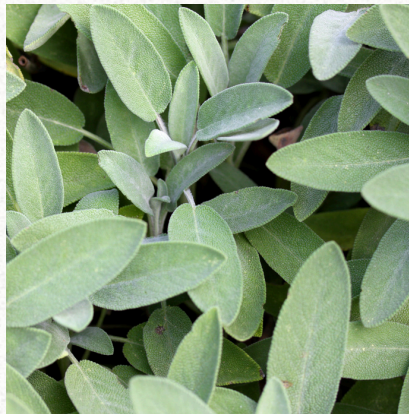


LIVING LABS FUNDING PROGRAM (SLLFP)

REPORT

2021-2025

A summarization of Concordia
University's Sustainability
Living Labs Funding Program



Prepared by

The Sustainability
Action Fund

Concordia
University's Office of
Sustainability



Table of Contents

About the Program

Program objectives, structure , revisions, membership policy, and more.

1

Management Model

Chairs and secretary, streams formulation and incorporation, different sustainability streams.

7

Program Termination

The joint decision to let the program come to a conclusion following its set final date.

11

Impact and Metrics

Funding allocation metrics, projects funded, testimonials, and more.

13

Lessons Learned

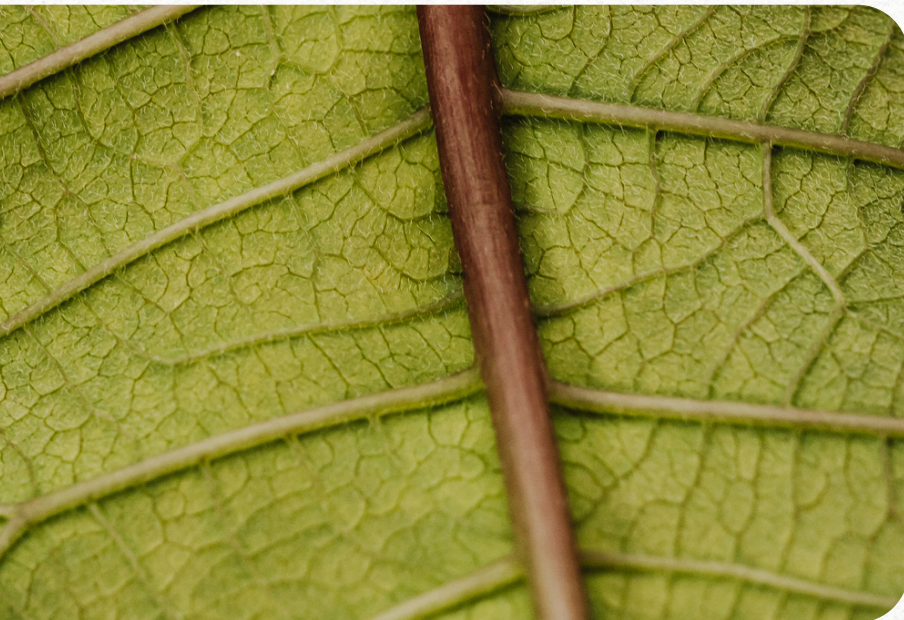
The lessons that SAF has learned following this program reviewing what works and what we would have done differently.

18

Conclusion

Final statement from SAF regarding the sustainability living labs funding program

20



SUSTAINABILITY LIVING LAB FUNDING PROGRAM (SLLFP)

The Sustainability Living Lab Funding Program (SLLFP) was a matching fund partnership between the Sustainability Action Fund (SAF) and Concordia University's Office of the VP, Services and Sustainability (as represented by the Office of Sustainability).

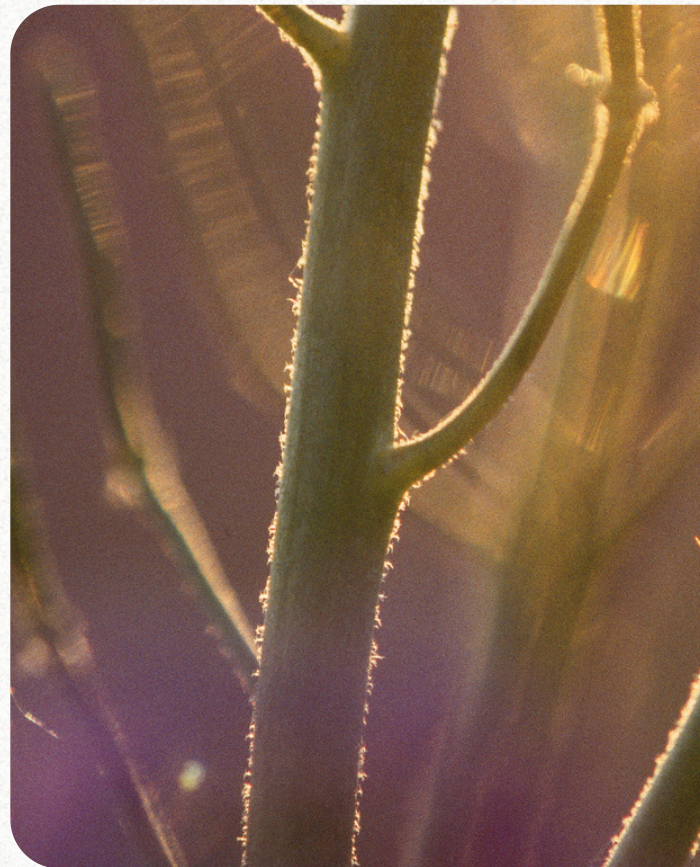
Program Objectives

Provide experiential learning through internships, classroom projects and project implementation and learning outcomes;

Provide hands-on learning activities through leadership opportunities in event coordination & programming, workshops, employment and varied forms of engagement opportunities;

Foster cross-disciplinary partnerships between faculty, staff and students for the purpose of utilising our campus and communities to incubate innovative solutions to sustainability challenges

Empower community members to propose and implement projects that improve the sustainability of campus operations, foster community, and build thriving new futures



Launched in 2021 following the introduction of the university's 5-year Sustainability Action Plan, the program emerged from several years of stakeholder consultations and Concordia community input.

Each year, up to \$80,000 was made available to support innovative, small-scale projects led by students, staff, and faculty.

These projects aimed to advance sustainability on campus through a focus on operations, community engagement, and interdisciplinary collaboration.



Sustainability Living Lab Funding Program (SLLFP)

Program Objectives

Recognizing sustainability as a complex and interdisciplinary field, the program enabled members of the Concordia community to co-create solutions that reflected their diverse backgrounds and expertise.

Specifically, the SLLFP supported projects that:

Fostered partnerships across sectors and disciplines

Focused on campus operations and community impact

Promoted project longevity and measurable progress

Provided meaningful experiential learning for students

Encouraged diverse perspectives and expertise

Advanced the goals of the Sustainability Action Plan

PROGRAM STRUCTURE AND REVISION

OVER THE YEARS

In its initial years, funding occurred on a monthly rolling basis, following SAF's funding model. A project first needed to be approved by the Office of the VP Services and Sustainability and the Office of Sustainability to meet the eligibility requirement and the stated Concordia Sustainability Action Plan target. Following that approval, the project then went to SAF's Special Projects Committee, who asked further questions and made a recommendation to the SAF board. Finally, the SAF board made its decisions during board meetings. The Office of Sustainability had a seat on the SAF Board and participated on the Special Projects Committee, engaging in both SLLFP and Special Projects funding proposal deliberations.



IMPROVEMENTS

To improve accessibility and impact, the program introduced SLLFP 2.0, a revised application process designed to simplify project development and diversify the selection committee to include students, faculty, and staff. SAF's Project Coordinator and the university's newly hired Sustainability Living Labs Coordinator worked closely with project leads throughout the process to offer guidance and support.

Funding was awarded three times per year during the fall, winter, and summer terms by a selection committee comprising SAF staff and Board members, Office of Sustainability representatives, and Concordia faculty and staff. There was a representative for each of the Concordia Sustainability Action Plan's five streams.



REVISIONS

In 2022, following an extensive period of research, consultations and discussions with Concordia community members, procedural changes were made to better align with the institutional needs of the program. These changes include

- (1) the reconfiguration of the selection committee structure,
- (2) the modification of application review frequency, and
- (3) webpage creation and application redesign.
- (4) final project report redesign.



RECONFIGURATION OF COMMITTEE STRUCTURE AND FREQUENCY

Membership Policy

As per the terms of reference, the frequency of application went from monthly to semesterly. The committee membership structure was also updated. This was aimed at offering more time and adequate support to project development, collaborations and budget requirements. The additional accompaniment contributed to stronger applications, better alignment with the Action Plan, and more embedded partnership through stakeholder awareness and buy-in. The membership of the updated committee structure is presented as follows:

Office of Sustainability staff (2) appointed by the Director of the Office of Sustainability

- sustainability analyst
- sustainability manager

Sustainability Action Plan stream plan representatives (5) appointed by action plan stream teams

- Sustainable Food Systems
- Zero Waste
- Climate Action
- Sustainability in Research
- Sustainability in Curriculum

Sustainability Action Fund (SAF) staff members (2) appointed by SAF

- Executive Director
- Projects Coordinator

SAF board members (3) appointed on a volunteer basis by the SAF

- At least two of them must be filling student seats on the SAF board
- The third seat may fill a student, faculty, staff, or community seat on the SAF board

Independent faculty (2) appointed respectively by the Principal of the Loyola College for Diversity and Sustainability and by the Director of the Loyola Sustainability Research Centre.

Facilities Management, Property Management staff (1) appointed by Paul Blouin, Manager of Program Optimization, External Contracts and Sustainability.





MANAGEMENT MODEL

Chair and Secretary (Non-Voting Members)

The Committee Chairperson is either the Sustainability Living Lab Coordinator or a delegate appointed by them. The committee Secretary will be a member of the Office of Sustainability.

This reconfiguration aimed at better supporting project leads and involving Concordia units more integrally in the selection process as well as keeping them abreast of developments that directly correlate to their faculty, streams, and/or units. This was meant to better embed projects within Concordia operations, as this was identified as a core functionality challenge to the previous structure's administration

Streams Reformulation & Involvement

The stream leads were asked to revisit subcategories for their respective stream in order to render the goals and targets of the action plan more accessible. These subsections were to help those who are unfamiliar with the Action Plan or who struggle to understand its specific language. Additionally, it also allowed more flexibility to reflect the evolution of the scope and understanding of sustainability between the creation of the Policy in 2016 and more current praxis. The additional "other" subcategory was universally applied to capture any missing data or areas of focus for future iterations of the plan. The five stream subcategories were further broken down as follows:

01

FOOD

This stream seeks to enable Concordia to become recognized as a leader in sourcing food that supports an environmentally and socially sustainable food system. It aims to enhance capacity to grow and transform food on campus, maximize related learning opportunities, and provide healthy and affordable food options in every main university building.

Procurement (can include fair trade), Food scarcity/security, Urban Agriculture, & more

02

WASTE

This stream seeks to divert 90% of material waste from landfill through compost, recycling, and material reuse and reduce total material waste by 50% (per full-time equivalent). It aims to do so through programs that encourage low-waste purchasing, materials reuse and innovative new practices, events and programs.

Zero Waste Events (includes food and drinks), Zero Waste procurement & reuse, Zero Waste labs, E-Waste, Supporting local communities and economies, & more

03

CLIMATE

This stream seeks to eliminate CO₂ and other greenhouse gas emissions from all sources controlled and operated by Concordia University, including all building energy use and transportation infrastructure. It aims to work towards achieving complete carbon neutrality across our community activities by 2040.

Buildings and Energy, Transport, Investments, Greening and Adaptation, Community Resilience, & more.

04

RESEARCH

This stream seeks to support students, staff and faculty in using the campus to foster and enable innovative approaches to addressing sustainability challenges and respond to the real-world action-oriented agenda of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Applicants are encouraged to adopt an innovative, reflective research approach that centers principles of EDID (equity, diversity, inclusion & decolonization) in their research project.

Sustainability or SDG related research, Sustainable research practices & more

05

CURRICULUM

This stream seeks to enable faculty members to foster an understanding and practice of sustainability across the curriculum. It aims to immerse students in interdisciplinary settings and equip them to link their disciplinary training to broader social, environmental and economic issues and be ready to enact change and impact society.

Development of new sustainability courses or modules/units, Development or enhancement of pedagogical approaches for nurturing sustainability competencies, Development of immersive sustainability education experiences for students, Other

CRITERIA DEVELOPMENT

Selection criteria were developed to allow for applicants to better tailor their applications. This was as a result of the observation of severe levels of variations pertaining to the alignment of the submitted projects and the level of understanding of the nature and function of the SLLFP itself.

Those criteria, and their publication, served to create a shared baseline of understanding for all applicants and offer a more equitable and transparent approach to the process.

The criteria were as follows:

| | |
|--|---|
| Alignment with Sustainability Action Plan | To what extent does the project align with and address one or more themes of the Sustainability Action Plan? |
| | To what extent does the project complement or meaningfully address gaps in the themes of the Sustainability Action Plan? |
| Cross-Disciplinary / Cross-Unit Collaboration | Is the project team made up of Concordia students, faculty, and / or staff members? |
| | Were sufficient efforts made to find collaborators and create partnerships for this project? |
| | Does this project have a cross-departmental or cross-disciplinary component? |
| | Does this project tie in with research- or curriculum-based activities? |
| Impact | How likely is the project to have a significant impact on sustainability within the university and its community? |
| | Does the long term vision for this project make a significant difference at Concordia or for Concordians? |
| | Does the project offer students the opportunity to develop useful knowledge and skills through experiential learning, either as leaders or as participants? |
| Outreach & Community Engagement | To what degree does the project engage the Concordia community and encourage their involvement and/or participation? |
| | Does the project intentionally seek a diverse audience or participant pool? |
| Feasibility | How well does the project demonstrate feasibility in terms of its approaches or methodologies? |
| | How realistic is the proposed timeline for the project? |
| | Is there a clear plan for sustaining the project's impact in the long term (if applicable)? |
| | Are their budget requests clearly defined and reasonable? |
| | Has the project applied for or obtained funding from other sources? |

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Sustainability | Does the project avoid negative environmental and social impacts in its process and content? |
| | Is the project likely to result in positive environmental and/ or social benefits? |
| | Have they filled out the sustainable event checklist (if applicable)? Have they tried to implement key strategies to increase the sustainability of their event? |
| Clarity and Workflow | How clear and well-organized is the project proposal? |
| | How clear are the project objectives, roles and project measurements methodologies? |
| | Is the application form complete? |

Update of web page, application form, and project final report

A web page specific to the Living Lab that offers information about the program and how to apply was created within the Sustainability Hub webpage architecture. Previous to this, the only information about the program lived on the SAF pages.

Furthermore, the application was fully redesigned from its aesthetic to its questions and order. This, alongside the project's report, was aimed at creating a more thorough documentation and understanding of the project's goals and outcomes. This additional entry point helped increase traffic once the communications strategy was implemented in Fall 2023.

The Sustainability Living lab Funding Program had detailed information available on the website regarding its purpose and application process. The website provides transparency on the funding amount and presents all 17 funded projects, each with accompanying descriptions. The application form includes comprehensive questions about project aspects, offering a clear overview of potential impact and success levels. Those changes resulted in a 100% increase in applications from Fall 2022 to Fall 2023.

The final report that project teams must supply to SAF after completing their project is extensive and thorough. However, in spite of the addition of key metrics that better enable us to gauge the success of the projects, there was still information missing that would help us improve the program. The SAF team and the Office of Sustainability's Sustainability Analyst drafted new questions, and a conversation began about whether they should be integrated into the existing final report or whether a separate final report should be created for the SLLFP project teams.

PROGRAM TERMINATION

As of May 1, 2025, the program's 5-year agreement had formally come to an end, with both the SAF and the Office of Sustainability having agreed not to pursue a new agreement to extend the program.

The program had initially been put on pause in Winter 2024. The context for this decision was that, according to the partnership agreement, the Office of the VP, Services and Sustainability would provide their portion of program funding in two installments. As SAF was responsible for managing the disbursement of these funds and there were instances in which allocations preceded installments, SAF often disbursed project funds before receiving the committed annual contribution from the university in its entirety.

INTERNAL AUDIT

Concordia University's internal audit department conducted an independent audit that included meeting and receiving information from both of the parties involved. Both parties cooperated with the auditors and provided the information requested to the best of their abilities. This process was further complicated by the turnover of several staff members between the inception of the SLLFP in 2021 and the time of the audit in 2024.

The report produced by the auditors shared that SAF generally followed the agreement except for two issues: Firstly, the SLLFP funds weren't kept in a separate bank account. The Office of Sustainability had been told about the arrangement in 2022 and had agreed to it as long as the funds were tracked separately. Secondly, the agreement allowed 10–15% of the funding to go toward SAF administrative costs, but actual spending was calculated to have been much higher.

During the Fall 2023 and Winter 2024 semesters, exceptionally atypical delays in receiving SAF's fee levy payments from Concordia University led SAF to request an advance payment of \$20,000 from the Office of Sustainability to reimburse projects that had already been allocated funding. The Office of Sustainability reviewed the specifics of the partnership contract and the management of SLLFP funds in response to this early request. Several meetings were held with the independent observation and facilitation by the Dean of Students Office, at the request of both parties. As a result, The Office of Sustainability asked for an independent audit to review how funds for the SLLFP were managed by SAF in accordance with the agreement and how much money was left in the fund.

After reviewing and discussing the auditors' report, the Office of Sustainability and the SAF met with the Dean of Students Office. At this meeting, SAF clarified that the organization can commit to paying the three remaining SLLFP projects awaiting the disbursement of their funds.

The Office of Sustainability presented a new budget (table 1) That would retroactively account for an increase in administrative costs from 2021 to 2024.

INTERNAL AUDIT RESULTS

Since the meeting, the SAF Board has agreed to the proposed budget (table 1) and both parties have confirmed that the SAF will reimburse any costs resulting from the remaining three projects. In the event of the projects requesting less than was allocated, the SAF will redirect the remaining unspent allocated funds back to the Office of Sustainability for their Sustainability Ambassadors Program or other departmental expenses. The unspent funds allocated as of May 2025 for the three remaining projects are \$39,172.60.

Table 1—The updated SLLFP budget proposed by the Office of Sustainability and agreed upon by the SAF Board. This budget retroactively assigns 20% of the total program funds to administrative costs (as compared to the 10-15% specified in the partnership agreement). The funds to cover this increase come from unspent project allocations. No additional contributions from either the SAF or Concordia were made to support the new budget.

| SLLFP BUDGET BALANCING EXERCISE / PROPOSAL | | | | | |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 | Total |
| Funds Received | | | | | |
| Concordia | \$40,000 | \$40,000 | \$40,000 | \$20,000 | \$140,000 |
| SAF | \$40,000 | \$40,000 | \$40,000 | \$20,000 | \$140,000 |
| CSU | | \$15,000 | | | \$15,000 |
| | \$80,000 | \$95,000 | \$80,000 | \$40,000 | \$295,000 |
| Expenses | | | | | |
| Project allocations | \$69,545 | \$60,416 | \$67,097 | \$64,975 | \$262,033 |
| Administration (20%) | \$16,000 | \$19,000 | \$16,000 | \$8,000 | \$59,000 |
| | \$85,545 | \$79,416 | \$83,097 | \$72,975 | \$321,033 |
| | | | | | |
| Ending Fund Balance | -\$5,545 | \$15,584 | -\$3,097 | -\$32,975 | -\$26,033 |
| Unclaimed / returned | \$6,880 | \$6,209 | \$3,365 | \$10,000 | \$26,452.72 |
| Actual Fund Balance | \$1,335 | \$21,793 | \$268 | -\$22,975 | \$420.07 |



PROGRAM IMPACT

Between 2020 and 2023, the SLLFP funded 20 impactful projects, with a total of \$262,032.65 allocated. Project teams claimed \$209,852.33, and three projects were still awaiting final disbursements at the program's conclusion.

The program helped cultivate a culture of sustainability at Concordia by supporting forward-thinking, community-driven solutions to pressing societal challenges. It provided meaningful learning opportunities and succeeded over time in advancing the university's sustainability goals. For a summary of each project funded, please refer to [this link](#).

| 2023-2024 Project Name | Total Allocated |
|--|--------------------|
| Chinatown Re-imagined Forum | \$19,000.00 |
| OpenWaste.ai | \$13,944.00 |
| Nature Positive Concordia | \$19,780.65 |
| Foret Curieuse (CUFO Arts) residency program | \$12,250.00 |
| TOTAL | \$64,974.65 |

| 2022-2023 Project Name | Total Allocated |
|--|--------------------|
| 2022-2023 Market Garden Internship Program (Coop CultivAction) | \$7,500.00 |
| 2022-2023 Mobilizing Data for Justice | \$7,280.25 |
| 2022-2023 Deep Time Walk Tiohtiá:ke/Montreal | \$3,258.00 |
| 2022-2023 Sustainable Transformations | \$8,750.00 |
| 2022-2023 MATTEReality: Sustainable Studios | \$8,540.00 |
| 2022-2023 Mind.Heart.Mouth 2023 | \$12,183.75 |
| 2022-2023 Co-op CultivAction Urban Agriculture School | \$9,585.00 |
| 2022-2023 Exploring Sustainability Across the Arts (FOFA) | \$10,000.00 |
| TOTAL | \$67,097.00 |

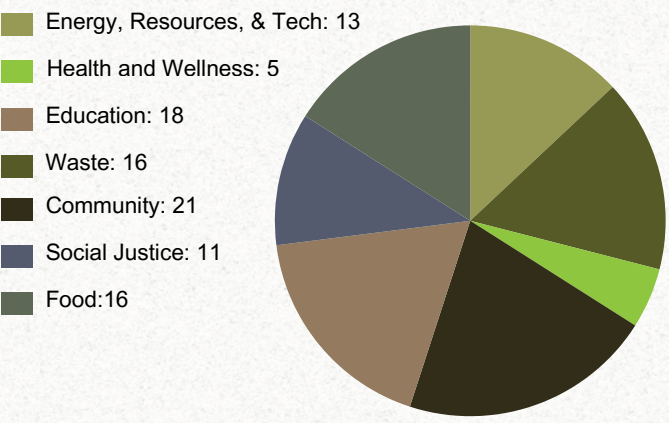
| 2021-2022 Project Name | Total Allocated |
|--|--------------------|
| 2021-2022 EDML Library of Parts | \$5,390.00 |
| 2021-2022 Solvent Recovery Initiative | \$29,000.00 |
| 2021-2022 Co-op CultivAction Urban Agriculture School | \$6,950.00 |
| 2021-2022 Mind.Heart.Mouth | \$14,120.00 |
| 2021-2022 Engaging Solarity: Taking Solar Media Mobile | \$4,956.00 |
| TOTAL | \$60,416.00 |

| 2021-2022 Project Name | Total Allocated |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| 2020-2021 Land as our teacher | \$25,000.00 |
| 2020-2021 Mind.Heart.Mouth | \$17,228.00 |
| 2020-2021 CP3 | \$27,317.00 |
| TOTAL | \$69,545.00 |

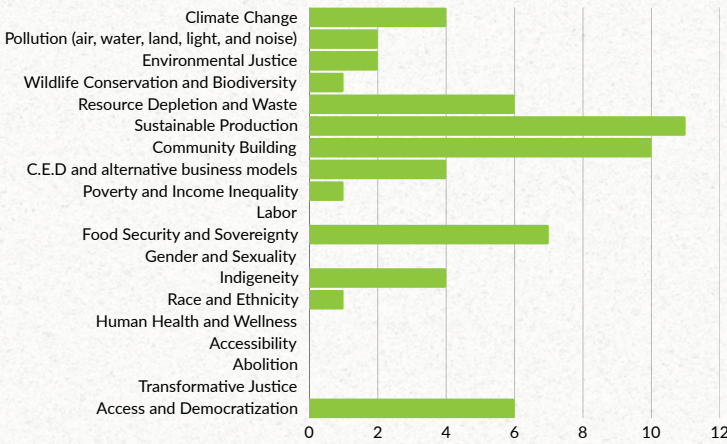
METRICS

Let's take a look at some of the numbers and metrics that the SLLFP has accumulated over the duration of its lifespan funding student projects.

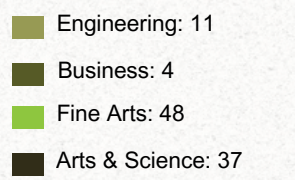
Funding Allocation by Theme



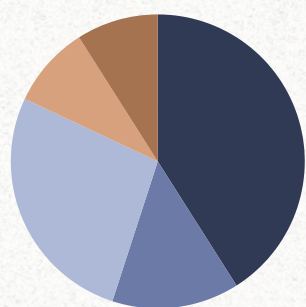
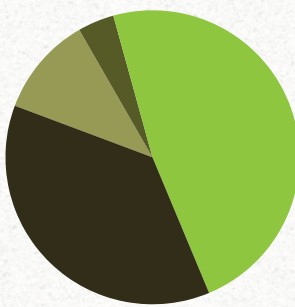
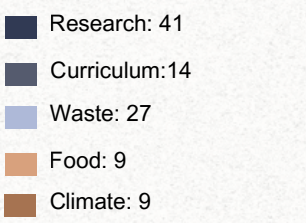
Funding Allocation by Category



Funding Allocation by Faculty



Funded Projects by stream plan



Number of Projects Funded by Sustainability Action Plan Stream Topic

| Sustainability Action Plan stream topic | # projects funded |
|---|-------------------|
| Sustainable Food Systems | 2 |
| Zero Waste | 6 |
| Climate Action | 2 |
| Sustainability in Research | 9 |
| Sustainability in Curriculum | 3 |

TESTIMONIALS

"It is sometimes scary to start a project that speaks to your values and transposes that into a vision and mission that encompass a form of activism. But I promise you that if don't take this chance, you might never know what you could have done, how far you could have gone."

-mind.heart.mouth team member

"In a short 4 months, we made significant headway on applying best practices for re-using solvent waste in our chemistry research lab. We recycled and reused over 50L of solvent. The main student in charge of this initiative was an MSc student who graduate in December, and she developed methods and protocols for this sustainable research idea. She also presented her work to our entire department (graduate students and professors); and again in front of a smaller audience during her MSc defense. The SAF funds helped this student carry out the research (both salary support and operational funding) and also supported the salary of an undergraduate research assistant."

-Solvent Recovery Initiative team member

"Coming to the garden every Wednesday afternoon is the highlight of my week"

-mind.heart.mouth participant

"I cannot fully express how grateful I am to have received the opportunity to participate in this internship program! Up to this point in my university experience, I had never actually experienced experiential learning as it is meant to be: getting one's hands dirty (both literally and metaphorically) in an effort to learn both practice and theory. As a part of the internship, I did just as much work farming and selling produce at the market, as I did readings and conferring with my instructor and classmates. This made for the life-changing feeling that I was a genuine participant in urban agriculture and sustainable food practices. I sold healthy, affordable, ethically-grown produce to my own professors and university peers; got to discuss, in depth, the intersections of capitalism and agriculture with the other interns as a part of a classroom setting; and even harvested a few crops! I really hope to see this program re-instated in coming years, so more students can experience the joy and growth that I did."

Dinu Mahapatuna, Co-op CultivAction Market Garden Internship participant

TESTIMONIALS

"The CultivAction course I took with Professor Erik Chevrier and Mohammed Al-Duais this summer was a lifestyle altering and memorable 13 weeks. It allowed me to apply the teachings of the course in a very hands on stress free manner. The course material mixed with the dynamic teaching/farming method in which the class was taught, was a refreshing departure from traditional learning and allowed me to learn at my own pace and develop the skills that mattered most to me. I would highly recommend this class to anyone who's looking to get more involved and active in the world of community/urban agriculture."

- Sampreet Arneja, Co-op CultivAction Urban Agriculture School 2022 participant

"Doing this internship has been really rewarding and has taught me a lot about producing food sustainably at a larger scale than I am used to. Being able to learn about food production and distribution at a hyper-local level by being immersed in both production at the Loyola farm, and distribution at the farmers' market, has been really enriching. Doing these hands-on activities was really complementary to the reading circles and reflections about the course material. I found this way of learning, through both theory and hands-on practice, to be a really immersive and enjoyable way to learn."

- Talya Hope, Co-op CultivAction Market Garden Internship participant

"The CultivAction course went wonderfully. We gained a wealth of knowledge over the course of the summer about how to contribute to the building of social economy and how to establish and maintain urban agricultural practices. That said, the most impactful part of the course for myself would have to have been getting connected with the community and amazing people involved in this project. The many different people of a range of backgrounds and roles coming together to learn about these topics and work collectively toward goals was greatly inspiring. It felt very much like finding the connecting point between our variegated perspectives and weaving them all together. I can't wait to apply this knowledge in my own life and help to build the community further so that more people can benefit from this amazing opportunity - as the course has no doubt been one of the highlights of my time as a student."

- Eamonn Stinson O'Gorman, Co-op CultivAction Urban Agriculture School 2022 participant



LESSONS LEARNED BY SAF

Some of the lessons learned by SAF from this experience:

Clearer financial management structures are essential

The lack of a separate bank account for SLLFP funds and a separate tracking of the SLLFP fund was challenging for both parties. To increase financial transparency, future initiatives should build stronger financial protocols and regularly review funding agreements (e.g., separate bank accounts).

Flexibility and regular revisiting of contractual agreements are necessary

If a contract becomes difficult to implement in practice, its conditions should be flagged early and openly by all parties involved (e.g.,). This approach ensures that misunderstandings do not accumulate over time and that necessary amendments can be made in a collaborative and transparent manner.

Verbal agreements must be formalized in writing

While verbal agreements can help build trust and facilitate collaboration in the short term, they are not sufficient substitutes for formal written commitments in long-term partnerships. For example, in the SLLFP, the acceptance of not using a separate bank account for the funds was made verbally but not formally amended in the contract. This contributed to confusion and complications during the audit process. To ensure accountability and avoid discrepancies, any changes, exceptions, or clarifications discussed verbally need to be promptly documented and incorporated into the official agreement. Clear, written records protect all parties and support transparency and continuity, especially in the face of staff turnover or institutional memory loss.



LESSONS LEARNED BY SAF CONTINUED

Some of the lessons learned by SAF from this experience:

Institutional memory matters

Key personnel changes at SAF created knowledge gaps that complicated audits and reviews. Future programs should institutionalize documentation practices and succession planning to ensure consistency regardless of staff turnover.

Collaborative governance requires ongoing alignment

While the partnership between SAF and the Office of Sustainability was initially strong, diverging interpretations of the contract and funding responsibilities drove home the importance of ongoing dialogue, shared understanding, and adaptable structures.

Flexibility in funding criteria and eligibility is necessary to ensure the accessibility of funding opportunities

The requirement of the initial version of the program to meet one of the targets of Concordia's Sustainability Action Plans introduced challenges and made it challenging for project teams, especially those whose efforts focused on issues of social sustainability, to adapt their projects to program criteria. Recognizing this, the SAF and the Office of Sustainability worked to introduce more flexible requirements into the SLLFP 2.0 version of the program.

CONCLUSION

OVER THE YEARS

The Sustainability Living Lab Funding Program (SLLFP) was a pioneering initiative that demonstrated the value of interdisciplinary, community-engaged sustainability work at Concordia University. Over its span, the program successfully funded 20 innovative projects and contributed significantly to cultivating a campus culture grounded in sustainability, collaboration, and experiential learning.

Despite the program's ultimate discontinuation due to administrative and financial management challenges and the end of the 5-year agreement, its impact remains meaningful. Students, faculty, and staff benefitted from hands-on experiences and practical applications of sustainability principles. Several of the projects funded through the program have been institutionalized and continue to evolve to meet community needs. The program also served as a critical platform for integrating diverse perspectives into institutional sustainability efforts and operational practices.

The decision to end the program, made jointly by the SAF and the Office of Sustainability, followed an independent audit, a reassessment of administrative costs, and a need for better alignment in fund disbursement practices. A budget-balancing agreement was reached, and remaining commitments to project teams will be fulfilled or reassigned to other sustainability initiatives. The project's 5-year agreement came to an end, and neither partner wishes to continue or renew it.

