



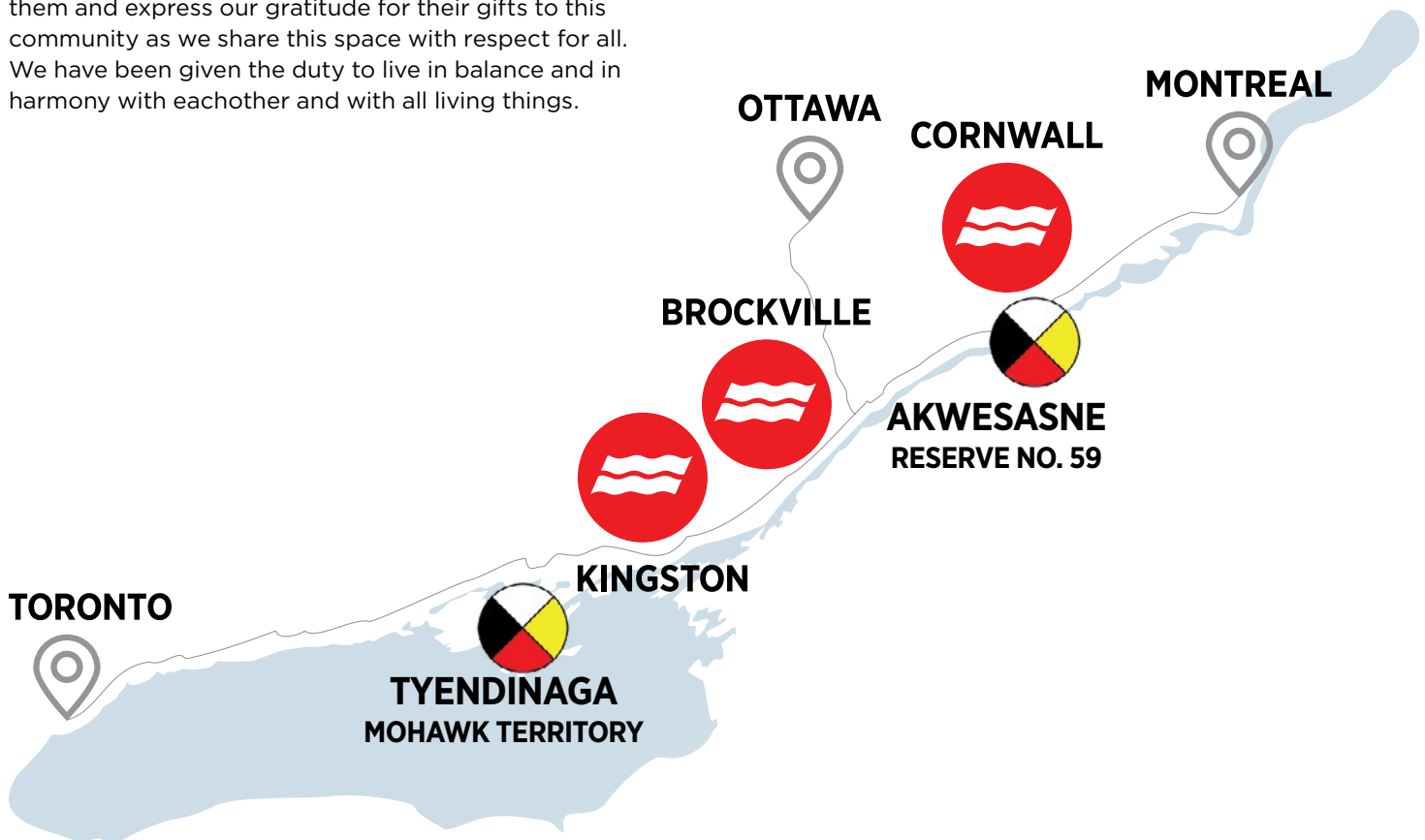
St. Lawrence  
College

# ANNUAL SUSTAINABILITY REPORT 2023/24



# LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

St. Lawrence College is situated on the traditional lands of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe People. With good minds and hearts united as one, we acknowledge and celebrate the traditional lands as a gathering place of Canada's First Peoples, who have been the guardians of Mother Earth since time immemorial. We pay homage to them and express our gratitude for their gifts to this community as we share this space with respect for all. We have been given the duty to live in balance and in harmony with each other and with all living things.



## DID YOU KNOW?

The waves in the SLC logo represent the St. Lawrence River that joins OUR three communities.

SLC is located in the heart of the stunning 1000 Islands, with campuses in three Eastern Ontario communities: Kingston, Brockville, and Cornwall.

80% of SLC graduates live and work in Eastern Ontario



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# INTRODUCTION

**As part of SLC's commitment to sustainability, this document outlines the college's 2023-2024 progress on sustainability initiatives in support of the official Sustainability Plan.**

SLC is pleased to highlight our sustainability progress for the 2023-2024 academic year through this first annual sustainability report. Sections of this report include sustainability initiatives completed throughout the year in pursuit of the targets defined in the SLC 2020-2024 Sustainability Plan. The report and Plan support the strategic objective of sustainability as set in the SLC in Five + Three Strategic Plan. The Sustainability Plan follows the direction of the United Nation's 17 Sustainable Development Goals (page seven) and the progress benchmarks set by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) (page eight).

The Plan guides sustainability efforts across our tri-campus communities, is aligned to College strategic initiatives, and supports global efforts for a more sustainable planet.

We sincerely thank our college community members for their participation and engagement in these initiatives, and for supporting sustainability at SLC. We look forward to continuing this work together as a community. Together we are preparing our future generations to think and act sustainably and building more sustainable campus communities for everyone.





## LETTER FROM SLC'S PRESIDENT AND CEO

I am pleased to introduce the SLC 2023-24 Sustainability Annual Report, and to express my gratitude to all the folks here at SLC who contributed to the work reflected in the following pages. Thank you to our Sustainability team for steering these important projects, and to the whole SLC community for your participation in tri-campus sustainability initiatives throughout the year. As a college, we have the capacity to make an impact and show leadership, and I am proud of the work we are doing to prioritize sustainability through academics, operations, and community engagement.

The work in this report reflects the pillars of the SLC Sustainability Plan and progress toward the targets set within it. It represents SLC's multiyear objective of Operational Excellence, as set out in our strategic plan, SLC in Five + 3: to drive sustainability and improvements in operations and apply sustainable practices across programs and operations. This report features many of our great achievements, including:

- **Earning a Silver rating for our sustainability work, and we're already working toward Gold**
- **Creating plans to cut our environmental impact in half by 2050**
- **Completing nature assessments at our Brockville and Cornwall campuses**
- **Bringing sustainability topics into more than 20% of our programs.**
- **Amazing growth of our student sustainability club — reaching over 1,500 students through various activities this year**

As you read through this report, I'm sure you'll take enormous pride in how sustainability is becoming part of everything we do at SLC. I look forward to seeing how our commitment to environmental responsibility will continue to shape our college and communities.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Glenn Vollebregt'.

Glenn Vollebregt (He/Him)  
President and CEO  
St. Lawrence College

# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

## A SHARED OUTLOOK FOR A BETTER PLANET FOR EVERYONE



SLC is committed to the United Nation's 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Implicated in the UN 2030 agenda for sustainable development, the SDGs were adopted by all United Nations member states in 2015. They provide a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet. We strive to support the goals in all we do - from academic integration, to student engagement, and new sustainable practices in operations. This report includes a reflection of the SDGs supported in 2023-2024. We are proud of the progress made at SLC this year in support of a better planet.

## MEASURING OUR PROGRESS - STARS

### HOW WE TRACK SUSTAINABILITY AT SLC

Building a robust Sustainability Plan required an environmental scan of how similar institutions are pursuing sustainability on campus. SLC is a proud member of the globally recognized Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) and participates in the Sustainability Tracking and Rating System (STARS). AASHE and STARS were used to complete the scan and develop the Plan.

#### ABOUT AASHE:

AASHE is the leading association for sustainability advancement in post secondary, serving a range of higher education faculty, administrators, staff, and students driving innovation. Established in 2005, AASHE is comprised of over 900 members across 48 U.S. states, 9 Canadian provinces, and 20 countries.[1] STARS is a key resource developed by AASHE. It is a transparent, self-reporting framework for colleges and universities to measure sustainability performance.

#### STARS & SLC:

By participating in STARS, SLC benefits from access to meaningful comparisons across institutions using a common set of measurements for performance. STARS incentivizes institutions to continually build on sustainability practices and performance. It helps us build stronger and more diverse campus sustainability models and a college community dedicated to furthering sustainability.



# MEASURING PROGRESS - STARS

## STARS RATING SUMMARY



### Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education

This chart below outlines the results of the application for a STARS rating submitted by St. Lawrence College. The STARS rating is an official recognition that the College has met the requirements prescribed within the STARS as created, maintained, and administered by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE)

### St. Lawrence College

An institution's score is based on the percentage of points it earns by pursuing relevant credits across four main categories: Academics, Engagement, Operations, and Planning & Administration. In addition, institutions may earn up to four Innovation & Leadership points for exemplary and path-breaking initiatives that are not covered by other STARS credits or that exceed the highest criterion of a standard credit. The final institutional score is achieved through the following formula: Points Achieved/Points Possible + Innovation & Leadership Points. [2]

DATE SUBMITTED:	MAY 2024	RATING:	SCORE REQUIRED:
Reporting Period:	2021-2024	Bronze	25
Rating:	Silver	Silver	45
Score:	58.84	Gold	65
STARS Version:	2.2	Platinum	85

CATEGORY	SUB-CATEGORY	EARNED POINTS	AVAILABLE POINTS
Academics	Curriculum	32.6	40
	Research	9.6	18
	<b>Total</b>	<b>42.2</b>	<b>58</b>
Engagement	Campus Engagement	15.8	21
	Public Engagement	8.5	20
	<b>Total</b>	<b>24.2</b>	<b>41</b>
Operations	Air & Climate	8	11
	Buildings	1.7	8
	Energy	4.3	10
	Food & Dining	2.5	8
	Grounds	2.7	3
	Purchasing	1.7	6
	Transportation	4	7
	Waste	3.7	10
	Water	2.1	6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>30.8</b>	<b>69</b>
Planning & Administration	Coordination & Planning	7.6	9
	Diversity & Affordability	2.3	10
	Investment & Finance	0	7
	Wellbeing & Work	3	7
	<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>33</b>
Innovation & Leadership	Exemplary Practice Innovation	4	4
	<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>



# MEASURING OUR PROGRESS - STARS

## OUR STARS ROADMAP

SLC secured a Silver STARS ranking in mid 2024 where the institution scored 58.84 points across five categories in 2024 (compared to 33.58 points in its last submission in 2019).

SLC is now working toward a STARS Gold rating. We look forward to working with the AASHE team and alongside Ontario colleges and universities to help guide and measure progress along the higher education sustainability continuum.



### 2026-2027

**YEAR 6-7  
SUBMIT STARS REPORT  
TARGETING GOLD  
CERTIFICATION**

### 2025-2026

**YEAR 6  
CONTINUE TO ADVANCE  
STRATEGIC INITIATIVES**



### 2023-2024

**YEAR 4-5  
SILVER CERTIFICATION**

### 2020-2022

**YEAR 1-3  
ADVANCE STRATEGIC  
INITIATIVES**



### START: 2019

**BRONZE CERTIFICATION**

# SUSTAINABILITY PLAN: OUR PROGRESS

## KEY HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 2020-2024 SUSTAINABILITY PLAN INABILITY AT SLC

The 2020-2024 Sustainability Plan is aligned to the SLC strategic plan and guides our sustainability efforts across our campus communities. At SLC, sustainability is the integration and optimization of lenses of environment, economics, social, and cultural.

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

Delivering programming and operations that are fiscally responsible, as well as environmentally and socially just.

### SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT:

Fostering a vibrant culture where diversity is celebrated, health and well-being are prioritized, and equity is championed.

### ENVIRONMENTAL DEVELOPMENT:

Regenerative approach to our environmental footprint, innovative resource management, and safeguarding of health and prosperity.

[Click here to explore the Sustainability Plan!](#)

The updates on the following pages represent a snapshot of activities completed supporting our Sustainability Plan's targets as well as the UN's SDGs, and aligned with our sustainability targets under AASHE's STARS framework. For additional details and our full Sustainability Plan, click the link above.







# 2023-2024 HIGHLIGHTS

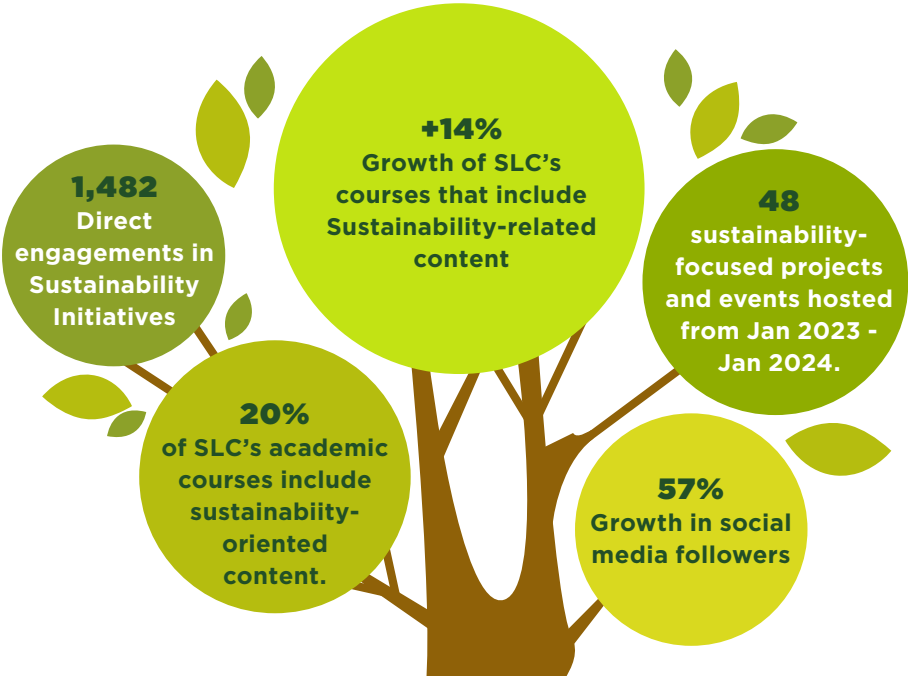
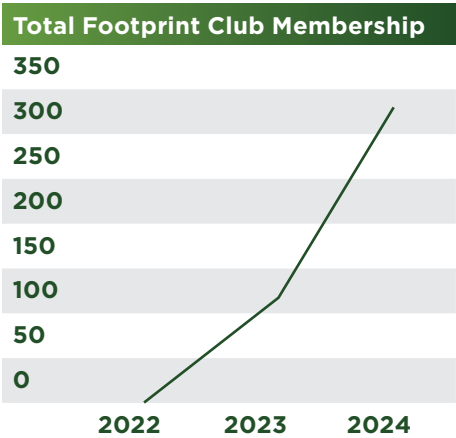




# SUSTAINABILITY AT SLC

## 2023-2024 YEAR AT A GLANCE

SLC is committed to continuously integrating sustainability in all that we do. From our operations, academic programing, internal and external engagement, and planning - we are proud of the progress that's been made this year. SLC's Sustainability Plan and targets drive our initiatives and support the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set forth by the United Nations. Some highlights of SLC's progress this year include:



# 2023-2024

## YEAR AT A GLANCE

- **Continued membership with the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE).** In 2024, SLC was awarded a Silver designation by AASHE's Sustainability Tracking and Ranking System (STARS). Next up, SLC is targeting to achieve STARS Gold in alignment with SLC in Five +3.
- Forecasted financial and operational requirements for reaching our GreenHouse Gas (GHG) reduction targets, including a **50% reduction below 2010 and achieving carbon neutrality by 2050.**
- **Completed biodiversity assessments and recommendation reports for Brockville and Cornwall campuses.** Alongside Kingston recommendations, this work informs the Sustainable Landscape Management Plan (SMLP). Objectives of the SMLP include supporting resilient and ecologically diverse outdoor spaces on campus, and increasing SLC community outdoor engagement.
- **Continued work with the Curriculum Planning team to assess sustainability content** in academics, achieving over 20% of SLC programs verified as sustainability-inclusive or sustainability-focused (an important indicator for SLC's STARS rating).
- **Engagement and raising awareness:**
  - SLC's Footprint sustainability club, grew membership by 125%, increasing overall student sustainability awareness and participation.
  - Achieved 77% growth in social media engagement.
  - Hosted 48 events and engaged with over 1,486 students and over 80 staff/faculty members.





# footprint

## OUR OPERATIONS

2 ZERO HUNGER



6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION



7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY



9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE



10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



13 CLIMATE ACTION



14 LIFE BELOW WATER



15 LIFE ON LAND



16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS





# CLIMATE TARGETS AT SLC: CARBON NEUTRAL BY 2050

SLC's FMS team is working to reach our reduction targets for scope one and two Green House Gas (GHG) sources and remains on track to meet our 50% reduction target (below 2010 baseline of 3,180 tonnes of annual GHG emissions) by 2030. Currently SLC is at 2,806 tonnes (2022), a 1,004 tonnes reduction (-24%) from our baseline. It should be noted that the college has added roughly 85,000 sq. ft. of new campus space in this period yet our GHG emissions have continued to decrease.

To meet our 2030 target of 2,054 tonnes of GHG emissions, SLC will need to continue to reduce annual GHG production by an additional 752 tonnes.

## TARGETING THE 50% EMISSIONS REDUCTION BY 2030, SLC HAS INITIATED THE FOLLOWING PROJECTS:

- Brockville chiller replacement: this has enabled SLC to adopt air source heat pump (ASHP) solutions to provide heating and cooling for the campus. This ASHP will offset the use of natural gas on campus, reducing GHG emissions by approximately 78 tonnes.
- Kingston ASHP. SLC is currently replacing the existing Violet Wing Chiller with an ASHP. Similar to the project in Brockville, this ASHP will produce cooling and heating, offset the use of natural gas, and reduce GHG emissions by approximately 68 tonnes.
- The college is also in the process of replacing several rooftops AHU's on the Kingston campus for hybrid ASHP/Natural gas rooftop unit. These projects will further reduce the GHG emissions on the Kingston campus.

## UPCOMING:

- Integrate the scope three GHG emissions into the GHG Inventory.
- Complete SLC Climate Action Plan - to be carbon neutral by 2050.
- Develop the SLC Sustainable Building Policy/ Guideline that integrates climate action, financial security, diversity, Indigenous ways of knowing and being, accessibility, and health and well-being. Target globally recognized sustainable buildings and infrastructure as best-in-class to create state-of-the-art learning spaces for students, staff, and community members.





# BIODIVERSITY AT SLC

The relationship between biodiversity, design, maintenance, and land management is significant in the context of learning institutions and campuses. By considering the potential for enhanced biodiversity in our local environment, good maintenance practice, and land management can protect investments in landscape and property while contributing to SLC's environmental, social, and governance goals.

## ASSESSING BIODIVERSITY ON CAMPUS

In 2023-2024, SLC completed biodiversity assessments on each campus to better understand overall ecological health and levels of biodiversity on property ground. These assessments informed three campus-specific recommendation reports to support and increase biodiversity and ecological resilience. This work informs the Sustainable Landscape Management Plan (SLMP) for each site.

## SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT PLAN (SLMP)

The objectives of the SLMP guide our land management, stewardship, and decision-making. The objectives are:

- Act as stewards of this land and integrate Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Being into our management of SLC's outdoor space.
- Create outdoor spaces that promote increased engagement with the natural environment and support SLC community health and wellbeing.
- Enhance biodiversity and ecological health to support land and climate resiliency.
- Protect vulnerable and endangered species and remove invasive species.



# SLC'S REUSABLE CONTAINER AND CUP PROGRAM

## CANO CO

SLC is tackling single-use containers one cup at a time. In 2023 SLC adopted a new reusable food packaging program called Cano. This exciting initiative has enabled the College community to participate in reducing the waste we produce as an institution and reducing the impact of food packaging production and pollution overall. Join the program below by scanning the QR code.



**FREE DRINK!** Scan the QR code to download the Cano app and earn your reward. \*

\*Rewards must be redeemed in a Cano container. Specific offers can vary based on partnering locations. This promotion only applies to new Cano users.



**887**

Total SLC users



**4,005**

Total packages  
diverted



**676.14**

Kilograms of waste  
diverted



**\$1,825**

Saved by  
consumers







## OUR PEOPLE



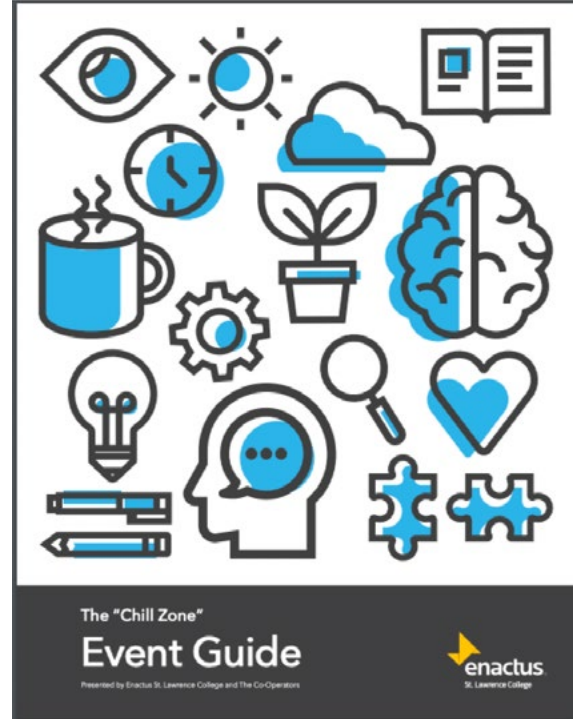


## MENTAL HEALTH WELLNESS

## MENTAL HEALTH CHILL ZONES

Hosted in collaboration with SLC's Innovation Hub and Enactus Group, the Chill Zone offers participants a space to relax and take a break from daily pressures of student and work life. This project, which began with a focus on students, has expanded to include faculty and staff, emphasizing the importance of mental well-being across the academic community. Activities offered have included art sessions, therapy dog visits, games and group sessions.

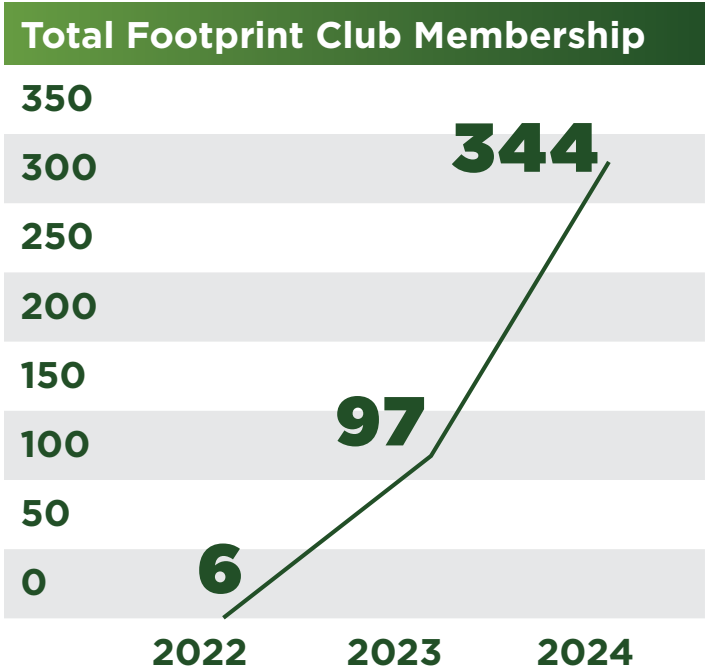
**IN 2024, EIGHT CHILL ZONE  
EVENTS WERE ATTENDED  
BY 399 STUDENTS.**





# FOOTPRINT CLUB MEMBERSHIP

Formerly known as the Green Team (created in 2014), the Footprint club is comprised of a diverse student group dedicated to advancing sustainability. Footprint remains an open space for students to engage, contribute, and explore sustainability in their fields and areas of interest. Footprint is growing continually, expanding our URSLC presence and development opportunities for staff, students, and faculty. Join us on URSLC and follow along on Instagram for event and project updates.







## OUR PROGRAMS





# CLIMATE LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

## PILOT YEAR RESULTS (2023)

SLC is committed to continuously integrating sustainability in all that we do. From our operations, academic programming, internal and external engagement, and planning - we are proud of the progress that's been made this year. SLC's Sustainability Plan and targets drive our initiatives and support the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set forth by the United Nations. Some highlights of SLC's progress this year include:

**16 STUDENTS** participated in the CLP program

**9 TEAMS** presented their business plans on Pitch Night to the panel of judges

**32 ATTENDEES** at Pitch Night listened to team proposals & celebrated top 3 Climate Leaders

**\$2,000 FUNDING** awarded to winning projects





## SDGS AT SLC

# LAUNCH, ACTIVATE, AND BOOST

We strive to engage SLC's staff, students, and faculty with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through interactive and relevant content that connects back to their field of study and work. The SDG LABs workshop is offered to courses and to the general community to engage participants in the action and importance of the SDGs in a meaningful way.

Since March 2023, the Sustainability team has hosted five workshops in collaboration with the Innovation Hub focused on the UN SDGs. Over 120 students attended these sessions. The team also provided an online LAUNCH quiz and badge to over 50 students and plans to deliver more sessions in partnership with faculty members for individual courses.



### SDGS EXPO AT SLC

St. Lawrence College's Kingston campus students from the Project Management program hosted sustainable-focused businesses and organizations to speak to students about their mission and to share opportunities for student engagement. This project engaged 87 students and involved seven local organizations.





# LAND-BASED EDUCATION RETREAT

The Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Being and Sustainability teams collaborate with the Behavioural Psychology program each year to provide a 24-hour land-based learning opportunity at Elbow Lake Environmental Education Centre to over 40 fourth year students.

## ACTIVITIES INCLUDED:

- Cooking in teams for the rest of the cohort
- Biodiversity hiking and seed throwing
- Kairos Blanket Exercise
- Learning about the climate emergency
- ...and more!



3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



4 QUALITY EDUCATION



5 GENDER EQUALITY



10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



14 LIFE BELOW WATER



15 LIFE ON LAND



17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS





# SLC IMAGINES A BETTER FUTURE

In January 2024, the Sustainability team launched a new initiative: SLC Imagines a Better Future.

Hosted with Jerri Jerreat, a writer, teacher, and climate activist, the initiative challenged participants to take a solutions-focused perspective on climate issues. Through arts-based workshops, participants learned about sustainable development from a global perspective, and were guided to imagine a more sustainable future and to share these ideas through the creative arts. Participants presented their ideas through the visual arts, writing, poetry, performance, and other mediums. Student projects were showcased to a panel of SLC judges, and top contributors in each category were awarded prizes.



Winning art piece by Monica Montero, HR program student



Tree made from recycled Tim Horton's coffee cups, a collaborative art piece from Project Management students







# OUR COMMUNITIES

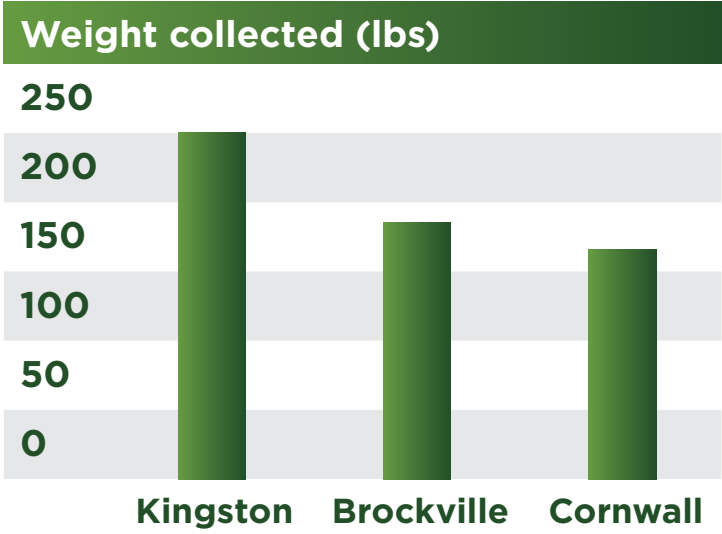


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|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| <p><b>4</b> QUALITY EDUCATION</p>  | <p><b>10</b> REDUCED INEQUALITIES</p>  | <p><b>11</b> SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES</p>  | <p><b>13</b> CLIMATE ACTION</p>  | <p><b>16</b> PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS</p>  | <p><b>17</b> PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS</p>  |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|



# 2024 PITCH-IN CLEAN UP EVENT

The SLC community came out to support the annual Pitch-In event on April 25th, 2024. Participants on each campus joined together to help restore and preserve SLC's natural environment and enjoy the surrounding outdoor spaces after a long winter. Together we recovered approximately **338 lbs of landfill garbage and 136 lbs of recycling from campuses and surrounding grounds.** This is an important step in maintaining a resilient and thriving campus community that is rich in biodiversity and supports natural ecosystem function. This works also upholds the Sustainable Development Goals set forth by the UN including supporting life on land, life on water, creating sustainable communities and cities, and taking action against climate change.

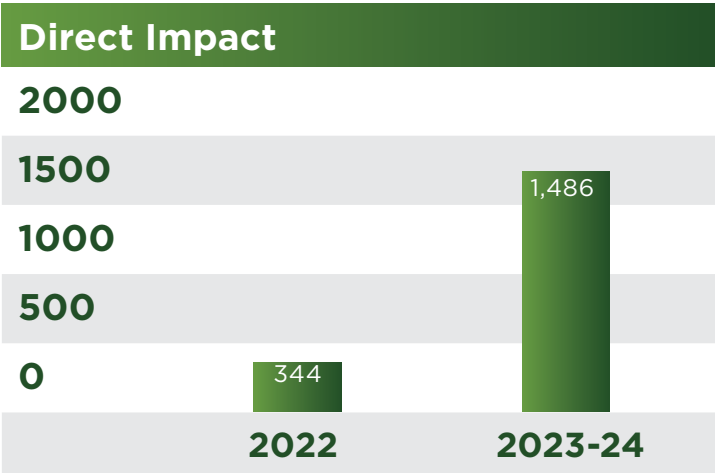




# DIRECT IMPACT



Nearly four times as many SLC community members engaged with SLC's sustainability initiatives in 2023-24 compared to the previous year. This is the total number of people who actively engaged with workshops and climate-focused projects. The Sustainability team and Footprint club continue to increase the number of events and activations offered to reach more students, staff, and faculty.





## COMMUNITY PROJECTS



### SENIORS CENTRE PLANTING

Members of the SLC Footprint Club came together for two sweltering summer afternoons to remove and pile brush used on site to nourish new growth and shelter wildlife. We marked the locations of three small forests, and spread a layer of compost about 3 to 4cm thick over each area. 12 SLC students volunteered their time to plant at the Centre.



### WINTER COAT DRIVE

SLC also hosted the annual Winter Coat Drive: through collecting and redistributing used winter coats, boots, mittens, and other winter clothing items, SLC is helping to reduce over consumption and fight social inequity. In December 2023, 103 winter coats were collected for the SLC community to re-use.





# LEARNING CONNECTIONS CONFERENCE



## BIODIVERSITY WORKSHOP

To promote biodiversity awareness in our SLC community, the team hosted a session in the Learning Connections Conference focused on the role of biodiversity in a healthy natural environment. This session provided a learning opportunity as we heard from ecologist Kristen Harrison of North South Environmental and planted native plants for participants to take home. 33 staff members joined the session.

## BIOBLITZ WALK + LEARN

Twenty-two staff and faculty members joined the session and got outside for our Kingston BioBlitz to record as many species as possible on campus over a set period of time. This data collection helps us to better understand what species are living on campus, as well as how to identify native vs non-native species and document species diversity in horticultural planting areas. The BioBlitzes collect baseline ecological data to inform ongoing planning of each of the campus Sustainable Landscape Management Plan to enhance and protect biodiversity on campus.





## ENACTUS SLC CHAMPIONS

SLC's Climate Leadership Program winners entered the 2023 Regional competition of the Enactus organization. SLC's team was awarded the Runner-up title in the Canadian Tire Environmental Sustainability Challenge at Enactus Central Regionals.





**We thank the SLC community for your continued support of sustainability across our campuses. Together we are building a more sustainable SLC.**

### **Contact Us**

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- [stlawrencecollege.ca/about/sustainability](http://stlawrencecollege.ca/about/sustainability)
-  [@footprintSLC](https://www.instagram.com/footprintSLC)

