

# 2021 IMPACT REPORT



CityHive

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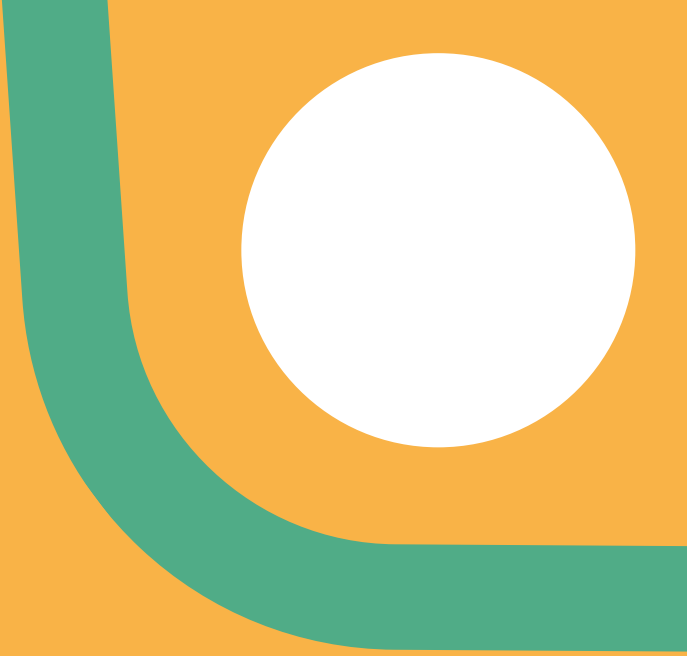
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Thank You



# Territorial Acknowledgement

CityHive recognizes the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the x<sup>w</sup>məθk<sup>w</sup>əy<sup>əm</sup> (Musqueam), the Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish), and the sə́lilw̓ətaʔt̓ (Tseil-Waututh) Nations on whose land we live, learn and engage with youth. We also recognize the Katzie, Kwantlen, Kwikwetlem, Qayqayt, Semiahmoo, S'ólh Téméxw (Stó:lō), Stz'uminus, scəwəθenaʔt̓ təməx<sup>w</sup> (Tsawwassen), and all Coast Salish peoples on whose land we do our work.

We thank these Host nations for being stewards of their lands since time immemorial. CityHive recognizes that the civic institutions and decision making processes we seek to influence through our programs are colonial, and have actively perpetuated harm to Indigenous peoples. It is through understanding the truth of histories of Indigenous Peoples, exploring our relationship and responsibility to these lands, and listening to Host Nations and Indigenous youth that we are committed to continually reflecting and deepening our commitment to decolonial practices within our programs and operations.

# Letter from the Executive Director




To our wonderful CityHive community,

When Tesicca and I started CityHive in 2016/2017 as university students, our vision was born out of a felt need—we were young people who cared deeply about our city and wanted to help shape it. Without a clear lane for youth changemaking and municipal engagement, and hearing anecdotes that friends and other youth felt similarly excluded by decision making processes, we began building an organization that directly addressed the gaps we were experiencing.

In those early days, "building" an organization meant lots of conversations with youth, decision makers, and city staff, and a lot of trial-by-fire in designing programs, though always driven by our 'why.' We learned as we went and stayed constantly adaptable, wondered too late if we had drastically miscalculated the amount of sushi needed for 30 hungry program participants. It was many initial relationships that we established with people who shared our vision and believed in our work that launched us into our toddler phase of growing and running our first programs, and that has continued to allow us to grow and learn into our teenaged phase as an organization. Those principles of relationships and being driven by real-world needs (and usually involving some food) are still at our core today.

Although CityHive has a less-than-stellar track record when it comes to remembering to celebrate our birthday (or agreeing on the official start date), we've been in operation for five years. I can honestly say that, in 2017, I would've never imagined myself having the great honour of being the Executive Director during years of such growth and change. It's one thing to start a passion project; it's another entirely to learn how to collaborate with and grow a team of people, continuously develop programming and organizational capacity, learn about what it takes to run a non-profit organization (and how we can do things differently), manage risk, continually challenge ourselves to do better, and start planning beyond a three-month horizon.



Last year was a real exercise in internal work. I continued to learn and reflect on the state of our democracy, consumptive and linear economy, and often fractured and deeply inequitable society, while finding opportunities to deepen relationships and hope along the way.

We embarked on a journey of real organizational transformation, and although it was largely informed by our community, much of that work happened out of view from our alumni and followers. We did a thorough impact measurement process to help us understand: Which youth are we reaching? Who are we not reaching, and what impacts are we really having? Where can we do more, and where can we do better? Through the Innoweave program, our team accessed Strategic Clarity and Intended Impact Coaching with Social Impact Advisors, which gave us the invaluable opportunity to step back after five years of growth and revise our mission, vision, impact statement, and theory of change.

The most exciting part of the process for me was that it was truly a collective effort, including our staff and Board, CityHive alumni and partners from across our organizational lifespan, and many youth across Metro Vancouver. This process opened up space for many (trust me, many!) team conversations about our current and future programmatic directions, clarifying our target audiences, defining what being equity-centred and prioritizing systemically marginalized youth means, and naming our approaches to civic and environmental changemaking. Every discussion would leave me adding to the mental supercut that plays in my head of CityHive's evolution and remind me that while we're still a young organization with so much growth to come, we've grown up a lot in these last few years.

I'm grateful for the space we took to refocus CityHive's collective energy, and to update our theory of change to reflect where we need to head to deepen the impact we want to have. It can feel counterintuitive to carve out time for such slow, intentional work when each day seemingly demands so much, but having our new 3-Year Strategic Plan and 12-Month Action Plan has set us up for an exciting next chapter.

It's like hiking with a friend, lost in conversation and your footfalls, until you both pause for a water break and suddenly realize how far you've come. By the end of 2021, I felt like we'd made it to that metaphorical clearing to take stock, admire the view, and tighten our laces for the path ahead. Thanks for being a part of it all! See you somewhere soon.

With gratitude,  
Veronika

# Mission, Vision, and Theory of Change

Through the Innoweave program, we had the opportunity to access impact and strategic clarity coaching with Social Impact Advisors throughout 2021. The intensive process spanned 7 months. With invaluable input from team members, our Board, alumni, and other youth through surveys, conversations and focus groups, we're proud to unveil our updated mission, vision, intended impact statement, and theory of change.

## Intended Impact & Theory of Change

- Kick-off coaching call and first workshop
- Organizational reflection
- Drafting and refining our intended impact and theory of change

## Pressure Testing

- Testing and refining our theory of change through landscape and program analysis, focus groups
- Bi-weekly coaching calls
- External research

## Refining & Action Planning

- Integrating learnings and finalizing ToC
- Program revisions
- Change management workshop and action plan development

This work led to CityHive creating a new 3-year Strategic Plan and 12-month Action Plan for 2022.

[Read the plan.](#)



## **Our Mission**

CityHive’s mission is to transform the way young people shape their cities and the civic processes that engage them.

## **Our Vision**

We envision cities where youth are actively involved in civic planning, shaping, and decision-making. A youth-engaged city is a just, resilient and sustainable city—not only for young people, but for all current and future generations.

## **Intended Impact**

By 2026, 10,000 youth ages 13-30 facing systemic barriers to participation in Metro Vancouver will have an increased and lasting sense of civic agency.

# OUR TEAM

*\*no longer in their position*



**Veronika Bylicki,  
Executive Director**



**Rowan Sylvester,  
Civic Education  
Program Manager**



**Kathryn Trnavsky,  
Sustainability  
Programs Lead**



**\*Aida Mwanzia,  
Operations & Special  
Projects Lead**



**Aarti Kamat,  
Youth Development  
Coordinator**



**Linda Xia,  
Webmaster**



**Lucy Wicken,  
Communications  
Coordinator**



**Dina Sadeghi,  
Sustainability  
Programs Assistant**



**Jasleen Bains,  
Communications  
Assistant**



**Michaela Slinger,  
Communications &  
Community  
Coordinator**



**\*Valentina Farías,  
Impact Measurement  
Researcher**



**\*Ruby Dhaliwal,  
Organizational  
Development  
Researcher**



**\*Rajdeep Dhaliwal,  
Equity in Civic  
Education Researcher**



**\*Emmett Keyserlingk,  
Civic Education in  
Schools Researcher**



**\*Peyvand Forouzandeh,  
Envirolab Impact &  
Climate Researcher  
Intern**



# OUR BOARD



**James Infante,  
Chair**



**Jenna McNeil, Vice  
Chair and Secretary**



**Jessica Wong,  
Treasurer**



**Naitik Mehta**



**Petros Kusmu**



**Precious Ile**

# FACILITATORS



**Aarti Kamat,  
Envirolab 5 and City  
Shapers**



**Alice Henry,  
Envirolab 5**



**Melvin Sedeora,  
City Shapers**



**Rachel Cheang,  
Envirolab 5 and City Shapers**



**Rajdeep Dhaliwhal,  
City Shapers**

# CITYHIVE YOUTH ADVISORY

In 2021, we convened our first CityHive Youth Advisory (CHYA), composed of CityHive program alumni and community members who provide input on current and future program offerings and bring a diversity of youth perspectives.



Amy Cornish



Gala Munoz-Carrier



Ismail Askin



Jay Castro



Jenric Ng



Maria Montenegro



Miranda Maslany



Molly Henry



Sameer Esmail



Sandy Wan



Sarah Day



Sayemin Azam Naheen



Tim Lam



Uytae Lee

# KEY LEARNINGS

## From our Strategic Clarity process

### Definitions are important.

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To be intentional about our work and impact, we spent a lot of time actually defining what we mean by terms like 'civic agency' and 'capacity to engage', as well as clear definitions for our different audiences of youth and civic institutions.

### Identify which gaps are ours to fill.

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When we zoom out to the big picture of the systemic issues we are trying to change, it's easy to map out all the gaps that exist. While understanding them all helps us do our work better, we don't need to fill them all ourselves—setting boundaries helps to focus our efforts and impact.

### Build out the engagement continuum.

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We commit to meeting youth where they're at, recognizing their unique assets, barriers and needs, and centering those who face systemic exclusion. We formally built out what this engagement continuum looks like, and what youth may need/fear/face depending on previous experiences within civic institutions. This helped us build a clearer throughline: from our youth audiences, to our programs, to our impact.

## From our programs and research

### Tools for embedding equity in civic education curriculum.

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Our researcher, Raj, reported that equity in civic education programming should recognize and examine race, privilege and oppression, reconsider practices and policies, and allow space for interruption and responses to issues identified by learners.

### Classroom civic education needs transforming.

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Our researcher, Emmett, interviewed teachers and found that elementary civics education is a major opportunity for CityHive—curriculum can be personalized for learners, and the amount of civics content delivered varies dramatically.

### What youth and cities need for climate action.

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With funding from the Pacific Institute of Climate Solutions, our researcher, Peyvand, completed an evaluation of our existing Envriolab program and assessed municipal climate needs. This information has been invaluable as we wrap our current innovation labs and plan the next iteration.

# ORGANIZATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

While we continued to deliver impactful programs throughout 2021, it was also a year of major internal growth. As such, many organizational highlights happened quietly, behind the scenes. We're proud to share this year in review.

## AT A GLANCE

**450+**

hours spent developing our theory of change and strategic plan

**11**

new youth-led projects across Metro Vancouver

**80**

new CityHive alumni (ages 14-30)

**344**

participants and attendees



# CIVIC EDUCATION PROGRAMS

## City Shapers: Public Space



City Shapers is an experiential, civic education program for Metro Vancouver youth ages 18-30. Each cohort explores pressing urban issues, with an emphasis on the municipal level and local decision-making. Guest speakers and presenters include professionals, elected officials, city staff, and community leaders. Participants in the public space cohort put their learning into action by providing the City of Surrey and the Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association with concrete recommendations to improve 5 key public spaces.



**Funders:** Real Estate Foundation of BC, Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association, SFU Community Engagement Initiative

**Partners:** Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association, City of Surrey

[Read our final report!](#)

- 23 participants
- June-August 2021
- Results: 5 small group briefs on public space recommendations were shared with the Downtown Vancouver BIA and the City of Surrey.

"The ten weeks I participated in [City Shapers] were some of the most intensive but rewarding weeks of my life."

# 100%

of participants would recommend participation in a similar program to their friends or colleagues

# CIVIC EDUCATION PROGRAMS

## K-12 Civic Education Development

Partner: **Urbanarium**

In BC, the K-12 curriculum fails to teach students about cities, local government, and how to be active, engaged residents. In collaboration, CityHive and Urbanarium have been working to explore the civic education landscape for youth under 18, and how our programs can begin meeting youth in spaces they know and trust: their classrooms.

In partnership with Urbanarium, we brought on a summer researcher (Emmett Keyserlingk) who conducted a thorough review of the BC K-12 curriculum and interviewed two dozen teachers and educators to learn more about the current state of civic education in our schools, and the opportunities they saw for our programming to support their teaching goals. This wider program research was supported by our Equity in Civic Education Researcher's (Rajdeep Dhaliwal) work that explored how we can better incorporate equity, justice, and decolonization into our civic education programming. Their guidance has provided us with a clear path forward to pilot our new K-12 classroom workshops and programming in 2022.



"Lots of students struggle with the 'why' [when it comes to] civics."

- TOC in Vancouver

"How can we make local civics more interesting?"

- High school teacher, Surrey



The Envirolab program allows youth to tackle complex urban sustainability challenges and work alongside decision makers and community organizations.

Partners: **Lawson Foundation, Vancity, Envirolab Steering Committee**

## Cohort 3: Zero Waste & Circular Economies

This cohort was bold! Over the 13 week program, they learned about and critically explored their role in the circular economy and what systemic shifts are required to address zero waste. Through learning from community partners and thought leaders, the cohort produced six project driven solutions to address identified challenges and opportunities.



- 30 participants
- 6 projects: Deconstruct the City, Restaurant Buddies, Farmateers, Circular Construction Economy, [Rx]Pillable, Communicycle

"Youth have the immense potential to get Metro Vancouver to its environmental targets, as they are the future citizens. Programs like Envirolab helps to close the silo between the youth and decision makers, and allows youth to become changemakers in their own right."

- cohort member

[Read our final report!](#)



## Cohort 4: Climate Adaptation

This cohort took place over 12 weeks during the summer of 2021 and asked participants to consider ways to reduce the vulnerability to the effects of climate change. These youth leaders embraced the notion that to adapt to climate change is to acknowledge that there is no going back, only forward. We must seek to find a balance in our relationship to the earth that centres health, equity and resilience at the forefront of these conversations.

Participants brought with them a level of awareness that enabled them to reflect on their own positionalities and their role in climate action. Together, we thought critically about the systemic shifts required to develop climate adaptation plans that are responsive to ecological, social and economic needs. This cohort produced five project-driven solutions to address challenges and opportunities they identified through this process.

- **26 participants**
- **5 projects: BuzzStop, Adaptales, EcoConnectBC, SURGE, Grow With The Flow**

**“Envirolab revealed how powerful youth can be with a strong support system and platform to share their experiences and ideas. I know I can positively impact the Metro Vancouver community with my project. I see it as my responsibility, because I want to make this a better place to live and inspire others around me to create change.”**

**- cohort member**

[Read our final report!](#)



# YOUTH ENGAGEMENT CONSULTING

## Youth Adaptation Lab

Funder and Partner: **City of Vancouver**

Participants: **15**



Over a year-long process, the Youth Adaptation Lab convened a group of youth with deep connections to False Creek to learn about sea level rise and coastal adaptation in the area. As of the end of 2021, participants are developing projects in 3 teams that advance coastal adaptation planning in the City of Vancouver and celebrate youth voices.

## Transport 2050

Funder and Partner: **Translink**

Participants: **18**

We continued to support Phases 2 and 3 of the Transport 2050 Regional Transportation Plan development. T2050 Youth Advisory members were trained to deliver engagement events with their communities across Metro Vancouver, resulting in 15 focus group conversations held with Indigenous youth, immigrant and newcomer youth, LGBTQ2S+ youth, students, and working professionals.

Their feedback on people-first streets, rapid transit networks, and automated vehicles informed the final draft of the plan. Advisory members were then invited to provide direct input on the final draft strategy at stakeholder sessions in the fall.

[Read the report here!](#)



# YOUTH ENGAGEMENT CONSULTING

## City of Richmond: Civic Ed Cohorts

Cohort 1: **January-March, 10 participants, 3 projects**

Cohort 2: **September-November, 8 participants, 3 projects**

This program offered Richmond youth an opportunity to learn more about their city and the different ways that they can get involved. Both cohorts spanned 8 weeks, culminating in group presentations to a Mock Council, sharing their ideas and initiatives to improve their city. Participants got to hear directly from municipal staff working in half a dozen departments, as well as speak with the Mayor and Councillors.



## BC Hydro: Clean Power 2040

Phase 1: **February, 29 participants**

Phase 2: **August, 14 participants**

Youth (13-18) from across BC participated in two workshops on Clean Power 2040. In Phase 1, youth offered insights into their values, sustainability, future living, and smart technologies, which supported the development of a draft plan. This plan was then discussed at the Phase 2 workshop, where 14 youth returned to share their feedback on electricity management, future resources, and planning for the unexpected.

Their input informed the final **Clean Power 2040 Integrated Resource Plan.**

# YOUTH ENGAGEMENT CONSULTING

## Vancouver Plan: Young Planners



[Read the report here!](#)

Partners: **City of Vancouver, Society for Children & Youth of BC, Urbanarium**

In 2021, we worked alongside the City to develop a comprehensive civic education program for Phase 2 of the Vancouver Plan engagement process. Activities, modules, and materials were developed to help students (and their teachers) learn more about how the City of Vancouver works.

## RiSE Coordinator Training

Partner: **Apathy is Boring**  
Participants: **15**

We delivered a training workshop for the RiSE Program Coordinators and Apathy is Boring staff on Cities 101 and lessons from our City Shapers: Resilient Communities program.



# WORKSHOPS

## Urbanarium: Public Washrooms

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Funder: **REFBC**

Partner: **Urbanarium Studio**

Participants: **55**

In March, we co-hosted this an urban design workshop convening planners, designers and architects to facilitate graphic discourse on city-making challenges through charrette-style live events.

## Youth Taking Charge

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Funder: **REFBC**

Partners: **SFU Public Square, Vancouver City Planning Commission**

Participants: **59**

We co-hosted this virtual event on youth organizers changing the face of Metro Vancouver.

## Housing & Affordability 101

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Funder: **REFBC**

Participants: **45**

We hosted this virtual event for all interested members of the public.

# ALUMNI SPOTLIGHTS

## DEMETRA BARBACUTA

### City Shapers (Public Space)

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Demetra came to our program with a public health background as she moved into the world of urban planning, with little knowledge of how change happened at the municipal level, or how she could get involved.



She's now completing her Masters of Planning at the University of Toronto, and assisting research on outdoor and curbside cafes across North America.



**"Leaving the program, I learned one question to constantly ask: 'Who are public spaces for?' That's something I still ask myself every day."**

# ALUMNI SPOTLIGHTS

## SANDY WAN

### Envirolab (Climate Emergency)

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Sandy joined Envirolab during a transition phase after working abroad for two years, looking to find a new project and reignite her civic engagement. With her Envirolab team, she launched Lighter Foodprint, Canada's first climate labelling initiative.



Lighter Footprint is now a mighty team of 15 youth across the country. Sandy also works as a Program Manager at Amazon Web Services.



**"When you're trying to make an impact in a new way, there are no answers for all the tough questions. Create your own path so that other like-minded youth can walk in your footsteps."**

# INTERNAL UPDATES



We created a new position for an Operations & Special Projects Lead, civic education program researchers, impact measurement researchers and cohort program facilitators—all youth, of course!

We developed a new theory of change, mission, vision, and intended impact statement, including pressure testing with over 100 youth who'd been involved in CityHive programming.

For the first time in our history, we started a **public fundraising campaign!** We opened an Impact Fund with Vancity Community Foundation to support our new target of engaging 10,000 youth in our programming by 2026.

# OTHER BIG WINS



**WINNER:** Charity Village's Best Youth Engagement Organization (under 20 staff)

## SPEAKING AND LEADERSHIP

We're honoured to continually share our learnings and perspectives on meaningful youth engagement and city building at a variety of events. Here are some standout speaking events from 2021:

- Veronika provided writing and editing support for the [Youth Climate Lab's Infiltration Manual](#)
- Veronika spoke on a panel about [Youth Leadership in Non-Profits](#) hosted by Vantage Point
- Veronika co-moderated [Future Economy: Prosperous, Sustainable, and Resilient](#) hosted by SFU Public Square and the City of Vancouver
- Rowan spoke at "[Doubling Down: Democracy, Dialogue and Innovations in Engaging Civic Education](#)" hosted by SFU Centre for Dialogue
- Kathryn ran "Co-creating Climate Action at the Municipal Level" with Youth Climate Lab at Leading Change
- Kathryn co-facilitated a conversation with [author Sheila Watt-Cloutier](#) hosted by The Lawson Foundation
- Kathryn led a talk called "Creating Ideas for Impact: Placing Youth in the Driver's Seat" at the [Brands for Better Hackathon](#)
- Veronika spoke at Metro Vancouver Public Forum on youth climate action
- Veronika spoke on a panel "[What's Next On The Urban Agenda for Canadian Youth?](#)" hosted by the Canadian Urban Institute
- Rowan and Veronika spoke at the [IAP2 North American Virtual Conference](#)
- Veronika spoke about youth-engaged cities on the [Building Better Cities](#) podcast and [blog](#)
- Rowan spoke to the Apathy is Boring RiSE cohort about civic engagement



# LOOKING AHEAD



## 2022 will be a big year.

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With our Strategic Plan, we have a strong sense of what we need to do, and this year we'll be building out our team, revamping programs like the Envirolab and City Shapers, and building the partnerships to bring it all to life!"

## The future of civics is here.

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For civic education, we'll be launching and piloting our K-12 program. We'll also be doing lots of programs in partnership with community partners that serve youth (like agencies that serve newcomer youth) and focus on co-designing programs with partners.

## Municipal elections are near.

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October, in fact! Although we really emphasize engaging between election cycles and not just engaging at the voting booth, we're going to be doing lots of civic ed and building out opportunities for youth to put their issues on the table for candidates and municipalities.

# THANK YOU!

**In particular, to the following people who supported our programs as guest speakers, mentors, or in some other capacity:**

Adam Corneil	Erica Lotelli	Max Lindlay-Peart
Adriana Laurent	Erin Desaultels	Meg O'Shea
Albert Huang	Felix Bock	Melanie Chanona
Alice Henry	George Benson	Melissa Lee
Alycia Doering	George Radner	Nadine Nakagawa
Amanda Mitchel	Grace Nosek	Paul McBride
Andrew Pask	Heather McCain	Raghav Rmadya
Angela Danyluk	Holly Schmidt	Rob Ficsher
Anna Zhuo	Irina Mackenzie	Robin Cox
Cate Burton	Jasmira Lovemore	Robin Hawker
Cheri Hessami	Jaylen Bastos	Rosemary Cooper
Cheryl Brooks	Jenny Tan	Sabrina Meherally
Cheryl Ng	Jim Boothroyd	Sandy Wan
Cinci & Chris	Julie Kanya	Sarah Ellis
City of Surrey	Karen Storry	SFU: Public Square
Clare Warner	Kathleen Zaragoza	Shalen Chen
Dagmar Timmer	Katia Tynan	Svend Anderson
Daniel Rotman	Krista Loewen	Tamsin Mills
David Sadler	Ksenia Stepkina	Tara Mahoney
Deborah Harford	Leah Herman	Tessa Vanderkop
Dr. Stephen Sheppard	Leslie Shieh	Vanessa Timmer
DVBIA	Lihwen Hsu	VCPC
Em Mittertrainer	Luna Aixn	Wonjun Cho
Emily Huang	Marga Pacis	Yuri Artibise

**and all participants in our programs!**

**Donate to our Impact Fund (and  
receive a charitable receipt for  
your donation)!**

[DONATE](#)

**Get in touch with us to discuss  
collaborations, partnerships or  
ideas!**

[CONTACT](#)



**CityHive**