



SCHOOL OF  
SUSTAINABLE FUTURES  
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

# *STRATEGIC PLAN 2025-2030*

CSU'S INTERDISCIPLINARY HUB SHAPING  
SUSTAINABLE FUTURES IN A CHANGING CLIMATE.





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# *TURNING SUSTAINABILITY KNOWLEDGE INTO ACTION*

The School of Sustainable Futures (formerly the School of Global Environmental Sustainability, SoGES) is Colorado State University's interdisciplinary hub for sustainability. The School connects people and ideas across CSU to turn climate and sustainability knowledge into action—through applied learning, research support, and partner collaboration.

This five-year plan sets a practical direction for the School under new leadership and a new name. It builds on nearly two decades of cross-campus sustainability work and brings the former CSU Climate Initiative, including the CSU Climate Hub at Spur, into a clearer structure for students, faculty, partners, and supporters.

The plan draws on consultation with faculty, staff, students, campus leaders, advisory councils, and external partners. It will guide priorities, investments, partnerships, fundraising, and how the School measures progress.



# *A new name with a clear direction*

The name School of Sustainable Futures holds two ideas together: sustainability is the mission; futures is the direction. It reflects CSU's land-grant strengths in applied learning and real-world partnership, while making room for future-facing programs that help people plan, decide, and act under changing conditions.

Climate remains explicit in the School's work. Climate change is a defining driver within

sustainability challenges, and CSU has strong assets in climate science, environmental research, policy, communication, and community-focused work. The School's role is to connect those assets so they reach further.

The School does not replace work happening in colleges, departments, centers, or central research leadership. It complements that work by providing connective infrastructure, shared platforms, targeted support, educational programs, and

partner-facing pathways that are difficult for any single unit to build alone.

In practice, sustainable futures means helping people understand change, imagine plausible futures, and shape practical pathways forward. The School does this by preparing students, supporting interdisciplinary teams, and connecting evidence with decisions that affect communities, ecosystems, and working landscapes.



# *Mission and vision*

## MISSION

1.

Provide a challenging, integrative, and forward-thinking education that equips students with the knowledge and tools to lead on climate change and other sustainability challenges.

2.

Facilitate and conduct innovative, interdisciplinary research that leads to new and deeper understanding of climate change and other sustainability issues.

3.

Engage public and private sector decision-makers, communities, and partners to translate discoveries into useful information and practical solutions.

## VISION

We envision a future where interdisciplinary knowledge and collaboration drive sustainability solutions—for a planet that is healthy, just, and resilient.

## VALUES

### **Interdisciplinarity.**

We connect expertise across CSU so complex sustainability questions can be addressed from more than one field or perspective.

### **Innovation.**

We test new models for education, research support, and engagement as challenges and opportunities change.

### **Inclusivity.**

We expand access to our programs and invite more people into climate and sustainability work.

### **Impact.**

We focus on practical applications, clear communication, and useful outcomes with partners.

### **Integrity.**

Our work is grounded in transparency, accountability, and scientific rigor.



# *STRATEGIC PRIORITIES*

The next five years are organized around four priorities. Each priority is written for public accountability—what the School will do, what will change, and how progress will be tracked.



# *Equip students with stronger pathways*

Students need climate and sustainability learning that connects to careers, public life, and decisions beyond the classroom. The School will make its programs clearer, more useful, and easier to find.

## WHAT WE WILL DO



Strengthen existing climate and sustainability credentials, including the Global Environmental Sustainability minor and the Climate Change and Society undergraduate certificate.



Streamline outdated or undersubscribed offerings so students have a clearer set of choices.



Launch a new undergraduate certificate in sustainability and a Climate Change Studies minor.



Work with the Warner College of Natural Resources to explore a Climate Change Studies major.



Assess demand for future graduate offerings, including a graduate certificate connected to transdisciplinarity, futures and foresight methods, or systems thinking.



Explore an online M.S. in Sustainability Studies using the Intermountain West as a lens for local-to-global sustainability leadership.



Improve advising, student communications, alumni tracking, and student-focused marketing.



Continue the Diana Wall Sustainability Leadership Fellows program and work toward expanding it to master's students.



Explore a paid Sustainability and Climate Fellows Program that places students with local governments, nonprofits, and sustainability-oriented companies.



Expand flexible seminars, climate futures offerings, dual-enrollment pathways, and K-12 connections through efforts such as the Seal of Climate Literacy.

## PROGRESS WE WILL TRACK



New and revised credentials approved, launched, and reviewed.



Growth in enrollment and student credit hours.



Stronger advising feedback and clearer student awareness of programs.



Alumni outcomes, career pathways, and post-graduation placements.



By 2030, a nationally recognized suite of sustainability and climate credentials, with undergraduate credential enrollment doubled and graduate credential enrollment tripled from 2024–2025 baselines.



## WHAT WE WILL DO



Expand support for Global Challenge Research Teams.



Launch interdisciplinary working groups, or Collaboratories, that give faculty space to test ideas and build proposals.



Offer flexible funding for timely research needs, travel, workshops, and convenings.



Bring external partners into research teams where it creates mutual benefit.



Formalize affiliate faculty pathways and create more ways for faculty to engage at different career stages.



Build a sustainability-focused series of campus networking events.



Launch a School Colloquium Series and offer regular training in policy engagement, science communication, climate futures, and related topics.



Map climate-related expertise across CSU in collaboration with the Climate Hub.

# *Strengthen interdisciplinary research*

Climate and sustainability challenges cut across fields. The School will help interdisciplinary teams form, compete for support, and move good ideas into use.

## PROGRESS WE WILL TRACK



Faculty participation across colleges, ranks, and disciplines.



Research teams, Collaboratories, and events supported each year.



Proposals, grants, publications, and other outputs connected to School support.



Attendance and feedback for sustainability networking events, Colloquia, and training programs.



Case studies showing how School seed funding helped collaborations grow.



By 2030, a strong record of interdisciplinary projects, an engaged affiliate faculty network, and at least one formal multi-principal-investigator center or institute incubated through the School.



# *Move knowledge into use with partners*

The School will connect climate and sustainability research with community, policy, and organizational decision-making. The goal is practical use—not broad claims of impact without partners, context, or evidence.

## WHAT WE WILL DO



Maintain the Managing the Planet series for the Fort Collins community.



Expand training that helps graduate students and faculty communicate with policy, media, and partner audiences.



Build new partnerships with private companies, public agencies, nonprofits, and community-based organizations.



Explore local contracts that support sustainability and climate planning around Fort Collins.



Establish the CSU Climate Hub as a primary venue for external engagement.



Host public programs at Spur that highlight School and Climate Hub work.



Expand curated news, faculty features, and other public-facing content.



Build capacity to offer futures and foresight workshops for students, faculty, professionals, and partners.

## PROGRESS WE WILL TRACK



New partnerships, partner feedback, and external recognition.



External funding, contracts, and collaborative projects secured.



Participation in public programs, trainings, and regional or national events.



Partner involvement in Global Challenge Research Teams and Collaboratories.



Documented policy, community, or organizational outcomes where the School helped evidence move into use.



## WHAT WE WILL DO



Align staffing with education, research support, partner engagement, fundraising, and communications needs.



Hire an Assistant Director of Education and Development to strengthen education programs, marketing, and recruitment.



Support a part-time Faculty Fellow for Climate Leadership.



Launch an updated website and improve newsletter, listserv, social media, and student communications.



Build a marketing and recruitment plan for educational programs.



Create education and research sub-teams to support planning and coordination.



Build and diversify an External Advisory Council with industry, foundation, and nonprofit representation.



Integrate advisory structures from the former School and the former CSU Climate Initiative.



Diversify revenue through educational programs, contracts, grants, philanthropy, and fee-based services.



Build a dedicated Futures Program that supports futures literacy, climate futures, and decision support.

# *Build the capacity to sustain this work*

The School's public promise depends on a strong operating model. The next phase will align staffing, governance, communications, and revenue strategy so the School can grow with focus.

## PROGRESS WE WILL TRACK



Activity and usefulness of advisory councils, sub-teams, and governance structures.



Website traffic, social media engagement, newsletter performance, and program inquiries.



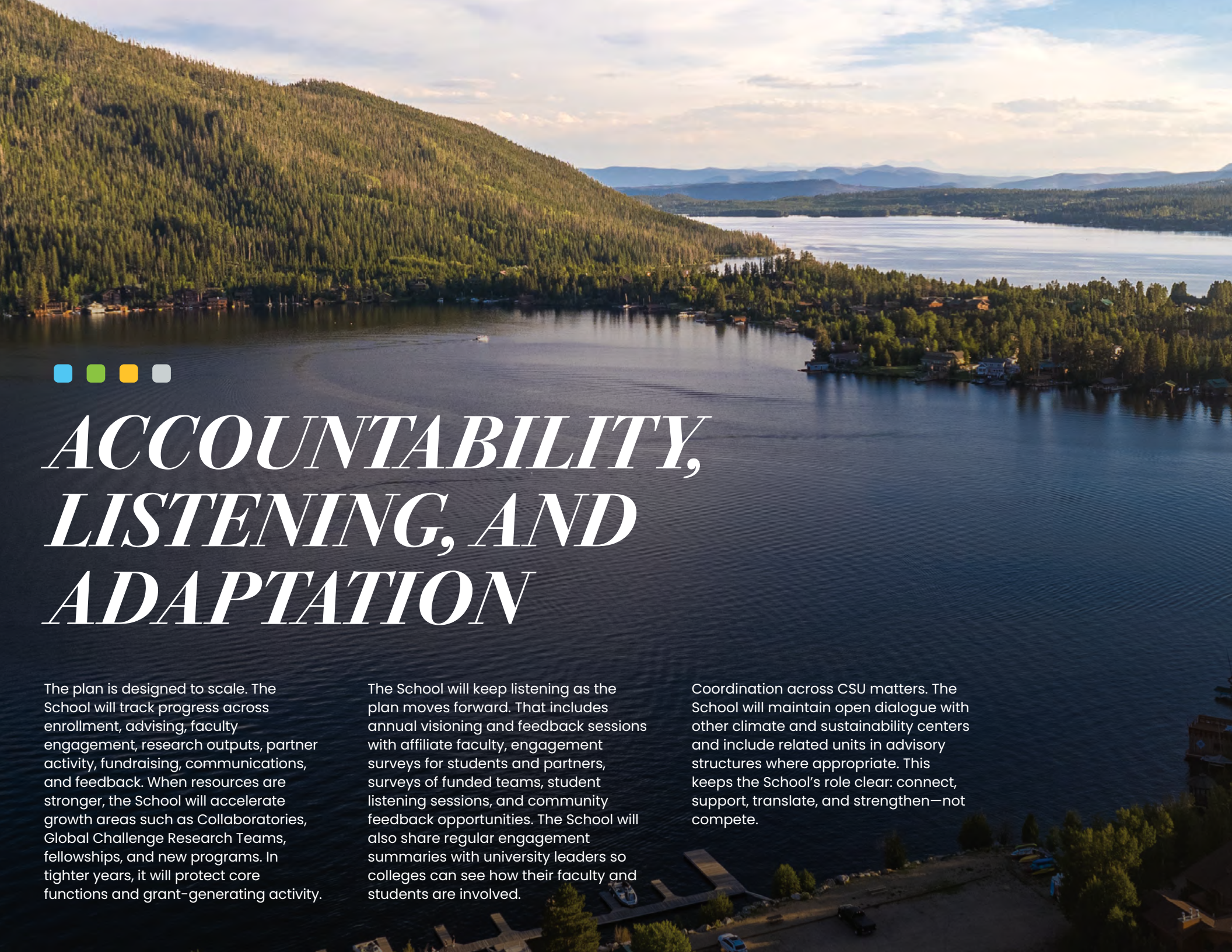
Fundraising, contracts, grants, and fee-based revenue.



Faculty, student, partner, and staff feedback.



By 2030, a resilient School that can sustain core programs, invest in new opportunities, and serve as a model for interdisciplinary institutional design at CSU.



# *ACCOUNTABILITY, LISTENING, AND ADAPTATION*

The plan is designed to scale. The School will track progress across enrollment, advising, faculty engagement, research outputs, partner activity, fundraising, communications, and feedback. When resources are stronger, the School will accelerate growth areas such as Collaboratories, Global Challenge Research Teams, fellowships, and new programs. In tighter years, it will protect core functions and grant-generating activity.

The School will keep listening as the plan moves forward. That includes annual visioning and feedback sessions with affiliate faculty, engagement surveys for students and partners, surveys of funded teams, student listening sessions, and community feedback opportunities. The School will also share regular engagement summaries with university leaders so colleges can see how their faculty and students are involved.

Coordination across CSU matters. The School will maintain open dialogue with other climate and sustainability centers and include related units in advisory structures where appropriate. This keeps the School's role clear: connect, support, translate, and strengthen—not compete.



# *SIGNATURE INITIATIVES*

These initiatives will carry the plan into programs, partnerships, and fundraising conversations.

## THE FUTURES PROGRAM.

A signature program that builds futures literacy across CSU, with emphasis on climate futures, foresight, scenario work, and practical decision support.

## CLIMATE ACROSS THE CURRICULUM.

Support for faculty who want to integrate climate into courses across disciplines.

## DIANA WALL SUSTAINABILITY LEADERSHIP FELLOWS.

Continued support for Ph.D. students and postdocs, with a goal of expanding opportunities for master's students.



## RESEARCH SEED FUNDING.

Expanded support for Global Challenge Research Teams and Collaboratories so interdisciplinary ideas can mature and compete for external funding.

## CLIMATE CHANGE STUDIES MAJOR EXPLORATION.

Work with campus partners to assess and develop what could become CSU's first fully interdisciplinary major.

## SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE FELLOWS PROGRAM.

A paid summer fellowship model that connects students with local governments, nonprofits, and sustainability-oriented companies.



## SUSTAINABILITY COLLOQUIUM SERIES.

High-profile speakers and campus-wide dialogue that raise visibility for climate and sustainability work.

## GRADUATE CREDENTIALS AND FUTURE ONLINE STUDY.

New graduate pathways, including certificate concepts and a possible online M.S., if demand and feasibility support them.