



SAN FRANCISCO
STATE UNIVERSITY



Photo credit: Kai Burrus

SFSU Climate HQ Annual Report

2023 - 2024

Empowering SFSU's diverse students, staff, & faculty to become climate justice leaders

Our Mission

Climate change is the defining social justice and sustainability issue of our time, requiring action from the local to global levels. As more and more people experience the impacts of climate change in the Bay Area and beyond, Climate HQ has become San Francisco State University's (SFSU) **hub for hope** and action. Our mission is to engage and empower diverse students, faculty, staff, and community members via education, research, and action to become **climate justice leaders**.

In our second year as an organization, we have **deepened our initial initiatives**, such as our Climate Action Fellowships and Annual Film Festival, and **launched new initiatives**, including an action-oriented Capstone experience for the Climate Change Certificate, a Faculty Learning Communities initiative, and an Annual Climate Jobs fair. Our team has also undertaken reflective work to solidify our central roles as an organization: fostering hope, cultivating interdisciplinary solutions, and training diverse leaders.

Guided by our core value of climate justice, Climate HQ puts SF State's exceptionally diverse students - and their futures - at the center of our work. As part of the California State University system, the largest 4-year public university system in the country, SFSU plays a central role in training California's leaders, voters, and workforce. If we can change California, we can change the world.



Education



Research



Action

Our Team



Kai Burrus
Professor of Biology

Co-Director of Climate HQ

Adrienne Cool
Professor of Physics & Astronomy

Climate Action Fellows

Gopal Dayaneni
Lecturer faculty in Race & Resistance Studies

Climate Certificate Capstone; Events

Geoff Desa
Professor of Management

Assessment

Alcides Fuentes
Climate HQ Program & Communications Specialist

Lisa Galli
Climate HQ Budget Specialist



Sheldon Gen
Professor of Public Administration

Climate HQ Consultant

Constance Gordon
Assistant Professor in Communications

Climate Ambassadors

Falu Bakrania
Professor of Race & Resistance Studies

Events

Erica Pulley
Lecturer faculty in Broadcast & Electronic Communications

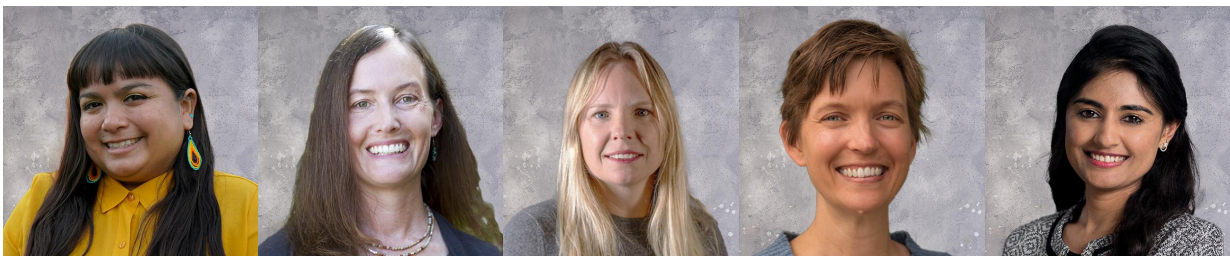
Events

Charli Sakari
Assistant Professor of Physics & Astronomy

PK-12 Climate Justice Certificate

Aritree Samanta
Associate Professor in the School of the Environment

Co-Director of Climate HQ; Chair of Climate Certificate Steering Committee



Carolina Prado
Assistant Professor of Latina/Latino Studies

Faculty Mini Grants & Learning Communities

Stephanie Sisk-Hilton
Professor of Elementary Education

PK-12 Climate Justice Certificate

Caitlin Steele
Director of Sustainability & Energy

Events

Autumn Thoyre
Associate Professor in the School of the Environment

Co-Director of Climate HQ

Zubaida Qamar
Associate Professor of Nutrition & Dietetics

Campus Farm

Our Cumulative Impact

SFSU Climate HQ has launched a total of 10 initiatives since fall 2021 and has reached over 3000 students through undergraduate climate change certificate classes, fellowships, internships, and Earth Week and other climate-focused campus events. We will launch 3 additional initiatives in academic year 2024-2025. The numbers below represent the cumulative impacts since the launch of Climate HQ in fall 2021.

Students engaged & impacted through our annual Earth Week 2024 Events	Diverse undergraduate & graduate students supported through Climate Action Fellowships (\$5-10K each)	Students enrolled in Undergraduate Climate Change Certificate classes in Fall 2023 and Spring 2024
>2000	14	>1300
Undergraduate students who earned the Climate Change Certificate	Faculty Mini-Grants awarded (\$5-12K each)	Faculty, students, & staff supported through Faculty Learning Communities
94	6	34
New Educational Certificate Programs launched	Climate Justice Courses created to support the 2 educational programs & Climate Action Fellows	California State University-wide workshops focused on climate justice pedagogy & research
1	3	2

Applied Climate Justice Courses

Climate HQ launched two new courses to support students taking action for climate justice and honing their leadership skills.

Climate Change: Applied Learning for the Real World (BIOL 681)



Through this practicum, we support students taking real-world action for climate change, whether through fellowships, internships, research, or service learning. Students reported that they expanded their professional networks and gained a sense of community, belonging, and confidence.

“My understanding of climate justice expanded on the very first day of the practicum course. Hearing about the incredibly diverse projects...was eye-opening and empowering, as it showed that people in every part of the industry are working towards solving problems in various aspects of climate change. I’ve spent a few years working on climate justice initiatives, but I rarely get to learn about the journeys and trials involved in researching climate change solutions. The stories...were inspiring.”

Climate Ambassadors (COMM/ENVS 675)



As climate ambassadors, students develop their skills in collaborative decision-making, project management, and ethical, effective communication with diverse stakeholders. For example, students developed a “Green Garden Guerrillas” project, amplifying green space education on campus.

“I feel more confident in my ability to communicate climate change impacts and solutions, more aware of my positionality and worldview lens...as well as more prepared for what a career post-graduation might offer me.”

“Being in a communications class reminds you that the [climate justice] conversation never stops, whether you're in the classroom, or you're at work, or you're at home, at the individual level—it is our shared responsibility to keep the conversation going.”

Faculty Learning Communities Program

Climate HQ transformed the teaching of faculty, students, future PK12 teachers, and staff through our first cohort of six climate justice Faculty Learning Communities.



Snapshot: Children's Literature & Climate Justice Faculty Learning Community

The scale of the climate crisis requires that we incorporate climate justice throughout PK12 curricula. Recognizing SFSU's crucial role in training teachers across California and beyond, two SFSU faculty (Dr. Isaura M. Escamilla and Dr. Daniel Meier, both in Dept of Elementary Education) and two SFSU graduate students (Gabriella Gutierrez, Grade 1 student teacher, and Alicia Baires Rios, Preschool teacher) focused their Learning Community on climate justice in children's literature. The group created new assignments in Elementary Education courses at SFSU that will give PK12 teachers the tools and practice they need to effectively incorporate climate justice-oriented children's books into their teaching.

For example, using San Mateo County Poet Laureate Jose Argueta's bilingual books such as *Water, Little Water / Agua, Aguita*, they created innovative ways to bring climate justice to life for young children. Gutierrez reflected on the impacts of this approach on first graders at SFUSD, who created the images above during the activities this Learning Community designed:

"The children were able to make connections to their experiences outside of the classroom which was powerful. For Agua, Aguita, children were prompted to work in a small group to illustrate a snapshot of the ways water presents itself in our world. Children went beyond illustrating a single element and drew ecosystems and communities they have previously visited and learned..."

Climate Action Fellows Highlights (2023 - 2024)

Through the Climate Action Fellows program, students develop research, community, and creative projects to take action for climate change. This year's Fellows used their projects as stepping stones to their lives and careers after graduation.



Monique Scott, Master of Public Health

Project: Combating climate change through community capacity building

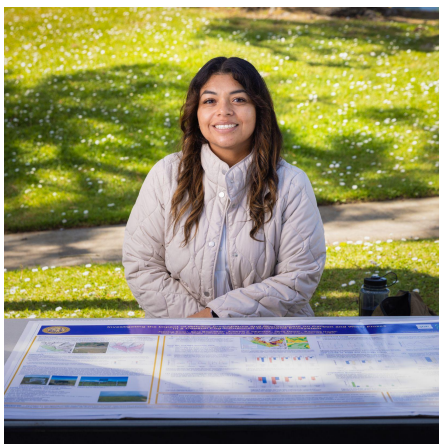
Monique is now a Data and Research Assistant at Innovative Health Solutions. She leads initiatives promoting community gardening and sustainable food access, ensuring that underserved communities benefit from fresh organic produce. Monique coordinates professional development programs for interns, fosters partnerships with local farms, and participates in respiratory disease prevention and climate action networks. She is dedicated to improving health equity and empowering communities through education and sustainable practices.



Imani Ware, Bachelor of Science in Astrophysics

Project: Off-grid, eco-friendly, low-cost, & resilient mobile tiny home

Since completing her fellowship, Imani has been dedicated to perfecting her sustainably-sourced camper van project. The Fellowship enabled her to create an eco-friendly home powered entirely by renewable energy, complete with solar panels and advanced data monitoring devices. Now Imani is embarking on a cross-country road trip from San Diego to Boston, visiting Native American reservations and national parks and testing her van in various altitudes. Follow her journey on Instagram: [@calypte.vanna](https://www.instagram.com/calypte.vanna).



Jessica Solis, Master of Arts in Geography

Project: Investigating the impact of wildfire disturbance & microclimate on carbon & water fluxes in a coastal fog-influenced grassland ecosystem

Jessica currently works as a Research Data Specialist for CalFire. The Fellowship provided her with crucial resources to complete her graduate research project on the impacts of wildfires on coastal ecosystems. This hands-on field experience, combined with the Fellowship's emphasis on connecting environmental science to social justice, uniquely prepared Jessica for her current job, where Jessica takes a holistic, socially-conscious approach to her work monitoring wildfires across California to ensure firefighters have the critical information they need to protect lives and property.

New Climate Action Fellows 2024 - 2025

Gabriela Franco

Undergraduate student, Microbiology

Connecting Microbes to Carbon Sequestration and Decomposition in Urban Environments

Jared Livingston

Graduate student, Resource Management & Environmental Planning

Climate Change & Flood Perception: Mission Bay's Vulnerability

Cecilia Ng

Undergraduate student, Urban Studies & Planning

Clean Air for Everybody: Community-Based Hygienic Infrastructures in the Face of Climate and Pandemic Disaster

Joaquin Felix Rosell

Graduate student, Biology

Mitigating Harmful Algal Blooms in a Changing Climate

Sam Lee Silva

Graduate student, Communication Studies

Communicating Unhoused Community Resilience on the Frontlines of Climate Change

LuzMaria Soto (pictured above)

Graduate student, Marine & Estuarine Sciences

Analyzing Fish Communities & Low Dissolved Oxygen Levels in Restored Wetlands Using Environmental DNA

Changing Climate Narratives

Asserting Indigenous Sovereignty: Defending Indigenous Land Rights



During Earth Week we held a dynamic panel of Indigenous land stewards working to protect, preserve and restore their ancestral and native homelands, foodways, and lifeways. Students reflected on how the panel shifted understandings of their relationship to the land.

"I learned that indigenous sovereignty is about the health of the planet and having the land back and oceans back. Indigenous sovereignty deals with intergenerational trauma, genocide, restoration, and injustice. Indigenous sovereignty looks like being present and alive and that itself is an anti-political statement."

"The land and Earth cannot be owned, and this comes with repatriation and protection of the land for future generations. Repatriating the land means restoring sacred relationships between Indigenous people and their ancestral land, and restoring it in a way that reflects the practices that Indigenous people have used for thousands of years."

Photo credits: Falu Bakrania

Queer Ecology and Climate Justice Film and Workshop



The Queer Ecology film and workshop had a profound impact on over 200 students, broadening their perspectives on the intersections of identity, community, and environmental challenges. It sparked thoughtful reflections on the diverse experiences of marginalized groups in the face of climate change, particularly in states like Florida.

Students noted that the film and workshop highlighted the critical importance of solidarity, underscoring the value of inclusive approaches to climate change advocacy and the power of diverse voices in shaping more effective and equitable solutions.

"The queer ecology workshop and film made me think of how queer people who already face hardships in places like Florida will be further impacted by the effects of climate change."

"[I thought about] the importance of community action and supporting your neighbors, because in many places you only have each other."

Creating Pathways for Students

Climate Justice Jobs Mixer April, 2024



Climate HQ held its first annual jobs fair where students networked and connected with environmental and climate justice organizations, non-profits, and public sector agencies that are actively hiring.

“This experience left me feeling hopeful and empowered, knowing that impactful initiatives are being pursued to address these pressing issues.”

“I learned that there are many different fields I could go into... I was worried that there weren’t going to be any organizations hiring for entry level work, but it turns out that almost every organization there was looking for college level interns, and some were even hiring full time positions. It was reassuring being able to see the many different options I have for a career path, but I think it was also good to see that there are many careers out there for fields I am not a part of, but are highly important as well.”

Empowering Students with LinkedIn May, 2024, LinkedIn SF Community Space



Climate HQ partnered with LinkedIn to bring 20 SFSU to LinkedIn’s San Francisco office community space for a field trip tailored toward their professional development. Students learned about the rise of green jobs in the U.S., how to use LinkedIn to search for jobs, how to transition from college to the professional world, and claimed one year of LinkedIn Premium to help them on their job search.

The students expressed that they felt immensely empowered by the insightful presentations and advice from LinkedIn’s speakers. They left the event feeling more confident and prepared to take the next steps in their career journey. Furthermore, they shared that these are exactly the kinds of networking experiences they needed. With updated resumes and a clearer understanding of the job application process, they felt ready to embark on their professional paths with renewed enthusiasm and a set of practical tools to support their ambitions.

Connecting Disciplines Across Campus

Earth Week Planetarium Showing

April, 2024



Through a planetarium showing at the Charles F. Hagar Planetarium guided by Climate HQ leader Dr. Charli Sakari, students learned that understanding the Earth's climate through other planets provides insights into climate change and the importance of conservation.

“Looking beyond this world for more context is a helpful reminder of just how special we are to be here. We have this perfect little Goldilocks effect where our planet is not too warm and not too cold and has this magical existence of water on it. Even with all the technologies out there and even if there was a planet that could host life there would be no way to get to it. This is a reminder of how important it is to take care of the only one we have.”

Climate HQ's Second Annual Earth Week Film Fest

April 24, 2024

The Film Fest featured the award-winning documentary “Water Warriors” by activist filmmaker Michael Premo, about Indigenous and non-Indigenous community members in New Brunswick, CA joining in resistance against the oil and gas industry threatening their climate, water, and ways of life. NorCal Public Media shared a sneak preview of their forthcoming PBS series,

“Climate California.” The event included a panel discussion with Premo, Charles Loi, Nor Cal Public Media’s “Climate California” series producer, and Mayuran Tiruchelvam, SFSU’s George and Judy Marcus Endowed Chair in Social Justice Fiction Filmmaking. Chloë Fitzmaurice, Bay Area filmmaker and founder of the online documentary platform Docuivist, moderated the panel.



“Based on the film, I'd like to highlight three important things: the power of collective action, the challenges communities face, and the importance of responsible resource management.”

Reporting with Transparency

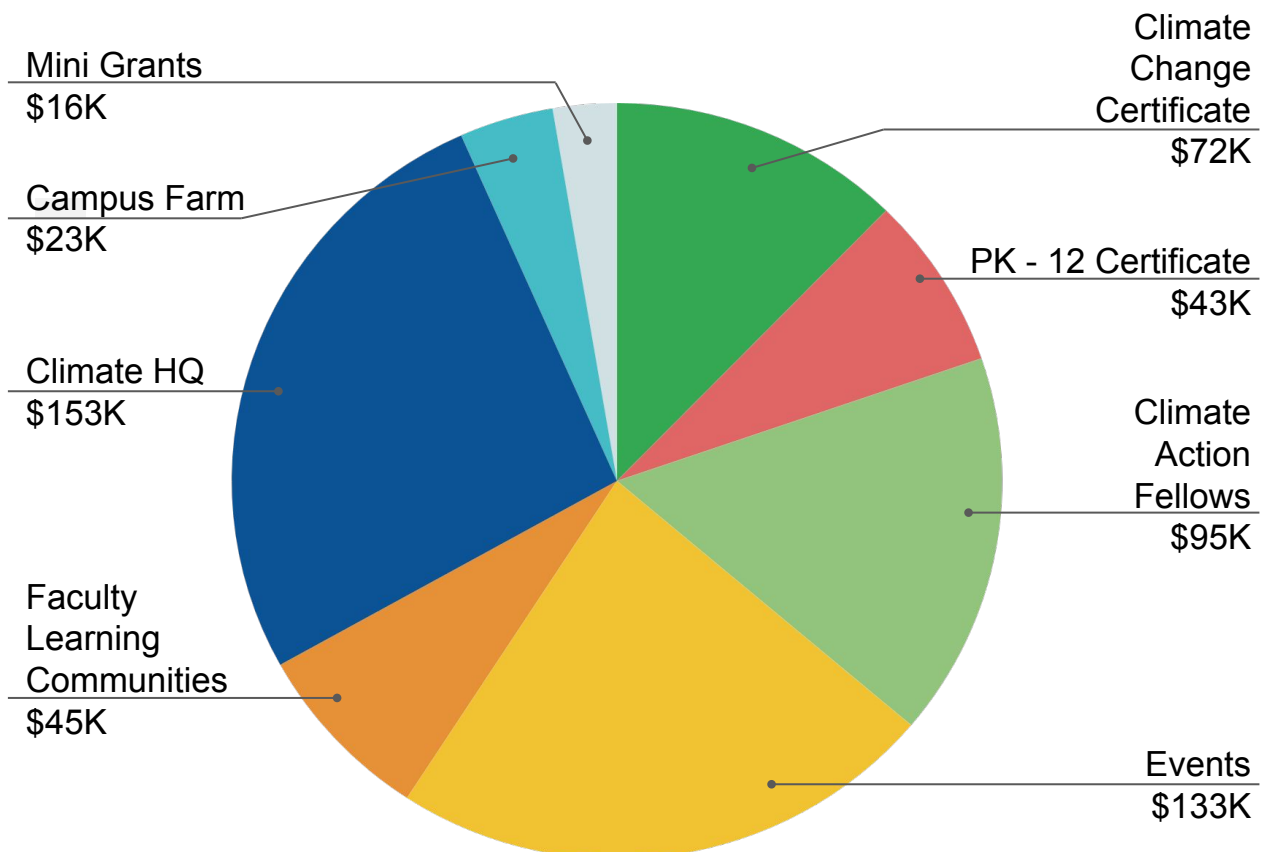
Summary of Budget Components

SFSU Climate HQ serves as a hub for hope, dedicated to nurturing diverse climate justice leaders. While Black, Indigenous, people of color, and low-income communities disproportionately bear the brunt of climate change, they also spearhead climate justice initiatives and action. Recognizing this, we allocate a significant portion of our budget to supporting students from these frontline communities through fellowships, educational certificate programs, hands-on internships, leadership opportunities, and networking events.

Justice forms the cornerstone of our mission. We bolster faculty research, pedagogical innovations, and creative endeavors centered on climate justice through our mini-grants program and learning communities. Approximately 25% of our expenditure sustains Climate HQ's core operations, comprising three co-directors and two staff members who oversee program administration.

Our commitment to empowering underrepresented voices in the climate movement drives every aspect of our work, fostering a new generation of leaders equipped to tackling the most pressing climate challenges of our time.

Breakdown of Expenses by Initiative



Reporting with Transparency

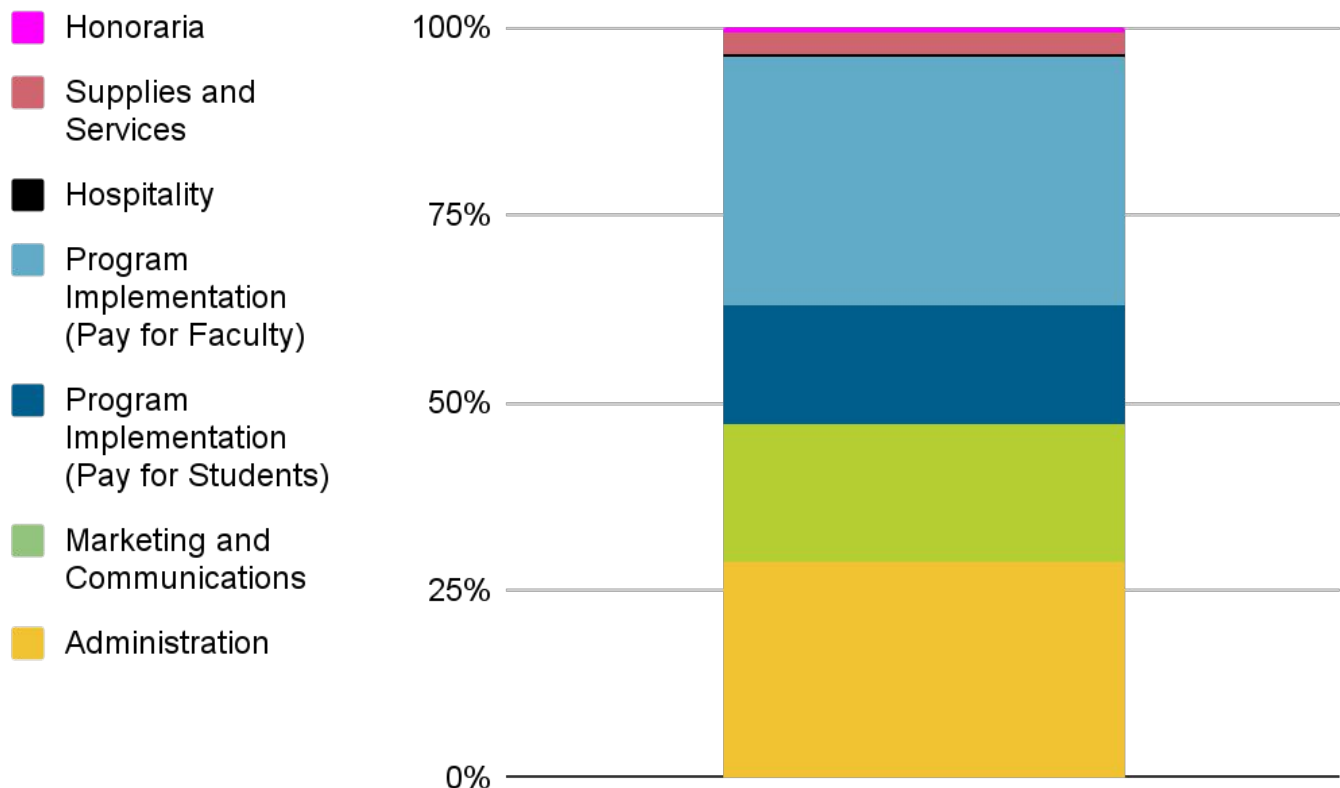
Summary of Budget Components

The majority of our expenses are related to paying people for our work. From a climate equity and justice perspective, compensating people fairly for their work is a fundamental principle because:

- It recognizes the value and dignity of peoples' contributions to the movement.
- It allows activists and organizers, especially those from marginalized communities, to sustain their efforts without facing work overload or financial hardship.
- It helps dismantle systems of exploitation that have historically burdened frontline communities and perpetuated environmental injustice.
- It builds capacity that lasts far into the future.

By ensuring people can fully participate in climate work, we build a more inclusive, diverse, and resilient movement capable of driving long-term change at SFSU and beyond.

Breakdown of Percent Expenditures by Category



About Our Donor



Neda Nobari

Founder and President, MOZAIK Foundation

Iranian-American justice advocate Neda Nobari emigrated from Iran to the United States in 1978. She earned a B.S. in Computer Science from San Francisco State University and an M.A. in Liberal Studies from Dartmouth College.

In 2007, after a 22-year career in the fashion industry at bebe, Nobari founded her private foundation with a mission to promote social and environmental justice through arts and education.

In early 2020 as a response to the global pandemic and its impact on artists, she pivoted her foundation to MOZAIK with a mission to democratize philanthropy through the exploration and modeling of new equitable practices.

As a member of the SF State Foundation's Board of Directors, and as its Chair, Nobari has been a consistent advocate for access to equitable public higher education.

In 2017, Nobari established the Center for Iranian Diaspora Studies, an innovative academic platform for transnational exploration of Iranian identity through the lens of next generation scholars in global diaspora communities.

Nobari was the 2017 Commencement speaker at San Francisco State University's 116th Commencement ceremony, its 2020 Alumna of the Year, and San Francisco State University Alumni Hall of Fame inductee.

In 2023, Nobari received the Ellis Island Medal of Honor in recognition of her significant impact on her community through a life of service.

“My mind was blown away when I learned that all six Colleges at SFSU had made a commitment to the Climate Justice Leaders Initiative with its equity-based interdisciplinary approach to cultivating leaders to solve the biggest challenge of our time. All they needed to scale was money. I was like ‘how much?’”

Get involved

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Check out our website
climatehq.sfsu.edu

Contact us at
climatehq@sfsu.edu

Want to donate to Climate HQ?
Follow the donation links on our
webpage or use the QR code
below!



*Climate HQ is transforming the
campus with respect to climate change
and training the next generation of
diverse climate justice leaders.*

Photo credit: SFSU Strategic Marketing and
Communications





Climate HQ

at San Francisco State

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