2025 Climate Summit | *Fostering Our Ecosystems: Co-existence & Climate Resiliency*

May 16, 2025 | 355 110th Ave NE, 1st Floor, Bellevue, WA 98004 * *all sessions subject to change*

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

FRIDAY, MAY 16, 2025

8:30-9:00 AM — REGISTRATION + CHECK-IN
Coffee, tea, and light breakfast available

9:00-9:15 AM — WELCOME + INTRODUCTIONS
*Staff Welcome by **Zoe Guckenheimer**, AIA Seattle*
Program Introduction by Task Force Members

9:15-10:30 AM — OPENING KEYNOTE | LO—TEK, DESIGN BY RADICAL INDIGENISM
Julia Watson, Designer, Activist, Academic, Author, Co-founder | Lo—TEK Institute

Julia Watson's lecture on Indigenous knowledge systems explores the world as an interconnected web, where survival depends on reciprocity and respect for all life. Unlike Western science's compartmentalized approach, Indigenous wisdom sees everything in conversation. This perspective has shaped climate-resilient water technologies, like the War Khasi's living root bridges and the Ma'dan's reed islands, which adapt to nature's rhythms. This lecture will highlight how these innovations offer sustainable alternatives to resource-intensive infrastructures. As we face climate uncertainty, Indigenous technologies provide a model for living symbiotically with the earth, fostering resilience and guiding us toward a more sustainable future.

10:30-10:45 AM — SHORT BREAK

10:45-12:00 PM — SESSION 2 | BUILDING CLIMATE RESILIENCE AT THE LOCAL LEVEL: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES
Moderator: **Gundula Proksch,** Professor, Department of Architecture + Adjunct Associate Professor, Department of Landscape Architecture | UW
Juan Rovalo, Director of Ecology | Perkins & Will
Lara Whitely Binder, Climate Preparedness Manager | King County Executive Climate Office
Susan Dickerson-Lange, Director, Climate Impacts Group | UW

This session will explore challenges and opportunities in achieving climate resilient buildings for all. Speakers will level-set our progress so far at the city and state levels, and will share how local advocacy can continue to advance resiliency and co-existence for ecosystems and communities.

12:00-1:00 PM — LUNCH + NETWORKING HOUR

1:00-2:30 PM — SESSION 3 | DESIGNING FOR COEXISTENCE: CREATING FOR THE CLIMATE
Kirstin Weeks, LFA, Principal, Regenerative Design & Urban Ecology | Bio Studio

Facilitated by Kirstin Weeks, this hands-on session will practice how to apply ecological and nature-based principles to design for co-existence with other flora and fauna, migrating or otherwise. Attendees will consider site and regional ecosystems to better understand present and projected climate conditions and design for the provisional needs – food, water, shelter and nesting – of a variety of local communities.

2:30-2:45 PM SHORT BREAK

2:45-4:30 PM SESSION 4 | LOOKING FORWARD: CASE STUDIES IN ECOLOGY

Brent Bucknam, Founder | Hyphae Design Laboratory
Susie Teal AIA, Partner | COOKFOX Architects
Sandra Girgis, Senior Associate, MCIP, RPP, Just Communities AP | Mithun

How can the built environment actively support biodiversity, climate resilience, and whole-ecosystem health? This session will showcase a variety of case studies demonstrating how real-world approaches can foster coexistence between human and non-human systems. Speakers will share insights into strategies, challenges, and successes in designing for interconnected resilience. Join us to explore what's possible and what's already being done.

4:30-4:45 PM CONCLUDING REMARKS + INVITATION TO HAPPY HOUR

4:45-6:00 PM NETWORKING HAPPY HOUR ON-SITE

SPEAKER BIOS

SESSION 1 | OPENING KEYNOTE | LO—TEK, DESIGN BY RADICAL INDIGENISM

Julia Watson, Designer, Activist, Academic, Author, Co-founder, Lo—TEK Institute | Julia Watson, Australian-born and of Greco-Egyptian descent, is a connoisseur of localized traditional ecological knowledge. She is the author of the Lo—TEK, Design by Radical Indigenism (Taschen, 2019), which showcases the soft, earth-based technologies of Indigenous peoples the world over, and the upcoming Lo—TEK Water (2025). Julia has traveled the world over to understand these technologies and respectfully share the messages of their makers with the world. Watson grew up in Australia, where aboriginal science and knowledge is not only acknowledged in the school system but systematically integrated into university curricula. She is thus driven to steer other nations towards properly respecting and integrating Indigenous knowledge into the "mainstream." She studied landscape architecture at Harvard, taught for over a decade at institutions like Columbia, Harvard and RISD, cofounded the Lo—TEK Institute, which empowers generational wisdom through nature-based education and advocacy, cocreated the The Living Earth Curriculum and Digital Database, which uplift traditional ecological knowledge to enhance STEM programs, and runs a design studio in Brooklyn, New York, which provides strategic consulting and design expertise at the intersection of culture, ecology, and innovation.

SESSION 2 | BUILDING CLIMATE RESILIENCE AT THE LOCAL LEVEL: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Moderator: **Gundula Proksch, Professor, Department of Architecture + Adjunct Associate Professor, Department of Landscape Architecture UW** | Gundula Proksch is a scholar, licensed architect, and professor of Architecture at the University of Washington in Seattle. She is the founding director of the Circular City and Living Systems Lab, an interdisciplinary research group investigating transformative strategies for sustainable urban futures. Professor Proksch is the principal investigator (PI) of the National Science Foundation (NSF) funded research projects CITYFOOD and Aquaponics Optimization, which investigate the urban integration of aquaponics alongside international research consortia. She is also a Co-PI of an NSF EFRI ELiS grant on engineered living materials (ELMs) in the built environment. Her book Creating Urban Agricultural Systems: An Integrated Approach to Design (Routledge, 2017) is the first sourcebook on approaching urban agriculture from a systems perspective. Professor Proksch's interdisciplinary research builds on her professional practice in Europe and the United States with architects David Chipperfield in London and Richard Meier, Stan Allen, and Roger Duffy of SOM in New York.

Juan Rovalo, Director of Ecology, Perkins & Will | Juan Rovalo is a consultant, educator, and scientist with a passion for nature positive design solutions based on nature's systems. With over 20 years of experience, he has contributed to numerous projects globally. Born and raised in Mexico, he cofounded Environmental Operations Workshop and later created InSite and Associates. In 2014, he relocated to the U.S., collaborating with Jason McLennan on initiatives like wildlife friendly housing master plans and conservation focused real estate projects, and nature-based solutions for coastal resilience and ecological restoration. He has collaborated with industry leaders such as Biohabitats, Jacobs, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Engineering With Nature Program©. Rovalo taught biomimicry at the University of Iberoamericana in Mexico, fostering future transdisciplinary environmentalists. Currently, as Director of Ecology for Perkins&Will, he promotes ecological thinking and implementation through the Perkins&Will "Living Design" approach.

Lara Whitely Binder, Climate Preparedness Manager, King County Executive Climate Office | Lara Whitely Binder is the Climate Preparedness Manager for King County. Lara is responsible for strategic coordination of King County agency work on preparing for the impacts of climate change and strengthening regional partnerships to address shared challenges and opportunities around climate preparedness. Lara is also co-chair of the Puget Sound Climate Preparedness Collaborative, a network of local governments, Tribal governments, and other organizations working together to improve adaptation outcomes in the Puget Sound region. Prior to joining King County in 2017, Lara worked extensively with local, state, and tribal governments in the Northwest on climate adaptation as a Senior Strategist for the University of Washington Climate Impacts Group. Recent contributions include developing King County's first countywide strategic plans for extreme heat and wildfire, implementing a sea level rise risk area for King County, and developing performance measurement frameworks for climate preparedness.

Susan Dickerson-Lange, Director, Climate Impacts Group, UW | Susan is the Director of the University of Washington Climate Impacts Group, which builds climate resilience by advancing understanding of climate risks and enabling science-based action to manage those risks. Susan's professional background includes applied research, environmental consulting, organizational development, and convening collaborations with stakeholders across sectors. Her areas of expertise are hydrology and geomorphology, and she is currently an affiliate assistant professor in the UW Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering. Susan is passionate about watershed science and co-creating climate adaptation strategies with community partners. She holds a PhD in Hydrology from UW and degrees in Geology from the College of William and Mary and Western Washington University. Before joining the Climate Impacts Group in 2025, she served as Principal Hydrologist at Natural Systems Design, a Washington-based environmental consulting firm, where she worked with community partners and led teams to develop restoration projects and resilience strategies.

SESSION 3 | DESIGNING FOR COEXISTENCE: CREATING FOR THE CLIMATE

Kirstin Weeks, LFA, Principal, Regenerative Design & Urban Ecology, Bio Studio | Kirstin Weeks has over 20 years of experience collaborating with interdisciplinary teams to create regenerative, resilient built environments where people and ecosystems thrive together. A leader in ecological planning and design, Kirstin encourages practitioners to consider how their projects can serve all community members, human and non-human alike. As a workshop facilitator, Kirstin strives to create an inclusive environment where everyone can be heard and all contributions matter. Kirstin's experience extends from sustainability leadership on education, ecotourism, office and community/mixed use projects to creek restoration planning, policy studies and advisory services. After 12 years at Arup, Kirstin started Bio Studio to offer innovative, climate-positive consulting while bringing to the forefront her passion for ecosystem restoration. Kirstin holds degrees in Environmental Studies, Building Science and Ecological Restoration. She is a LEED AP, LFA, ENV SP, WELL AP, Certified Energy Manager and Green Roof Professional, and was

named a Living Future Hero in 2021. Kirstin lives in the San Francisco Bay Area with her family and a menagerie of pets and farm animals.

SESSION 4 | LOOKING FORWARD: CASE STUDIES IN ECOLOGY

Brent Bucknam, Founder, Hyphae Design Laboratory | Brent Bucknum is a leader in urban environmental engineering, founding Hyphae Design Lab in 2008 and co-founding Urban Biofilter. With nearly two decades of experience, his work integrates academic research, community participation, and innovative green infrastructure design to address urban health and environmental justice. Notable projects include the Academy of Sciences green roof, the SFMOMA living wall, Arlington Cemetery, and the GreenHeart Project. Brent's approach focuses on enhancing urban ecosystems for all species, especially humans, through systems thinking, design innovation, and public policy. His expertise spans environmental planning, bioremediation, wetland assessment, and ecosystem engineering. Brent also lectures and advocates across the U.S., promoting urban infrastructure planning that improves air, soil, water, human health, and justice.

Susie Teal AIA, Partner, COOKFOX Architects | Susie Teal, AIA, Partner at COOKFOX Architects, leads the studio's design strategy for proposals and new business opportunities. Across her work, she focuses on biophilic design from the perspectives of environmental regeneration and supply chain transparency. She also spearheads the COOKFOX Mission & Culture team and is a member of the Design for Freedom Working Group. In addition to her leadership role on studio proposals, Susie has served in design and project management capacities on mixed-use high-density projects in New York and the Washington DC metro area. She was the project architect for City Point, a 1.6-million SF mixed-use development in Downtown Brooklyn that received the Award for Excellence in Design from the New York City Public Design Commission, as well as for 535 Carlton Avenue, an affordable residential building in Brooklyn's Pacific Park development. Susie was Partner-in-Charge of two recently completed residential developments: an award-winning preservation and expansion project at 378 West End Avenue and 1900 Crystal Drive, a two-tower design at National Landing in Arlington, VA.

Sandra Girgis, Senior Associate, MCIP, RPP, Just Communities AP, Mithun | Sandra Girgis is an urban designer, planner, and project manager with a passion for creating vibrant, resilient communities. With a focus on district- and regional-scale planning, she brings deep experience in leading complex, politically sensitive projects that balance community needs, agency priorities, and technical demands. Sandra has worked across sectors—from local governments to institutions—on initiatives including middle housing code, site selection, implementation strategies, and visioning plans. Previously she worked for Harvard University's Planning and Design Division creating the University's Planned 40-acre Enterprise Research Campus, a vibrant district focused on research, enterprise, and innovation. She worked side by side the Harvard Allston Land Company, with the first phase 7-acres and about 1 million square feet of mixed use, now under construction. A strong advocate for nature-based solutions, Sandra excels at navigating stakeholder dynamics and delivering plans that are actionable, adaptable, and impactful.

2025 CLIMATE SUMMIT PLANNING TASK FORCE

Jenn Chen, Interior Designer, NCIDQ, WELL AP, LMN Architects | Jenn is an interior designer dedicated to creating built environments that enrich the human experience while fostering a sustainable balance with the natural world. With a keen focus on the interplay between spatial qualities and human experiences, Jenn seeks to understand how the built environment shapes our behavior and perception while creating tailored design solutions to each project's unique needs and aspirations. Jenn is a recognized industry leader in the role interior designers play in decarbonizing the built environment and is a co-creator of the firm's Path to Zero Carbon series, which focuses on sharing research and prioritizing actions for carbon neutrality. As a key contributor to the firm's Applied Research teams—including Materials & Health, Equity, and Circular Lab—she has spearheaded initiatives such as launching a finish material library vetting process, implementing low-waste management strategies, and advancing

circular design practices for the betterment of communities and the environment.

Jessie Templeton, Embodied Carbon Service Lead, Brightworks Sustainability | Jessie Templeton is an Architect and Researcher who focuses on carbon, health, and equity in the built environment. She has over 15 years of experience as an architect and is the Embodied Carbon Service Lead at Brightworks Sustainability where she uses creative problem-solving and data analysis to identify and recommend material selection strategies to promote resiliency, adaptability, and circularity. She believes the built environment has the potential (and responsibility) to be regenerative, enhancing the quality of ecosystems and communities through research driven design and authentic community involvement. Jessie's project experience includes LEED Platinum and Living Building Challenge Multi-Family and Affordable housing, Mixed-Use urban projects, Office, Higher Ed, Labs, and Data Centers. She serves on the ILFI Energy and Carbon TAG and is a steering committee member for the Seattle CLF Hub.

Lara Lebeiko, Landscape Design, Mithun | Lara is a landscape designer at Mithun, working on a variety of urban park, residential and civic sites, with a special focus on building and coordinating interdisciplinary biodiversity and sustainability initiatives. With a background in business and branding, she blames her passion for green spaces in part because she has lived so many places across the U.S., celebrating the vastness of each region's treasures, from stargazing in Arizona, to botanical escapes in Cleveland, to secret waterfront nooks in Los Angeles and New York City.

Megan Larkin, Washington Clean Buildings Policy Manager, Climate Solutions | Megan works to advance policies and regulations that drive forward an equitable transition to 100% clean, safe, electric buildings in Washington. At Climate Solutions, she works with partners to develop and fund programs in the state budget for low-income and overburdened communities to transition to clean electricity. She also engages in utility planning and regulation. Last year, she played a key role in passing HB 1589, a landmark decarbonization law for the state's largest utility. Previously Megan has co-led a successful fossil fuel divestment campaign, campaigned steel companies to advance heavy industry decarbonization, and lobbied Members of Congress to pass the Inflation Reduction Act. Megan holds a B.A. in Geography and Environmental Studies from Dartmouth College. She currently serves on the steering committee for Shift Zero, Washington's zero carbon building alliance.

Simba Mafundikwa, Architectural Designer, Gensler | Born in New York City and raised by a Guadeloupean mother and Zimbabwean father, Simba Mafundikwa is inspired by his eclectic upbringing and approaches architecture and design with a diverse lens. He is driven by the transformative potential of architecture and design to improve the lives of people and create equitable and vibrant spaces that honor diverse communities, histories, and the environment. Simba's architecture education started in Zimbabwe and continued in New York for university. He is currently based in Seattle where he has worked on multiple projects including airports, multi-family housing and public installations to name a few. Seattle has allowed Simba to explore his passion of improving lives through design most notably on the Africatown Plaza, an affordable housing building that celebrates the history and identity of Seattle's Black and African community in the Central District.