

2024-2025

NextGen Climate Internship Annual Report



King County



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INTERNSHIP GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The NextGen Climate Internship Program gives students hands on experience to address and mitigate the effects of climate change on a macro level.

Climate Policy Implementation Through working directly with different teams and projects, interns gained insight into how policy envisioned at the county level gets implemented to incorporate and support communities and stakeholders.

Mentorship & Guidance: Interns were guided by experienced mentors who could offer advice, constructive feedback, and guidance on career development. Additional opportunities to meet with professionals in various stages of their careers in government, policy, and other climate career paths expanded interns' network of professionals.

Career Readiness: Working alongside professionals allowed interns to gain exposure to real-world practices, technical skills and insight, and general education to advance their careers with a focus on government and climate work.

NextGen interns worked on different projects across divisions and teams in King County, working towards advancing action items identified in the **Strategic Climate Action Plan (SCAP)**.



STRATEGIC CLIMATE ACTION PLAN OVERVIEW



King County's Strategic Climate Action Plan (SCAP) is the county's five-year blue print for climate action, integrating climate change into all areas of County operations and work with cities, partners, communities, and residents within King County. The SCAP has three sections

- Reducing Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions section
- Preparing for Climate Change section
- Sustainable & Resilient Frontline Communities (SRFC)

Each intern was placed on a project to a department to help implement a section of the SCAP



OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND

NextGen Interns receive a professional development budget to spend on opportunities like conferences and symposia, online courses, and certifications, and can be spent on anything that will advance an intern's professional development.

CAREER SPOTLIGHT SESSIONS

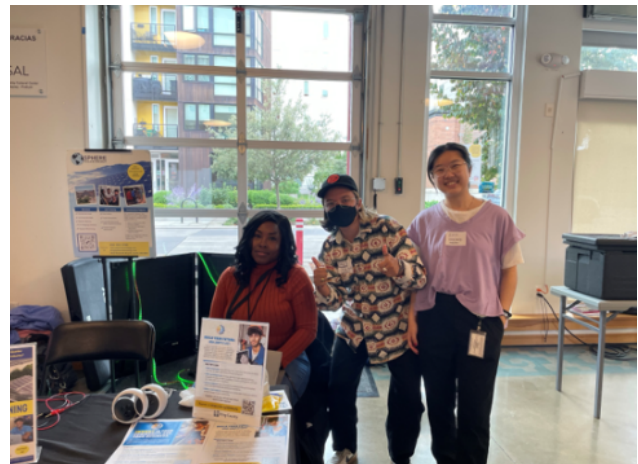
Career spotlight sessions give NextGen interns the opportunity to network with climate professionals, both within and outside of King County. In small group settings, interns learn about career journeys, ask questions, and continue discussions through individual coffee chats. Interns are also encouraged to form individual connections with people they meet along the way. Notable career spotlight sessions include the Climate Justice Director for the City of Seattle, Microsoft's Chief Sustainability Officer, and many more.

COURSE CERTIFICATIONS

Interns must complete online courses from Coursera to develop skills relevant to their selected projects. These courses include everything from project management to specific data analysis skills.

PORTFOLIO

Upon completing the NextGen internship, interns present a portfolio showcasing their achievements and learnings to King County employees, offering insights gained during their projects.



ALYSSA YANAGI *(She/Her)*

CONNECTING COUNTY AND COMMUNITY EFFORTS THROUGH THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONSUMPTION EMISSIONS TOOLKIT

Consumption Emissions Toolkit

A climate resource being developed to support residents, organizations, and businesses in making well-informed decisions to drive action and reduce carbon emissions.

Steering and Managing

- Led quarterly eight-person steering committee meetings to present project progress and discuss collaboration across county, city, and community efforts.
- Consulting the expertise of climate, emissions, policy, and circular economy professionals while developing the Toolkit.



Community Engagement

- Engaged with the Re+ Community Panel: residents, workers, and volunteers of King County who have lived experiences as frontline community members.
- Worked with consultant to organize engagement and presentations with Re+ Community Panel members.
- Expanded regional partnerships, engagement, and outreach to community-based organizations, cities, and businesses.

“

ALYSSA PLAYED A PIVOTAL ROLE IN LEADING AND CONTRIBUTING TO THE KING COUNTY CONSUMPTION EMISSIONS TOOLKIT (CET), IN PARALLEL WITH THE 2025 STRATEGIC CLIMATE ACTION PLAN UPDATE PROCESS. HER SUBSTANTIAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE CET WERE INSTRUMENTAL, PARTICULARLY THROUGH HER COLLABORATION WITH AND EMPOWERMENT OF FRONTLINE COMMUNITIES, WHOSE CONSUMPTION REDUCTION EXPERIENCES ARE HIGHLIGHTED IN THE TOOLKIT. ACHIEVING THIS DELIVERABLE WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE WITHOUT HER!

-NINA OLIVIER, CIRCULAR ECONOMY PROGRAM MANAGER

”

Additional Work

- Supported onboarding and turn-over of project work to incoming RES intern.
- Strengthened JumpStart’s employer outreach efforts by conducting 27 cold emails and calls.
- Supported JumpStart’s Green Futures Summit.
- Obtained certifications in Sustainable Materials Management and Project Management.

ERIN TSAI *(They/She)*

DESIGNING EVENTS AND EDUCATION CAMPAIGNS TO CONNECT YOUTH TO CLEAN ENERGY CAREERS



As a part of my project, I helped develop engaging events and campaigns encouraging youth to pursue green careers.

Green Jobs, Green Futures Summit

- Created informational packet about the GJGF Summit to provide to potential sponsors, increasing total sponsorship for event from \$12,000 the previous year to \$20,000 this year.
- Analyzed successful poster designs to optimize the visual impact and messaging of the poster for the 2024 Summit.
- Provided key administrative support to the steering committee, including managing communications and tracking project timelines.
- Created comprehensive report about improvements and ideas to implemented for future Summits and events.



“ ERIN HAS BEEN AN INVALUABLE ASSET TO THE EXECUTIVE CLIMATE OFFICE CLIMATE AND WORKFORCE TEAM. HER WORK HAS ADVANCED SEVERAL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVES, INCLUDING THE SUCCESSFUL PLANNING AND COORDINATION OF THE 2024 GREEN JOBS, GREEN FUTURES SUMMIT, AND HER INSTRUMENTAL ROLE IN CO-DESIGNING AND LEADING KEY ASPECTS OF THE JUMPSTART PROGRAM.

-ANOUSHKA ADHAV, CLIMATE & WORKFORCE PROJECT MANAGER

JumpStart

- Designed and implemented a 4-hour climate workshop as part of the 12-hour JumpStart training program. Developed the workshop to educate JumpStart trainees on:
 - Climate Science Basics: Provide a solid foundation in climate science concepts.
 - Climate Justice: Explore the social and environmental implications of climate change.
 - Personal Connection: Empower trainees on their role in addressing climate change.
- Provided key logistical support for JumpStart contractor and hiring events.
- Represented JumpStart at clean energy events and led the program's booth at the GJGF Summit, using VR simulations to engage youth in a creative and interactive way.
- Created content for brand new JumpStart website, ensuring consistent language and messaging.
- Gained certification in project management covering project life cycles, project management methodologies, and leadership skills.

JOHN DUNSTAN *(He/Him)*

DIVERSIFYING METRO'S ELECTRIFICATION CONTRACTORS

Contractor Engagement

- Researched Historically Underutilized Businesses (HUBs) and Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (MWBEs) around King County
- Attended and supported the Capital Division of King County Metro to meet with prospective contractors to connect them with upcoming capital projects



Community Engagement

- Researched and mapped out apprenticeship pathways to jobs on the south annex base capital projects
- Supported planning and outreach of King County Metro's green job fair through developing materials accessible to people outside the agency, distribution of event flyers around priority hiring communities, and event set-up

“PART OF METRO'S COMMITMENT TO AN EQUITABLE CLIMATE FUTURE IS MAKING SURE THAT WE DELIVER ECONOMIC EQUITY WITH OUR JOBS AND CONTRACTING. JOHN CREATE OUTREACH AMTERIALS THAT WILL CONNECT JOB SEEKERS TO OUR GREEN JOBS AND HELPED US ENGAGE WITH HISTORICALLY UNDERUTILIZED BUSINESSES TO INFORM THEM ABOUT FUTURE GREEN CONTRACTING OPPORTUNITIES. WITH AN OUTSIDER'S PERSPECTIVE AND THE LENS OF A SOCIAL WORK PROFESSIONAL, HE HELPED DEMYSTIFY OUR PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES, MKAING THEM MORE ACCESSIBLE TO ALL.

-JEN MAYER, ESJ IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM MANAGER

Additional Work

- Synthesized results of multiple IT project equity reviews; focusing on project achievements, lessons learned, and work still to be done in future projects
- Provided research and facilitation support on the south campus area mobility plan (SCAMP)
- Gained a certificate in Sustainable Cities covering sustainable regional principles, sustainable neighborhoods, sustainable transportation networks, and green construction



PARKER LYNAS *(He/Him)*

DESIGNING OUTREACH FOR STORMWATER SERVICES

Events & the “Clean Water Connects Us All” Campaign

- Researched the connection between mental health, water pollution, and climate change messaging to incorporate into our stormwater campaign.
- Designed communication materials that centered community action and mental health.
 - Included fliers, social media graphics, blog posts, and more.
- Hosted a booth at the Greenbridge Health Fair in White Center, Washington.
 - Showcased “Life of a Drop of Water” by Hernan Paganini, the 2019 Stormwater Artist in Residence. The design was installed using Rainworks invisible paint.
- Hosted a booth at DeafNation Expo in Seattle, Washington.
 - Featured 5 video interviews of King County employees with captions and side-by-side ASL interpretation.
 - Opened the expo with a sign-and-sing along performance of Home by Publish the Quest. This was then followed by a visual vernacular poem.
- Helped facilitate Stormwater’s ethnic media tour of Renton’s green stormwater infrastructure (GSI).



“

PARKER WAS ABLE TO TEST THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL TACTICS FOR COMMUNICATIONS, BUT HIS SHIFT IN UNDERSTANDING FROM THEORETICAL TO EXPERIENTIAL IS VALUABLE TO MAKING DEEPER CONNECTIONS, UNDERSTANDING IMPACT AND INFLUENCE. PARKER’S ENTHUSIASM AND CURIOSITY WIL MAKE HIS FUTURE WORK PERSONALLY ENRICHING, BUT I BELIEVE VALUABLE TO COMMUNITIES HE MAY SERVE. ROCK ON!

-MARY RABOURN, STORMWATER SERVICES COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

”



Additional Work

- Assisted with the Executive Climate Office’s work to revise the Strategic Climate Action Plan.
- Worked with Stormwater Outreach for Regional Municipalities (STORM) to facilitate STORM-Fest and presented at the annual STORM Symposium.
- Attended the Department of Local Services’s event for ethnic media representatives: “Local Services wants to speak your language”.
- Drafted initial surveys for a self-administered survey on racial equity in the workplace.
- Earned the Plastics: Impacts and Action certificate from Cornell University.
- Attended a conferences on Science Communications and Social Marketing

SUNNY SONG:

Evaluating GHG Reduction Strategies



SCAP 2025

- Updated 2020 SCAP GHG performance measurement tracker to include 2023 and 2024 data points. Coordinated and organized with 17 of staff leads to ensure data updates were complete and trouble shoot barriers.
 - Streamlined quality assurance processes by updating tracking systems to align GHG performance measures and SCAP priority action progress with the latest Biennial Report
- Documented key insights from interactive Climate Team workshops and external 2025 SCAP workshops to inform policy development and strategic planning.

Climate Action Plans

- Conducted comparative analyses of Climate Action Plans (CAP) from C40 and other cities to identify best practices and enhance clarity in plan structures
- Developed a detailed comparison spreadsheet of King Counties-Cities Climate Collaboration (K4C), Climate Action Plan, and Joint Commitment policies to identify overlaps and gaps.
- Created and delivered a presentation highlighting actionable policies King County can adopt to strengthen alignment with K4C commitments.

“**UPDATING THE 2025 SCAP IS AN ALL HANDS ON DECK EFFORT. SUNNY’S CONTRIBUTIONS WERE A HUGE HELP TO MOVE THIS BODY OF WORK FORWARD.**

**-CARRIE LEE,
GHG
REDUCTION
MANAGER** ”

Additional Work

LEED for Communities

- Led an informational session on SCAP and LEED project to guide King County’s recertification process
 - Facilitated applicant interviews and Q&A sessions to evaluate and onboard candidates for the project.
- Developed a comprehensive guideline and workflow plan to streamline project implementation and certification efforts.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



THANK YOU FOR THE RIDE

This internship, our experiences, and the projects we completed are owed to the support and insight of our supervisors, professional staff, and community members we have had the pleasure of working with and learning from.

EXTENDING GRATITUDE**Project Supervisors**

Anoushka Adhav - *Climate & Workforce Project Manager*
 Carrie Lee - *Greenhouse Gas Emissions Program Manager*
 Jen Mayer - *ESJ Implementation Program Manager*
 Nina Olivier - *Circular Economy Program Manager*
 Mary Rabourn - *Stormwater Services Communications Specialist*

Intern Supervisor

Michael Carter - *Climate & Workforce Manager*

NextGen Cohort Lead

Medha Kumar

Career Spotlight Sessions Speakers

Thank you for your continued support of the NextGen Internship Program!

CONTACT

Anoushka Adhav

anadhav@kingcounty.gov