



# **The Future We Lead:**

## *Guiding the Next Generation of Climate Leaders*

### **2024-2025 Annual Report**





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# A Letter from our Executive Director

Dear Supporters,

This year marks The Gaia Project's 15th anniversary and my seventh year as part of this incredible team. It's been a journey of growth, collaboration, and unwavering commitment to empowering youth through climate education.

With your support, we've reached new milestones:

- Delivered **323 climate action programs**, actively engaging thousands of students and educators in hands-on, real-world learning
- Reached **73,286 youth** with our programs and resources
- Provided **impactful programming to 262 schools** across Canada
- Supported **589 educators** in building climate literacy and capacity in their classrooms

These numbers tell a powerful story, but the true impact lies in how students are beginning to see themselves as part of a greener future. Whether building wind-powered models, completing energy audits, or exploring green careers, youth are not just learning about climate change—they're taking action as problem-solvers and leaders.

We are grateful to the teachers, school staff, and students who welcome us into their classrooms year after year. And to our partners and funders, thank you. Your belief in our mission, our people, and our potential fuels everything we do.

Here's to 15 years of impactful climate education, and to the future we're building together.

Sincerely,



**Geoff MacDonald**  
Executive Director, The Gaia Project

## Empowering youth to take action on climate change





# Our Impact in Numbers

262

Schools Reached

323

Projects Led

1,630

Classes Reached

371

Learning Packages  
Downloaded

73,286

Students Reached

589

Teachers Supported



# 2024–2025 Certified EcoSchools

As the official regional partner for EcoSchools Canada, we're thrilled to support a growing movement of New Brunswick schools taking meaningful climate action and fostering a strong culture of environmental stewardship. We are continually inspired by the tenacity, creativity, and passion of the students and teachers who participate, and proudly celebrate the schools who achieved certification this year.

## Platinum

- Hampton High School
- Harbour View High School
- Rothsay Netherwood School
- École Notre-Dame
- École Abbey-Landry
- École Camille-Vautour
- Maplehurst Middle School
- École Secondaire Népisiguit
- École Mgr-Marcel-François-Richard

## Silver

- École Marie-Gaétane

## Bronze

- Superior Middle School
- Riverview Middle School
- École des Bâtisseurs
- École Dr-Marguerite-Michaud

## Gold

- Birchmount School
- École Blanche-Bourgeois
- École l'Odyssée
- École La Ruche





# Stakeholder Testimonials

## Stories of Impact and Inspiration

*"The Gaia Project's programs support teachers in teaching climate education. This organization offers practical resources for a variety of school age groups, as well as virtual and in-person workshops. Their encouragement to participate in the eco-school program empowers staff and students to continue being environmentally responsible and even inspire community members to proudly value their environment and reduce ecological issues for future generations."*

-Annette Goguen Bah, Teacher, École Camille-Vautour

*"The Green Micro-Internship program is so valuable to high school students because it allows them to get hands-on work experience for their future... Going to ACAP was one of the highlights of my year, because now more than ever, I'm excited for my future in a green career."*

- Zoe, Grade 12 Student, Kennebecasis Valley High School



*"Building duck houses and bat houses made us feel involved in the community. The project allowed us to contribute positively to wildlife conservation providing safe habitats for animals while promoting biodiversity. This activity not only supported ecosystems but also encouraged teamwork and an appreciation for environmental stewardship. It made us feel connected and needed by nature, knowing we were helping [animals] stay warm and safe through the winter."*

-Hunter, Julia, Pedro, Chloe, Students, Bernice McNaughton High School

*"My Grade 6 science class had an incredibly engaging and informative experience participating in the renewable energy program offered by the Gaia Project here in St. Stephen, New Brunswick. From the very first session, my students were captivated by the hands-on activities and real-world applications of science concepts. The program not only deepened their understanding of renewable energy sources but also sparked important conversations about sustainability and environmental responsibility. The interactive lessons made learning fun and accessible, helping students connect classroom science with everyday life and global issues. We truly appreciated the enthusiasm and expertise of the Gaia Project facilitators over the years. They encouraged curiosity, critical thinking, and teamwork, all qualities I value deeply in my classroom. This experience has left a lasting impression on my students and inspired many to think more deeply about how they can positively impact the planet."*

*Thank you, Gaia Project, for supporting science education and helping shape a greener future through meaningful learning experiences!"*

-Krista McGinn, Teacher, St. Stephen Middle School







# EMPOWERING TOMORROW

## Inspiring the Future of Clean Energy in New Brunswick

Empowering Tomorrow 2025 brought nearly 200 high school teachers and students together for a day of green energy and sustainability-focused career exploration through immersive workshops and networking opportunities. With a growing demand for skilled professionals, introducing teens to the diverse career pathways within Atlantic Canada's growing clean energy sector is key to preparing the next generation of climate leaders.

Empowering Tomorrow showcases innovative technologies, emerging climate solutions, and highlights the diversity of expertise driving the future of clean energy through hands-on experimentation and networking opportunities. The future belongs to young people, and together, we are empowering them to build a brighter, cleaner, and greener world.



the power of possibility  
débordant d'énergie



## Key Outcomes of Empowering Tomorrow 2025



# 98%

of students surveyed reported learning something new about green careers available in New Brunswick.



# 95%

indicated they are now considering pursuing post-secondary education in sustainability.



# 85%

expressed interest in exploring a green job in the future.

*"I never really considered working in clean energy, like researching solar and wind and other forms of renewable energy. I didn't really realize that that was an option."*

-Sarah, Grade 11 Student,  
St. Malachy's Memorial High School

*"I would say that Empowering Tomorrow is just a really great conference; there's so much to learn! There's a lot about jobs and about keeping kids in our schools and in these communities, and it's very local, and very focused. it's very tied to environmental science...it can tie into a lot of different subjects!"*

-Katherine Halas Moulton, Teacher,  
Bonar Law Memorial





# The 2024-2025 Gaia Project Champion Awards

**Celebrating Climate Leadership:** This year, we saw another inspiring wave of climate leadership in schools across New Brunswick. From community cleanups to installing nesting boxes, students and teachers embraced climate action with creativity, passion and purpose. While there were many outstanding candidates, we selected four exceptional recipients whose projects really raised the bar, demonstrating the spirit of The Gaia Project Champion Awards.



## Champion Student

Rylan Gray, *Student*, Rothesay Netherwood School

Rylan has shown incredible climate leadership this past year as an active member of the Environmental Round Council at Rothesay Netherwood School. Rylan even initiated a school-wide energy audit and has been involved in trash sorting on campus!



## Champion Staff (Francophone)

Anik Simard, *Teacher*, École Marie-Gaétane

Anik Simard of École Marie-Gaétane oversees numerous environmental projects (such as the school greenhouse, composting program, and recycling initiative) and facilitates a collaborative environment where teachers and students are encouraged to participate in projects. Anik worked alongside grades 3-4 teachers, engaging students in the Trash Tracker Champion program.



## Champion Staff (Anglophone)

Brianne Durant, *Teacher*, Harbour View High School

Brianne Durant oversees the climate action team at Harbour View High School in Saint John, where she empowers students to take the lead on sustainability initiatives. With support from The Gaia Project, Brianne implemented both the Climate Mindset seminar and the Climate Action Project (Justice) program with her students. Under her guidance, students organized impactful activities such as an electronic waste drive and a school-wide clothing donation campaign.

## Champion School

École Camille-Vautour

Students and teachers in Saint-Antoine have continuously worked together to establish a school-wide culture of climate action, even achieving Platinum EcoSchools certification for both the 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 school years. From climate education resources to in-class programs, teachers at École Camille-Vautour have invited The Gaia Project year after year into their classrooms with an appetite for sustainability. In addition to participating in our Trash Tracker Champion and Climate Mindset programs, École Camille-Vautour spearheaded their own climate action projects including exploring hydroponics, composting, growing air plants, outdoor reading, environmental awareness campaigns, implementing refundable and paper recycling, and promoting waste free lunches!

Climate action has become central to the culture and values of École Camille-Vautour, and we are so proud of their exceptional work in promoting climate leadership and student action throughout their school. Well done, École Camille-Vautour, we can't wait to see you continue to lead with impact for years to come!

*"This year, I learned that there are so many small, concrete actions I can take to help the environment. I also realized that these actions aren't the same for everyone and each person can contribute in their own way. When it comes to climate change, I discovered different ways to deal with my emotions, like eco-anxiety. I found that doing something positive for the planet really helps me feel better."*

-Grade 6 Student, École Camille-Vautour





# Green Micro-Internships

## Guiding Future Sustainability Leaders in New Brunswick

In the 2024–2025 school year, we launched a new initiative: a micro-internship program giving high school students the chance to spend a day at the workplace of an environmentally-focused host organization. Rather than learning from a distance, 13 students from grades 9 to 12 took part in hands-on visits to green workplaces across the province. The Gaia Project staff collaborated with students and teachers to match participants with hosts based on interests, location, and language.

### Green Micro-Internship Spotlight: McCain Foods

In May two students from Hartland Community School spent a day with the team at McCain Foods, participating in a unique and enriching learning experience. The visit included a guided tour of the plant, showcasing McCain's sustainability initiatives, wastewater treatment processes, and a look into their innovative "Farm of the Future" project. It was a valuable opportunity for the students to gain insight into global sustainability efforts being led by a company rooted in their own community.



*This micro internship was a great experience! It was fascinating to hear about all the different careers in the green sector and how they relate to each other. In just one day, I became interested in this field and am highly looking into a career!*

-Autumn, Grade 12 Student, Hartland Community School

The Green Micro-Internship program has proven benefit to both the students and host organizations and showcases the benefit of mentorship and collaboration. We are looking forward to providing even more micro-internship opportunities for students in the 2025-2026 school year!

# Roadmap to 2027:

## Tracking Progress on Gaia's Strategic Plan

In 2022, The Gaia Project launched a five-year strategic plan to guide our work toward empowering youth to take action on climate change. As we approach the halfway point in our strategic plan, we are proud to celebrate the progress we've made and the momentum that continues to build.

### Celebrating Success

The Gaia Project is on track to reach every school in New Brunswick by 2027. This year alone, we engaged 57 "new to Gaia" schools, meaning we now reach over 75% of schools across the province annually. Demand for our programs remains strong, and we are adapting to ensure equitable access across regions and language sectors.

We continue to build and retain a strong, committed team. Five team members celebrated five years or more with Gaia this year—an important milestone for a growing nonprofit! Results from our staff survey indicate high satisfaction with professional learning, and we are investing in clearer work plans and opportunities for leadership development.

Our fundraising efforts remain strong, with \$1.25 million raised in 2024–25. This keeps us on pace to reach our \$1.5 million annual goal by 2027. We've implemented new tools for tracking impact, financial planning, and reporting.

These structures assist us in making smarter decisions and support steady, sustainable growth.

### Challenges and Opportunities Ahead

With three new board members joining this year and more on the way, our governance team is evolving. We're excited by the energy and expertise these additions bring. As we grow, Gaia remains focused on strengthening onboarding, training, and succession planning to ensure consistent, high-impact leadership.

Our interest in expanding to other Atlantic provinces continues to grow. As we look ahead, we are laying the groundwork for broader brand recognition through strategic marketing, partnership development, and region-specific storytelling. This work will be key to introducing Gaia's mission to new schools and communities by 2027.





## Our Partners

We are deeply grateful to our partners whose financial support and thoughtful guidance make our work possible. Their commitment empowers us to help students become climate leaders who drive positive change in their communities. Together, we are creating a future led by young people with purpose, resilience, and hope.

### Platinum



### Gold



Allison McCain

Brian McCain

### Silver



Sir James Dunn Foundation

### Bronze

- ANBL Quarterly Lottery Program
- Carleton County Community Foundation
- Carton Council of Canada
- City of Fredericton
- Encorp Atlantic
- EOS Eco-Energy Fredericton Direct Charge Cooperative
- Fredericton Community Foundation
- Fundy Community Foundation
- New Brunswick Children's Foundation
- RBC Communities Together Fund
- Rotary Clubs
- Saint John LNG
- Janssen Pharmaceuticals
- TD Friends of The Environment Foundation
- TD Parks People Grant
- United Way of Central New Brunswick

## Our Collaborators

We are thankful for the incredible collaborators who have worked alongside us to both develop and deliver programming to students across the province. Their on-the-ground support, regional knowledge, and shared vision have helped us reach more classrooms and empower youth through hands-on climate education.

### Our Collaborators

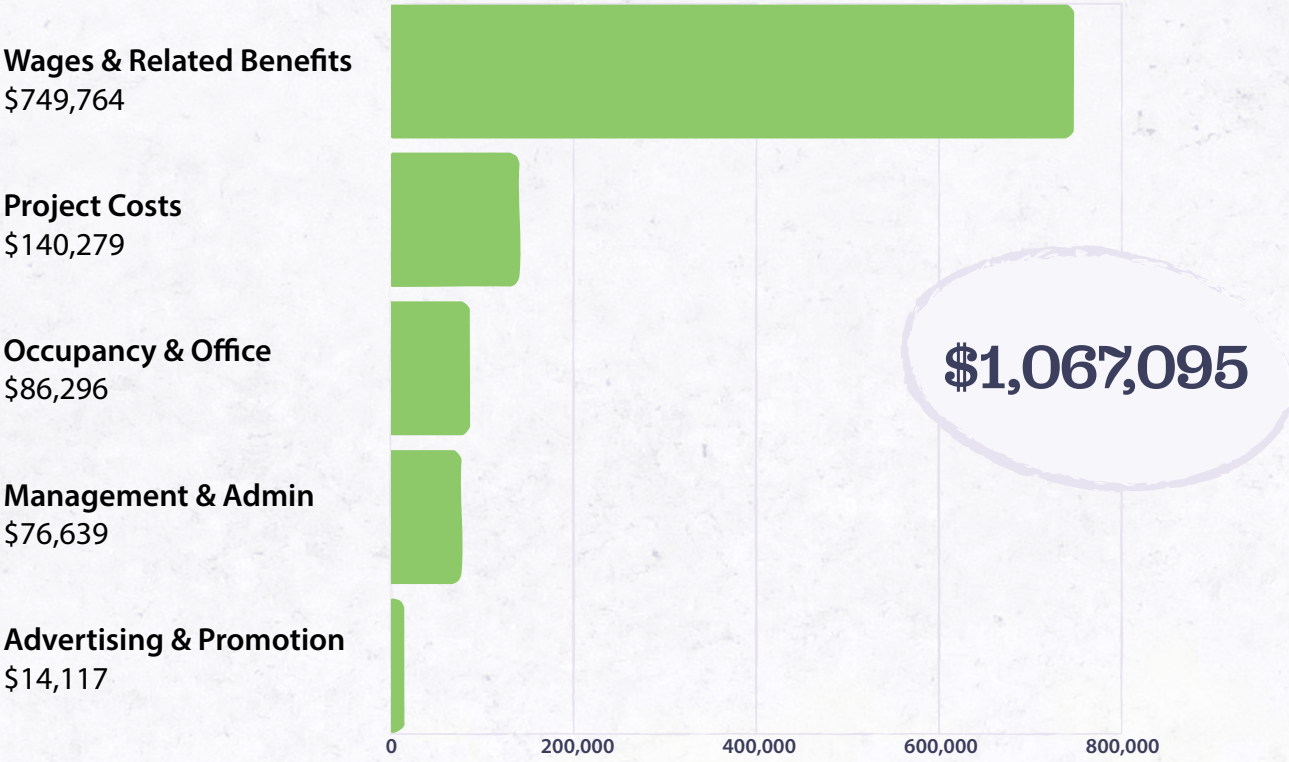
- ACAP SJ
- Association des enseignantes et des enseignants francophones du Nouveau-Brunswick
- Bouton d'or Acadie
- Centre of Excellence for Energy
- Centre of Excellence for Language Learning
- Circular Materials Atlantic
- Clean Foundation
- Conservation Corps Newfoundland and Labrador
- Conservation Council of New Brunswick
- EcoSchools Canada
- EOS EcoEnergy
- Heather Howe Realtor
- Nature NB
- New Brunswick Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
- New Brunswick Department of Environment and Local Government
- New Brunswick Environmental Network
- New Brunswick Lung Association
- New Brunswick Teachers Association
- Recycle NB
- Save Energy NB
- Starbucks New Brunswick
- STEAM PEI



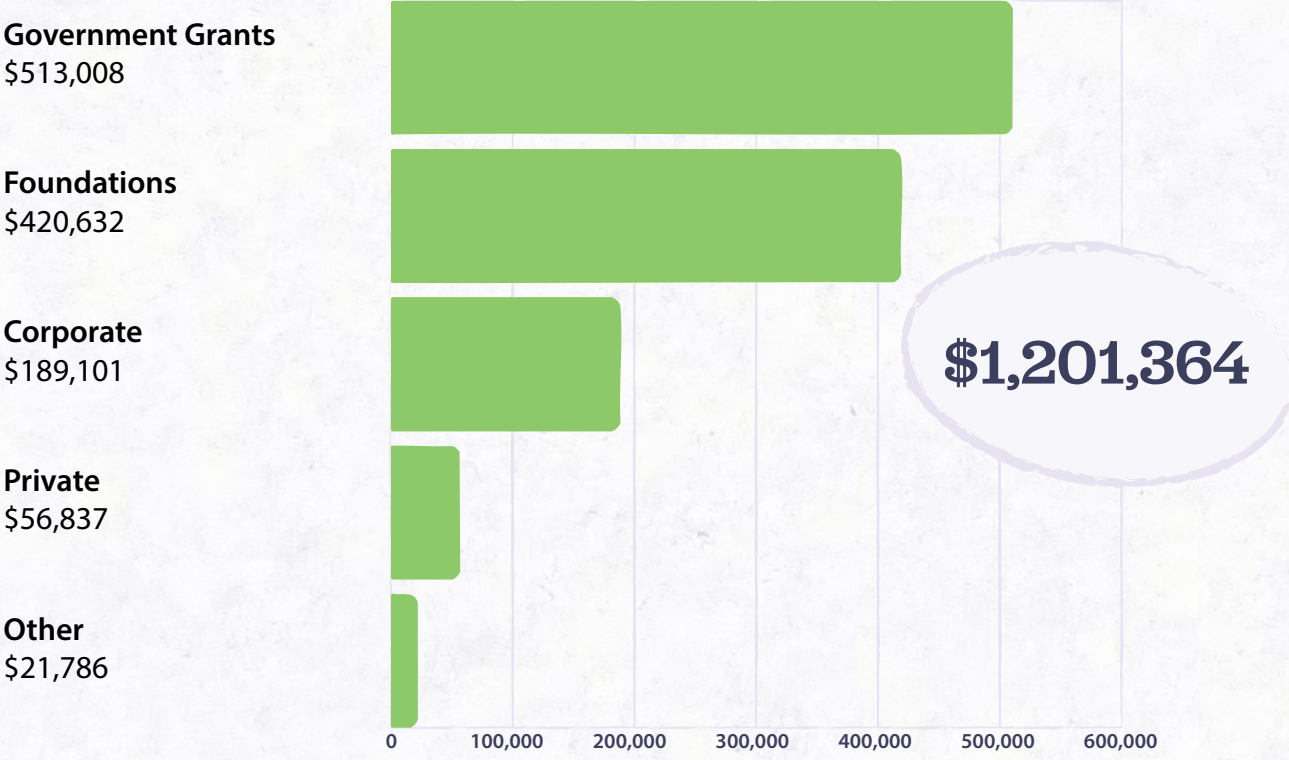


# Financial Summary

## Expenditures



## Revenues



# Our People

The Staff and Volunteers Who Bring Our Mission to Life

## Our Team

- (Left to right)  
Katelyn Plant  
Jamylynn McDonald  
Léane Journault  
Catherine Rioux  
Ainslee MacMillan  
Adam Mahoney  
Brittany MacNaughton  
Geoff MacDonald  
Anna-Lee Vienneau  
Travis Daley  
Guylaine Doucet-Ferguson



## Our Board

Carolyn Barnhart  
Chair

Laura Myers  
Vice-Chair

Jody Gorham  
Secretary

Darrin Hoyt  
Treasurer

Christy Bitcon  
Director

Kim Hughes  
Director

Brittany Tafford  
Director

Shawn Martin  
Director

Jessica Stutt  
Director

## Advisors

- George Dashner      John Reid



# *Join Our Climate Action Network*

The Gaia Project empowers youth across New Brunswick to take action on climate change. Stay up to date on inspiring student-led projects, educators making a difference in their community, and partners who help us mobilize the next generation of climate leaders across the province.



**Stay connected!**

Scan here to subscribe to  
The Gaia Project's  
newsletter!