

# 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

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Making **Climate-Smart  
Food Choices** the Norm



FOOD FOR  
CLIMATE  
LEAGUE



## WHO WE ARE

| FCL is a trailblazing, women-led 501(c)3 non-profit working to make climate-smart food choices the norm.



## WHAT DIFFERENTIATES US

| We use the power of narratives and behavioral science to motivate long-term food systems change.



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# 2023 BY THE NUMBERS

Published **first-of-its-kind** research in all-you-care-to-eat college dining halls showing a **58.5%** increase in students taking a plant-based option when offered as the default.

Rolled out global workshops to inspire plant-forward cooking; **473** chefs and cooks have participated to date, and **88%** of line cooks were motivated to sign up for plant-forward, culinary-skill training.

Trained over **90** international city leaders, food policy decision makers, and food industry professionals from **14** countries representing **20** companies, agencies, and organizations on how to drive more people to choose sustainable foods.

Garnered **12,000** visits to our EatAquaticFoods.org resources hub from food professionals in over **100** countries.

Shared FCL's research and insights at more than **37** conferences, events, and meetings reaching over **6,800** attendees.



# LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



It's hard to believe it's been just over four years since we put roots into the ground on this idea that we could move people to make climate-smart food choices by focusing on narrative.

It feels like just yesterday we were explaining why food and climate go hand in hand. By the end of 2023, the conversation was finally taking center stage at COP28.

These moments remind me why we do what we do. **We've seen that the key to changing behavior and shifting perceptions about sustainable foods is to empathize with the needs, values, and priorities of eaters and the people who feed them.** Only then, can these changes become enticing and relevant to the masses—and ultimately, positively impact the planet, simply through the foods they cook, serve, and eat.

In 2023, we nurtured our approach in important ways that advance the mission of making climate-smart food choices the norm. With our team now more than a

dozen strong, we refined our programs, designed a framework for impact measurement, and outlined our strategy for the next five years—and we expanded our reach with new projects and partners.

It is because of the shared vision and support of funders and partners like you that we are moving closer to a future where food is equitable, nutritious, and sustainable for all.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Eve Turow-Paul".

**Eve Turow-Paul**  
Founder & Executive Director

“Agriculture and food systems must urgently adapt and transform in order to respond to the imperatives of climate change.”

— COP28 UAE Declaration on Sustainable Agriculture, Resilient Food Systems, and Climate Action, November 2023



**IMPACT  
GOAL**



**By 2030, our mission is to empower 100 million individuals, inclusive of background or socioeconomic status, to engage in climate-smart food choices, reshaping the future of food worldwide.**

# OUR PROGRAMS



## Empowering Change Makers

Equips organizations, city leaders, and collectives with research-driven resources (e.g., reports, toolkits, and trainings) to support the success of climate-smart food system initiatives.



## Shifting Norms

Through motivational campaigns and comprehensive programs, inspires positive changes in behavior and perception by connecting to stakeholders' core needs—leading them to take climate-smart actions because they want to, not because they have to.



## Collective Power

Developing events, roundtables, and ecosystems to expand collaboration and insights-sharing among those dedicated to climate-smart food systems, in order to drive greater impact.

# NUDDING STUDENTS TOWARD PLANT-BASED CHOICES



## Why

While plant-based eating grows in popularity, particularly among Gen Z, meat-centric dishes remain the norm. Defaults are a proven strategy to nudge behavior.



## How

In a first-of-its-kind pilot, Food for Climate League—in collaboration with the Better Food Foundation, Sodexo, and researchers at Boston College—tested the ease and environmental impact of offering plant-based dishes as the default option at food stations on three university campuses. We published the findings in a [Spring 2023 report](#).



## Goal

To reduce emissions of university dining offerings without compromising eater satisfaction, and to develop a new norm of plant-based default dining.



## Impact

**58.3%**

Increase in people taking the plant-based option without compromising diner satisfaction

**23.6%**

Reduction in meal-related greenhouse gas emissions

**1 million**

Students, since Sodexo made its program available across the nearly 400 college and university campuses it serves, have the opportunity to access food stations offering plant-based options by default, unless a location opts out

## The Work Ahead

For the next phase of work, FCL is developing plug-and-play toolkits as well as trainings for foodservice staff, to help other universities establish successful plant-based default stations—plus other proven interventions to nudge sustainable food choices—on their own campuses.

Please reach out if you'd like to support this work with a donation or partner with FCL to implement something similar at your institution.  
[info@foodforclimateleague.org](mailto:info@foodforclimateleague.org)

“ We undertook this study to help nudge Sodexo’s own operations to adopt plant-based defaults more widely across our operations, and we are already seeing the direct large-scale impact on institutional dining that we set out to achieve.”

— **Lisa Feldman,**  
Senior Director of Culinary, Menu Systems and Impact Strategy,  
Sodexo North America





# MOTIVATING CHEFS & COOKS TO BECOME CHANGE MAKERS



## Why

Eaters' food choices are greatly impacted by the culinarians who develop menus and prepare the dishes. Plant-forward menus that eaters crave benefit from being developed by people who enjoy preparing these foods themselves.



## How

Applying research from the science of intrinsic motivation, FCL co-created the Culinary Inspiration Program for Google Chefs and Cooks to build buy-in and ownership for plant-forward cooking and drive enrollment in a skill-based culinary training. After a pilot test, the program was rolled out globally.



## Goal

To drive a change in perception and behavior regarding plant-forward cooking among Google's culinary teams by changing the way we engage these professionals.



## Impact

84%

Of line cooks who attended a 90-minute Culinary Inspiration Workshop developed by FCL said participating in the workshop increased their personal connection to plant-forward cooking

88%

Of line cooks choose to sign up for a 6-months-long plant-forward culinary skill training immediately after taking the Culinary Inspiration Workshop (and in December 2023, the first cohort of 95 cooks graduated from the culinary training program; 11 of them were promoted to sous chef

473

Culinarians have participated to date (and counting) across 14 countries throughout the U.S., Latin America, and Europe

## The Work Ahead

While this intrinsic motivation program is currently being run by one foodservice company, we aim to replicate it at multiple companies, NGOs, and foodservice operations globally, thus impacting millions of eaters.

Please reach out to learn more or partner with FCL to implement a similar program at your own organization.

[info@foodforclimateleague.org](mailto:info@foodforclimateleague.org)

“ [This is] a game-changing approach to sustainable culinary training that creates long-term impact: engaged staff and delicious, sustainable, plant-forward food offerings.”

— **Chavanne Hanson,**  
Food Choice Architecture and  
Nutrition Manager,  
Google



# DRIVING DEMAND FOR AQUATIC FOODS



## Why

U.S. and global food systems face critical challenges related to limited biodiversity on menus, lack of nutritious options, and reliance on unsustainable ingredients. Sustainable aquatic foods like sea vegetables, clams, and mussels present an exciting solution.



## How

In 2023, building on narratives our researchers developed in the previous year, Food for Climate League partnered with major foodservice operators CulinArt and The Good Eating Company to demonstrate in the real world how eaters, chefs, and foodservice staff alike are open to and interested in sea vegetables and bivalves as ingredients.



## Goal

To motivate more eaters to consume and more foodservice professionals to serve craveable dishes featuring sustainable sea vegetables and bivalves.



## Impact

**1,750**

Total eaters reached by dish launches and narrative tests across four U.S. sites

**71%**

Percentage of staff with high confidence that diners will enjoy sea vegetables—up from 33% before the test

**71%**

Percentage of staff intending to offer sea vegetables on future menus following successful pilot test—up from 17% before the test

# The Work Ahead

The decisions of foodservice operators and narrative strategy are both essential elements of food system change. Going forward, if we can engage not only culinary professionals but culinary students preparing for a career in foodservice to understand the benefits of sustainable aquatic foods and intrinsically motivate them to add aquatic foods to menus as delicious alternatives to resource-intense proteins, we all move closer to making these foods an integral part of the American diet.

## POPULARIZING ALASKA KELP AND OYSTERS

In a separate ongoing project, the Alaska Mariculture Cluster, led by Southeast Conference, has **hired FCL to support its efforts to expand the state's sustainable mariculture industry and grow demand for kelp and oysters among American eaters.**

This is the first government-funded project for FCL. Drawing on our expertise with aquatic foods, we kicked off the work in 2023 by creating stakeholder maps and landscape analysis of the Alaska mariculture industry. In 2024, we will continue our research to identify target consumers, as well as gaps and opportunities for these mariculture products in foodservice and retail.

“ Chefs play a huge role, especially those who work in corporate foodservice like myself. Ongoing education for chefs is really important so that we can continue to learn about new and emerging ways to make a positive impact on our environment simply through the menus we write.”

— **Alicia Jenish-McCarron**, Director of Culinary Programming, The Good Eating Company



# TRAINING LEADERS TO EFFECTIVELY PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE FOOD CHOICES



## Why

Despite delicious product innovation, menu redesign, and supply chain improvements, so often organizations' sustainable food offerings and consumer engagement campaigns don't gain the traction they deserve. In part, this is due to a problem with messaging.



## How

FCL extended customized, hands-on virtual workshops in 2023 to new, high-impact audiences including UN agencies, C40's global network of city leaders, and representatives of major food companies. Building on our popular flagship training, "How to Talk About Food and Climate," our experts in consumer behavior change and storytelling developed a new training, "How to Reframe Narratives to Shift Perceptions and Drive Consumption of Healthy, Sustainable Foods," further helping participants apply FCL's concepts to improve their organizations' own content.



## Goal

To increase confidence in communicating effectively around food and climate.



## Impact

260

International city leaders, food policy decision makers, and food industry professionals (including 90 trained in 2023)

25

Different countries to date (including 14 in 2023)

100+

Companies, agencies, and organizations (including 20 in 2023) that influence billions of eaters around the world



## The Work Ahead

The importance of narrative and the need for actionable communications strategies appear to grow stronger every year. With inbound interest from a growing array of audiences—including educators and funders—we look forward to partnering with more companies, consortia, coalitions, and associations to impart tailored insights to overcome their messaging challenges and reach their goals for increased consumption of sustainable foods.

Please reach out if you'd like to support this training with a donation or bring the workshop to your organization.  
[info@foodforclimateleague.org](mailto:info@foodforclimateleague.org)

“ Food for Climate League helped us develop a custom-made workshop for our members ... The workshop they delivered exceeded every expectation. The FCL team is incredibly engaged, intelligent, creative, and well-spoken; they are here to make a difference and are a valuable partner in driving systems change.”

— **Maria Westin**, Senior Associate,  
Agriculture & Food, World Business  
Council for Sustainable Development



## SCHOOL FOOD PROFESSIONALS CAMPAIGN

The Chef Ann Foundation **engaged FCL to conduct narrative research in preparation for a first-of-its-kind public education campaign to reshape negative perceptions of school food professionals among Californians**; the campaign supports the foundation's work to build the capacity and skill among the school food workforce to cook sustainable, scratch-made meals. Our insights included repositioning school food professionals as skilled culinarians and emphasizing their role as providing fresh, diverse, delicious food that nourishes children's mental health and overall well-being—in addition to amplifying the valuable part these professionals play in schools, communities, and society.

## NOURISH EQUITY NARRATIVE PROJECT

FCL laid the groundwork, including partnering with the Detroit Food Policy Council as co-creator of a **new initiative that will convene a diverse coalition of food system champions to shape and disseminate new narratives that foster a sustainable and equitable food system**. Specifically, it seeks to amplify the voices and perspectives of BIPOC future food leaders; craft an inclusive narrative that reflects their aspirations and values and addresses historic injustices; and promote equity within U.S. food systems. Together, we are working to catalyze transformative changes in food system leadership, policies, and practices, ultimately advancing social justice goals within the food system. Please connect with us if you'd like to provide funding to support this project: [info@foodforclimateleague.org](mailto:info@foodforclimateleague.org).

## Honoring Our Colleague & His Impact

In January 2024, Bryce Fluellen, our cherished colleague and friend, and the strategic advisor for our Nourish Equity project, passed away. He was a brilliant and uniquely passionate advocate who touched many who worked at the intersection of food, equity, health, and sustainability. We had so much to learn from him, and we are committed to honoring his legacy through the impact of this work.



## PLANT-FORWARD OPPORTUNITY REPORT

For the fourth year in a row, FCL collaborated with Datassential, The Culinary Institute of America, and the Menus of Change University Research Collaborative to publish the Plant-Forward Opportunity Report. **This year's research focused on "understanding consumer expectations around plant-forward offerings so that chefs and other foodservice operators can meet consumers where they are and optimize their menus,"** ultimately moving tastes away from a reliance on meat, dairy, and other animal-based dishes toward more healthy and sustainable plant-forward choices.

## COOL BEANS

Leveraging the impact diverse influencers have on their communities, FCL is inspiring an increase in the consumption of accessible, nutritious, and sustainable beans, pulses, and legumes. **In 2023, we kicked off this work by conducting deep research into key audiences and their current barriers, perceptions, and motivations around eating beans.** To date, we have surveyed 450 eaters, reviewed 50-plus sources, and conducted expert interviews. Drawing on these insights, we're developing narratives to encourage young people, specifically lower-income, non-Hispanic Gen Zers and Millennials (the audience our research found to have the highest potential for impact) to choose beans. In 2024, we are testing the impact of those narratives on food choices in a university dining hall, in advance of an influencer-led campaign to encourage residents of major American cities, starting with Chicago, to eat more beans. **Contact us to support this workstream as we move from research into activation and scaling: [info@foodforclimateleague.org](mailto:info@foodforclimateleague.org).**

## Organizations We Partnered With in 2023

Beans is How  
Better Food Foundation  
Boston College  
C40 Cities  
CulinArt  
Culinary Institute of America  
Climate Section of the UN Department of Global Communications  
Datassential  
dScout  
Evitarus  
Fed by Blu  
Fenton Communications  
Food + Planet  
Game Changers Institute  
Good Chaos  
Greener by Default  
Lehigh University  
Menus of Change University Research Collaborative  
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute  
Sodexo  
The Good Eating Company  
Tulane University  
World Business Council for Sustainable Development

# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

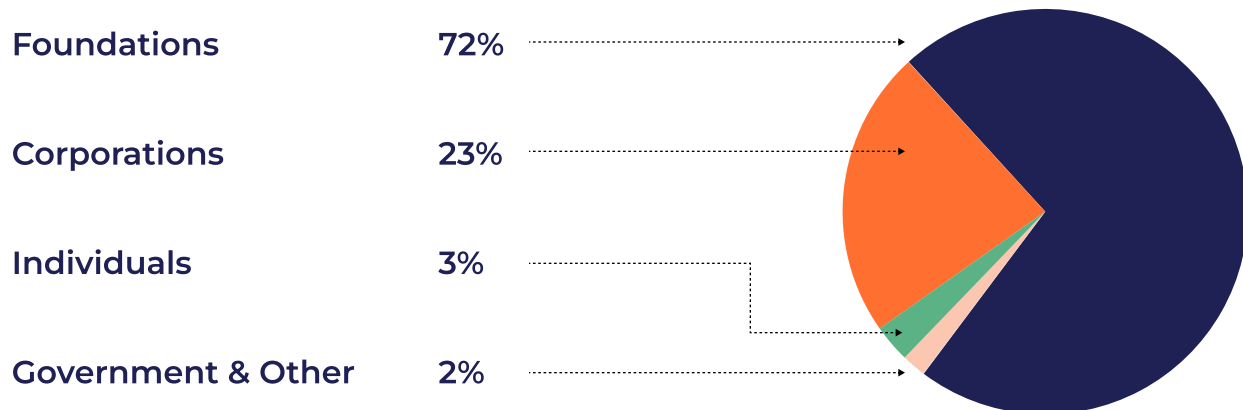
## Charitable Income

Generous partners gave onetime gifts and multi-year commitments. Here's a snapshot of our charitable income:

<b>Foundations</b>	<b>\$1,738,315</b>
Unrestricted	\$45,000
Restricted	\$1,693,315
<b>Corporations</b>	<b>\$46,000</b>
<b>Individuals</b>	<b>\$13,566</b>
<b>Other</b>	<b>\$1,329</b>
<hr/>	
<b>Total 2022 Income</b>	<b>\$1,799,210</b>

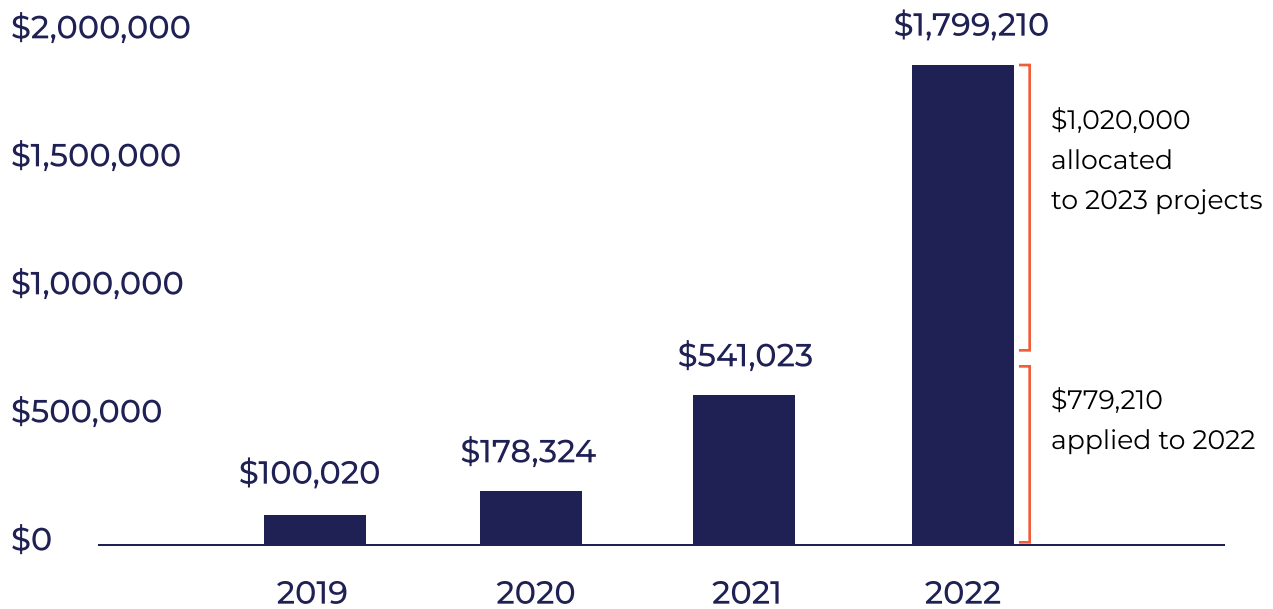
## Income by Percentage 2022-23

Our income streams are becoming increasingly diverse as we grow. The table below shows the charitable income breakdown by percentage, when including both 2022 and unaudited 2023 income.



Unless otherwise noted, all numbers represent audited financials for 2022.

## Annual Revenue by Year



## Highest Impact to Date

Administrative and fundraising allocations have allowed us to build our team, create operational infrastructures critical to our growth, and raise additional funds to scale our solutions. However, the vast majority of our funding goes directly to our programs.



For more details on Food for Climate League's financials, contact us at [info@foodforclimateleague.org](mailto:info@foodforclimateleague.org).





# FCL TEAM

Food for Climate League has grown to more than a dozen talented employees and contractors who believe in and show up every day in service of this mission to make climate-smart choices the norm.



**EVE TUROW-PAUL**  
Founder & Executive Director



**GESINA BECKERT**  
Director of Operations



**SOPHIE EGAN, MPH**  
Director of Strategy



**CHHAVI JATWANI**  
Director of Research & Innovation



**KELLY KILLIAN**  
Strategic Communications Lead



**DANIELLE BOLES, PHD**  
Senior Researcher



**JULIE DELOSE, PHD**  
Senior Researcher



**STEPHANIE SZEMETYLO**  
Senior Design Researcher



**TING TING EEO**  
Senior Project Manager



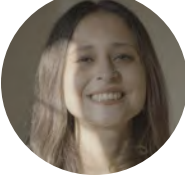
**KATIE SILVA**  
Research Project Manager



**VERONICA CHAMPINE, PHD**  
Research Associate



**KIDEST FIKREMARIAM**  
Research Associate



**SAYORI MUKHERJEE**  
Visual Design Specialist

## Special Contributors

Samie Blasingame, Jenn Brown, Stephen Mattson, Bryan Pabon

## Board of Directors

**Chiara Cecchini** Business Development Lead, Savor

**Lisa Feldman** Senior Director of Culinary, Menu Systems, and Impact Strategy, Sodexo North America

**Amy Kull Lithgow** Marketing Communications Engagement Lead, Google Food Program

**Pilar Carvajo Lucena** Head of Investments and Fund Partnerships, Third Derivative

**Sara Roversi** Founder and Director, Future Food Institute

**Lauren M. Scott** Chief Strategy Officer, International Fresh Produce Association

**Dorothy Shaver** Global Food Sustainability Director, Unilever

**Sweta Chakraborty, PhD** CEO, North America and Executive Board Member, We Don't Have Time

**Avery Cohn, PhD** Partner, Food and Agriculture, Ode

**Julia Collins** Founder/CEO, Planet FWD

**Sonalie Figueiras** Founder/CEO, Green Queen, Ekowarehouse, and Source Green

**Chavanne Hanson** Food Choice Architecture and Nutrition Manager, Google

**Cindy Judge** President/CEO, Sterling Rice Group

**Rachel Krupa** Founder/CEO, Krupa Consulting and The Goods Mart

**Lloyd Mann** Global Executive Chef/VP, Culinary, Sodexo

**Wendy Millet** Director, TomKat Ranch

**Rachael Petersen** Founder/Principal, Earthrise Services

**Alexis Rosenzweig** Investor, Advisor, Talent and Brand Manager

**Darel Scott** Founder, Earth in Color

**Jillian Semaan** VP, Sustainability, Ketchum

**Annie Svigals** Director, Food and Beverage, IDEO

**Rob Trice** Founding Partner, Better Food Ventures Founder, The Mixing Bowl

**Martin Tull** Senior Deputy Director Strategy, Innovation & Development American College of Lifestyle Medicine

**Jane Upritchard, PhD** Global Director, Nutrition and Well-Being, Compass at Google

**Ryan Shadrick Wilson** Founder/CEO, Boardwalk Collective LLC Executive Chairperson, Territory Foods Co-Chair, Investor Coalition on Nutrition (ICON)

## Academic Advisors

**Eva Monterrosa, PhD** Co-Founder, Food Culture Alliance and Program Lead, Consumer Demand Generation, GAIN

**Lesley Ann Noel, PhD** Assistant Professor, Dept. of Design Studies, North Carolina State University

**Ruth Schmidt, PhD** Associate Professor, Institute of Design, Illinois Institute of Technology

**Gregg Sparkman, PhD** Assistant Professor, Dept. of Psychology, Boston College

## Board Of Advisors

**David Barber** Co-Founder, Stone Barns Center for Food & Agriculture, Co-Founder/Owner, Blue Hill Founder, Almanac

**Adam Brumberg** Program Director, Cornell Food Industry Management Program

# FCL PARTNER ROUNDTABLE

Food for Climate League's Partner Roundtable brings together a growing ecosystem of organizations working at the intersection of food and climate for global knowledge-sharing and accelerated paths to action.

Through quarterly dialogues and presentations, these organizations along with FCL work together toward refining, codifying, and scaling best practices for communicating climate-friendly food choices.

In 2023, members of the FCL Partner Roundtable joined forces for a social media campaign tied to COP28 to amplify the importance of narrative change and behavioral science strategies in advancing food-related climate solutions.



“ Attending the roundtables is a great opportunity to hear updates on organizations working more broadly in the space. These are groups we likely wouldn't be connected with otherwise.”

— FCL Partner Roundtable member

# THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDERS

## Sponsors & Grantors

You are building an equitable, nutritious, and sustainable food system that is rooted in people's core needs, values, and diversity of cultures through your contribution.



## Individual Donors

Christopher Gardner

Sara Murray

And to everyone who has supported Food For Climate League, we are grateful.

Frank and Sandy Gelber

Adriane and Scott Turow

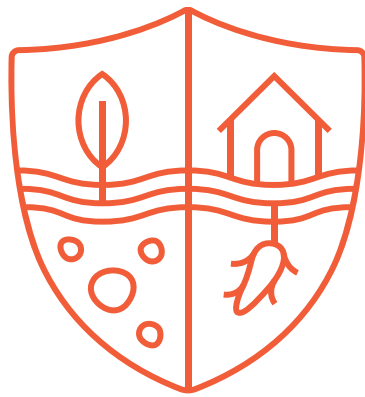
Jessica and Jeff Grossman

Annette Turow

Amy Kull Lithgow

Benjamin Eeo and Penney Ooi

To give, contact [eve@foodforclimateleague.org](mailto:eve@foodforclimateleague.org) or visit [FoodforClimateLeague.org/donate](https://FoodforClimateLeague.org/donate).



**FOOD FOR CLIMATE  
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