

# CAN'T FACE IT ALONE



**CLIMATE ACTION BEYOND THE INDIVIDUAL**

**PUBLIC DIALOGUE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FALL 2019**

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# BACKGROUND

Can't Face It Alone: Climate Action Beyond the Individual was a public dialogue held in Vancouver on Friday, November 29th of 2019. This dialogue was developed and hosted by students participating in Semester in Dialogue, a Simon Fraser University undergraduate program designed to inspire students with a sense of civic responsibility and encourage their passion for improving society.

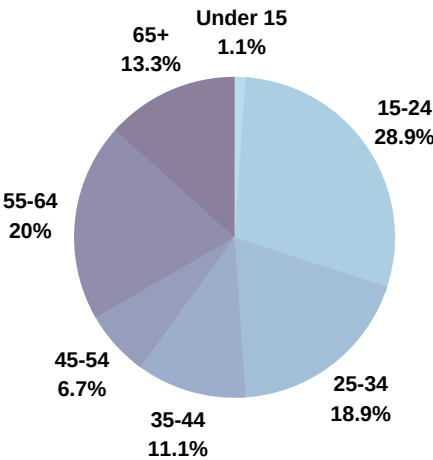
Our cohort wished to empower individuals to act collectively in the face of the climate crisis. Our primary goals in hosting this dialogue were to provide a means through which attendees could create connections with others, explore how to involve their communities in climate action, and develop tangible climate solutions.

Approximately 140 participants attended this event, including political representatives, environmental advocates, faith leaders, and everyday citizens excited to explore change made through collaboration and collective action.

This dialogue cultivated diverse discussions related to climate action beyond the individual. The following summary represents our key findings from these discussions and our recommendations for how organizations and community groups can advance climate action moving forward.

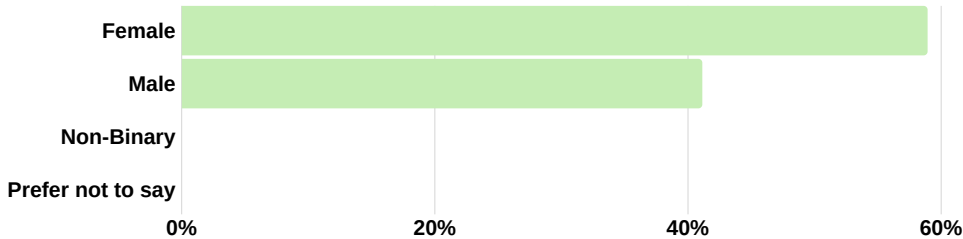


# PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS



Our participants were generally diverse in age, but the largest age groups in attendance were those **15-24** and **55-64**.

The majority of participants identified as **female**.



OVER  
**60%**

of participants had **no formal career or education related to climate or the environment**, implying that many individuals in attendance were invested in the subject of climate change in a personal capacity.

# FINDINGS

## 1 Community-oriented public dialogues can create hope and motivate action in response to the climate crisis.

The majority of this event's participants had no formal career or education related to climate change, and 36.6% of those surveyed had only engaged in collective climate action once or twice at most. This finding suggests participation in dialogues such as ours could lead to a growing awareness of and concern about the climate crisis among those sometimes excluded from climate change discourse. Many participants reported feelings of hope and empowerment by the end of the event, and **84.4% stated they were likely or very likely to participate in collective action after this event.**



## 2 Participants indicated that collaboration between sectors, organizations and communities is necessary to support collective rather than individual action.

Participants explored what actions they could take within their communities as well as the barriers that inhibit taking further action. A key frustration of participants was the lack of collaboration across sectors, organizations and communities. Many felt that increased collaboration would support individuals in taking collective action.

The more we **involve people** in this crisis the better may be the outcome

## 3 Participants connected more with the social impacts of climate change than the science behind it.

Participant's discussions placed little emphasis on climate science; instead, the majority of participants were keen to discuss the social impacts of the climate crisis in their own communities and communities across the world. We asked participants to share their hopes for the future, and several indicated that they hope for more discussions related to climate justice and equity.





# RECOMMENDATIONS

## 1 Support or host similar public forums.

A common sentiment shared by participants was that climate change forums with a focus on community and collective action were rare. Many expressed that this public dialogue helped to motivate them to act within their communities, and that they would like to see similar events take place in the future.

“Please do more of these.

“Encouraging forum - have more!

“Replicate this formula!



## 2 Collaborate with other organizations.

Collaboration with a variety of environmental organizations, religious groups, neighborhood houses, and other community groups helps to make climate action efforts more impactful by connecting with a greater diversity of audiences.

## 3 Focus on climate justice more than climate science.

Sharing stories about human experiences with climate impacts can resonate better with a more diverse audience than explaining its importance through science.



“ I hope we can continue to broaden the network and build the bridges that will allow us to come together as a region, a province, and a country to start leading the way towards meaningful climate change mitigation and adaptation. ”



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