

FALL
2023



GREENHOUSE IMPACT REPORT

GREENHOUSE

GreenHouse is a social impact incubator that offers programs, opportunities and a community for students to develop problem solving skills, to build innovative ideas and make new forms of sustainable impact around social or environmental change.

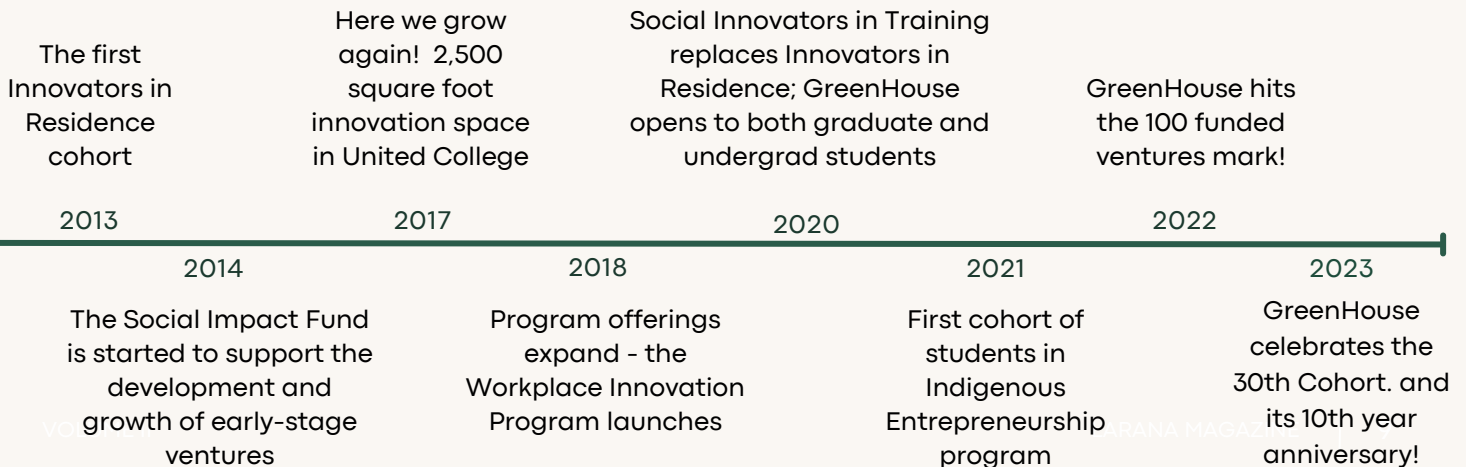


Hard to believe that another term has come and gone! This fall, we celebrated our 30th cohort of Social Innovators, awarded \$18,500 in social impact funding, and hosted workshops and events that reached hundreds of students across campus, the community, and beyond!

This Impact Report captures some of our most memorable moments from the Fall 2023 term. Check out all of the accomplishments that our GreenHouse students and alum have participated in!

The GreenHouse Team

GreenHouse Milestones





**Inside you'll
find...**

**Impact to
Date**

**30th Social Impact
Showcase**

**Safi
Venture Spotlight**

**Student
Testimonials**

**Alumni
Spotlights**

**Term
Recap**

**Changemaker
Labs**

Thank you

IMPACT TO DATE

Social Impact Fund

The Social Impact Fund (SIF) was established to support students in advancing their ideas into action. This fund is generously supported by donors in our community. We are so grateful for their support!



Ventures funded since 2013



Funding awarded Fall 2023



Students supported Fall 2023

GREENHOUSE & THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are set in place to help the world move towards a more just society. Below are the SDGs and in the centre of the box is the number of GreenHouse ventures that contribute towards those goals. We use the SDGs to understand how the collective actions of GreenHouse ventures contribute towards solving pressing challenges and building a better future.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



30th SOCIAL IMPACT SHOWCASE

November 22nd, 2023

**People's Choice
Winner +\$1,000**



Rising SheFarmers Founded by Lydia Madintin Konlan, Rising SheFarmers is alleviating poverty for rural Ghanaian women by empowering them through mushroom farming.

**6 Ventures
funded \$18.5k**

The **Social Impact Showcase** occurs each term and celebrates the amazing work that GreenHouse students accomplish through their journeys of social innovation and entrepreneurship. At the event, we announce grants for some early stage, high-potential ideas and hear from various student ventures. The People's Choice award is also revealed at the Showcase.

Real Research, awarded **\$500**, is providing undergraduate students with valuable research experience and is led by Ria Menon (Faculty of Science).

Rising SheFarmers, awarded **\$2,000**, is empowering rural women in Ghana to farm mushrooms for income and is led by Lydia Madintin Konlan (Faculty of Engineering).

WhereCafe, awarded **\$1,500**, is using artificial and authentic intelligence to empower solo female travellers to travel the world safely and is led by Nethy Sudswong (Faculty of Engineering) and Carla Castaneda.

Patient Companion, awarded **\$5,000**, is improving communication between nurses and patients. Led by Christy Lee (Faculty of Engineering).

Braille Buddy, awarded **\$1,500**, is designing computer-vision powered braille books to help low-vision individuals learn braille independently and is led by Shaahana Naufal, Julia Turner, Mathurah Ravigulan, and Ayla Oucevic (Faculty of Engineering).

Safi, awarded **\$8,000** Waterloo students Miraal Kabir, Martin Turuta and Daria Margarit, created Safi as the world's first off-the-grid pasteurization monitoring unit to prevent the spread of milk-borne diseases in East Africa.

SAFI

An Interview with Miraal Kabir from the Safi team

How has GreenHouse impacted you as an entrepreneur?

Joining GreenHouse has impacted me as an entrepreneur in 3 major ways. Firstly, the support and resources provided have taught me how to think like a successful entrepreneur and what important questions to ask myself when I am making business decisions. They have also been instrumental in refining our pitch for Safi and the way we convey our story and impact to others in a compelling way. Lastly, the support and resources from GreenHouse have taught me **the importance of collaboration in social entrepreneurship** and given me the opportunities to grow my network with like-minded individuals passionate about making social impact.

What do you wish more people knew about GreenHouse?

I wish more people knew about the holistic approach that GreenHouse takes in growing social ventures. Joining GreenHouse is not just an opportunity to gain funding. Instead, GreenHouse is **a community-driven incubator that fosters collaboration, innovation, and mentorship**. It is committed to developing not just successful businesses but socially responsible leaders who are dedicated to making a positive impact. The emphasis on creating a supportive ecosystem of social entrepreneurs with uWaterloo sets GreenHouse apart. I know that the relationships that I have made over the past two semesters with professors, mentors and other students will last me a lifetime.



Figure 1

Safi was awarded \$8,000 at this Social Impact Showcase this term



Figure 2

Safi team taking pictures with Rawandan farmers and displaying their first prototype

Safi

Safi was born in 2020 at the Challenge4ClimateAction competition, a competition aimed to combat the threats caused by climate change.

Safi is a cost-effective pasteurization tool that destroys harmful pathogens in milk. This innovation tool, combats three different SDG goals: Zero Hunger, Good Health & Wellbeing and Reduced Inequalities.

SAFI

An interview with Miraal Kabir from the Safi team

How have you evolved or changed since you started your business and joining GreenHouse?

Since starting my business and joining GreenHouse, I've undergone significant personal and professional growth. The incubator's structured program and mentorship have equipped me with a deeper understanding of the social impact landscape and how to adapt our business model to real-world feedback and stakeholders needs. It has also **enhanced my ability to navigate challenges through personal growth** and also through the support given in the community. Overall, I've become a more resilient and adaptable entrepreneur.

How do you define success in GreenHouse?

I think the beauty of GreenHouse is that **there is not only one way to define success**. Instead, we are provided with the tools and mentorship to grow, whether that means getting your first customer, growing your team or even simply starting a social media account.

Success for everyone is different, but as long as you learn something and take a step forward no matter how big or small, that is success in GreenHouse.

What has been your biggest challenge in GreenHouse, and how did you overcome it?

Our biggest challenge in GreenHouse actually happened last semester when we pitched at the Social Impact Fund for 10k and did not win any money. This felt like such a huge challenge at the time because we really needed the money to go pilot our device in East Africa and we felt as though we didn't have the resources to continue past the loss.

As a team, we kept telling ourselves that this challenge could be the best thing that happened to us if we were able to overcome it. Even though it felt so difficult in the moment, with the support of GreenHouse we took the learnings from our loss and revamped our pitch to convey our story better. This growth is what led us to gaining more funding to go pilot our device in East Africa and eventually winning the Social Impact Fund this semester! **A growth mindset** and support from GreenHouse is what allowed us to overcome the biggest challenge we had faced as a company.



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Student Testimonials

“Greenhouse gave us the confidence to pursue our venture while guiding us towards perfecting our ideas. The connections we have made both with GreenHouse staff and the other people in the program has been extremely valuable.”

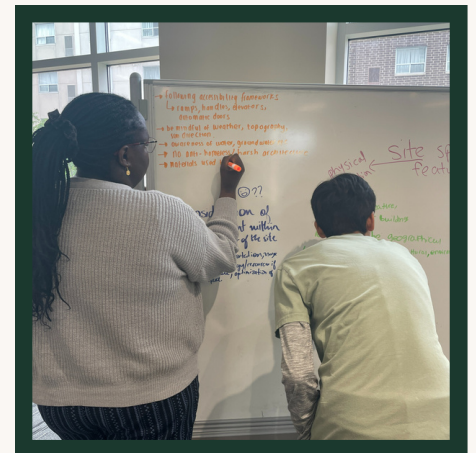
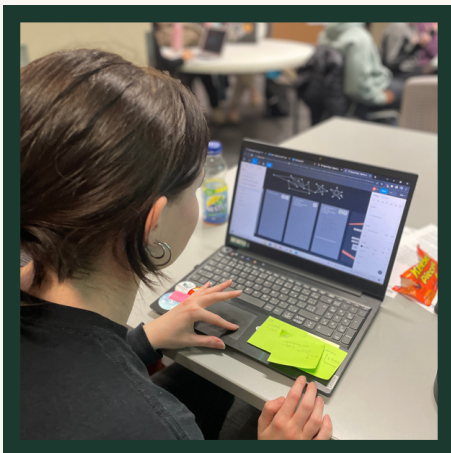
Fall 2023 Social Innovator in Training Student

“GreenHouse is a friendly and conducive environment to learn about inclusive innovation. The learning, mentorship, and connections facilitated by the program are what everyone needs to discover how to implement their innovative ideas successfully. I would definitely recommend this program to anyone seeking to advance their entrepreneurial journey.”

Abolade Makinde

“GreenHouse is a truly unique space at Waterloo. It allows like-minded individuals to gather together in a supportive, inclusive and innovative space. They help you so much in putting together various aspects of your problem and implementing a solution. They support you consistently, not only with funding but as mentors and advisors. I truly encourage anyone with a passion for creating change to join GreenHouse and see the difference you can make.” **Fall 2023 Social Innovator in Training Student**

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GreenHouse
purpose • action • impact

Alumni Spotlights

ENTREPRENEURSHIP AS A STUDENT AND STAFF MEMBER

Evan VanderMeer, GreenHouse alumna and Indigenous Entrepreneurship Coordinator at United College



Featured in Waterloo News

Evan was featured in the fall edition of the Waterloo Magazine. [“The Mushroom Startup with the Power to Heal”](#)

Promoting Indigenous entrepreneurship across Turtle Island

This term, Evan spent two weeks travelling across Turtle Island to visit our partner colleges and promote the Indigenous Entrepreneurship diploma program.

GREENHOUSE AFTER GRADUATION: ANNA'S JOURNEY

Your relationship with GreenHouse doesn't end after graduating from our programs!



Anna Kuepfer Wright participated in Social Innovators in Training in 2018 with her venture, SheCycle, creating antimicrobial reusable sanitary pads that could be locally sourced and distributed in Uganda.

Since graduating, Anna has continued to stay involved in the GreenHouse community, acting as a guest facilitator for Changemaker Labs and coaching students on green venture ideas. Anna recently accepted a job at KidsAbility, working on innovative projects with former GreenHouse staff member, Brendan Wylie-Toal.

GREENHOUSE ALUMNI PASS ON THEIR KNOWLEDGE

This term, GreenHouse alumni inspired the next generation of innovators via our **Changemaker Labs** program. Alumni led hands-on workshops on traditional ecological knowledge and hosted insightful tours, allowing students to step inside a unique insect-producing shipping container.

Five GreenHouse grads facilitated each week of our Design Sprint challenge weaving in their unique experiences as young entrepreneurs – and providing valuable insights to the budding innovators!



TERM RECAP

500+ students engaged through class collaborations, events, and workshops



10 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

GreenHouse celebrated 10 years! This fall, we reconvened 80 alumni and friends to celebrate the past decade of innovators making the world a better place. Since the launch of GreenHouse in 2013, we have seen ideas started on sketches and sticky notes evolve into powerful initiatives touching the lives of people in our community and beyond.



JACK ROSEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP PANEL

GreenHouse students came together to share their entrepreneurship journeys with curious Environment students at a panel event in November, promoting the 2024 Jack Rosen Memorial Award. Justin Succar, Lauren Smith, and Jason Amri shared their experiences with green entrepreneurship and why students should apply to the Jack Rosen pitch competition.

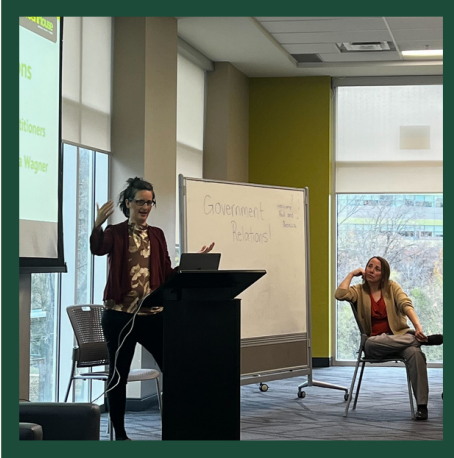


HLTH 480: COMPETENCIES IN HEALTH

This term, GreenHouse collaborated with several classes including HLTH 480: Competencies in Health. This new capstone-style course connected students to local organizations working on real-world health challenges, ranging from climate anxiety to health communication to early disease detection. Students pitched solutions to problems identified by 8 health organization collaborators.

TERM RECAP

500+ students engaged through class collaborations, events, and workshops



GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

Participants learned important tips and tricks on how to speak to government officials. MPs and political persons to help grow their ventures.

Rebecca Wagner and Paul Heidebrecht gave their insight on how to approach politicians when pitching student ventures.



HOW CAN QUANTUM SOLUTIONS IMPACT ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES?

This term, GreenHouse joined Quantum Ethics to explore how quantum and the environment might interconnect to make a social impact.

The event focuses on the ethical implications of emerging technologies and why social impact ventures can use quantum technology to their benefit.



COMMUNITY BUILDING

Over the past decade, the GreenHouse community has evolved into a vibrant, passionate and well-connected collection of people in Waterloo Region and beyond.

This term was no different. From Changemakers joining SIIT in future terms, to alumni facilitating workshops and providing coaching, to community partners who empower young minds year after year - we appreciate and thank each member of our community for their contributions!



CHANGEMAKER LABS

Changemaker Labs for Green Youth is a newly established program at GreenHouse designed to drive climate action and advance Canada's transition to net zero by 2050 by creating work integrated learning opportunities through on-campus and in-community partnerships with an **inter-generational participant model**.

This term focused on the TransformWR focus #5 **"Transforming the ways we produce, consume and waste"** with a special focus on food systems. Participants engaged in activity streams such as the 'Transform sessions', design sprints and content creation labs.





Pictured: Tania with Judene Pretti of the Work Learn Institute who collaborated with us on inter-generational program modelling

Challenge Statement: "How might we create more accessible, equitable and just pathways to food systems in Waterloo Region?"

FAST FACTS

- **54 participants** ages 15-65
- **5 community partners** contributed context, concepts and contacts to help participants better understand food systems in Waterloo Region for our design sprint challenge (pictured below)
- **6 partners** led our transform sessions and supported our content creation labs

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Meeting local climate action goals is an all hands on deck project. We each have a role to play. Awareness, attitude and action changes need to occur.

With that in our grasp, we can exercise our personal and professional power to make a difference. We hope to see you at future iterations of the **Changemaker Labs** program as a partner, participant, facilitator or volunteer!

- Lily, Changemaker Labs designer



TESTIMONIALS

The Great Big Challenge design sprint hosted by GreenHouse, is not just a competition; it facilitates teamwork, fostering an environment where ideas flourish in a collaborative space -- it's a catalyst for positive change. It's an ode to collective ingenuity, creativity, and the belief that our shared efforts can reshape communities for the better - **Zelda**

It was a really valuable experience to be able to build a community with many different generations while working towards solving a problem that we were all passionate about. It was a truly unique opportunity to bring these groups together and one that I haven't seen in a lot of my past community work - **Tesni**

OUR SUPPORTERS

Thank you to United College and the Business Higher Education Roundtable for supporting our programs.

We also extend special appreciation to our community of donors that contribute towards the Social Impact Fund and help our students grow.



THE GreenHouse TEAM



**Tania
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Director



**Erin
Hogan**

Programs
Manager



**Lily
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Manager



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GreenHouse

purpose • action • impact



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The GreenHouse team
past and present!