



# Acceleration Fund

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Amanda Belles, Communications & Marketing Manager  
(617) 221-9671; [abelles@secondnature.org](mailto:abelles@secondnature.org)

## Climate Solutions Acceleration Fund Winners Announced

Boston, Massachusetts (June 3, 2020) - Today, [Second Nature](#) - a Boston-based NGO who accelerates climate action in, and through, higher education - announced the colleges and universities that were awarded grant funding through the [Second Nature Climate Solutions Acceleration Fund \(the Acceleration Fund\)](#).

The opportunity to apply for funding was first announced at the [2020 Higher Education Climate Leadership Summit](#). The Acceleration Fund is dedicated to supporting innovative cross-sector climate action activities driven by colleges and universities.

Second Nature created the Acceleration Fund with generous support from Bloomberg Philanthropies, as part of a larger project to accelerate higher education's leadership in cross-sector, place-based climate action.

"Local leaders are at the forefront of climate action because they see the vast benefits to their communities, from cutting energy bills to protecting public health," **said Antha Williams, head of environmental programs at Bloomberg Philanthropies.** "It's fantastic to see these forward-thinking colleges and universities advance their bold climate solutions, ensuring continued progress in our fight against the climate crisis."

**The institutions who were awarded funding are** (additional information about each is further below):

Agnes Scott College (Decatur, GA)  
Bard College (Annandale-on-Hudson, NY)  
California State University, Chico (Chico, CA)  
Central Community College (Hastings, Columbus, Grand Island, NE)  
Colgate University (Hamilton, NY)  
Institute of American Indian Arts (Santa Fe, NM)  
The University of Arizona (Tucson, AZ)  
University at Albany - State University of New York (Albany, NY)  
University of Pittsburgh (Pittsburgh, PA)  
Wentworth Institute of Technology (Boston, MA)

**In addition to the grant awardees, there were numerous colleges and universities who received Honorable Mention:**

Portland State University (Portland, OR)  
Rutgers University (Camden, New Brunswick, NJ)  
Tecnológico de Monterrey (Monterrey, Mexico)  
University of Colorado at Boulder (Boulder, CO)  
University of Massachusetts at Amherst (Amherst, MA)  
University of Wisconsin-Madison (Madison, WI)

Colleges and universities who are [Climate Leadership Network](#) signatories and/or members of the [University Climate Change Coalition \(UC3\)](#) were eligible to apply for funding. Projects eligible for the funding included those that would use the funding for implementation, or to support climate action planning activities. A project also had to be able to advance cross-sector (campus and external stakeholders) climate action in some way.

Priority was given to schools that would foster long-term campus-community partnerships; have the potential to scale their work beyond the grant term (end of June 2021); climate action that would be inclusive for all segments of the population; and those that promoted equitable and just outcomes.

By the application deadline, Second Nature had received over 50 proposals. Not only were the proposed projects diverse, but so were the characteristics of the colleges and universities who applied, including but not limited to: public schools, private schools, community colleges, minority serving institutions, and schools of various sizes and locations - including from outside of the United States.

“We were positively overwhelmed and impressed with the quantity and quality of submitted proposals,” **stated Tim Carter, President of Second Nature**. “It emphasized that even in the midst of a global pandemic, the higher education sector not only understands how crucial it is to continue to accelerate climate action, but is committed to doing so. Congratulations to the institutions who were awarded funding for this round, and to all schools for submitting such incredible proposals.”

The following is information on each grant recipient and brief information about their proposed projects.



### **Agnes Scott College**

Agnes Scott is working with the City of Decatur on a joint Climate Resilience Plan and will use the grant funding to more quickly complete that Plan, while also simultaneously accelerating several priority projects. Their goal is to be able to have the Plan wrapped up by this summer.

*“Agnes Scott College is honored to be among the colleges and universities selected for the inaugural round of these climate action grants. Completing our climate resilience plan with the City of Decatur is a priority, especially now while we are learning how to be resilient in our response to COVID 19. At Agnes Scott we see climate change as one of the most challenging issues of our time, and we are preparing our students to have the tools to respond. This grant gives a significant boost to our efforts.” - President Leocadia I. Zak*

## **Bard College**

### **Bard College**

Bard College is working to implement a project to create up to three types of collection drives for items that contain refrigerants, while aiming to map the ecosystem of refrigerants management in both Ulster and Dutchess counties in New York. The goal is to be able to establish a process that can then be replicated.

*“Refrigerant management is one of the surprise solutions to reversing global warming. Thanks to Second Nature, Bard will map the pathway of these gases from our campus and community to reclamation or destruction. We can help inform policy about sustainable options for these super greenhouse gases; tackling an issue locally that has planetary-level implications.”  
- Laurie Husted, Chief Sustainability Officer*



### **California State University, Chico**

Chico State will use the funding to quantify the amount of carbon that is stored in the more than 5,000 acres of diverse land (all with carbon sequestration potential) that they own, and develop

adaptive management plans that will identify implementation opportunities to promote the storage of carbon across these landscapes.

*“We are deeply appreciative to have been selected to receive a Second Nature inaugural Climate Solutions Acceleration Fund award. As a founding signatory of the Presidents’ Climate Commitment, building a sustainable and resilient campus and community are central to the mission of Chico State. These funds will assist in measuring soil organic carbon in our managed lands; allowing us and our surrounding region to develop management plans to mitigate the effects of climate change.” – Chico State President Gayle E. Hutchinson*



### **Central Community College**

Central Community College will use the funding to support the installation of a new five-bike share solar powered Bluetooth docking station on their Hastings campus. Additionally it will support the upgrade of their existing docking stations from lithium battery powered keypads to solar powered Bluetooth docking stations.

*“Central Community College is greatly appreciative to the Climate Solutions Acceleration Fund and Second Nature Inc. for this grant, which will help fund a Bike Share program with a solar docking station at our Hastings Campus,” said Benjamin Newton, CCC environmental Sustainability Director. “CCC has Bike Share programs at its Columbus and Grand Island campuses and because of the grant, our Hastings students and staff will be able to benefit from a free and healthy alternative form of transportation.”*



### **Colgate University**

Since 2016, a dedicated group of Colgate faculty, students, and administrators have been working with Hamilton (NY) elected officials and local residents to reduce their community’s carbon footprint, while also taking action to become a more climate resilient community. This funding will help support the completion of community and government operation Climate Action Plans for the Town and Village of Hamilton, NY.

*"Colgate is honored to be an inaugural recipient of Second Nature's Climate Solutions Acceleration Fund. Colgate enjoys a wonderful working relationship with the Town and Village of Hamilton, NY to build campus and community climate resilience. This award will be used to catalyze our efforts and strengthen our community partnerships." - Colgate President Brian W. Casey*



INSTITUTE OF  
AMERICAN INDIAN ARTS

### **Institute of American Indian Arts**

The Institute of American Indian Arts (IAIA) will be developing and delivering a series of Continuing Education podcasts and webcasts that will be made available (free of charge) to the residents of the Rancho Viejo housing community. The podcasts and webcasts will educate the community on water-saving landscaping and household solar panels.

*"IAIA is grateful to receive a grant from the Climate Solutions Action Fund. Our commitment to energy efficiency and waste reduction is fundamental to our mission as a Tribal College and a Land-Grant institution. This grant will assist us in developing webcasts and podcasts for our neighboring Indigenous communities that share our dedication to decreasing our carbon footprint and water use." - President Dr. Robert Martin*



THE UNIVERSITY  
OF ARIZONA

### **The University of Arizona**

The funding will support The University of Arizona's creation of Fellowships that will aide in the engagement of faculty, students, and community representatives to support the development of a regional Climate Action Plan involving The University of Arizona, the City of Tucson, and Pima County.

*"The University of Arizona is pleased to have been selected for the Climate Solutions Acceleration Fund award from Second Nature. We are absolutely committed to the principles of the University Climate Change Coalition and will use this award to accelerate climate action through fellowships for students, faculty and community members. This fellowship program demonstrates our commitment to collaborative projects between the University and the communities in the greater Tucson area." - President Robert C. Robbins*



### **University at Albany - State University of New York (SUNY)**

In partnership with five SUNY campuses (Binghamton, Buffalo, SUNY Maritime, Stonybrook and Plattsburgh), the University at Albany will use the funding to help refine the SUNY Climate Adaptation Curriculum, Engagement & Research (ACER) Initiative.

*“The University at Albany remains committed to partnering with higher education leaders to drive our nation’s climate action,” said **UAlbany President Havidán Rodríguez**. “This support from the Climate Solutions Acceleration Fund is an important catalyst accelerating faculty and student-engaged research aimed at strengthening preparedness and supporting hazard risk mitigation as we face more extreme weather – and increasingly severe and frequent disasters – linked to climate change.”*



### **University of Pittsburgh**

The funding will help support energy modeling at the district level for the Oakland neighborhood of Pittsburgh, which is the third largest downtown in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The modeling will include strategic energy planning for two separate, cooperatively owned district energy facilities, a growth analysis, and carbon impact analysis. The Oakland Energy Plan is critically important to helping the City of Pittsburgh and its universities reach their carbon goals.

*“Addressing global climate change is a vital issue—one that can’t be reduced to a single issue or a single panacea,” said **Chancellor Patrick Gallagher**. “I am thankful for Second Nature’s support, which will advance our quest for carbon neutrality and our role in combating climate change in truly meaningful ways.”*



### **Wentworth Institute of Technology**

Wentworth Institute of Technology will use the funding to host a cross-sector forum on microgrids for the Wentworth community and neighborhood stakeholders. Students will have the opportunity to learn how a microgrid works, how it supports clean energy and resiliency, and how teams must engage with stakeholders to develop cross-sector partnerships. A summary of the program will be shared with the City of Boston to foster cross-sector relationships as prioritized in the City’s Climate Action Plan.

*“Wentworth has been dedicated to fostering and sustaining green principles and programs for a very long time,” said **President Mark A. Thompson**. “Promoting sustainability is in the university’s DNA—a top priority of students and leadership alike. We appreciate Second Nature’s advocacy and are proud to be included in the agency’s Acceleration Fund program.”*

**About Second Nature:**

Second Nature is committed to accelerating climate action in, and through, higher education. This is accomplished by mobilizing a diverse array of higher education institutions to act on bold climate commitments, to scale campus climate initiatives, and to create innovative climate solutions. Second Nature aims to align, amplify, and bridge the sector’s efforts with other global leaders to advance urgent climate priorities. [Secondnature.org](https://secondnature.org).

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