



Impact Report

2019

Climate Access



Message from our Executive Director

June 2020

2019 seems so long ago and everything has changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and uprisings against racism and police brutality. We've taken a look back and summarized the impact [Climate Access](#) delivered in building political and public will, and the social capital needed to spur equitable climate action. That's outlined in the *Impact Report* below.

Our minds, however, are focused on what's ahead. On the challenges recovering from the global health crisis presents as well as the opportunities to accelerate a just transition to inclusive low-carbon economies and lifestyles. We are thinking through the communication and engagement tools, strategies and training climate leaders need to continue advancing efforts to prepare for climate impacts and reduce emissions. Now more than ever, bold political leadership and an engaged public are required to increase climate, health and economic resilience.

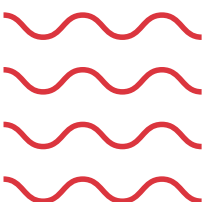
In 2019, we made a number of important changes at Climate Access that place us in a strong position to face the new times. Based on an evaluation conducted at the end of 2018 which included feedback from our members,

we decided to hone in on replicating the communication, engagement and training approaches we developed that have had the greatest success in changing the climate conversation and activating broad segments of the public. As a result, we now have three core programs:

1. **RESOURCE AND TRAINING CENTER**
2. **STRATEGIC FRAMING AND NARRATIVE DEVELOPMENT**
3. **ACTIVATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

These shifts in our organizational approach will be reflected soon in our member newsletter and website.

Through the **RESOURCE AND TRAINING CENTER** (formerly the Climate Access Network), we've been responding to COVID-19 by providing workshops and tools on how to make the case for climate action during the pandemic, build support for policy change and motivate people to take action while being sensitive to the disruptions and uncertainties being faced. We are looking to expand and sustain these offerings



throughout the year while continuing to provide the one-stop-shop for the latest climate communication research and best practices our base of more than 3,600 nonprofit, government, and academic climate leaders rely on.

Climate Access has a long track record working with organizations, government agencies and networks to develop values-based frames and narratives that reach beyond the choir, break down polarization and motivate action. Through the **STRATEGIC FRAMING AND NARRATIVE DEVELOPMENT** program, we are working directly with advocates and government leaders to frame climate issues, create compelling narratives about the challenge, choice and opportunity the climate emergency presents and increase their capacity to be effective climate storytellers. We are currently constructing and amplifying a global just transition narrative in partnership with advocates from around the world.

With the **ACTIVATION AND ENGAGEMENT** program, Climate Access works with nonprofits and government agencies to involve a diverse range of community members in creating and

implementing climate action plans and programs. The program includes the following core activation and engagement models:

- **Prepare:** Co-Exploring Risks and Developing Solutions
- **Look Ahead:** Leveraging Virtual Reality for Climate Action
- **Climate Community Leaders:** Increasing Local Capacity and Resilience

Through these models, we are applying and refining climate engagement best practices to reach thousands of people in communities across the United States including those most at risk from the impacts of climate change and often left out of local decision-making, increase their awareness of climate risks and motivate them to take steps to prepare for impacts and cut emissions.

I'm proud to share highlights from the past year and a snapshot of our focus for 2020 as we work to build support for climate action during COVID-19 recovery.

Thank you for being a part of Climate Access and stay well.



Cara Pike
Executive Director, Climate Access

Resource and Training Center

Climate Access provides more than 3,600 members from nonprofits, government agencies, academic institutions and community-based organizations with access to an extensive collection of public opinion and social science research, interactive skill-building training, problem-solving sessions and communication and engagement tips and tools to raise the communications capacity of the field.

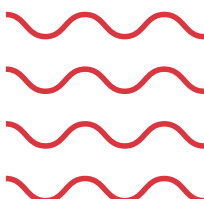


In 2019, we covered topics on the Climate Access website and online and in-person training sessions including generating [community leadership](#) for climate action, finding the political will to [phase out fossil fuels](#) and understanding the narrative driving the [Global Climate Strike](#) movement. Climate Access members benefited from the opportunity to apply communications and engagement best practices to their work. Members commented that we offer the best tools in engaging different audiences and appreciate the focus on best practices and lessons learned.

“I love how Climate Access has exemplified that information from concept to application.”

“Climate Access turns complex data into plain language. In that regard, they play an important curatorial and translation function. Their products are far superior to generic climate framing.”

In 2020, our focus is on sharing best practices in communicating about the need for a just transition away from fossil fuels to low-carbon energy and economies and engaging stakeholders who are not yet concerned about or activated on climate change and those most affected by climate impacts. We made a quick pivot early in the pandemic to respond to the COVID-19 crisis by providing communication [tips and tools](#) via a [webinar](#) with [expert panelists](#) on www.climateaccess.org. We aim to expand this work throughout the year as climate leaders navigate how to advance equitable climate solutions during a time of disruption.



Strategic Framing and Narrative Development

Climate Access is using values-based frames and narratives to shift the climate conversation and build support for policy change and new social norms. We provide strategic guidance and training to individual organizations and government agencies as well as networks of groups to harmonize and amplify outreach strategies.



In 2019, Climate Access developed recommendations on how to frame the need to phase out the production of oil and gas and accelerate a global just energy transition for the Global Gas & Oil Network (GGON). We helped GGON members advance the narrative at COP25 including working with Climate Nexus to land media coverage of GGON's *Oil, Gas and the Climate Report* outlining the production threat over the next five years. This resulted in stories in *The Guardian*, *The Herald Scotland*, *The NM Political Report*, *Axios* and *GreenBiz* and many other outlets. Climate Access also partnered with The YEARS Project to produce the *Carbon Bomb* video summary of the report, which has been viewed more than 70,000 times.

Last year we also had the opportunity to create framing research and recommendations for local governments to improve sustainable consumption communications on behalf of the Urban Sustainability Directors Network (USDN). The *Smart Shift* report is being used by municipal leaders across the U.S. and Canada for guidance on how to talk about reducing consumption as a way to reduce emissions and generate economic, health and other benefits.



For 2020, the focus is on amplifying the need for a global just transition as part of COVID-19. Climate Access is working with Stand.Earth and a team of research, policy and engagement experts from around the globe to launch the *Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty* campaign aimed at limiting fossil fuel expansion and promoting international cooperation for a just transition. Communication efforts are underway and the treaty is garnering media attention as reflected in a recent editorial placed in *Reuters*. Connected to the treaty campaign is a local grassroots initiative comparable to Nuclear Free Cities – *SAFE Cities*. Climate Access is working with Stand.Earth on a communication plan for SAFE with the goal of increasing the number of local groups advocating their local governments to place restrictions on fossil fuels and the number of cities that put SAFE policies in effect.

Activation and Engagement

Climate Access has created the following models for building stakeholder activation and engagement:

- Look Ahead
- Prepare
- Climate Community Leaders

Climate Access is pioneering innovative engagement approaches that are reaching and mobilizing thousands of Americans in dozens of communities across the country on behalf of nonprofits, government agencies and businesses. We use social science, polling, best practices from the field and stakeholder interviews to inform the design of outreach strategies and work with our partners to implement and test the approach. We distill lessons learned from our hands-on projects and share them with Climate Access members so effective strategies and models can be replicated in other contexts.



Look Ahead

Climate Access has been testing the use of virtual reality as a way to increase awareness of climate impacts and engage community members in local decision making and climate action for years, starting in Marin County, California. The approach has proven particularly effective in reaching youth and those outside the climate choir. We created the *Look Ahead* model to apply what works in other communities.

In 2019, we developed *Look Ahead Hermosa Beach* with the City of Hermosa Beach, U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), and WhiteSpaceVR to raise awareness of climate impacts and solutions. The immersive 360° virtual reality tour allows community members to visualize how areas in the community will be affected by sea-level rise, what is possible if climate action is taken, show support for different climate actions and access resources that support taking action. The campaign launched in January 2020 and now Climate Access is working with the neighboring City of Manhattan Beach on a *Look Ahead* project.

Prepare

Climate Access works on behalf of government agencies to involve community stakeholders as partners in developing and implementing climate action plans and programs.

We worked throughout 2019 in collaboration with the Geos Institute for Louisville Metro Government in Kentucky to develop the [*Prepare Louisville Climate Adaptation Plan*](#). The Climate Access team helped the Louisville Metro staff communicate information in accessible ways and engage more than 2,000 community stakeholders in shaping Louisville's climate adaptation plan through surveys, toolkit, and community dialogue events. This work wrapped up in 2020 with the release of the draft plan on Earth Day. The *Prepare* model is ready for replication in other communities.



Climate Community Leaders

In 2019, Climate Access turned the community activation program we developed for the City of Boston ([*Greenovate Community Leaders*](#)) into a replicable program for other communities.

Through the *Climate Community Leaders* program, local governments partner with and provide training and resources to community members to engage their social networks in taking climate action. The program creates a seat at the table for frontline communities disproportionately impacted by climate change to help shape local policy and be part of the solution. A toolkit is offered in five languages and stipends provided to encourage broad participation. We will launch a similar program with the City of Cambridge in 2020 and are creating a plan to expand to other locations.



The Climate Access team is grateful for our supporters, whose generous contributions are helping us develop and implement innovative climate communications and engagement initiatives.

We need your support to expand and advance our work in 2020. Please consider making a [donation to Climate Access](#) today.

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