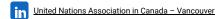


11th Think Global Link Local 2025 Holiday Inn Vancouver-Centre Broadway March 7, 2025 | Friday | Registration Opens at 8 AM

Connect with us online:















Hosted by the United Nations Association of Canada, Vancouver (UNAC-V) in collaboration with the NGO and Non-profit Studies program at Kwantlen Polytechnic University, Think Global Link Local (TGLL) is an award-winning annual networking event that was recognized by UNESCO's IFIP (International Forum of Inclusion Practitioners) Global Inclusion Awards 2024.

TGLL connects undergraduates and recent graduates with local Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Non-Profit Organizations (NPOs), Civil Society Groups, and Public Service Institutions from the Greater Vancouver Area.

We are thrilled to welcome you back to Think Global Link Local 2025! This year marks the 11th year of TGLL, and we are delighted to have you join us on this beautiful morning

PROGRAM GUIDE CONTENTS

- Event Schedule
- Keynote Speaker, Leilani Farha
- Participating Organizations and their "Table Captain"
- Coffee Raffle Information
- Special Thanks
- Feedback
- NOTES section for writing down questions, comments, and/or contact information

Notes

UNAC-Vancouver acknowledges that the land on which we gather is the unceded territory of the Coast Salish Peoples, including the territories of the x^wməθk^wəýəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səlílwəta?/ Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.



PART I

8:00 AM

Networking Breakfast & Registration

8:55 AM

General Announcement

9:00 AM

Opening Remarks by Sameer Esmail, UNAC-Vancouver President

9:10 AM

Introduction of Keynote Speaker by George Somerwill, Past UNAC-Vancouver President

9:12 AM

Keynote Address by Leilani Farha, Global Director of The Shift | Q&A

9:47 AM

Participant Welcome by:

Larissa Petrillo (Lead Advisor, Work-Integrated Learning, Kwantlen Polytechnic University) | Sarah Fessenden (Coordinator, NGO and Nonprofit Studies, Department of Anthropology, KPU)

9:50 AM

TGLL Event Overview and Guidelines by Sameer Esmail, UNAC-Vancouver President

PART II

9:55 AM

Networking Session 1 (20 minutes)

10:15 AM

Seat Shuffling

10:20 AM

Networking Session 2 (20 minutes)

10:40 AM

Seat Shuffling | Coffee break (10 minutes)

10:50 AM

Networking Session 3 (20 minutes)

11:10 AM

Seat Shuffling

11:15 AM

Networking Session 4 (20 minutes)

11:35 AM

Coffee Raffle Draw | Announcement of Winners by TGLL Committee Chair, Soon-Lan Lee Switzer

11:50 AM

Closing Remarks by Sameer Esmail, UNAC-Vancouver President

12:00 PM

End of Program | Feedback



LEILANI FARHA

Global Director, The Shift Former UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Housing



Leilani Farha is the Global Director of The Shift (make-the-shift.org), an international human rights organization focused on the right to housing. She is a legal practitioner and holds a BA (Hons), LLB, and MSW from the University of Toronto. Ms. Farha served as United Nations Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing between 2014 and 2020. She is recognized by governments and grassroots movements alike for her human rights expertise and is a leading voice globally on international human rights law. She is the author of the first UN Guidelines for the implementation of the right to housing. She has spearheaded and co-authored standards on homelessness and the financialization of housing and has produced the first human rights guidelines for investors in residential real estate. She has worked with cities and national governments across the globe to assist them in the implementation of human rights.

Ms. Farha is a regular contributor to news outlets including The Guardian, The New York Times, The Globe and Mail, CBC Canada, DW, and elsewhere. She currently co-hosts a podcast called PUSHBACK Talks and is the protagonist in the documentary film, PUSH, about the financialization of housing. Leilani also serves as a Commissioner at the International Commission of Jurists and is the former Executive Director of the non-profit organization, Canada Without Poverty.

notes





AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL



We are a global movement of people fighting injustice and promoting human rights. Members of Amnesty International in Canada campaign on human rights in the Americas and in a number of other countries where the actions of

the Canadian government and of Canadians can have the greatest impact.



Mariann Northeast

Senior Grassroots Activist Leader

My name is Mariann Northeast, I have been an Amnesty International member since 1983 and a Grassroots Activist Leader since 1989. I have always been committed to working to abolish the death penalty worldwide, stopping Torture and defending human rights defenders around the world.



Katrina Chau

Grassroots Activist Leader

Katrina is a lawyer, human rights advocate, and grassroots activist leader. Prior to joining Amnesty, she specialized in the rights of refugees and migrants challenging negative decisions in the Federal Court of Canada. She assisted victims of human trafficking as well as low-income migrant workers at risk of labour exploitation. Katrina currently promotes activism in the community pertaining to the rights of refugees.

ASIA PACIFIC FOUNDATION OF CANADA



The Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada is a national not-for-profit organization and think tank focused on promoting Canada's knowledge of and ties with the countries and peoples of the Asia Pacific. It achieves this by

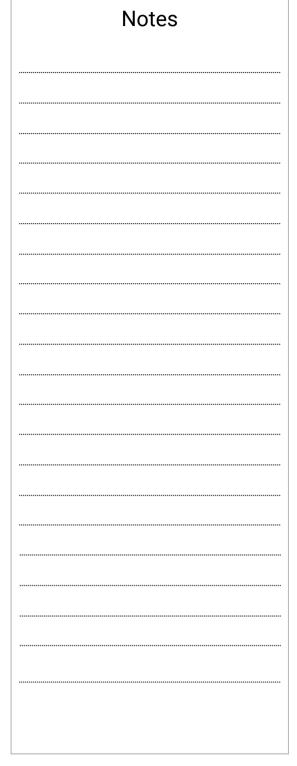
conducting policy research and analysis and bringing together experts from Canada and Asia to discuss economics, politics, security, technology, the environment, and other key issues.



Erin Williams

Senior Program Manager, Skills and Competencies

Erin Williams is a Senior Program Manager at the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada, a not-





for-profit think tank focused on Canada's trans-Pacific ties. Her work includes Asia competence programming and editorial support. Prior to joining APF Canada, Erin worked for the Canadian Member Committee of the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP). She serves on the Advisory Board of the Canada China Forum.

CANADIAN RED CROSS



Canadian Red Cross

The mission of the Canadian Red Cross is to help people and communities in Canada and around the world in times of need and support them in strengthening their resilience. The Canadian Red Cross Society part of the largest

humanitarian network in the world. This network includes the International Committee of the Red Cross, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and 191 National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

and partnership-building.



Maram Suleiman Emergency Management Coordinator

Maram Suleiman is an Emergency Management Coordinator at the Canadian Red Cross with a background in economics and a degree in Emergency and Disaster Management from the Justice Institute of British Columbia. With over ten years of experience, she has worked with Oxfam GB, Human Relief Foundation, and IREX International, addressing human rights, refugees, gender equality, and youth development. At the Red Cross, Maram focuses on improving disaster response, volunteer coordination, and community preparedness, building a strong reputation for collaboration

EVERGREEN FOUNDATION



Our mission is to empower youth to be informed, actively engaged, and lead an action towards a progressive change in the world. Through self-reflection and growth, contributors will be activated and inspire others as stewards of positive global change.

Notes		





Serena Verma

Serena Verma is a Family Doctor dedicated to advancing the understanding of health determinants. She lives and works on the traditional lands of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations (Vancouver, BC).

Balancing patient care and medical education, Serena collaborates with learners at the University of British Columbia. A proud mother of three, she enjoys exploring and reflecting with her family and friends. Serena's passion for teaching and health has led to her involvement with the Evergreen Foundation, where she is excited to see its work translated into action.



Shilpi Shah Director

Shilpi Shah is a passionate advocate for community engagement and sustainable development, with a career dedicated to improving lives and fostering innovation. As a founding partner and director of the Evergreen Foundation, she works to advance initiatives aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Over her eighteen-year career, Shilpi has led impactful community projects, including wellness workshops, carnivals, and education initiatives. Her focus on holistic approaches and collaboration has driven positive change, particularly in healthcare and community wellbeing. Shilpi is committed to creating a more equitable and sustainable future through innovation, compassion, and collective progress.



Pratibha Pachchigar Director

Pratibha is a passionate educator with over 20 years of teaching experience. Born, raised, and educated in England, she taught there for a decade before continuing her career at St. George's School, where she remains dedicated to shaping young minds.

A lifelong advocate for community service,

Notes



Pratibha has been committed to volunteering since childhood. She has been actively involved with the Evergreen Foundation since its inception and looks forward to contributing to its success. A proud mother of two, she enjoys running, reading, and spending time with loved ones in her free time.

GLOBAL SHAPERS COMMUNITY - VANCOUVER



Created by the World Economic Forum, the Global Shapers are a global community of over 10,000 young leaders aged between 18-30, working to create positive change in their local and global communities. Operating for over 8

years, the Vancouver Hub of the Global Shapers community works on tackling some of the most pressing issues facing our city and our world, while fostering a dynamic community of impact leaders in our city.



Matin Moradkhan

Vice-Curator

Matin Moradkhan is the Vice-Curator of Global Shapers Vancouver, committed to driving positive change through youth-led initiatives locally and globally. A passionate advocate for mental health equity, she founded the Talk Mental Health Foundation to promote education for students' mental fitness. Pursuing her Master of Global Health at McMaster, she also serves as a UNICEF Canada youth mentor and official advocate.

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY - GREATER VANCOUVER



Habitat for Humanity Greater Vancouver is committed to creating sustainable and inclusive communities by providing affordable, safe housing for families, empowering youth through skills training, and promoting environmental stewardship through responsible

deconstruction practices. With the help of volunteers, corporate partnerships and generous donors, Habitat for Humanity gives Partner Families a hand-up into affordable homeownership.

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Persis Ahrestani Chief Executive Officer

Persis Ahrestani, CEO at Habitat for Humanity Greater Vancouver, was recognized as one of Business in Vancouver's "40 under 40" business leaders for 2024. With over 20 years of experience as a results-driven CPA, she has led organizations through high growth, built strong teams, and fostered relationships. Passionate about Habitat's mission to provide affordable housing, she credits her success to the support of her team, mentors, and family. Persis advises young professionals to leverage their strengths and prioritize others' growth, as true success comes from making a positive impact.

IMMIGRANT SERVICES SOCIETY OF BC



Since 1968, ISSofBC has worked to provide a welcoming and empowering environment for all newcomers to British Columbia. Our services support settlement and English language needs, as well as employment and career ambitions.

We are driven by core values and principles that put inclusivity, compassion and innovation at the centre of our work. We serve over 25,000 newcomers to BC each year. You can learn more about ISSofBC at www.issbc.org.



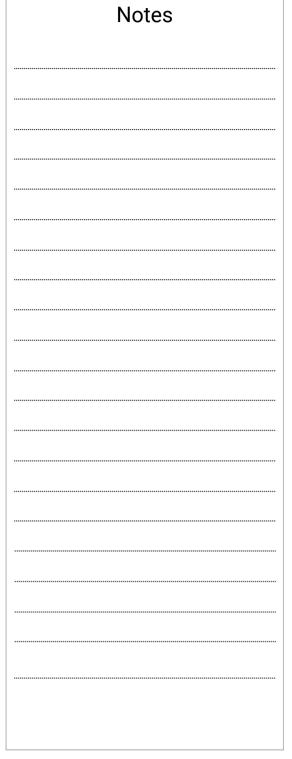
Jonathan Oldman Chief Executive Officer

Jonathan has over 20-years leadership experience in BC's social impact sector, working with a range of organizations serving the homeless, individuals with mental health and addiction challenges, seniors, and those with cancer and at end-of-life. Jonathan also serves on the Boards of Catalyst Community Developments Society, a NFP real estate developer, and NewTrack Solutions Inc., a forprofit company owned by ISSofBC.

LEAN IN CANADA

LEAN IN NETWORK | Vancouver

Lean In Canada is a community of professional women empowering each other to build purposeful and fulfilling careers. We envision a world where people of every gender can pursue their dreams without bias or other barriers. A







world where girls grow up to be confident, resilient leaders, and where more women run companies and countries. At our core, we are driven by the belief that our society and economy would be better if women and girls were valued more.



Amrita Aggarwal

President

Amrita is a passionate storyteller and strategist, helping organizations attain an equitable and sustainable future. She envisions leveraging her energy and enthusiasm to affect positive social change in her community. She was raised by a theatre family and attained a unique blend of education in fine arts and business which all coalesced into her becoming a natural facilitator and strategist, leading organizations into a more inclusive future one policy and one conversation at a time.



Nemo Anyudan Zhao

Vice-President

Nemo is a dedicated relationship builder and strategist with a passion for fostering connections and driving meaningful change. At Lean In, she works to create opportunities for others to realize their potential and achieve their career goals.

In her day job, Nemo is part of the team advancing the \$3 billion FORWARD campaign, securing transformative support for impactful initiatives. She also serves as Treasurer for her building's strata council in the Vancouver Lower Mainland, managing a \$1.5 million budget and ensuring strategic resource allocation. Prior to her career in development, Nemo gained diverse experience in banking, energy, and insurance, giving her a broad perspective.



Sana Lajporiya

Vice-President

Sana's background in marketing and strategy has been key to her professional journey, and she is now applying this expertise to the nonprofit sector, focusing on donations, fundraising, and social enterprise initiatives.

With a deep commitment to equity, Sana has spent her adult life working with various nonprofits to address hunger, poverty, civic issues,

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and animal welfare. At Lean In, her current focus is empowering women to create a more inclusive and equitable society. Passionate and driven, Sana is committed to using her skills to make a positive impact in the community.

OCEAN WISE



Our Ocean. Our Future. Ocean Wise believes that together, we can protect our ocean. With an action plan for the next decade, Ocean Wise is committed to initiatives addressing three critical challenges that face our oceans through

direct action: climate change, ocean pollution, and overfishing. The Ocean Wise Youth Initiative includes programs designed to educate youth, break down barriers between social, geographic, and socioeconomic backgrounds to advance ocean conservation efforts.



Patrick Lamontagne Director, Youth

Patrick Lamontagne is the Director of Youth at Ocean Wise in Vancouver, BC. With over 9 years of experience in education and youth engagement, he has designed and led programs that empower young people to champion ocean conservation and community involvement. Patrick's career includes roles at Ocean Wise, JA British Columbia, and Fusion Jeunesse, where he has developed expertise in areas such as curriculum development, leadership training, and experiential learning. He earned his Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruction from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto. At Ocean Wise, Patrick oversees initiatives that connect youth with marine conservation efforts, fostering skills and networks essential for environmental stewardship.

BC ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE



The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) is more than just Canada's national police service. We have been part of the fabric of Canada since 1873 – almost 150 years. We are one of only a few police services recognized around the world

Notes



for both our policing excellence and our image the "Mountie." Over the last century-and-a-half, we have grown and evolved with and for Canadians. The result is a more modern, diverse and inclusive RCMP that serves with honour and pride to keep Canadians safe.



Insp. Martin Guay

Operations Officer, Ridge Meadows Detachment

Inspector Guay has been the Operations Officer at the Ridge Meadows detachment since 2023. With over 19 years of dedicated service with the RCMP, Inspector Guay brings a wealth of experience in both rural and urban policing. Throughout his career, he has served in various high-profile roles, including working with major crimes units such as the Lower Mainland District Integrated Homicide Investigation Team (IHIT) and the Surrey Unsolved Homicide Unit. Inspector Guay also served as the Sunshine Coast Detachment Commander before joining the Ridge Meadows RCMP. Since 2023, Inspector Guay assumed the strategic leadership role known as the RCMP "E" Division "Gold Commander" within the Gold-Silver-Bronze command structure during the BC wildfires-related emergency.

Inspector Guay holds a Political science Bachelor's degree from Montreal University (Quebec) and Social Science College degree from Collège de Maisonneuve (Quebec).

THE SHIFT



The Shift is a global convening. The Shift connects and mobilizes anyone working to secure the right to housing. From Berlin to Seoul, Montevideo to Montreal, The Shift includes cities big and small from every continent. It brings together governments,

legislators, human rights institutes, urban planners, architects, scholars, grassroots groups, artists, philanthropists, lawyers, students, and NGOs. The Shift is led by Leilani Farha, the former UN Special Rapporteur on the right to housing (2014-2020), in partnership with United Cities Local Government and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. The Shift team includes lawyers, campaigners, filmmakers, community advocates, journalists, and researchers.

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Leilani Farha Global Director

Leilani Farha is the Global Director of The Shift. an international human rights organization focused on housing rights. A legal expert with degrees from the University of Toronto, she served as the UN Special Rapporteur on homelessness and housing financialization. Leilani contributes to major media, co-hosts the PUSHBACK Talks podcast, and appears in the documentary PUSH. She is also a Commissioner at the International Commission of Jurists and former Executive Director of Canada Without Poverty.

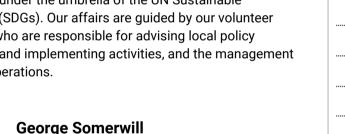
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UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION IN CANADA- VANCOUVER



UNAC-V aims to inform, inspire, and engage with people in Metro Vancouver through local partnerships, to accomplish the vital work of the UN. Some of the many issues UNAC-V addresses, include poverty, gender inequalities, human rights, cross-cultural understanding,

environmental degradation and threats to peace and security. This is all brought together under the umbrella of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Our affairs are guided by our volunteer Board of Directors, who are responsible for advising local policy decisions, planning, and implementing activities, and the management of general branch operations.





UNAC-V Past President

George is a Canadian former United Nations staff member who worked for the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) from 1996-2011, serving in Angola, Iraq (Oil-for-Food Program), Pakistan (with UNICEF), Ethiopia, Eritrea, Sudan, and Liberia. He holds an MA in Post-conflict Reconstruction and Development from York U, UK.

George began his career with the BBC Africa service and CBC (As it Happens), traveling to troubled regions like Ethiopia and Somalia. He later worked for CIDA and CARE Canada in Ottawa and Africa (Kenya and Zimbabwe) in communications and fundraising. He is an



honorary member and former President of the Vancouver Board of the UN Association in Canada (UNAC) and served on the board of MOSAIC, a Vancouver-based immigrant service organization, from 2015-2021.

In 2025 George was awarded the King Charles III Coronation Medal for his international work with the United Nations and his volunteer work in Canada with the UN Association in Canada. He is a past president of the Vancouver Branch of UNAC Vancouver.



Rosio Godomar UNAC-Vancouver Treasurer

Rosio, born in Peru and now living in Vancouver, is a nutritionist and amateur photographer. She has worked with the UN World Food Program (WFP) for over 20 years, leading humanitarian and emergency programs in Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia. She holds an MSc in Human Nutrition from the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and has studied nutrition in Peru and Germany.

In 2013, Rosio founded the "Educate Girls Network" (EGN), an initiative to sponsor girls from underprivileged families in Liberia to pursue higher education and become educators. From 2011 to 2017, she worked as a food service supervisor with Fraser Health. She now volunteers as a mentor with MOSAIC's Workplace Connections Program in Vancouver and with the United Nations Association in Canada (UNAC), Vancouver branch.

WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM



The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) Canada's goals are to bring together women of different political beliefs and philosophies who are united in their determination to study, make known and help

abolish the causes and the legitimization of war; and to work toward world peace; total and universal disarmament; the abolition of violence

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and coercion in the settlement of conflict and their substitution in every case of negotiation and conciliation; the strengthening of the United Nations system; the continuous development and implementation of international law; political and social equality and economic equity; cooperation among all people; and an environmentally sustainable development.



Patsy George Co-President

Patsy, a retired public servant and social worker from Kerala, India, immigrated to Canada in 1960. She holds a BA from the University of Windsor and an MSW from the University of Ottawa. She specialized in community development, working in Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, and BC, where she held various positions in the provincial public service. In 1983, she organized the Solidarity Coalition to oppose government cutbacks and retired in 2001 as a Director in the Ministry of Multiculturalism and Immigration.

Patsy served on the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada and co-coordinated the Backlog Division in BC and Alberta. She was appointed to a commission that led to the Child, Family, and Community Services Act of BC. Patsy held leadership roles in organizations like the BC Association of Social Workers, Boys and Girls Clubs of BC, and the United Nations Association in Canada, Vancouver Branch. She has received multiple honors, including the Order of British Columbia, the Order of Canada, and honorary doctorates from the University of the Fraser Valley and the University of British Columbia.

WOMEN TRANSFORMING CITIES



Women Transforming Cities aims to radically shift social, economic, and political power to equity-deserving groups to reshape who cities are built by and for so that communities' needs are met and everyone can belong, participate, and thrive.

Notes		





Alexa Traboulay Board Director

Alexa Traboulay is a social justice advocate and researcher dedicated to amplifying diverse voices through community engagement. With expertise in equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI), she develops action-based programs for equity-deserving communities. She is a Program Coordinator at UBC's Office of Regional & International Community Engagement, specializing in research, project design, and policy-informed data analysis.

Alexa holds a Master's in Social Sciences from the University of Chicago and a Bachelor of Arts from UBC. Her interests include human rights, anti-hate advocacy, digital democracy, and racial justice. A second-generation immigrant of Trinidadian and Hungarian ancestry, she is committed to advancing decolonization while living on the unceded territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations.

YOUTH CHALLENGE INTERNATIONAL



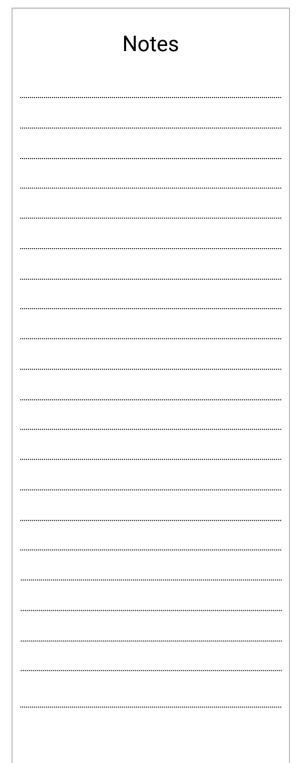
YCI is a leading global youth development organization that promotes youth innovation to drive positive change. Together with our partners we create market ready solutions that catapult youth around the world to succeed and prosper; we are driven by youth and their

potential to affect positive change in the world. Our solutions are designed with a clear focus—keeping the young people we collaborate with at the heart of the conversation."



Alison RoadburgPeople & Program Manager

Alison is a program and operations management professional who has worked on the front and back end of international program design and implementation for nearly 15 years. Alison spent a large majority of her career in West Africa and she is currently the People and Program Manager with Youth Challenge International.





Notes

Win exclusive coffee chats with these amazing UNAC Vancouver and KPU Members



George Somerwill **UNAC-Vancouver Honorary Director,** Former President UN Department of Peacekeeping / Former **Director of Communications**



Rosio Godomar UNAC-Vancouver Treasurer Founder of the Education Girls Network



Patsy George UNAC-Vancouver Honorary Director Former President, International Council of Social Welfare, Canada



Dariel Filwood UNAC-Vancouver Director-at-Large, Communications Coordinator



Dr. Larissa Petrillo KPU, Lead, Advisor Work-Integrated Learning

Complete the feedback survey to get a free raffle ticket!







Thank You!

We extend our sincere gratitude to all participating organizations and their Table Captains for dedicating their time, expertise, and resources, which have been vital to the success of Think Global Link Local 2025. This event celebrates over a decade of fostering connections among BC students, non-profit organizations, and local civil society groups.

A special thank you to Holiday Inn Vancouver-Centre (Broadway) for generously hosting the event. We also appreciate the NGO and Non-Profit Studies Program at Kwantlen Polytechnic University (KPU) for their coordination efforts, volunteer support, and contributions to event costs, alongside the United Nations Association in Canada - Vancouver (UNAC-V), whose role in organizing and funding the event was essential.

We are grateful to Simon Fraser University School for International Studies for sponsoring students to attend and to Rosedale on Robson Suite Hotel for providing accommodations for our Keynote Speaker. A heartfelt thank you to our financial supporters, Davie Village Registered Massage Therapy and Educate Girls Network, whose contributions helped make TGLL 2025 possible.

The collective efforts of all involved have been crucial in realizing this event, and we deeply appreciate the continued support that strengthens our community connections.







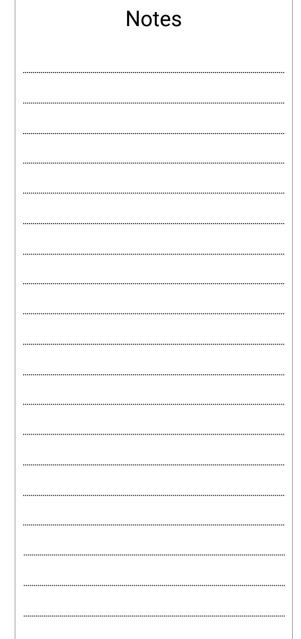
















Thank you for joining us at Think Global Link Local 2025!

We'd love to hear about your experience! Share your feedback with us.

Fill out the Feedback Survey at https://forms.gle/DSH1xF3LYeKEuFR9A or follow the QR Code:



Scan Me!

Notes

