



CENTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT
2025 Year in Review



DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



When the Center for the Environment launched in July 2023, I hypothesized that it would bring the WashU community together in new ways to understand and overcome environmental challenges. As I look back at 2025, I see substantial evidence in support of that hypothesis. The center illustrates what is possible when we leverage the whole of the university. Faculty from eight different schools at WashU have participated in the center's collaboration and research acceleration programs. Beyond faculty, our programs have engaged staff, postdoctoral scholars, and graduate and undergraduate students. Through relationships within a rich university ecosystem, we advance research at intersections with other WashU organizations and connect with community partners. On behalf of the Center for the Environment team, I invite you to learn about our recent activities and to connect with us in 2026.

Daniel Giammar

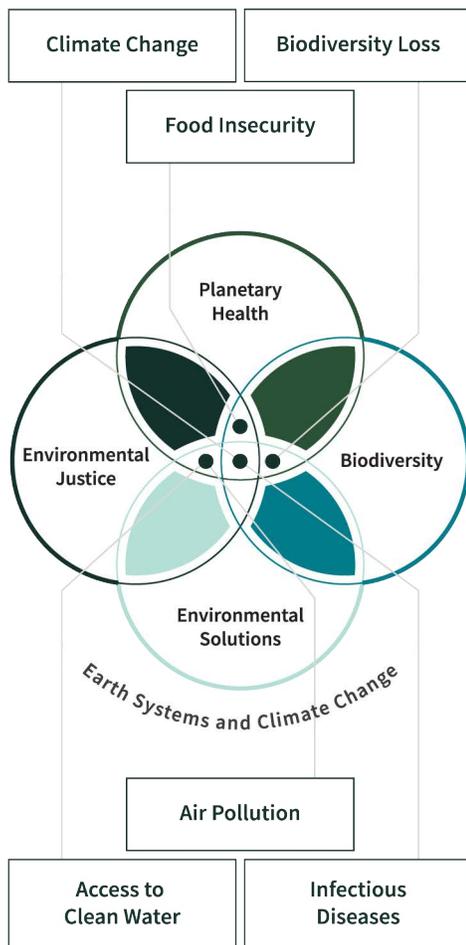
Director of the Center for the Environment, Walter E. Browne Professor of Environmental Engineering

“The center illustrates what is possible when we leverage the whole of the university.”

VISION

The research and creative capacity of WashU and the strength of interdisciplinary partnerships are mobilized to advance knowledge that addresses complex environmental challenges.

Addressing our deepest societal environmental challenges



The Center for the Environment brings researchers together to meet these challenges.

THE WashU ECOSYSTEM

Within the WashU ecosystem of environmental research, education, and practice, the Center for the Environment serves as a connector. Much like a biodiversity corridor, we create space where partners within our ecosystem and across distinct disciplines come together to advance scientific discovery.



Center for the Environment

Here and Next Sibling Initiatives

- Confluence Collaborative
- Digital Intelligence and Innovation Accelerator
- Office of Public Scholarship

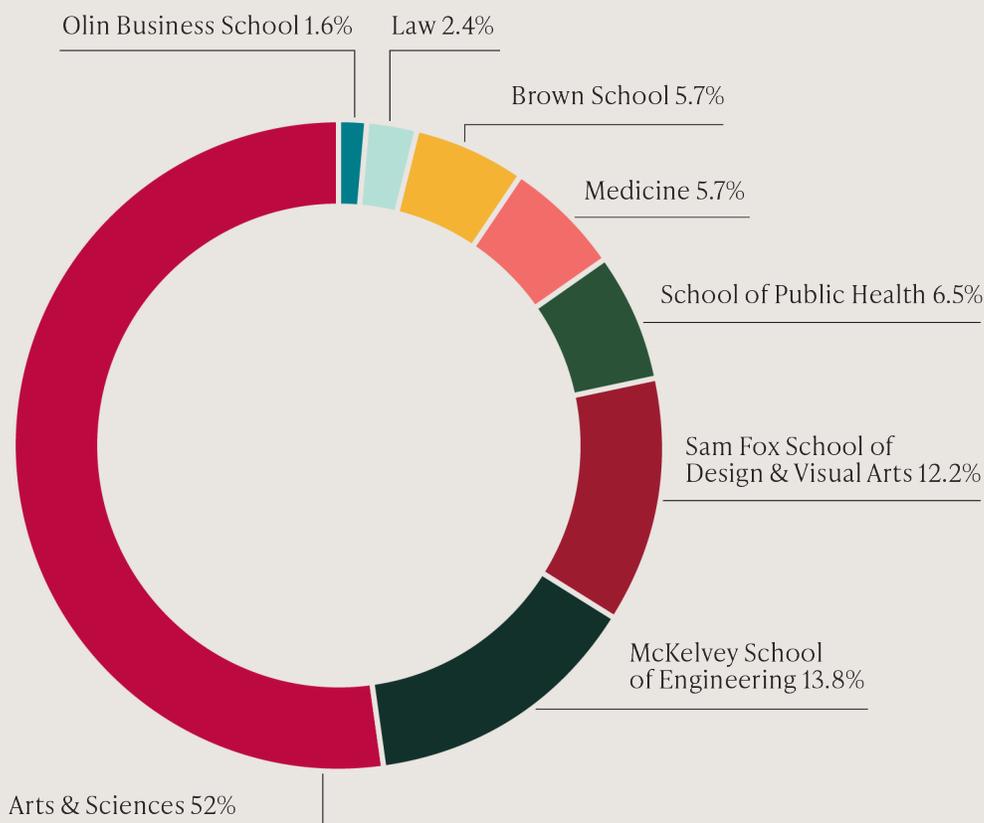
Internal Advisory Council

Council of Partners

- Center for Aerosol Science and Engineering
- Center for Water Innovation
- Living Earth Collaborative
- Midwest Climate Collaborative
- Office of Sustainability
- Tyson Research Center

CENTER SCHOLARS

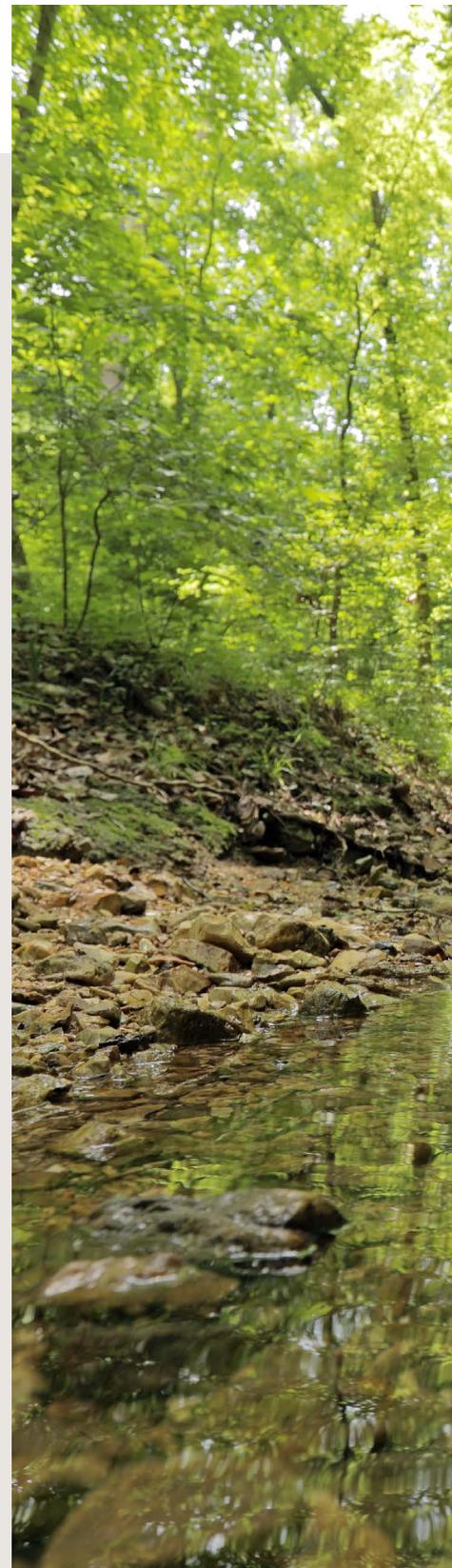
Our center scholars are leading faculty and practitioners who dig deeper into the center's research themes.



Most Represented Units

- Anthropology
- Architecture
- Biology
- Earth, Environmental, and Planetary Sciences
- Energy, Environmental & Chemical Engineering
- Public Health
- Tyson Research Center

Scholars have access to opportunities and support from the center in all three of our key functions—collaboration hub, research acceleration, and signal boosting.



CENTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT SCHOLARS



Solny Adalsteinsson
Ramesh Agarwal
Felix Ampadu
Kenneth Andrews
Sang-Hoon Bae
Sarah Baitzel
Ellis Ballard
Manasseh Begay
Matthew Bernstine
Elizabeth Biro
Joshua Blodgett
Hester Blum
Jacco Boon
Arpita Bose
Zack Bowersox
Alexander Bradley
Kristin Brig-Ortiz
Laura Brugger
Lisa Bulawsky
Yin Cao
Bruce Carlson
Jeffrey Catalano
Rajan Chakrabarty
Dino Christenson
Todd Combs
Anselm Dannecker
Gautam Dantas
Seth Denizen
Jenna Ditto
MJ Durkee
Amy Eyler
Nathaniel Farrell
David Fike
Marcus Foston
Patrick Fowler
Michael Frchetti
Catalina Freixas
Rachel Garg
Christian George
Dan Giammar
Theresa Gildner
Joseph Guinness

Dougal Hansen
Kelly Harris
Sophia Hayes
Jason He
Erik Herzog
Patty Heyda
Paul Hime
Steve Hindle
Angela Hobson
Derek Hoferlin
Liz Hubertz
Lora Iannotti
Megan Irwin
Nathan Jacobs
Young-Shin Jun
Andreas Kautt
Tristram Kidder
Bomin Kim
Bronwen Konecky
Scott Krummenacher
Ben Kumfer
Natalia Laas
Michael Landis
Bo Li
Xinhua Liang
Fangqiong Ling
Xinyi Liu
Bronwyn Nichols
Lodato
Jonathan Losos
Suzanne Loui
Bill Lowry
Liz Mallott
Meredith Malone
Ben Mansfeld
Beth Martin
Randall Martin
Claire Masteller
Virginia McKay
Kim Medley
Molly Metzger
Sharvari Mhatre

Roger Michaelides
Krista Milich
Natalie Mueller
Jonathan Myers
Mitra Naseh
Erin O'Connell
Kenneth Olsen
Patricia Olynyk
Kimberly Parker
Illaria Patania
Rachel Penczykowski
Andrew Reeves
Jill Richardson
Bryce Sadtler
Zahra Safaverdi
Linda Samuels
Crickette Sanz
Barbara Schaal
Christopher Schaberg
Rodrigo Siqueira Reis
Christina Stallings

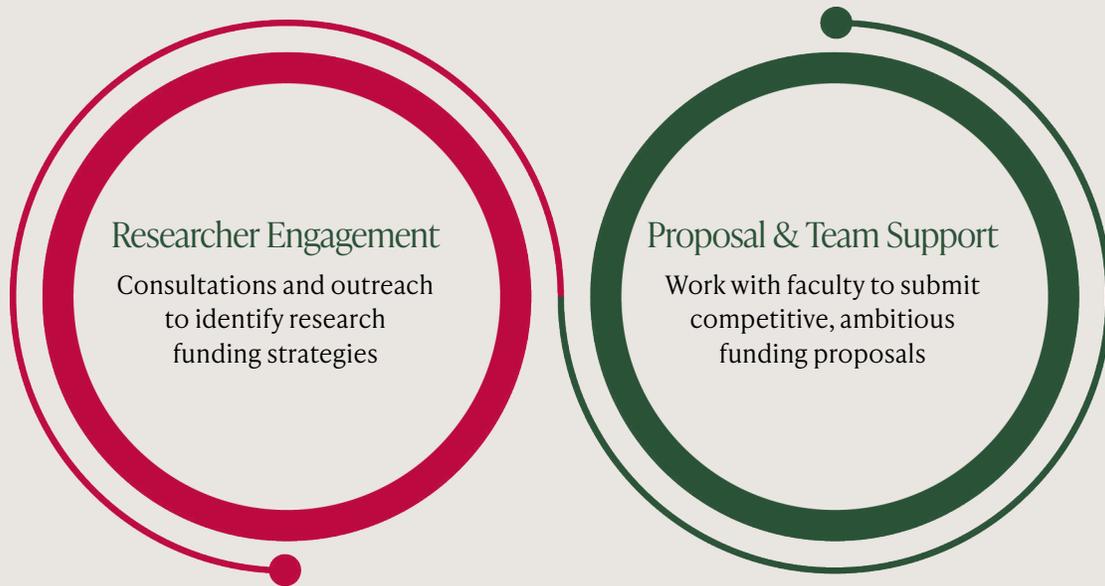
Christopher Stark
Joe Steensma
Joan Strassmann
Steve Taff
Margarita Tsoutsoura
Andrew Tuch
Jay Turner
Lindsay Underhill
Constance Vale
Froggi VanRiper
Nishant Vats
Jian Wang
Katie Westby
Robert Wexler
Douglas Wiens
Emily Wroblewski
Michael Wysession
Lu Xu
Hongxi Yin
Fuzhong Zhang
Zhiling Zheng

Scholar Benefits

- Visibility and signal boosting
- Research acceleration opportunities
- Funding opportunities
- Collaboration opportunities

RESEARCH ACCELERATOR ACTIVITIES

Through a variety of activities, the Center for the Environment advances environmental research, supports funding proposals, and connects researchers.



Collaborative Workshops

Connecting researchers in the pursuit of significant funding opportunities

2023

- Environmental Research Networking
- Air Quality and Health

2024

- Environmental Research & the Department of Defense
- Agriculture - Environment - Health
- Environmental Justice Federal Funding
- Environmental Research & Design
- Explore the WashU Mini-City

2025

- Implementation Science and the Environment
- WashU Planetary Health Roundtable
- FARM Cultivate Funding: Environmental Research Networking
- Environmental Justice Landscape Mapping
- Mississippi River Infrastructure and Ecology
- Here and Next Ignite Seed Grant
- Digital Solutions for Environmental Research
- Writing About Your Environmental Research to Engage the General Public
- Metals, Microbes, Plants, and Soils
- Writing About Planetary Health for General Audiences
- Geoscience + AI (NSF-CAIG) Research Networking
- WashU Advocates for Environmental Researchers
- Campus Climate Change Connections

TRUSTED TAP

WashU researchers are empowering people to monitor their own tap water. Trusted Tap is an NSF Convergence Accelerator-funded project developing a transformative approach to deploy commercially available point-of-use (POU) filters as water quality monitoring devices in households. This project brings together faculty in Engineering, Public Health, Sam Fox, and the Skandalaris Center, along with University of Illinois faculty and four non-academic partners.



AIR QUALITY AND HEALTH

A Transcend Initiative

The Air Quality and Health Research Initiative, an intensive three-year project, is building collaboration among WashU schools.

This initiative establishes WashU as a leader of a diverse collaborative hub with local community impact and global reach.

Transcend Initiative grants are designed to seed collaboration that drives world-changing discovery. The Air Quality and Health Research Initiative comprises 15 faculty researchers, 1 postdoc, and 8 graduate students in Engineering, Public Health, and Medicine. The team brings expertise in:

- Chemistry of indoor air pollution
- Impact of asthma on developmental outcomes
- Urban environments and health equity
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
- Impact of aerosols on climate and air quality



Randall Martin
Raymond R. Tucker
Distinguished Professor
of Environmental
Engineering



Jay Turner
James McKelvey
Professor of
Engineering Education



Yin Cao
Associate Professor of
Surgery and Associate
Professor of Medicine



Victor G. Davila-Roman
Professor of Medicine,
Anesthesiology, and
Radiology and Director,
Global Health Center

ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH COLLABORATION SERIES

The Environmental Research Collaboration Series is a monthly interdisciplinary lunch gathering for WashU faculty and staff.

This series builds community among researchers while highlighting specific projects and generating ideas for future collaboration.



February 5, 2025
Michael Frchetti

Anthropology

Society-centered Studies of Climate, Environment, and Resilience: Archaeological Cases from Central and Southeast Asia

March 5, 2025
Patricia Olynyk

**Sam Fox School of
Design & Visual Arts**
Environmental Art and the
Stories We Tell

April 2, 2025
Gautam Dantas

Pathology & Immunology
Understanding, Predicting,
and Combating Antibiotic
Resistance Evolution Across
Diverse Habitats

May 7, 2025
Lora Iannotti

Public Health
E3 Nutrition Lab Panel
(Environmentally
Sustainable, Equitably
Accessed, Evolutionarily
Appropriate Maternal &
Child Nutrition)

September 22, 2025
Lu Xu

**Energy, Environmental &
Chemical Engineering**
Air Quality in a Changing
Climate: Impacts of
Wildfires, CO₂ Removal, and
Solar Geoengineering

October 13, 2025
Yin Cao

Surgery
Light, Air, Water: What We've
Missed in the Cancer Puzzle

November 10, 2025
Xinyi Liu

Anthropology
Globalization in Deep
History: Integrating Cultural
and Biological Diversities

December 8, 2025
Heather Navarro

**Midwest Climate
Collaborative**
Collaborating on Midwest
Climate Solutions for
Global Impact

PROPOSALS SUPPORTED

The Center for the Environment supports research at WashU. Our team provides project management of proposal development, identifies and introduces potential collaborators and partners, and reviews proposal drafts.

External Proposals

30

external proposals submitted

\$9.7M

funded for six external proposals

Internal Proposals

10

internal proposals submitted

5

grants awarded, including Air Quality and Health Transcend Initiative

Principal Investigators

73

PIs and Co-PIs supported across seven schools

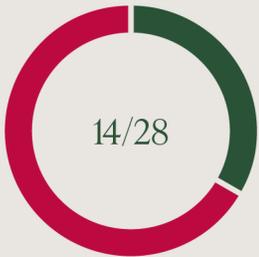
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submissions with PIs collaborating across two or more schools

SUMMER UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH PROGRAM

At WashU, undergraduate students have a unique opportunity to spend the summer conducting research alongside principal investigators, graduate students, and peers—all within an interdisciplinary cohort.

28 Undergraduates
3 Schools
22 Majors/Minors



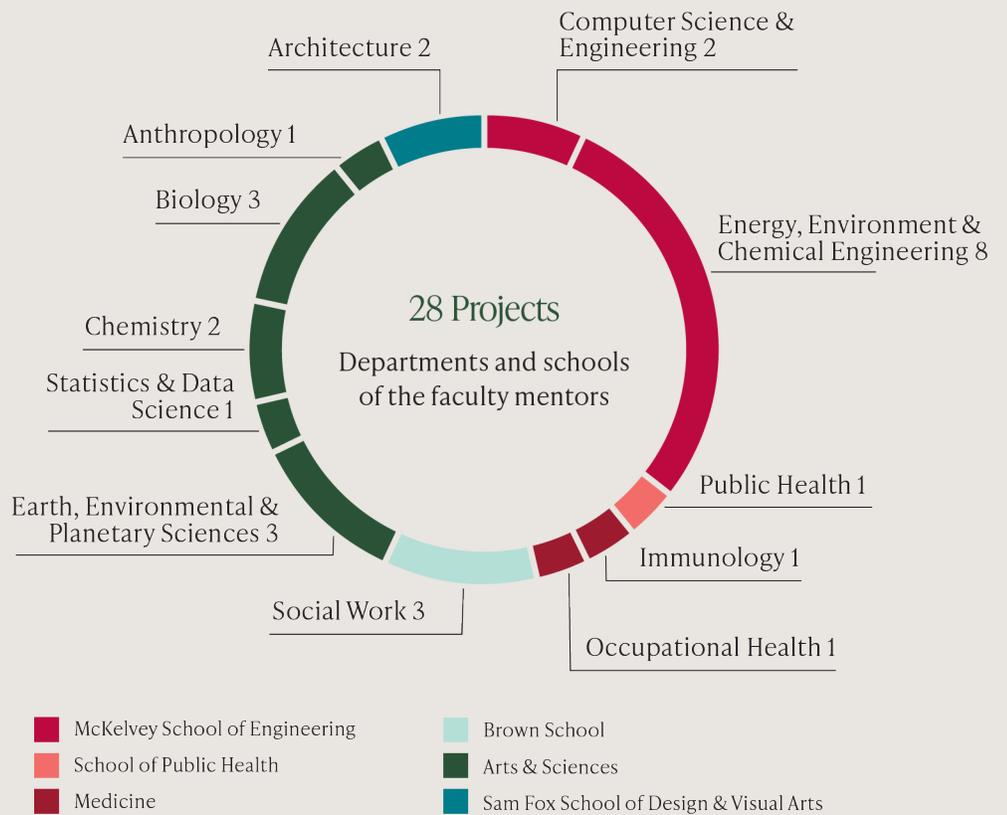
new to research outside of coursework



conducted research in the following fall



continued with their summer research



GRADUATE STUDENT PROGRAMMING

The Center for the Environment offers graduate student programming across WashU, encouraging interdisciplinary learning, community connection, and professional growth.



Lightning Talk Opportunities

Environmental Research & Creativity Week

Monthly Lunch Talks

- Health Effects of Combustion-Generated Aerosols
- HonduHerp: Biodiversity Conservation in Honduras
- Monitoring Metals in Drinking Water by Residential Point-of-Use Filters
- Dengue Monitoring Implementation in Thailand
- Detecting Variations in Melting Arctic Ground Ice
- Drawing to See: Illustrating Nature
- Mapping and Multimodal Learning
- Should You Trust the Air Quality in St. Louis?
- Stable Isotope Investigations of Indigenous Cahokian Agriculture

Annual Networking Dinner

Climate Across the Discipline

- Interdisciplinary faculty panel
- Structured networking
- Opportunities to connect with faculty

ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH & CREATIVITY WEEK (ERCW)



Thank you to our 2025 ERCW Cohosts and Partners

- Aquatic Chemistry Lab
- Center for Career Engagement
- Center for the Humanities
- Department of History
- Environmental Art & Humanities Working Group
- Kathryn M. Buder Center for American Indian Studies
- Laboratory for the Analysis of Early Food-Webs
- Living Earth Collaborative
- McDonnell International Scholars Academy
- Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum
- Office of the Provost
- Penczykowski Lab
- Sam Fox School—College of Art and College of Architecture Faculty
- School of Medicine Sustainability Team
- University Advancement
- WashU Arboretum

15
events

11
university
partners

38
community
organizers

48
researchers
showcased

850+
attendees

RECOLTIVATING INDIGENOUS SOVEREIGNTY AND STEWARDSHIP

A Day-of-Panels was spearheaded by local native community members in collaboration with the Center for the Environment and 12 different partners. More than 100 campus and community members came together across three panels designed to advance Indigenous approaches to land and food systems.

Featured Panelists

Mariam Al-Lami

Missouri University of Science and Technology, Postdoctoral Fellow

Michelle Bowden

Quapaw Environmental Office, Food Sovereignty Director

Dail Chambers

Coahoma Orchards, Owner

Deb Echo-Hawk

Pawnee Seed Bank, Keeper of the Seeds

Brandon Gibson

Program Coordinator, Tribal Alliance for Pollinators

Monie Horsechief

Pawnee Seed Bank, Owner, Horsechief Catering

Caleb Horsechief

Horsechief Catering

Dana Hummell

Quapaw Environmental Office, Data Analysis Manager

Saundi Kloeckener

Native Women's Care Circle

Veronica Pipestem

Braiding the Sacred, Seed Keeper

Rico Rose

Indigenous St.Louis/ Facing Native Working Group

Panel Topics

- Indigenous Health & Food Sovereignty
- Land Stewardship & Environmental Justice
- Seed Rematriation & Cultivation



CENTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT TEAM



Daniel Giammar
Director of the Center
for the Environment



Lora Iannotti
Director for
Planetary Health



Jonathan Losos
Director for
Biodiversity



Bronwen Konecky
Faculty Fellow for
Climate Change



Nicole Angeli
Administrative
Coordinator



Kevin Hahn-Petruso
Program and
Operations Manager



Alex Morales-Heil
Program Manager



Michael O'Toole
Research Development
Associate



Mia Salamone
Project Manager for
Trusted Tap



Daniel Puma
Communications
Specialist







“The environment is inherently multidisciplinary, both in terms of academic research and devising solutions. We need people from many different spheres to come together to find the intersection where we can solve problems.”

—Jonathan Losos, Director for Biodiversity



CONNECT WITH US



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