

# DESIGN *for* AMERICA

## Studio Impact Project: Local Climate Action

### Overview

The Climate Action Impact Project, hosted by the Design for America (DFA) National team, offers DFA studios nationwide the chance to collaborate with local policymakers, students, and those affected by climate change to take urgent action.

This project supports DFA's social impact mission through design thinking and aligns with [UN Sustainable Development Goal 13: Climate Action](#). Students will work directly with those affected by climate change to foster resilience and green practices, with the project culminating in a tangible outcome that promotes sustainability in the community and provides climate action education.

### How It Works

In this six-week sprint, DFA studios will partner with local businesses or the community to address a climate action challenge during the spring season. The project aims to create meaningful, actionable solutions that benefit those affected by climate change and the community.

### Possible Project Ideas

*Here are some ideas of what your final product might look like:*

- *Campaigning to produce sustainable behavioral change in students*
- *Providing help, education, and / or services to those affected by climate change*
- *Reducing the use of energy in campus buildings*
- *Creating new ways to use what students consider "waste"*
- *Reclaiming green spaces on campus or in the community*

## What You'll Get from DFA National

- **Mentorship:** Office hours and dedicated times to interact with the DFA National Team through guided sessions, feedback, and support.
- **Resources:** \$250 stipend to the team for project resources
- **Cross-studio communication:** A Slack channel where students can ask questions, share progress, and connect with other teams.

## Why This Project?

This project is a unique opportunity for DFA studios to:

- Collaborate with local organizations and those affected by climate change, using design thinking to create real-world impact.
- Receive guided support as you put into practice each stage of the design process. Great for new team members, launching studios, or members who want an extra challenge.
- Learn from professionals in the field while gaining valuable experience in design project facilitation.

## *Welcome to the DFA Climate Action Project!*

### *What to Expect*

This project is designed as a learning opportunity for DFA studios to work through the Design Process with guided support from DFA HQ. Through the **Studio Impact Project**, student teams dive into meaningful topics their partner identifies, gaining hands-on experience in human-centered design while offering fresh insights and innovative solutions.

- **Structure:** Student-led teams work through the Design Process under the guidance of a DFA HQ team member, with additional support and expertise provided by a nonprofit partner.
- **Focus:** Projects explore topics or themes important to the community partner.
- **Value:** Students gain practical experience in human-centered design, while partners benefit from innovative solutions and fresh perspectives on their challenges.
- **Support:** Funded by the organization, partners, or DFA supporters to donate cover facilitation, programming, student engagement, and branded materials or swag.

Each studio will have its community partner for this project, tackling local issues. Students can talk with each other to discuss similar roadblocks, successes, and questions. All studios will present their work at the end of the semester (final date TBD with studio availability). All community partners will also be present for this event to give feedback and continue working on implementation.

## Participating Studios:

- **Studios with Continuing Projects**
  - DFA Colgate
- **Studios Starting New Projects**
  - DFA Stanford
  - DFA WIU
  - DFA NYU

## What to Expect:

DFA members can expect to complete this project in a fast-paced, "sprint" style. Studios will:

- Participate in weekly check-ins with DFA HQ (either virtually or asynchronously) to stay on track.
- Meet with DFA HQ at least **three times** throughout the project.
- Submit deliverables, including:
  - A final presentation slide deck.
  - Any project artifacts created or ready for implementation.
- Share resources and collaborate freely in the cross studio **#proj-climate** channel.

## Studio Meetings:

Throughout the semester, teams will meet with DFA HQ a minimum of 3 times to align on project goals. These meetings will be quick and effective: understanding where teams are and getting them where they need to be. We can also meet with community partners at this time and co-create all together. Once a regular time is decided, we will also have a climate-themed guest speaker event.

## To-Do:

- ☐ Read the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 13 on [Climate Action](#)
- ☐ Meet with your community partner if you have not already done so
- ☐ Go through the [DFA Climate Change Workbook](#) to see our schedule

## Calendar of Events:

Each regular session will be an in-depth look at that stage of the design process. I will answer specific questions that the studio leads have and then give a 10 minute talk on resources that will be useful for them. I will also start each meeting with a climate research insight to help stoke conversation.

- **Feb 3. 2025 7 PM CST**
  - **Full Group Project Kickoff!**
- Feb. 10
  - Identifying Community Partners and Interview Practice 1-1 Check ins
- Feb. 17
  - Stakeholder Maps, Reframing 1-1 Check ins
- Feb. 24
  - **Guest Speaker** Ideation, 1-1 Check ins
- March 3
  - Building, 1-1 Check ins
- March 10

- **Final Project Prep**, Testing, 1-1 Check ins
- March 17-24
  - **Students have Spring Break, Testing Period**
- Week of March 31-April 4
  - **Final Presentation TBD**