

STICHTING YOUTH FOR SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL

ANNUAL REPORT 2023

GENERAL

In Q4 of 2022 the board of Youth for Sustainable Travel (YFST) was approached by a volunteer with the idea of the project Latin American Youth Scholarship (LAYCS). Together with a team of volunteers and advisors from both Europe and Latin American we successfully organised the project.

LAYCS was the focus of YFST in 2023. We're looking back at a successful year in which YFST has broadened the scope of youth involved by branching out from Europe to Latin America. Therefore further strengthening marginalised youth voices in the debate around sustainability and travel in the international political arena.

Besides LAYCS we finalised the campaign ExPlane, which since 2021 had been conducted as a part of the "Reframe, Rethink, Reshape" campaign by the organisation *Stay Grounded*. The ExPlane campaign will not be continued.

Other than that we kept contact with our existing network of volunteers and organisations active in sustainable travel and youth advocacy to keep an eye out for possible future collaborations.

LATIN AMERICAN YOUTH SCHOLARSHIP

The Latin American Youth Climate Scholarship (LAYCS) was designed for Latin American youth from Black, Indigenous, and/or People of Color (BIPOC) communities. This initiative responds to a need and effort to address the climate crisis, leading and participating in a multitude of initiatives at the local, sub-national, national, and international levels through the active involvement of global youth. The aim of the scholarship is to achieve meaningful, inclusive, and continuous involvement of Latin American BIPOC youth in international climate spaces. To accomplish this objective, three pillars are crucial to this project: Knowledge Sharing and Capacity Building, Empowerment for Impactful Participation, as well as Resilient Network Building.

In 2023, we launched the pilot iteration of the Latin American Youth Climate Scholarship, receiving an overwhelming total of 5743 applications. Following a rigorous selection process, thirteen scholarship recipients were chosen to constitute the first LAYCS cohort. This group had the opportunity to participate in SB58, the Conference of Youth (COY18), and the Conference of the Parties (COP28).

In the appendix of this annual report you will find comprehensive information regarding the project's objectives, overall outcomes, and a detailed breakdown of each of the important steps taken to bring the initiative to life. These phases include capacity-building, participation in SB58 in Bonn, implementation of mini grants projects,

engagement at COY18 and involvement in COP28 in Dubai, as well as learnings and next steps.

The Latin American Youth Climate Scholarship was created by a dedicated team of young women who firmly believe in the strength and resilience of black and indigenous communities. Founded with a fervent commitment to centering climate justice within the youth movement, LAYCS aims to pave new paths toward a more inclusive and equitable future.



**YOUTH FOR
SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL**



IMPACT REPORT

Latin American Youth Climate Scholarship 2023

carried by

Stichting Youth for Sustainable Travel





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Summary

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” *As organizers, we were awestruck and perpetually inspired by the outcomes of this pilot project. We hope that you, too, find as much love and admiration for it as we do.*

The future we want has already started.



Figure 1: The coordination team of LAYCS (from left): Azul Schwartzman, Clara von Glasow, Alicia Maria Amancio da Silva, Ati Gunnawi Viviam Villafaña Izquierdo



LAYCS 2023 in Numbers

Application Process

Within a span of just three weeks during the application period, the Latin American Youth Climate Scholarship received a total of 5743 applications. This not only highlights the interest and engagement of BIPOC LATAM youth but also the immense gap in opportunities tailored for them and their needs, such as no English knowledge or previous attendances in international conferences requirements.

5743 APPLICATIONS
19.3% INDIGENOUS
21 COUNTRIES
55% WOMEN

The regional distribution of applications can be seen in figure 2.

The application process demonstrated a balanced gender distribution, with 55% of applicants being women. Additionally, there were 1109 applications from indigenous peoples, constituting approximately 19.3% of the total entries.



Figure 2: Number of applications by country

Following the closure of the application period, a group of young advocates from Latin America was assigned to assess and score the applications. The applications were categorized and divided into Portuguese and Spanish, with further subdivisions for Indigenous and Black/People of Color applicants. Upon completing the initial scoring, the evaluators and the organizing team created a shortlist of candidates to be interviewed.

A total of 24 candidates underwent interviews conducted by at least two individuals, including one member of the organizing team and one volunteer evaluator. During these interviews, candidates were questioned about the content of their written applications and were prompted to elaborate more on their local engagement, as a way to confirm they are indeed part of a grassroots movement. Furthermore, detailed explanations were provided regarding the project's objectives, the collaborative approach

throughout the year, and the level of commitment expected from their end.

Upon concluding the interviews, the organizing team reviewed the initial selection criteria, the scores from the written evaluations, and the feedback obtained during the interviews to arrive at a final decision. Subsequently, thirteen scholars were chosen to participate in the program.



Selected Scholars

The 2023 cohort was composed of 12 scholars (13 for SB) of 8 nationalities: Mexico, Bolivia, Uruguay, Colombia, Brazil, Ecuador, Chile and Peru. Eight of them belong to indigenous communities, two identify themselves as black and three as people of color.

Our delegation members present at SB58 and COP28 were composed by scholars, organizing team members and interpreters.

Scholars

- Ms. Açucena Marinheiro da Silva from Brazil
- Ms. Alma Xochitl Zamora Méndez from Mexico
- Ms. Audrey Luiza Almeida Gonçalves from Brazil
- Ms. Camila Paz Romero Peiret from Chile
- Ms. Daniela Soares da Silva from Brazil
- Mr. Diego Albeiro Aza Valenzuela from Colombia
- Ms. Elenita Sales Almeida from Brazil
- Ms. Guidaí Vargas Michelena from Uruguay
- Mx. Jose Angel Villalobos Gonzalez from Mexico
- Ms. Maria José Andrade Cerda from Ecuador
- Mr. Raylson Santos de Lima from Brazil
- Ms. Tonalli Quetzalli Gallegos-Solorzano from United States of America
- Ms. Valeria Belen Cerpa Salas from Peru
- Ms. Wara Iris Ruiz Condori from Bolivia
- Ms. Wenatoa Parakana from Brazil (**only for SB58**)

Organizing Team

- Ms. Alicia Maria Amancio da Silva from Brazil (**Organizing Team**)
- Ms. Ati Gunnawi Viviam Villafañá Izquierdo from Colombia (**Organizing Team**)
- Ms. Clara von Glasow from Germany (**Organizing Team**)
- Ms. Maria Azul Schvartzman from Argentina (**Organizing Team**)
- Ms. Tonalli Quetzalli Gallegos-Solorzano from United States of America (**Volunteer Support**)
- Ms. Elenita Sales Almeida from Brazil (**Volunteer Support**)

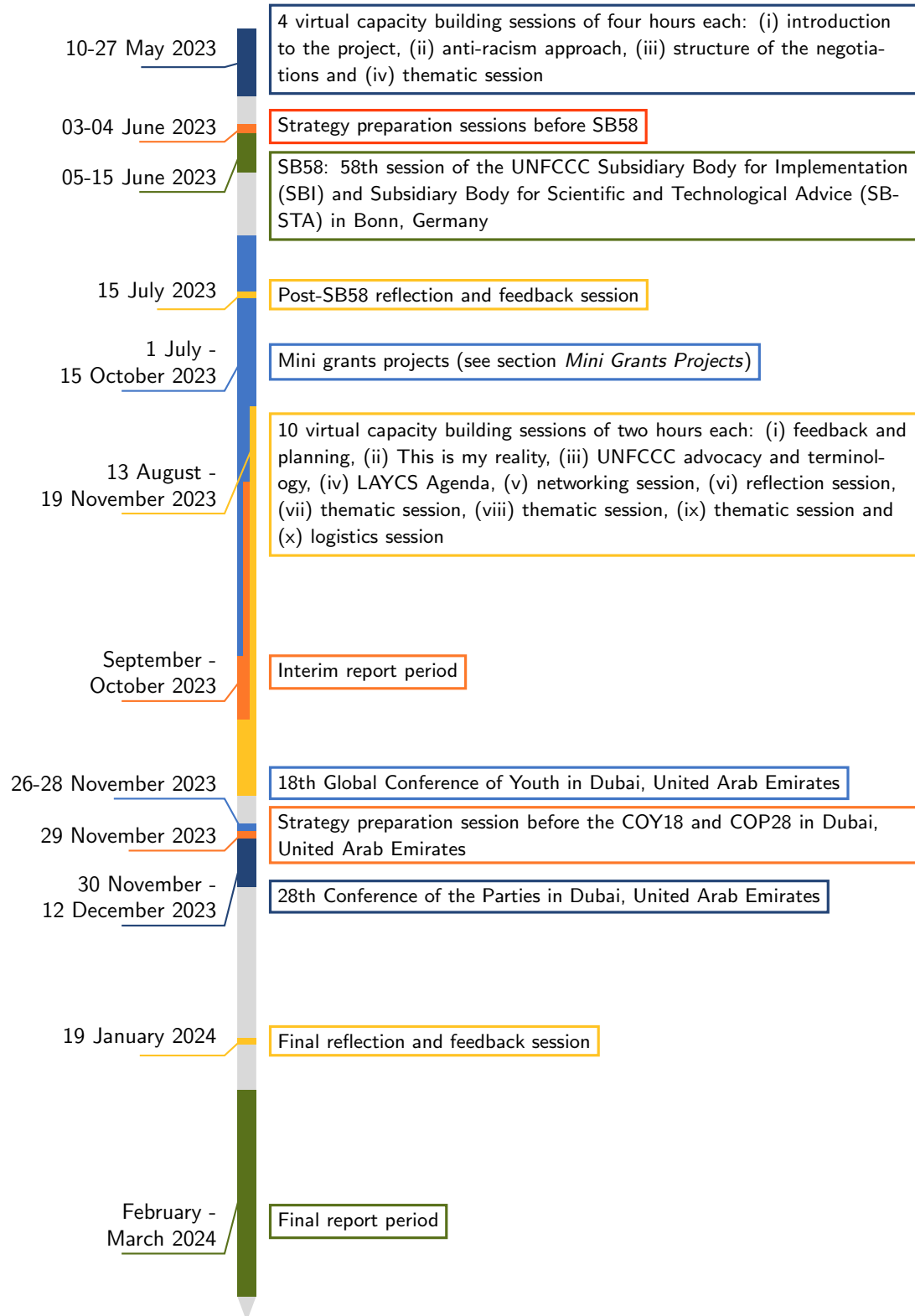
Interpreters

- Ms. Fernanda Vitarelli from Brazil
- Ms. Karine Barcellos Souto from Brazil
- Ms. Sthefani Carolina Techera Rodríguez from Uruguay (**only for COP28**)
- Ms. Yanina Laura Scheinfeld from Argentina (**only for COP28**)
- Mr. Marcelo Andreoti from Brazil (Interpreter) (**only for SB58**)
- Mr. Leonardo Locatelli from Brazil (Interpreter) (**only for SB58**)



Execution of the Project

The timeline of the project was as follows:





Capacity-building and strategy preparation sessions

Online Capacity-building Sessions

A total of 14 virtual sessions (32 hours of training) were held to prepare the scholars for their conference participation.

Four sessions before SB58 During an introductory session the project (objective, pillars, structure etc.) as well as the coordination team were presented. Additionally, the scholars were introduced to the three thematic negotiation topics of the project: Loss& Damage (L&D) Finance, Global Stocktake (GST) and Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA).

During the other sessions, we received the support of four experts: Ana Sanchez to introduce the anti-racist perspective in the climate struggle and for each negotiation topic: Pilar Bueno (GGA), Enrique Martua (GST) and Bruno Toledo (L&D).

Ten sessions before COP28 The second phase of the capacity building was informed by the perspective of the participants. Through a google form and our one-on-one sessions with each scholar, we received feedback on what elements and skills they wanted to best prepare prior to COY18 and COP28. The results indicated that they wanted to deepen their knowledge of UNFCCC terminology, learn and adopt tools for networking and advocacy within these spaces as well as media relations; they also had individual sessions to develop a group agenda. Additionally, they wanted to get to know closely each project that the participants were developing in their countries and communities, to have a better understanding of their leadership and share knowledge by exchanging capacity building on the basis of their strengths and experiences.

During these 10 sessions, we received the support of 5 experts who shared their inside knowledge of the negotiation topics that our scholars were following. As a group we gained a regional perspective from them as well as received input on how to structure our work and manage media relations. We also organized one networking session with attendees from 10 youth organizations who work on international climate policy.

The capacity building sessions also served to work together on framing what youth engagement and participation means to us. We created a common message that was used to define inputs for each group: GGA, GST and L&D.

All capacity-building sessions were conducted with simultaneous interpretation, mainly in portuguese and spanish channels.

On-ground strategy preparation sessions

For the preparation of each conference, we held on-ground planning and strategy meetings. For SB58, we organized two days of preparation in Cologne and Bonn, Saturday June 3 and Sunday June 4. Between COY18 and COP28, one day of preparation was held on November 29 in Dubai.

Topics discussed:

- **Welcome and introduction of the team:** Finally being physically together made it possible to generate group bonds, consolidate the thematic teams, define the common objective of the group and their roles.
- **Side event:** Together we defined the content, interpretation coordination, speakers and logistics in small working groups for the side events we organize as LAYCS.
- **Definition of individual and group agendas:** These spaces allowed to explain the methodology for the organization of the group agenda and the individual agenda. Events were classified



by color to define the level of prioritization of participation in each event, and each thematic group was guided to organize the topics and agenda items to be followed once the agendas were published on the UNFCCC web page.

- **Introduction to the interpretation distribution:** Interpretation distribution for all three thematic groups and individual members was defined through a four-step system involving the group coordinators, a member of the support team and the interpreters coordination.
- **Link in constituencies:** At the beginning of each conference, we asked the scholars to define their participation in the civil society constituency (YOUNGO, ENGO, IPO and Women& Gender) and we shared with them logistical details of the daily constituency meetings.
- **Discrimination awareness protocol:** This document established the responsibilities of project coordination in the event of discrimination perpetuated by or against members of the LAYCS team, and how to act in such cases. A glossary was also defined to facilitate the understanding of the facts and contexts to be taken into account in scenarios involving discriminatory acts.
- **Logistical details and security:** The financial aspects of the participation of each member was managed, such as: the distribution of daily allowance, how to get reimbursed for expenses that were covered, travel from the hotel to the conference and some safety tips understanding the context in the country we were in.



58th session of the UNFCCC Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) and Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) in Bonn, Germany (SB58)

From June 5th to 15th, 2023, 13 LAYCS scholars, 4 coordination team members and 4 interpreters attended the SB58 conference in Bonn, Germany. During the two weeks of the conference the group got to know each other, adapted to the on-ground interpretation system, attended constituency meetings, organized networking meetings, organized an action, attended side events and negotiation sessions.



Figure 3: The LAYCS team at SB58 in Bonn, Germany

Negotiation at SB58

As the main focus of the scholarship program is negotiations, the scholars spent most of their conference attendance actively following their respective negotiation tracks organized in three thematic working groups (Global Goal on Adaptation, Loss and Damage and Global Stocktake). Additionally, they listened into a few negotiations on other topics as well as press conferences to get a general overview of the status of negotiations.

Global Stocktake The thematic working group for the Global Stocktake (GST) consisted of two scholars who went head first into the details of the negotiations. In their preparation they had in-depth discussions with Enrique Martua from CANLA (Latin American Node of the Climate Action Network). Once on the ground in Bonn they prepared their work plan and followed it through. They attended the daily meetings of the YOUNGO GST working group with the support of our interpreters and contributed to their advocacy strategies. Both scholars followed the opening of the Opening Plenary of the GST Technical Dialogue and attended the GST Technical Dialogue World Cafe (which was challenging for interpretation). They also kept themselves up to date on the GST



Figure 4: LAYCS scholar Raylson Santos holds an intervention at the closing plenary of the Global Stocktake Technical Dialogue.



roundtables on Adaptation and Loss and Damage as well as Means of Implementation. A special highlight of SB58 was when our scholar Raylson Santos from Brazil held the intervention on behalf of YOUNGO in Portuguese in the closing plenary of the GST Technical Dialogue.

Global Goal on Adaptation A team of five scholars came together as the working group on the Global Goal on Adaptation. For its preparation, a regional perspective was prioritized. Therefore, they had discussions with GGA expert María del Pilar Bueno from Argentina during the online capacity-building. She is a member of the Steering Committee of The Adaptation Research Alliance, Undersecretary of Climate Change and Just Ecological Transition in the Municipality of Rosario in Argentina, and a researcher at the National Council for Scientific and Technical Research, among other positions. To follow up on these topics, four team members engaged with the indigenous peoples organizations Constituency (IPO) and one member joined the daily meetings of Climate Action Network (CAN) - ENGO Constituency. With the support of our interpreters the group members followed the following negotiations: Informal Consultation for National Adaptation Plans, Program of work on just transition pathways, workshops on the Glasgow-Sharm el-Sheikh work programme on the global goal on adaptation, Nairobi work programme on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change, among others. Ahead of SB58 they had prepared a work plan and consulted amongst themselves in regular working group meetings on the ground.

Loss and Damage Loss and Damage emerged as a central topic of discussion during SB58, with significant attention directed toward the design of the fund's architecture despite a lack of clarity regarding its operationalization. Prior to attending SB58, the five LAYCS scholars following this track convened for a preparatory online meeting led by Bruno Toledo, a regional expert from the Brazilian networking organization Observatório do Clima, to gain insight into the status of the Loss and Damage fund. During the conference, scholars focused on tracking and comprehending developments related to the operationalization of the fund, including which institution would manage it and the potential engagement of civil society in its governance board. To deepen their understanding of the key issues at hand, scholars engaged with New Zealand negotiators for Climate Finance and Loss and Damage, leveraging the country's commitment to promoting diverse and inclusive language. This interaction provided scholars with an opportunity to pose questions regarding decision-making processes and explore avenues for meaningful engagement. The members of the thematic group closely monitored the negotiations concerning the Santiago Network and the discussion points related to Loss and Damage within the framework of the Global Stocktake. Following their analysis, the group concluded that the Loss and Damage fund should transition toward a more human rights-based approach. They emphasized the necessity for clarity regarding civil society engagement and stressed the importance of ensuring that the host institution of the fund considers the unique challenges faced by small island nations and developing states when allocating these funds.



Media Appearances

Some of our members were featured in the media, here are some of these mentions:



We must stop depoliticizing climate change, an interview with Daniela Soares da Silva featured in German media ASW

Interview in local media in Brazil titled: Indigenous student from UEFS, Bahia, attends UN conference in Germany.



Global Climate Justice Alliance in Bonn denounces the promotion of false solutions and calls for an end to extractivism and a just transition in Latin America and the Caribbean. Press conference organized by the global campaign to demand Climate Justice, with the participation of Camila Romero.



Conference of the Youth (COY18) Dubai, United Arab Emirates

From November 26 to 28, 2023, 14 LAYCS members attended the 18th Conference of Youth (COY18) in Dubai, Emirates United Arab. The official youth constituency of UNFCCC, YOUNGO was responsible for organizing the event. We attended some networking meetings, attended side events and organized one and integrated into some movements present at the conference.



Figure 5: Part of the LAYCS team at the 18th Conference of the Youth in Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Interpretation at the opening and closing sessions

One of the LAYCS coordinators, Clara von Glasow, led the interpretation support for the opening and closing plenary session of the 18th Youth Conference. This made it possible for the session to be interpreted in Arabic, Portuguese, Spanish and French.

Side events Likewise, the side events which were attended by the scholars were: Connect with nature (WWF) / Green jobs fair, Agri-food event held by the American University of Sharjah, workshop to present a net zero 2050 board game organized by Climate Action Pakistan, Reports from Local Conferences of Youth 2023, Youth as Change Agents on Climate, Peace and Security, Thinking about Tomorrow Acting Today: Climate Change, Migration and Youth, Whole Foods at the Center of Health and Climate, "Your Action Today, Our Life Tomorrow:" Youth Power in Shaping Migration in a Changing Climate, The food system "optimizing", Peace and Security Working Group, Policy maker capacity building and ACE Working Group and NPO Taking action on Climate.



Figure 6: LAYCS provides interpretation support for plenary sessions.



Our side event Our event entitled *Workshop: Effective and Inclusive South-South and North-South Youth Collaboration* was interpreted into Spanish and Portuguese. The coordination team was responsible for explaining the structure of LAYCS and how we have approached South-South and North-South collaboration.



Figure 7: Alma Xochitl Zamora Mendez talking at the LAYCS side event



28th Conference of the Parties (COP28) Dubai, United Arab Emirates

At COP28, the scholars organized their work within the three thematic groups (GGA, L&D and GST) and also linked to Women and Gender (WGC), Youth NGOs (YOUNGO) and Indigenous Peoples' Organizations (IPO).

Negotiations at COP28

Global Stocktake The two scholars working on GST during SB58 continued to do so during COP28. They were later joined by scholars who previously worked on the Loss and Damage fund negotiations (since that item was adopted on the first day of COP28).

Already during COY18 the scholars attended a preparatory meeting of the YOUNGO GST working group. Since negotiations were often very crowded it was difficult to attend the informals related to the GST. For some of the Contact Group meetings of SBI 8/SBSTA 5 overflow rooms were open to all observers, so that the scholars and interpreters could sit in. Otherwise they attended the daily CAN press conference at 11:30 am as well as the Youth Policy Briefings in the Children and Youth Pavilion. They also attended and spoke at several side events about their experience following the negotiations. When the first draft of the GST text was published on 11th of December, the team joined the analysis as well as the civil society silent protests. They followed up and some team members witnessed the final text being gavelled.

Global Goal on Adaptation The thematic working group following adaptation prioritized 3 topics during COP28: the Glasgow-Sharm el-Sheikh work program on the global goal on adaptation, the Nairobi work program on adaptation and Adaptation Finance.

To ensure effective follow-up, four members of the team continued to participate in daily meetings of the Indigenous Peoples Organizations constituency (IPO), while one member joined the meetings of the Women and Gender Constituency (WGC). Additionally, attending spaces such as the daily Climate Action Network press updates on the negotiations was crucial as a lot of negotiation rooms were subject to a ticketing system allowing only one youth in the room. The press conference rooms had official interpretations infrastructure which our interpreters were able to use. This way we were able to extend the service not only for our scholars but also for the rest of the attendees.

A notable achievement is that some of our members supported the establishment of the International Indigenous Youth Forum on Climate Change.

Loss and Damage The five scholars focused on the Loss and Damage track maintained communication with negotiators and experts ahead of COP, understanding that the fund's approval was imminent in the initial days of the conference. This shifted their focus towards tracking contributions from parties and gaining insights into the forthcoming steps, including the role of the hosting entity (World Bank) and the Loss and Damage fund board that was yet to be established.

Throughout the remainder of the conference, these scholars collaborated with their peers following the Global Stocktake thematic track. By pooling their efforts and expertise, they aimed to maximize their impact and contribute comprehensively to discussions surrounding Loss and Damage and its integration within the broader framework of the Global Stocktake.

In the final feedback form, scholars expressed their satisfaction with the opportunity to track the Loss and Damage agenda item from its operationalization discussions to the announcement of financial contributions by parties in the early days of COP. They highlighted their ability to network with other youth groups, such as the Loss and Damage Youth Coalition, as well as engage with negotiators and experts, which deepened their understanding of the work being discussed in the negotiation tables. Furthermore, scholars felt empowered to bring these discussions back to their communities.



Side Events Organized by LAYCS at COP28

As LAYCS 2023 we organized the following seven side events ourselves and participated in numerous side events organized by other entities.

Climate Live Pavilion - Performance Our first self organized Side Event took place on 2nd of December 2023 from 14:00-15:00 in the Climate Live Pavilion (fig. 8). Our scholars Diego Aza Valenzuela from Colombia and Guidaí Vargas Michelena from Uruguay performed the song *5 siglos resistiendo* (Five century resisting) in the version of Bruno Arias. They also explained what the song means to them in terms of their fight for the rights in their indigenous territories. The audience got the chance to sing along with the song and ask questions. The event was interpreted into English.



Figure 8: Guidaí Vargas Michelena and Diego Aza Valenzuela (l.) performing *5 siglos resistiendo* at the Climate Live Pavilion



Figure 9: What is hindering indigenous peoples to attend climate conferences? LAYCS scholars Camila, Diego, Açucena, Alma, Wara and Guidaí are sharing their experiences.

Indigenous Peoples Pavilion On 4th of December (Day 5 of COP28) from 17:50-18:50 our scholars organized a Side Event in the Indigenous Peoples Pavilion. The event was co-organized with the Canadian campaign Mino Bimaadiziwin (fig. 9). The scholars Camila (Chile), Diego (Colombia), Açucena (Brazil), Alma (Mexico), Wara (Bolivia) and Guidaí (Uruguay) shared their experiences of barriers that hinder them from attending international conferences. The event started with a breathing exercise and appreciation for the space that the group and the audience were in. The event was closed with a song that was sung together. The event was accessible in Spanish, Portuguese and English with the help of interpreters. The title of the event was *Living the Good Life: Connecting Anishinaabe Stories with the Experiences of Latin American Indigenous Youth in the Climate Struggle by the Mino Bimaadiziwin Campaign and LAYCS Indigenous Youth*.

Youth Climate Champion Pavilion By invitation from the team of the Youth Climate Champion we organized a sharing circle on 5th of December where the speakers Pepe (Mexico), Raylson (Brazil), Daniel (Brazil) and Açucena (Brazil) discussed their realities in their territories with an audience from across the globe (fig. 10). It was a heartfelt conversation where the audience and the speakers connected over their common struggle, their love for mother earth and the feeling of community. The title of the event was "The culture and traditions of the young people from Latin America in combating climate change". The event was accessible in Spanish, English and Portuguese.



Figure 10: Heartfelt, multi-lingual conversations about common struggles, love for mother earth and feeling of community at the Youth Climate Champion Pavilion.



Figure 11: Audrey, Maria José, Wara and Valeria talk about climate justice, adaptation and resilience at the German Pavilion.

German Pavilion On 8th of December four young female scholars organized a side event in the German Pavilion (fig. 11). The title of the event was *Enhancing Adaptation and Resilience - A Latin American Perspective*. The scholars Audrey from Brazil, Maria José from Ecuador, Wara from Bolivia and Valeria from Peru spoke about climate justice, adaptation and resilience in the context of the Amazon, the mountain regions and in cities. The event was interpreted in Spanish. The recording of the event can be accessed [here](#).

Alma from Mexico presented the demands of the group to policy makers as well as experiences they have had as Latin American youth activists at UN Climate Conferences (see fig. 12). In the beginning the audience was invited to listen to a song and connect with the earth through breathing exercises. The event was interpreted into English.

Colombian Pavilion On 8th of December LAYCS organized a Side Event in the Pavilion of Colombia. The scholars Diego from Colombia, Raylson from Brazil and



Figure 12: Diego, Raylson and Alma present their demands to policy makers and talk about their experiences at UN Climate Conferences as Latin American youth activists.

Extreme Hangout Stage As our only event in the Green Zone we organized a panel on the stage of Extreme Hang-out at COP28 on 11th of December (fig. 13). The scholars Daniela from Brazil and Pepe from Mexico together with activists from India and the Philippines delivered a lively discussion about Loss and Damage and how the negotiations have an influence on their own realities. The event was partially interpreted from Portuguese to English. The title of the event was *Loss and Damage: A perspective of youth from territories around the world*.

Climate Live Pavilion - Embroidery Circle Together with PactoXelClima Colombia, Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty and Lagaia we organized a space for youth to decompress from the craziness of the negotiations



Figure 13: LAYCS scholars Daniela and Pepe discuss the negotiation topic *Loss and Damage* with activists from India and the Philippines.



on 11th of December in the Climate Live Pavilion (fig. 14). Coincidentally on the evening of the release of the first proposed draft of the Global Stocktake outcome text which caused a large backlash we invited youth to join an embroidery circle and share how they feel and what frustrates them. The event was interpreted from Spanish to English.



Figure 14: Sharing frustration and feelings in an embroidery circle after a disappointing draft of the Global Stocktake outcome text.

Networking

As we mentioned the scholars had the opportunity to meet with experts on each negotiation topic. All experts offered their support in guiding us through the negotiations and their perspectives on key issues: Enrique Martua (GST), Sandra Guzmán (GGA), Inès Bakhtaoui (L&D), Benjamin Abraham (L&D), Diosmar Filho (specialist in just transition and researcher into environmental racism), Patrick Gaspard (former US diplomat and former president of the Open Society Foundations), Leonildes Nazar (coordinator of the Institute for Climate and Society - ICS), Rogelio Rosas (GST negotiator of the Official Mexican Delegation on behalf of Civil Society), Emiko Mabe (LCOY Chile Representative) and Genaro Godoy (YOUNGO Finance Contact Point).

We also had several networking opportunities with other organizations, including the C40 Youth Hub and C40 team, The Peruvian pavilion, which provided an opportunity to meet experts from the Ricardo Palma University in Lima, the Peruvian negotiator and the Peruvian Minister of the Environment, Albina Ruiz. Additionally, interactions occurred at the Climate Mobility Pavilion with the Local Pathways Fellowship (LPF), International Organization for Migration (IOM), COP28 organizers for children, ISHA Foundation, Indigenous Youth Forum on Climate Change (IIFYFCC), Articulação Nacional dos Povos Indígenas do Brasil- APIB. The scholars also participated and spoke at the Indigenous Peoples Dialogue with UN High-Level Climate Change Champions, the COP28 Presidency, and UNFCCC Secretariat. Other engagements included meetings with The Climate Roadmap, with young Chilean and German negotiators, Biomass Action Network, Global Forest Coalition, The Waste Lab, Environmental Agency Abu Dhabi, DP World, Salis Design, SIA partners, Climate Action Pakistan, The Climate Tribe, among others.



Mini Grants Projects

What is the mini grant and why was this part of LAYCS strategy? Climate action encompasses a wide spectrum of activities and initiatives. In the context of the Latin American Youth Climate Scholarship, a pivotal criteria in our selection process was identifying young individuals deeply rooted in their communities. The reasoning behind this criteria was to bring to the center of the discussion the people who are directly affected by what is discussed in the international negotiations, but also to shift the narrative of such conversations, emphasizing the “human aspect” of the people on ground. There’s so many discussions about protecting nature but very little about how we can protect the people living in it.

By selecting the local youth who are actively contributing to the revitalization, preservation and strengthening of the natural and cultural elements of their surroundings, we not only empower individuals but uplift entire communities.

The LAYCS project is amazing, because the people who make it possible are incredibly committed to collective activism and transformation. It drives, generates essential conditions for international advocacy spaces to listen to our voices and for the scholars to seek their own strategies, but with firm and safe steps.

Guidaí Vargas Michelena, Uruguay



As part of our strategy to bridge the local and international aspects of our program, we provided our scholars with the opportunity to receive mini grants, each amounting to 190 euros. The execution of activities stemming from these grants was optional, acknowledging that our scholars were simultaneously navigating university commitments or full-time employment. Additionally, considering the mandatory nature of our capacity-building sessions, which already demand a portion of their time, we wanted to ensure flexibility.

The response from our scholars was overwhelmingly positive. We received a total of nine proposals, showcasing their enthusiasm to engage and share what they have learned with their communities. The team provided feedback and suggestions to each proposal, guiding scholars in order to achieve their goals in the best possible way.

Process

Following SB58 in Bonn, scholars were invited to voluntarily submit their proposals using an online form. Templates for the proposals were shared in both Portuguese and Spanish. The submission required details such as the context, objectives of the activity, target audience, necessary resources, and a general budget. The organizing team meticulously reviewed each proposal, providing feedback or posing additional questions when deemed necessary. After this initial filter all the nine proposals



Figure 15: Açucena Tumbalalá sharing her experience attending a UN Climate Conference in her community, Tumbalalá People in Brazil, 2023.



were approved and funds were transferred to facilitate their implementation.

With a timeline set at two months, scholars embarked on executing their activities. Throughout this period, the organizing team remained actively involved, offering support and assistance in addressing any challenges encountered by the scholars.

Statistics

To measure the impact of the Mini Grant activities, we implemented a post-execution evaluation process. Following the completion of their activities, all scholars were requested to complete a form. This form served the dual purpose of gauging the outcomes of the initiatives and gaining insights into any challenges encountered during the implementation. The statistics presented below came as a result of the information shared by the scholars with our team in this post-execution process.

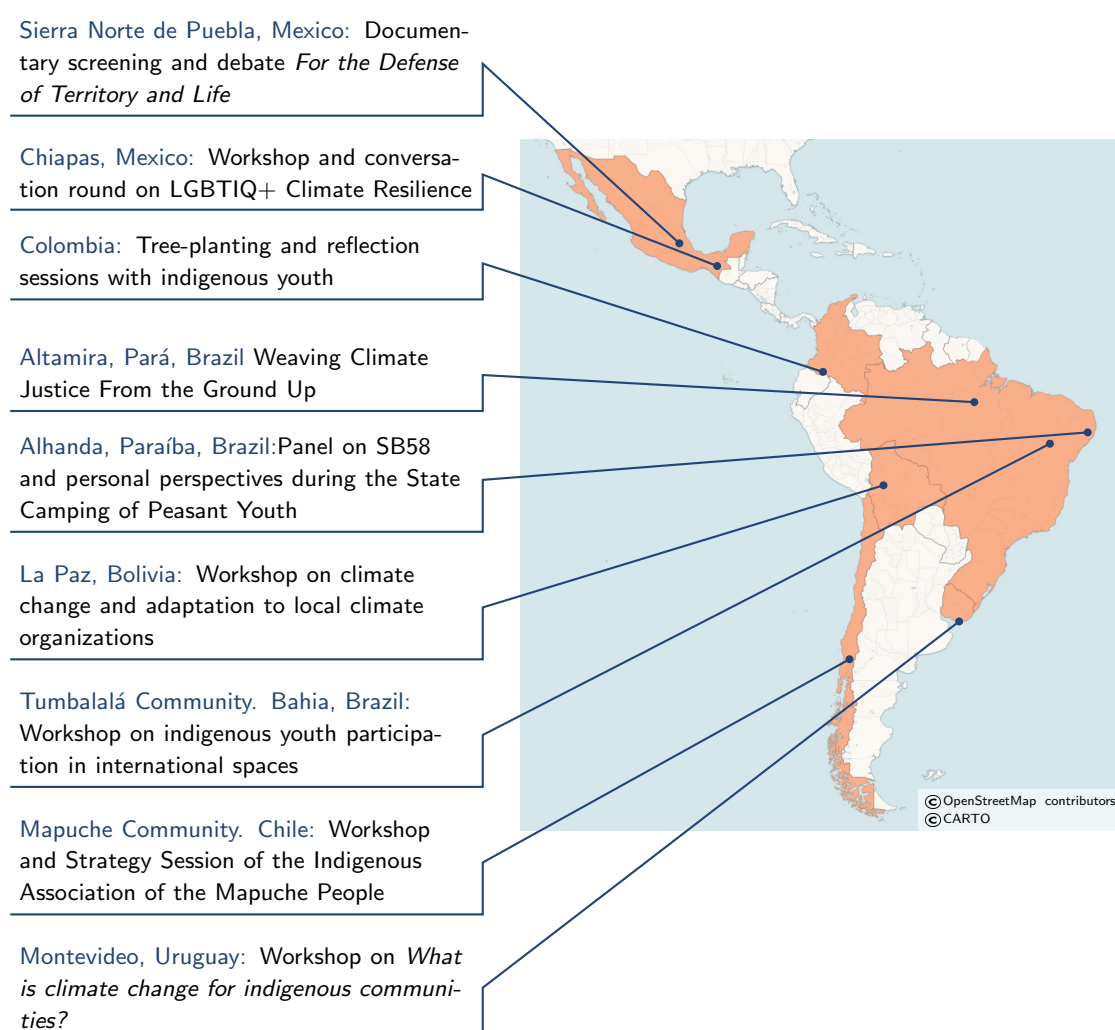


Figure 16: Nine activities were executed with the mini grants support in the highlighted countries.

Impact

The impact of the mini grant activities was significantly amplified through collaboration with four local entities. In total, the activities resulted in 530 individuals attending the events organized by our dedicated scholars.



Challenges

Two of the highlighted challenges during the implementation of the activities were the accessibility to distant indigenous communities and the substantial amount of funds required to support their participation and the challenge of preparing an activity for LGBTIQ + youth in a socially conservative city. Despite these challenges, the scholars demonstrated resilience and adaptability, showcasing their commitment and making a positive impact within their communities.



Figure 17: Flyer for documentary screening on indigenous resilience by Alma Xochitl in her community. Mexico 2023.



Learning from LAYCS 2023

As a pilot project, the Latin American Youth Climate Scholarship encountered its share of challenges and valuable lessons. Recognizing the significant responsibility of hosting a program for BIPOC youth, the team diligently assessed and prepared for potential risks related to discrimination, accessibility, and language barriers.

One major challenge arose from the unexpectedly high volume of applications received during the initial phase. With over 5,000 applications flooding in, coupled with an increased demand on our communication and social media channels, the team faced considerable pressure to manage the influx effectively. With the proximity of SB58, there was limited time available to adjust the selection timeline accordingly. In response, the entire coordination team joined efforts alongside the volunteer evaluators to diligently review each application.

As a key takeaway from this experience, we have implemented measures to streamline the selection process for the upcoming year. Recognizing the need for additional support, we have enlisted the assistance of eight dedicated volunteers to support application reviews. It is imperative for our team that the core values upon which LAYCS was founded are upheld at every stage of the process. To ensure equity and representation, all volunteer evaluators are individuals from Black and/or Indigenous communities, who will receive financial compensation for their time and expertise. This proactive approach not only enhances the inclusivity of our program but also reinforces our commitment to fostering diversity and equity within the climate movement.

Another significant learning that emerged in the early stages of the project was the realization that LAYCS had outgrown its status as a volunteer or side-job effort. The coordination team encountered challenges in balancing their full-time jobs with the demands of overseeing the program, often leading to grueling workdays lasting up to 14 hours. Following SB, one of our coordinators made the decision to commit her full time to the project, made possible by the allocation of additional funding for payment (still as a compensation).

By having one person working full time we effectively doubled the capacity available to coordinate the project, underscoring the critical need for financial compensation for those driving the initiative forward. It became evident that compensating individuals for their time and invaluable expertise is essential to sustainably manage and grow the project. For the year of 2024 LAYCS will count with three coordinators, one being full time (Alicia), and two part time (Ati Viviam and Clara). An effort will be made to offer appropriate payments to the team.

Being the sole program to provide its own team of interpreters at SB58 and COP28 presented numerous challenges. These challenges ranged from the absence of interpretation booths to encountering resistance from some individuals who were hesitant to allow our interpreters into meetings. As a result, we had to adapt and collaborate closely with our interpreters to ensure the best possible service for our scholars. In between SB and COP the organising team reached out to constituency focal points and interpreters, too.

LAYCS has transformed my life and changed the mentality of many people in my community.

Açucena Marinheiro, Brazil





Outlook - 2024 and beyond

LAYCS goes beyond the scholarship and its recipients. The program is committed to the principle of climate justice and understands the responsibility it carries in providing Black and Indigenous youth across the region with the required tools to navigate the UNFCCC in a safer way.

With the formal announcement that COP 30 will not only return to Latin American grounds but will be hosted on indigenous territory, the Latin American Youth Climate Scholarship perceives this as a pivotal moment to amplify the voices from the region. It is our great motivation to organize a second iteration of LAYCS in 2024 on the road to COP30.

Recognizing the challenges to host a COP in a country and territory that primarily only speaks Portuguese and building upon the groundwork laid in 2023, it is part of the program's strategy to **advocate for language accessibility** and **foster more meaningful involvement of grassroots youth** in climate negotiations.

Within the framework of our program, scholars of LAYCS 2024 will actively participate in two primary negotiation tracks: **climate finance and adaptation**. Furthermore, the project aims to actively engage in regional climate events, including the Regional Conference of Youth (RCOY), which is scheduled to be hosted in Belém, Brazil. The objective of involving scholars in such forums is to facilitate networking and collaborative efforts with other organizations in the region.

LAYCS is a community, a family with its stories of young leaders and their struggles. Without a doubt, LAYCS changed my perspective on how to be a climate and environmental activist and advocate for our territories and the global community. I am very confident that LAYCS is a gateway to transformational youth leadership.

Wara Iris Condori, Bolivia



In the efforts of strengthening local groups across Latin America, LAYCS aims to build the capacity of local and regional BIPoC youth as a tool to guarantee a meaningful engagement in the lead up and at COP30. At the local level the project aims to increase the support given to the 2024 scholars to organise activities in their communities as well as collaborate with other BIPoC youth groups by sharing our resources, such as translated policy briefings to Portuguese and Spanish and record some of our capacity building sessions with regional experts in climate policy. In January 2024 two calls were held with Brazilian youth from the Amazon region to introduce them to the UNFCCC spaces and YOUNGO. The LAYCS organizing team is also in contact with indigenous youth from Belém to better understand the gaps they are facing to mobilize and how we can contribute to bridging it.

At the international level the program will extend the support to the recently established **International Indigenous Youth Forum on Climate Change (IIYFCC)**, a platform created in 2023 by indigenous youth from across the globe working within UNFCCC conferences. Many of the founding members of the IIYFCC were LAYCS scholars and it's our goal to contribute to this movement by providing guidance and sharing resources.



Finance

In the fiscal year of 2023, Stichting Youth for Sustainable Travel had an amount of €218,014.44 at its disposal. This amount primarily stemmed from donations and grants, contributing to the full operationalization of the Latin American Youth Climate Scholarship program.

Breakdown of Revenue:

| | |
|---|--------------|
| European Climate Foundation Grant | € 100,000.00 |
| Climate Emergency Collaboration Group Grant | € 90,000.00 |
| Tenacious Award | £ 20,000.00 |

Private Donations We have received private donations from family members and donors who share our vision and see value in our project. We are immensely grateful for each one of you. This includes the indirect support by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), which partially covered the expenses for two of our indigenous scholars to attend COP28.

Financial Outlook The revenue generated in 2023 has significantly contributed to this pilot project. As we move forward, we remain committed to transparency and accountability in our financial management, ensuring that every euro is utilized effectively to advance our mission.

For a comprehensive breakdown of expenses or any further inquiries regarding our financial standing, please do not hesitate to contact us.



**YOUTH FOR
SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL**

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