

# Embedding Sustainability into Career Development: A Framework for Hope and Action

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Sustainability is “meeting the needs of the **present** without compromising the ability of **future** generations to meet their own needs.”

(Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future, 1987, p. 16)



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“The decisions we make **today** should result in a sustainable world seven generations into the **future**.”

(What is the Seventh Generation Principle?, 2020)



# A client's career **constellation** of life roles



“A person’s **multiple roles interact to reciprocally shape each other**. Thus, individuals make decisions about work-role behavior, such as occupational choice and organizational commitment, within the circumstances imposed by the **constellation of social positions** that give meaning and focus to their lives.”

(Super, Savickas, & Super, 1996, p. 128)



## Additional influences

COVID-19

Environmental

Socio-economical

Technological

Many others:

<https://ceric.ca/2040>

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“Having a sense of **hope empowers people** to consider the possibilities in any situation and **propels them to take action**...Without hope, however, people would simply give up when encountering obstacles (and everyone encounters obstacles to their goals).”

(Niles, Amundson, & Yoon, 2019, p. 284-285)

# Instilling hope, promoting action



**SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT  
GOALS**

# Instilling hope, promoting action



Derived from the 2030 UN Agenda for Sustainable Development: “...**a shared blueprint** for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future.”

Adopted in 2015 by all UN member states/countries: “...an **urgent call for action** by all countries...they recognize that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth – all while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests.”

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgs>



# Instilling hope, promoting action



...plus 169 targets and indicators



## Targets (can be broken down further into indicators)

4.1 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes

4.2 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education

4.3 By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university

4.4 By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship

4.5 By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations

4.6 By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy

4.7 By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development

Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all



# & CAREER DEVELOPMENT:

- are acts of **social justice**
- aid individuals in the discovery of their **strengths and talents**
- enable individuals realize their **purpose** and how they **serve** their communities



provide a powerful framework to help individuals consider their purpose - a grounding for their career aspirations:

- What is the world I want to live in?
- What do I see are the global problems or opportunities that need my attention?
- What are my talents and experiences that may help address these problems, and in turn improve the condition of our world?

**What do I care about?**

Embedding the



**SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

into a Senior Career  
Capstone Course

Students will:

- ✓ reflect on their educational experiences by examining artifacts
- ✓ investigate and prepare for work and further educational opportunities
- ✓ develop representational portfolios for post-university life
- ✓ consider what it means to be “educated” in their own context

Mindmaps

Information  
Interviews

Reflections

Guest  
Speakers



Mission Statement

Future Work  
Skills

Company  
Research



# Purposeful “Interventions”

Is a sense of purpose evident in these reflective components?

# Mission Statement

*An ePortfolio component asking: "How do you transform the lives of others?"*

**Create your own with:**

1. Your value and/or skill
2. Who you are creating it for
3. The expected outcome/goal
4. The SDG you are progressing

To leverage my teaching and research skills to empower post-secondary students and alumni to attain success in their careers and lives, so that they can positively impact their communities, and in turn progress SDG 4, Quality Education and SDG 8, Decent Work and Economic Growth.

# Mission Statement

*An ePortfolio component asking: "How do you transform the lives of others?"*



"I enable people to make informed decisions they can feel confident about."  
(Alyssa, Accounting student)



**Reflection:** I provide decision makers with accurate financial data on which they can base company decisions...[so they] can feel confident in the reports they have been provided. With SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), using management accounting practices, I will identify inefficient use of resources, collaborate to develop possible solutions and present financial outcomes of those solutions to take the best course of action to address, reduce or responsibly manage waste.



# Artifacts: Connecting Learning Between Life Roles



# Information Interviews



*Connect with individuals with relevant work and/or life experiences and reflect on these conversations*

“My UN SDG was to ensure the clean and adequate supply of water for all [SDG6]. **I think, as I write this response, that this may be my drive to pursue law.** I know that I want to help those throughout the world to ensure people do not die of malnutrition, and to ensure everyone has the right not to worry about a clean safe supply...Anecdotally, **I know that legal arguments most certainly can be made to ensure a clean safe supply, as this is a human right.** Maybe, human rights is an avenue of law I should explore. [Interviewee 1], for example, pursued law to potentially pursue and protect human rights. [Interviewee 2], similarly, did the same. This is something for me to consider.”  
(Kory, Criminology student)

# Implications



Use the SDGs to help those you serve to:  
**explore** career options  
**expand** career purpose

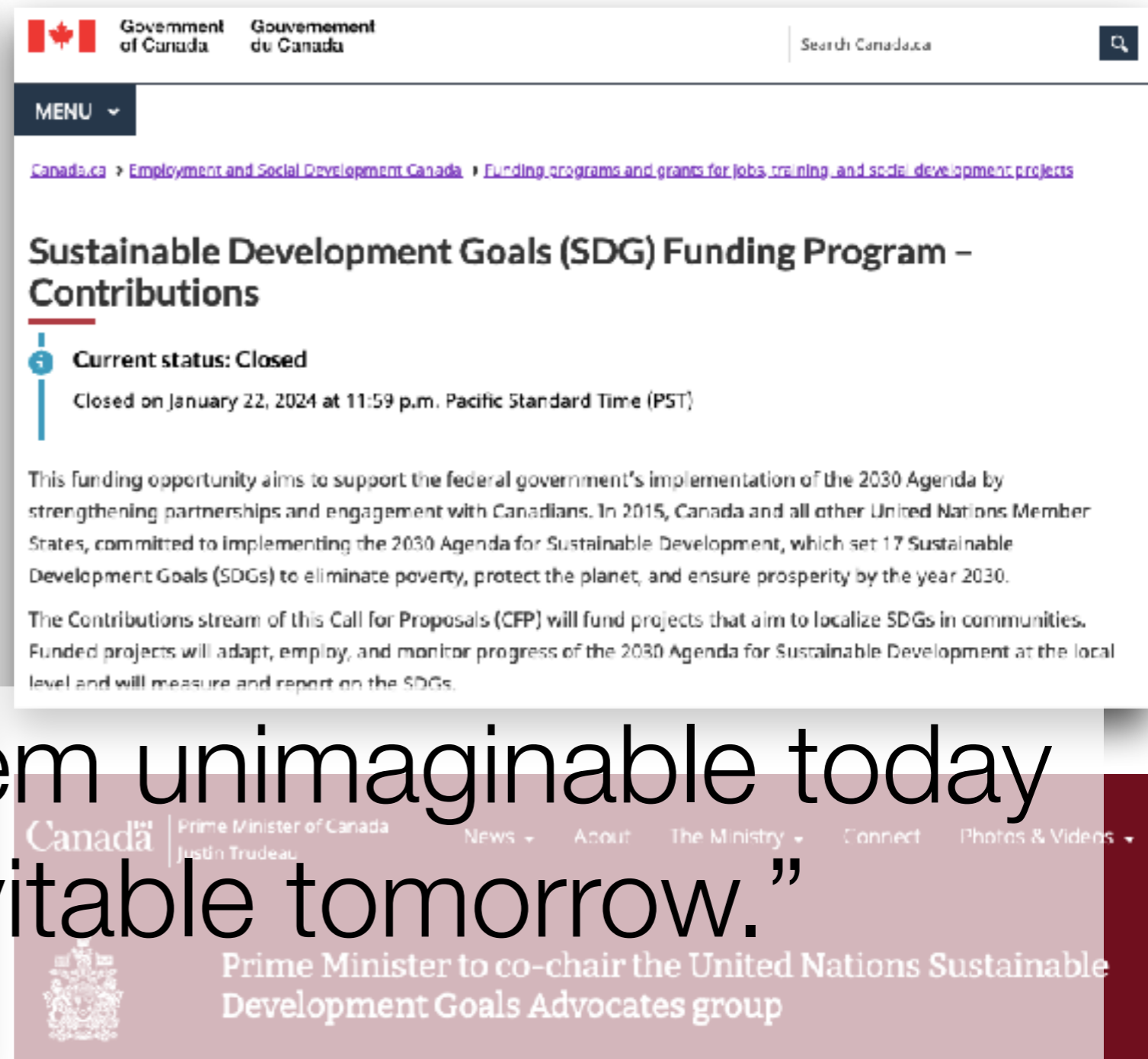
# Companies and employers taking a page from B Corporations



**Good  
company to  
keep.**

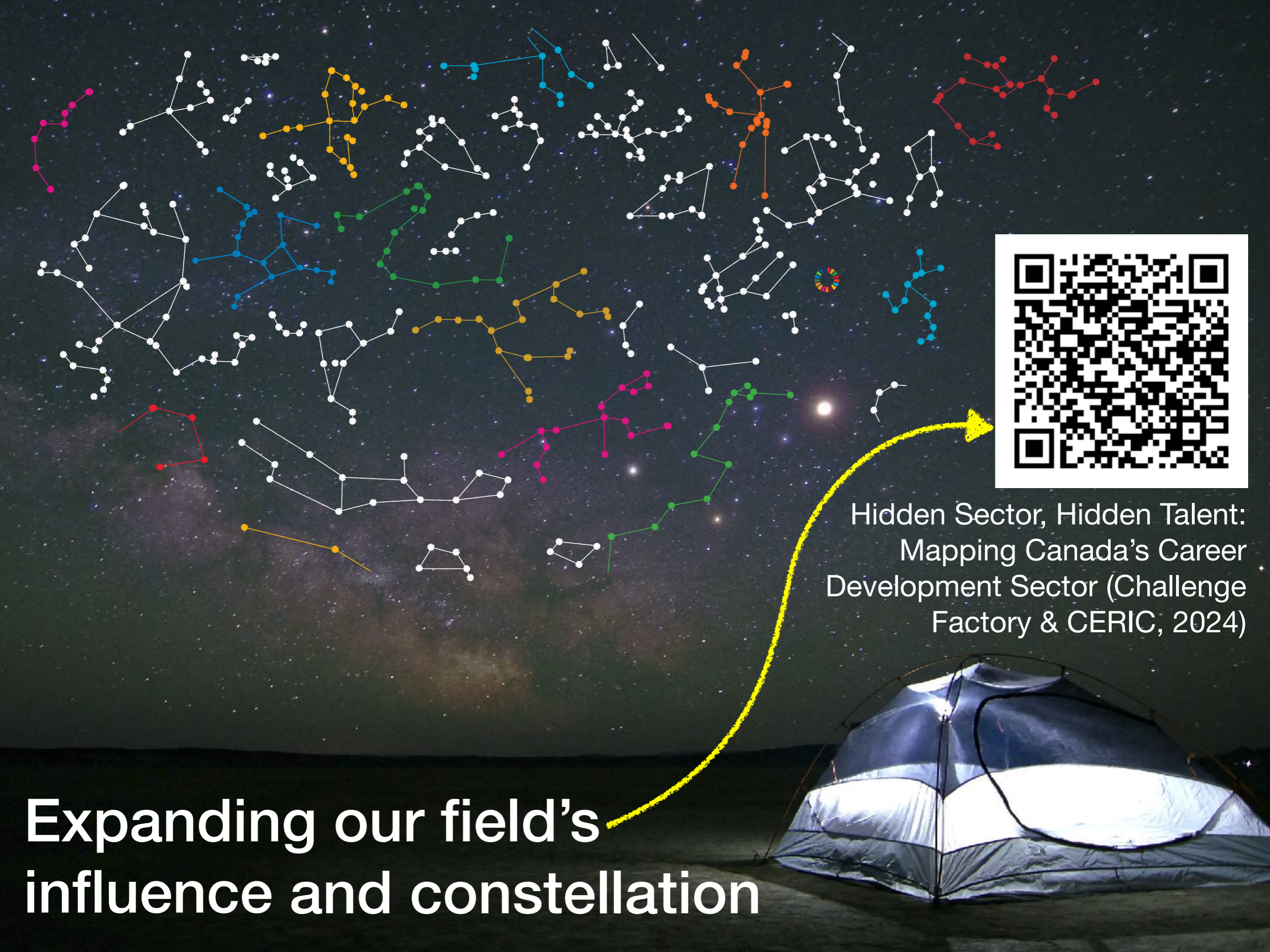


# Governments reporting and advancing the SDGs (but not doing nearly enough)



“Things that seem unimaginable today will be inevitable tomorrow.”

Professor Albus Dumbledore



Hidden Sector, Hidden Talent:  
Mapping Canada's Career  
Development Sector (Challenge  
Factory & CERIC, 2024)

Expanding our field's  
influence and constellation

# “What can you influence?”

## When practice drives research

“In what ways, if any, did the UN SDG(s) help you learn more about yourself and your career development?”

- 367 respondents from Fall 2019 to Spring 2021
- Three levels of reflection
  - ✓ **Individual:** One person can make a difference but daunting
  - ✓ **Career:** Expansion of occupational possibilities; duty to serve
  - ✓ **Community:** Harnessing collective efforts as change agents

*“I realized through this course that if I want to have a successful career, I need to think about how I want to serve the world first.” - Student*



# Final advice

- Embrace lifelong learning and flexibility
- Foster hope and empowerment
- Integrate values with career aspirations
- Advocate for social justice
- Stay collaborative and connected

“Legacy. What is a legacy? It’s planting seeds in a garden you never get to see.”

- Lin-Manual Miranda, *Hamilton*







“The plain fact is that the planet does not need more successful people. But it does desperately need more peacemakers, healers, restorers, storytellers, and lovers of every kind. It needs **people who live well in their places.** It needs **people of moral courage** willing to join the fight to make the world habitable and humane. And these qualities have little to do with success as we have defined it.”

David W. Orr, *Ecological Literacy: Educating Our Children for a Sustainable World*



**Thank you!**

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