

Strategic Directions
for the School of Architecture +
Landscape Architecture
at the University of British Columbia



SALA Strategic Directions, has emerged from a long journey. As internal consultation wrapped up in February 2020, within a month, SALA, and much of the rest of the world, had closed to mitigate COVID-19. UBC operations and academic programs shifted on-line for most of two years. When campus operations resumed in late 2022, we found ourselves in a very different place — one in which our strategic planning context had shifted significantly.

So we re-examined
our draft plan.



- > The design assumptions of daily life and design practice were shifting. Issues of environment, economic and social equity and justice had sharpened. Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples was informing public policy and community planning discourse globally. Climate change was inducing record high temperatures, wildfires, sea level rise, floods and landslides.

**What should
strategic planning
for a school of design
look like in these
shifting contexts?**

What do we need to know, to teach, to learn, to be an effective school of design? The familiar hierarchy — vision, mission, goals, strategies, objectives, actions would be presumptuous in the face of such uncertainty and instability.

**We focused instead
on fundamentals.**

What are the underlying strategic directions — the values, ambitions and priorities — that establish the enduring ‘whys’ that bind us to one another and to our place? Among them are commitments to who we are and what we believe — a community of purposeful and collaborative designers of ‘this place’; and, to the aspirations and priorities that we care about — impactful design, design fluency and engagement with people and communities. We write about these here.

Implementation pathways — the more tactical ‘whats’ and ‘hows’ that link initiatives and resources to these values and priorities will follow within the governance and operational portfolios of the School.



what we believe

SALA strategic directions

Design is among
the most hopeful
of human endeavours.

The School of Architecture + Landscape Architecture at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, is a community of students, faculty, staff, alumni and collaborators motivated to the betterment of people, place and planet enabled by design and design thinking.

Vermilion Sands, an installation created for the Harmony Arts Festival in West Vancouver by Associate Professor Matthew Soules. Photo by Krista Jahnke.

To this task, SALA brings a rich history of activism, advocacy and engagement around issues of environment, people and community in architecture, landscape architecture and urban design. While we continue to learn from that experience, we acknowledge that hope, history and practice are continuously tested, renewed and recalibrated.

In this decade alone, the onset of an overdue reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, an urgent deepening climate crisis, a global pandemic, entangled with interconnected environmental, social, economic and political tensions, have changed the ways we see, think, work and engage with the world. Important among these has been listening, learning and working alongside the Indigenous Peoples here before us.

acknowledgement

The lands upon which we in the School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture (SALA) live and work are traditional and unceded territories of the *xʷməθkʷəy̓əm* (Musqueam), *Skwxwú7mesh* (Squamish), and *səlilwətał* (Tsleil-Waututh).

We acknowledge the urgency of reconciliation and accept our responsibility to listen, learn and collaborate in a spirit of respect, reciprocity and truth.

*sʔi:qəy̓ qəqəŋ (double-headed serpent post),
Brent Sparrow, Musqueam, UBC Vancouver
Photo by Paul H. Joseph / UBC Brand & Marketing.*

who is SALA?



who is SALA?

a collaborative design community

We are a community of design thinkers, researchers, educators and professionals, who share a commitment to design as a means to address urgent human needs and interconnected global emergencies.

Through thoughtful, creative inquiry and strategic design interventions, we work together toward better futures, a healthier planet, and more inclusive places and qualities of life.

The SALON exhibition highlights the work of our graduating MArch, MLA and MArCLA students.

who is SALA?

a distinctive approach to design education

RECONCILIATION *s̓cəwəθən məsteyəx^w* 'D LAND RECLAMATION The Tsawwassen First Nation



We teach design across scales and disciplines from hand-held objects to buildings, sites, public spaces, urban design and regional landscapes.

We offer a distinctive approach to design education that integrates artful, creative syntheses of built and natural approaches to design and construction.

MLA students prepare for studio final reviews.

who is SALA?

we are of this place

Our programs navigate the perspective, diversity and vitality of a global city and the ecologies, materials, technologies and cultures of local places and peoples.

We are grounded in the cultures, climates and contexts of Vancouver, an international port city of the Canadian West Coast — a rich natural environment at an interface of the diverse communities and values of the Pacific Rim, urban North America and rural British Columbia.

An aerial view of the UBC Vancouver Campus, situated on traditional, ancestral and unceded territory of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam).

priorities + aspirations

1 Design for impact



2 Design fluency



3 Engage people and communities



1 design for impact

We will refresh and adapt the ways and means through which our approaches to design, design education and design scholarship address shifting needs and urgencies:

Design for equity and justice

Design for climate change

Advocate for progress



A watercraft storage shelter designed and built by SALA students, under the guidance of Associate Professor of Teaching Greg Johnson in summer 2018. The project is one of several SALA design-builds located at Camp Fircom on Gambier Island.

design for equity and justice

Diverse people and communities need design and design education. Our people, places, processes and practices respect that diversity, and will model the principles and practices of a just, equitable, inclusive and respectful culture for those with whom we work and collaborate.



SALA seizes opportunities to take a leadership position.

At the 2023 Venice Biennale of Architecture, the Canada Pavilion transformed into the headquarters of the Not for Sale! Campaign by Architects Against Housing Alienation (AAHA).

design for climate change

Climate change is the design challenge of our age. SALA develops design thinkers who can listen, research, and advocate for design solutions that mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change. We collaborate with others outside our core professional communities and disciplines to meet this challenge.



advocate for progress

The effects of design and design education extend well beyond our programs and geography. Our research, scholarship, creative work, and academic programs afford us opportunities to discover emerging issues and potential solutions. We share what we see and what we learn as spokespersons, convenors, advocates and agents for positive, progressive change.



SALA seeks influence beyond its educational mandate.

Design Discovery is our two-week summer program that introduces high-school students, college students, graduates, and second-career professionals to a potential career in design.

2 design fluency

SALA educates and inspires the next generation of architecture, landscape architecture and urban design practitioners to be progressive, creative agents and enablers of change, effective collaborators, and lifelong learners through:

- Intellectual breadth and dexterity**
- Collaborative teaching and learning**
- Making design tangible**



breadth + dexterity

Impactful design calls upon a broad and dynamic body of knowledge and dexterity of method in a constant state of refinement throughout a career. SALA's academic programs and partnerships seek to engage the breadth of that knowledge and inspire the curiosity, motivation and tools for lifelong learning and adaptation.



**SALA
embraces
complexity
and systems
thinking.**

*A speculative rendering
of False Creek in 2050,
illustrating solutions
developed through the Living
with Water project led by
Associate Professor Kees
Lokman. Image by Lee
Patola/Fraser River Delta
Collaborative.*

collaborative teaching and learning

SALA faculty, students and staff learn from and with one another and our partners. We inform, stimulate and challenge through respectful provocation, constructive and thoughtful feedback. Our classrooms, design studios and workplaces seek to facilitate humane, inclusive and collaborative places and a culture of belonging.



**SALA
educates for a
more tolerant,
humane and
welcoming
society.**


*A 2018 paddle-making
workshop with the
Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish)
Nation in North Vancouver
for an option studio led
by Adjunct Professor
Joanne Gates.*

making design tangible

Impactful design depends on direct experience with materials, processes and practices. We seek ways of connecting broadly based design thinking with that experience. We seek ways to remain technologically current, and in step with sustainable practices, with a critical eye on technology's impact on people and the environment.



A student works on the roof of the summer 2023 design-build on Keats Island



SALA integrates 'hands-on' learning with new technologies.

Zippered Wood Pavilion created in 2019 by HiLo Lab, led by Associate Professor Blair Satterfield with contributions by Alex Preiss, Derek Mavis, and Graham Entwistle, with Marc Swackhamer and Matthew Hayes of LoDo Lab.

3 engage people and communities

Productive interactions with people and places are our most influential teachers and beneficiaries of our expertise. The contexts within which we live, learn and work — UBC campus, our academic and professional communities, our external partner communities and international partnerships — are laboratories for this work:

Within SALA and UBC

Within and across our disciplines

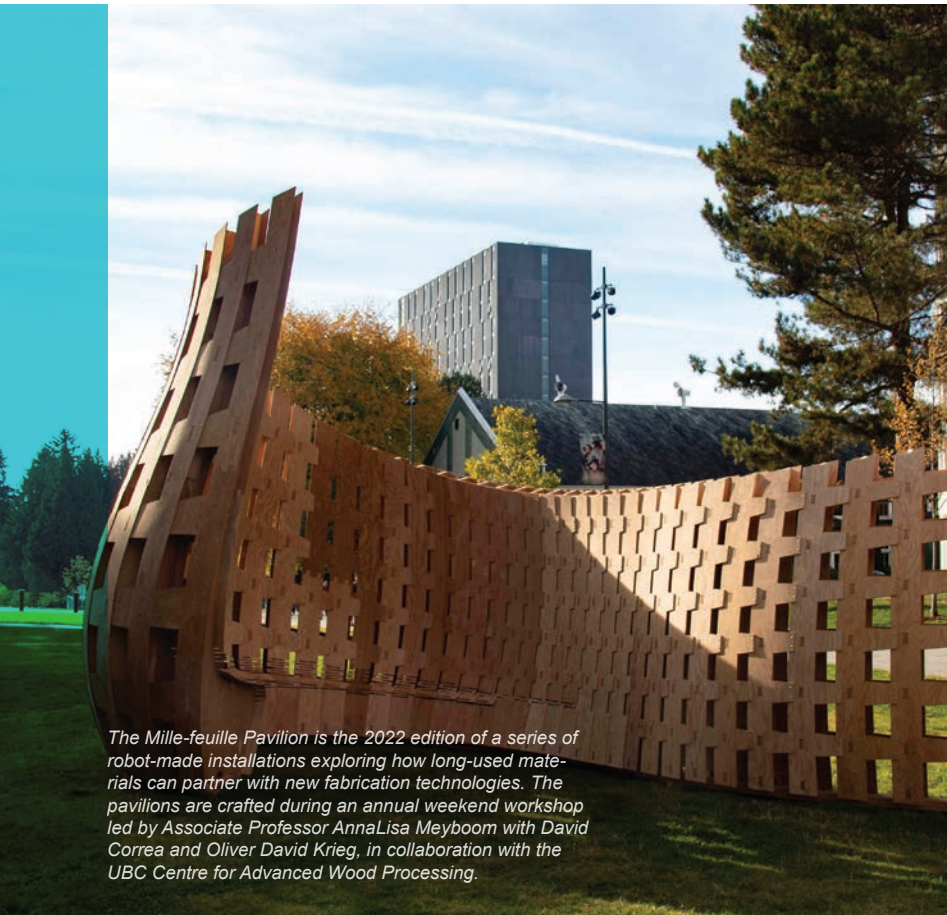
Across our external communities



Fuki no Mizu, or "water from the fuki plant," is a cooling station created for the 2022 Powell Street Festival, which celebrates Japanese-Canadian culture. The project is one of a number created for the festival, with Associate Professor Mari Fujita serving as faculty lead.

within SALA and UBC

A diverse pool of knowledge, experience and creative opportunity resides close at hand within SALA, the Faculty of Applied Science and the larger UBC community. Within this community we have sought, and continue to seek, new research and academic collaborators, and design partners.



The Mille-feuille Pavilion is the 2022 edition of a series of robot-made installations exploring how long-used materials can partner with new fabrication technologies. The pavillions are crafted during an annual weekend workshop led by Associate Professor AnnaLisa Meyboom with David Correa and Oliver David Krieg, in collaboration with the UBC Centre for Advanced Wood Processing.

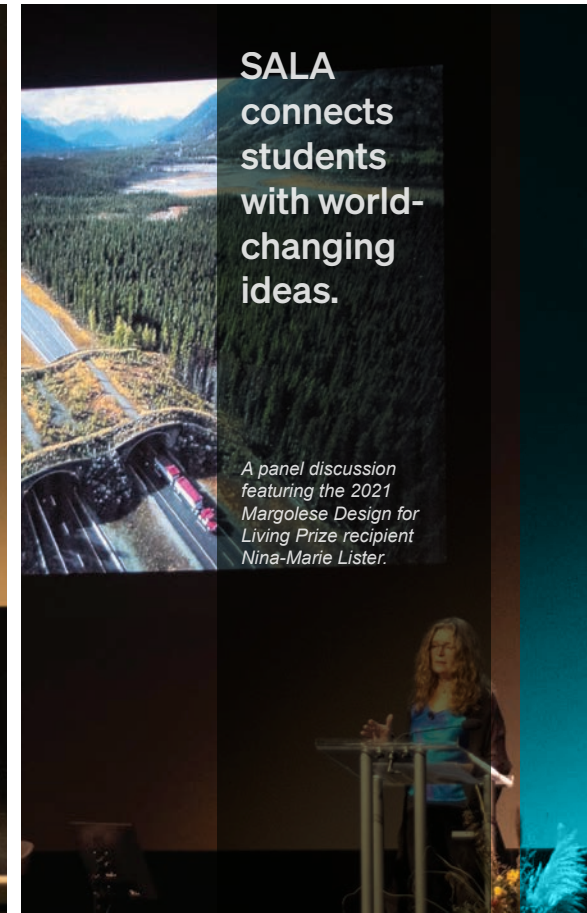


SALA seeks to be a catalyst for design innovation within UBC.

The C-Shore pavilion connects students with local material ecologies, using western red cedar cleared from a nearby construction site to create a restful sanctuary at one of the busiest locations on campus. The pavilion was designed and constructed in 2019 during a two-term course led by Associate Professor Joe Dahmen.

within and across our disciplines

Collaborations with professional partners and practitioners are essential to developing the next generation of architects, landscape architects and urban designers. Through them students and faculty gain opportunity to learn from those experienced in our fields and through which we share instructive and emerging projects, practices and design considerations outside of our day to day experience.



across our external communities

The voices and perspectives of those with distinctive lived experiences are crucial contributors to design research and education at SALA. Students, staff and faculty frequently partner with collaborators, advisors, sponsors, and user groups in the community at large. SALA partners with clients, communities, practitioners, makers, artists, builders and manufacturers that inform the refinement of design issues, technologies, and production processes.



SALA seeks integration of design with community.

Conversations at Kitsilano installation in May 2023. The project, conceived by 2022 Margolese Design for Living Prize winner Jane Wolff, invited visitors to attune to and engage with Kitsilano's changing shoreline.

Strategic Directions

affirms these existing and emerging values and priorities — who we are, what we care about, where we would like to go.

The SALA community is eager to apply, adapt and renew the ways that design, design education and design scholarship at SALA navigates these and future challenges.

These in turn direct our initiatives and resources towards the specific what, where, and with whom, we work and collaborate.

Detail of the sustainable materials used in Third Space Commons, including reclaimed windows and hempcrete walls.

drawings, thoughts, reactions

drawings, thoughts, reactions

drawings, thoughts, reactions

drawings, thoughts, reactions

drawings, thoughts, reactions

drawings, thoughts, reactions

SALA's Strategic Directions connects to a broader context of strategic planning concepts and initiatives at UBC. These include:

**THE UNIVERSITY OF
BRITISH COLUMBIA**

UBC's Strategic Plan 2018-
2028: Shaping UBC's
Next Century
2018

+

The UBC Indigenous
Strategic Plan
2020

**THE FACULTY OF
APPLIED SCIENCE**

Faculty of Applied Science's
(APSC) Strategic Plan:
Transforming Tomorrow
2020

**SALA's Strategic Directions
align most closely with
six of Transforming
Tomorrow's priority areas.
These include:**

- university of the future
- future of work
- inclusive leadership and respectful engagements
- solutions for people
- thriving cities and communities
- planetary health

The School of Architecture + Landscape Architecture (SALA) is an academic community in the Faculty of Applied Science (APSC). In 2023, our community includes approximately 530 graduate and undergraduate students, 25 tenure track faculty, over 50 part-time professional faculty, and 14 staff members plus a great many professional, academic and research related partners and sponsors.

In 2023, SALA offers eight degrees:

BDes

Bachelor of Design in
Architecture, Landscape
Architecture and Urbanism
Established in 2020

MArch

Professional Degree
Master of Architecture
Established in 1992

MLA

Professional Degree
Master of Landscape
Architecture
Established in 1997

MARCLA

Dual Professional Degrees
MArch and MLA
Established in 2016

MASA

Master of Advanced
Studies in Architecture
Research degree
Established in 1983

MASLA

Master of Advanced
Studies in Landscape
Architecture
Research degree
Established in 1996

MUD

Master of Urban Design
Post-professional degree,
Established in 2015

MEL in HPB

Master of Engineering
Leadership in High-
Performance Buildings
*In collaboration with the
Department of Mechanical
Engineering and the
Sauder School of Business.
Established in 2017*



The SALAntern Design Build project was undertaken in the summer of 2023 on Keats Island.

SALA Strategic Directions was generated through discussion, reflection and dialogue among faculty, staff, students, alumni, colleagues and friends of SALA aided by our facilitators and designers Stormy Lake Consulting and FERVOR.

Within SALA we benefitted from the diverse contributions of many faculty, staff and students and in particular from SALA's academic program chairs Mari Fujita, Kees Lokman and Blair Satterfield and staff Tamara Ross and Emma Fennell.



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

School of Architecture + Landscape Architecture

402 - 6333 Memorial Road
Vancouver, BC Canada V6T 1Z2
Tel 604 827 7252 info@sala.ubc.ca
FB [@ubcsala](#) Insta [@ubcsala](#)