AI x Green CIVIC Tech Accelerator

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Climate Collective

Summer 2025 Cohort

Final Report

September 2025

Executive Summary

The AI x Green CIVIC Tech Accelerator's Summer 2025 session helped 20 nature- and climate-focused nonprofits and social innovators build AI literacy & skills directly applicable to their work. The Accelerator ran from June to August 2025, and included organizations from 12 countries.

Applications were received from more than 70 organizations, including warm recommendations from the World Bank CIVIC team and Climate Collective's network partners, as well as an open-application process.

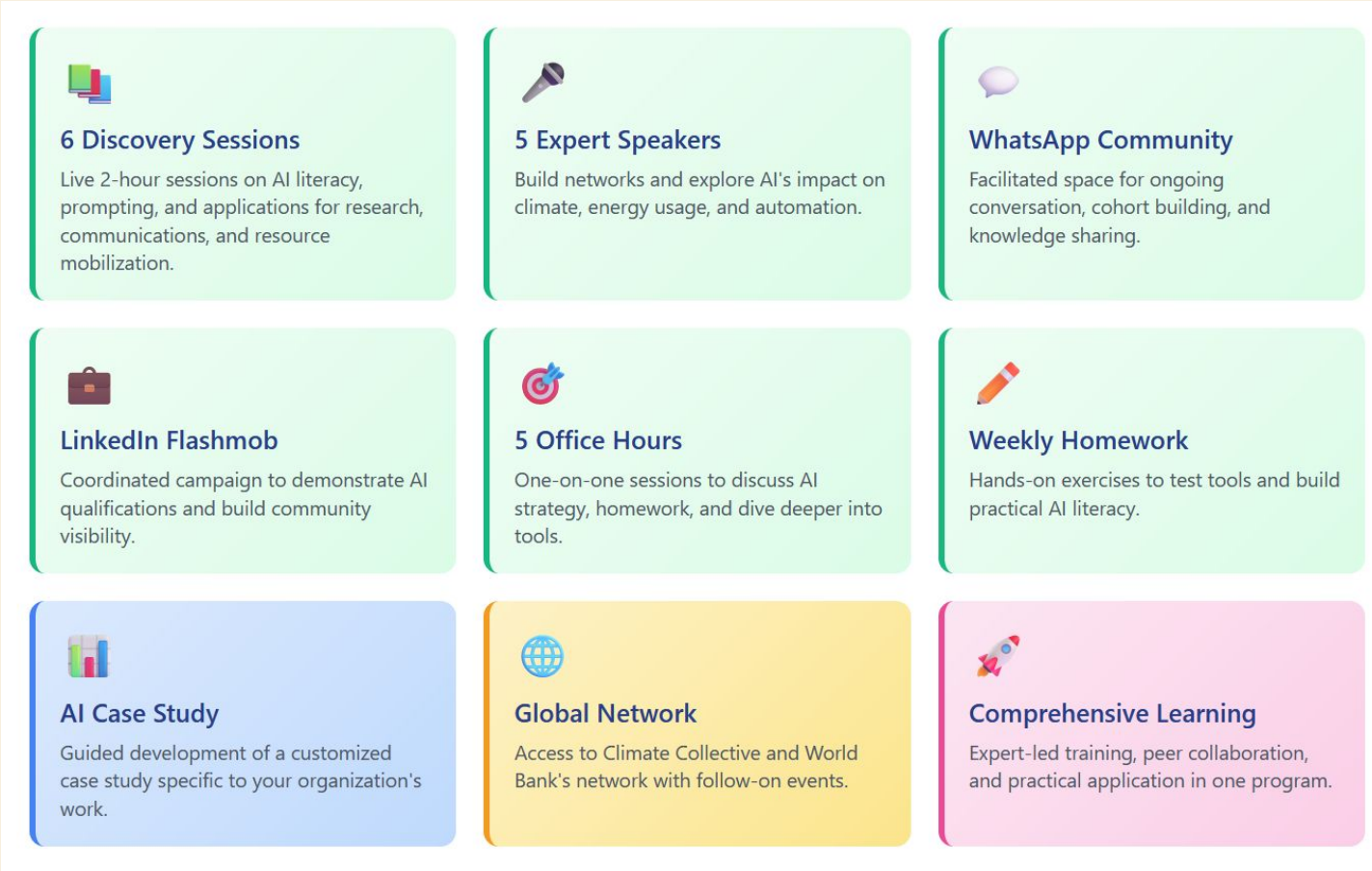
Executive Summary

Participants were selected on the basis of their high-interest but low-expertise in using AI for their mission, their focus at the intersection of climate, nature and civic engagement, as well as recommendations from partners.

The Accelerator worked to lower the barriers to understanding how AI tools work and how they might create analytical and operational efficiencies for organizations focused on the climate and nature challenge and identified use cases and a taxonomy of use cases that arose from our cohort.

Executive Summary

The course structure was designed to be engaging but not overwhelming. Details on each component in section 5.



Executive Summary

Categories of AI use cases surfaced by participants during the Accelerator. Details in section 6.

Streamlining Core Operations

Using AI to automate back-office, administrative, and internal program management tasks

Efficiency & Administration

Accelerating Strategic Growth

Using AI to enhance external engagement, storytelling, and resource mobilization (funding and outreach)

Fundraising & Communications

Enhancing Technical Mission

Using AI to analyze complex data, build models, and boost the technical capacity of field teams

Data Analysis & Capacity Building

Executive Summary

Quantitative results

100% of respondents

- would **recommend the program** to their peers.
- **gained new ideas** for storytelling, fundraising, or research using AI.
- were **comfortable using AI tools** after the program, compared to 60% before.

93% of respondents

- became **more confident identifying AI use cases** within their organization.

90% of respondents **found the sessions to be relevant** to their work

On average, each participant **shared knowledge from the program** with 3.4 colleagues.

Executive Summary

[The course was] "… **a turning point for my work** at FALA – inspiring, practical, and transformative. I left empowered, equipped, and already making real-world change."

-Thais Lazzeri, Founder, FALA impact studio (Brazil)

Contents

1. The Challenge

Our planet's vital signs are flashing red[1]

We can use AI to accelerate the global response to climate change.

The problem is urgent

As of September 2025, Seven of Nine Planetary Boundaries have been crossed.[2]

Public sector support is waning and sustainability-focused organizations are being asked to do more with less.

Amid ongoing efforts to cast doubt on climate science and on non-partisan institutions of knowledge and more broadly, it is more critical than ever that trusted local civil society has the capacity to engage communities around climate issues.

The opportunity is now

AI offers a once-in-a-generation opportunity to multiply the impact of frontline organizations and social innovators for sustainability.

The IEA estimates that widespread adoption of existing AI applications could lead to emissions reductions that are "far larger than emissions from data centres", and could account for as much as a 5% emissions reduction by 2035.[3]

[1] PBScience [2] PBScience [3] IEA

1. The Challenge

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Substantial potential, currently unmet

AI has the potential to supercharge the impact of frontline organizations and social entrepreneurs, but it's being underutilized across the sector.

The AI x Green Accelerator

With the support of CIVIC, the AI x Green Accelerator trains nonprofits in AI literacy to strengthen the effectiveness of their work, and deepen citizen engagement around climate and nature themes.

Amplifying impact globally

The program identifies of concrete examples of where and how AI can strengthen the impact of civil society organizations and their work. It opens the door to experimentation with AI tools and tests the hypothesis that AI can help teams save time, costs and help to integrate new, innovative technologies into their work.

2. Program Overview

The AI x Green CIVIC Tech Accelerator's Summer 2025 session supported 20 nature- and climate-focused nonprofits and social innovators build AI skills and technology prototypes directly applicable to their work.

2. Program Overview

The program was designed to:

1. **For participants:** Connect organizations in the climate and nature sectors with practical AI tools and expertise that create immediate efficiencies and amplify their impact, while building community and global networks.
2. **For the donor community:** Assess effectiveness of AI skills building to strengthen civil society organizations in the global south.
3. **For the broader climate sector**: Demonstrate how AI literacy programming is central to putting AI to work for climate - and deepen understanding for how to mitigate AI's own environmental footprint through #1 and #2.

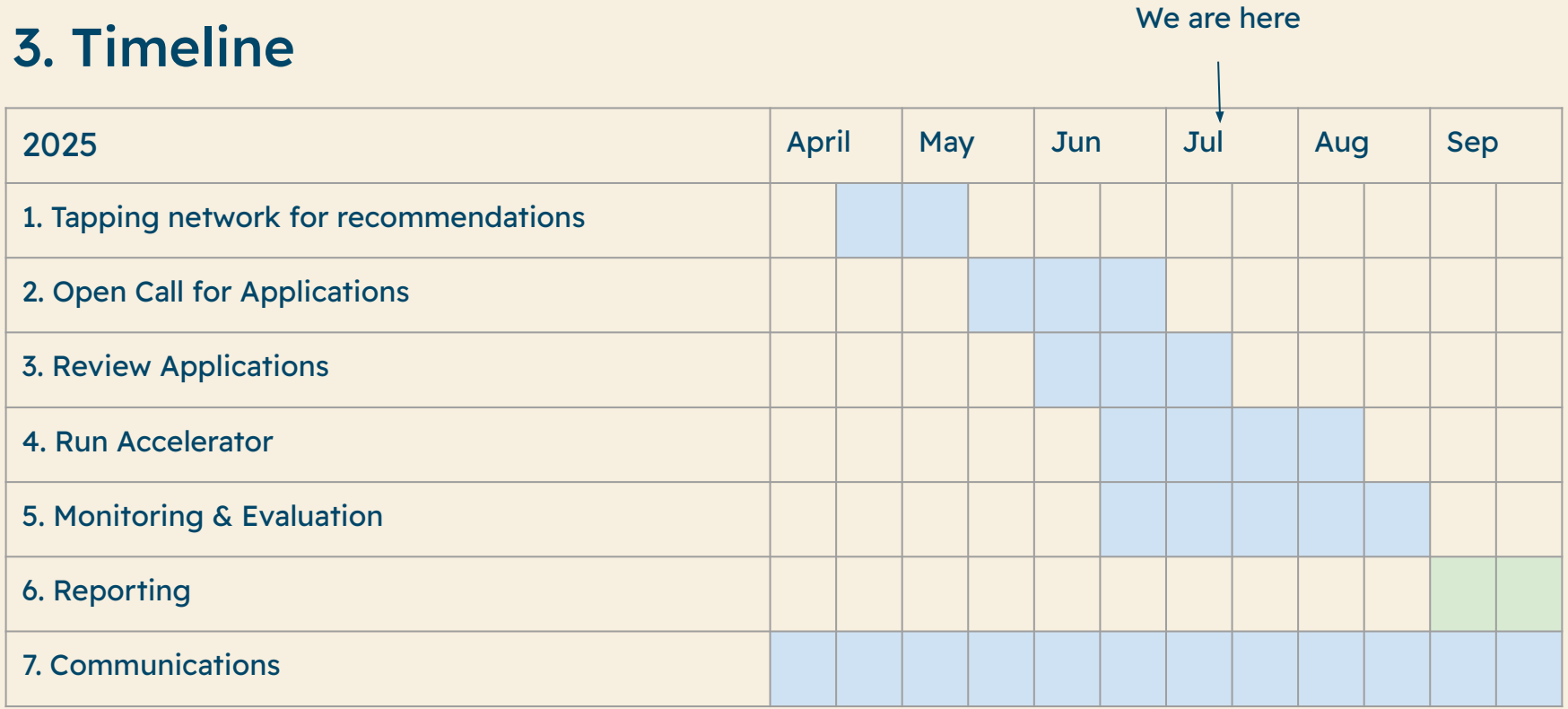
Participants share their general locations during the introductory session

2. Program Overview

This session of the Accelerator ran from June to August 2025, and…

- Provided an on-ramp for climate- and nature-focused non-profits in 13 countries across Latin America, Africa, Asia, and North America.
- Helped participants build the confidence to leverage the rapidly expanding ecosystem of AI tools to accelerate their work.
- Connected frontline organizations to global expertise and networks.
- Explored critical ethical and energy-related concerns around AI adoption, which are especially important in the social sector.
- Surfaced real-world use cases for where AI can strengthen citizen engagement programming and deepen the impact of participating organizations across the climate and nature sectors.

3. Timeline



Completed

Forthcoming

Click here to view detailed work plan.

4. Pre-Programming - Recruitment

Climate Collective sought to promote the AI x Green CIVIC Tech Accelerator to a broad audience of potentially interested start-ups and nonprofits, as well as donors and INGOs with global connections to climate-focused civic entrepreneurs and nonprofits.

Climate Collective worked with the World Bank team to leverage their network. In addition to receiving names of potential partners, we connected with ‘umbrella’ partners of the GPSA like WRI to ask for their recommendation of suitable orgs.

In addition, Climate Collective reached out to colleagues across the UNDP, WWF, Conservation International, and related organizations for nominations. In total Climate Collective received 71 applications for an anticipated 20 slots.

4. Pre-Programming - Selection

After the submission process closed, Climate Collective reviewed all 71 applications to identify climate- and nature-focused organizations who self-assessed as high-interest but low-capacity in using AI for their missions.

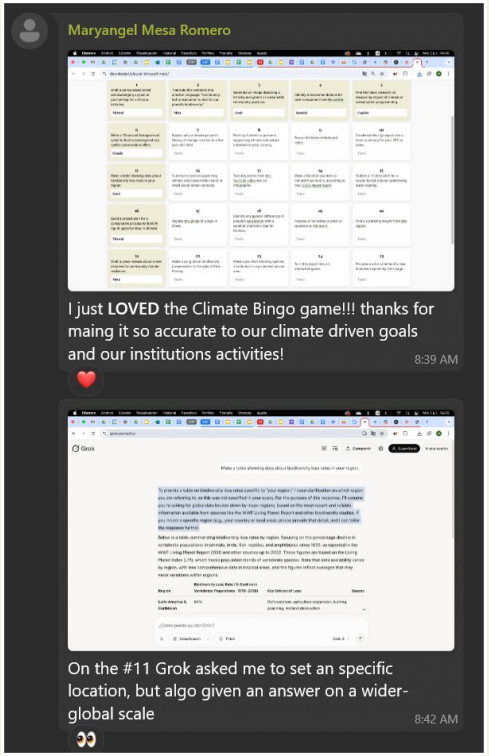
After a detailed assessment of each applicant organization’s initial application, focus areas, and public presence, 20 organizations were invited to participate.

5. Programming – Core Components

6 two-hour **discovery sessions** hosted live by an AI expert focused on basic literacy, prompting chatbots, and AI for non-profit research, communications, and resource mobilization.

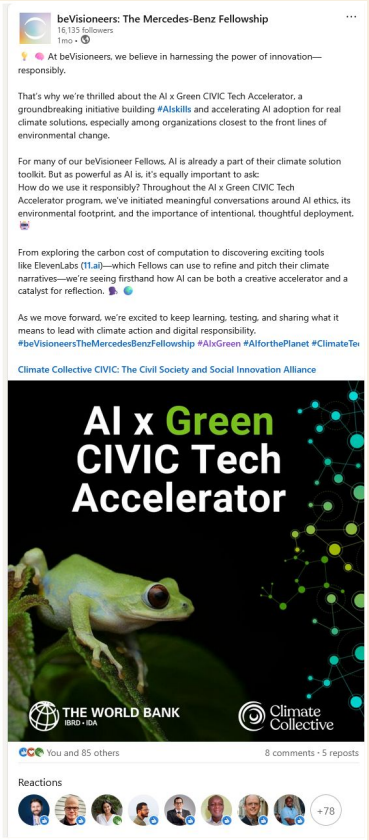
5 **expert guest speakers**, building participants' networks and knowledge and exploring AI's impact on climate, energy usage, and automation.

A facilitated **WhatsApp community** for ongoing conversation, cohort building, and knowledge sharing.



WhatsApp discussion on homework

5. Programming – Additional Components



Post from the LinkedIn Flashmob

A coordinated **“LinkedIn flashmob”** to help participants demonstrate their AI quals and build community through the Accelerator

5 **office hours** sessions with the facilitator of the discovery sessions to discuss AI strategy, homework, and to go deeper with specific tools and discussions.

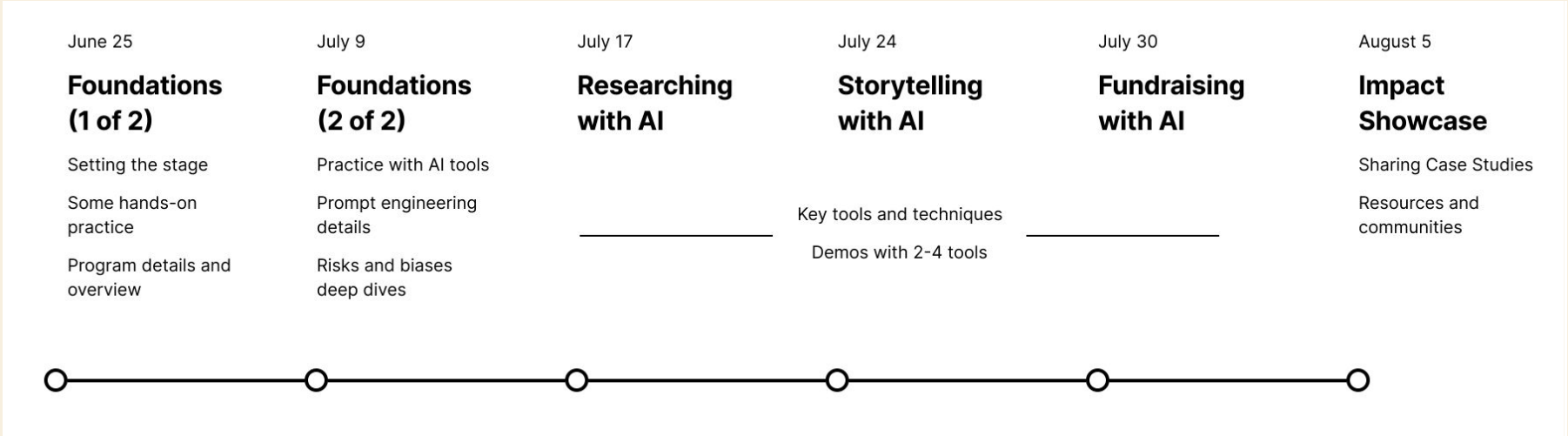
Weekly **homework exercises** to test tools and build literacy

Guided development of an **AI Case Study** specific to each organization’s work

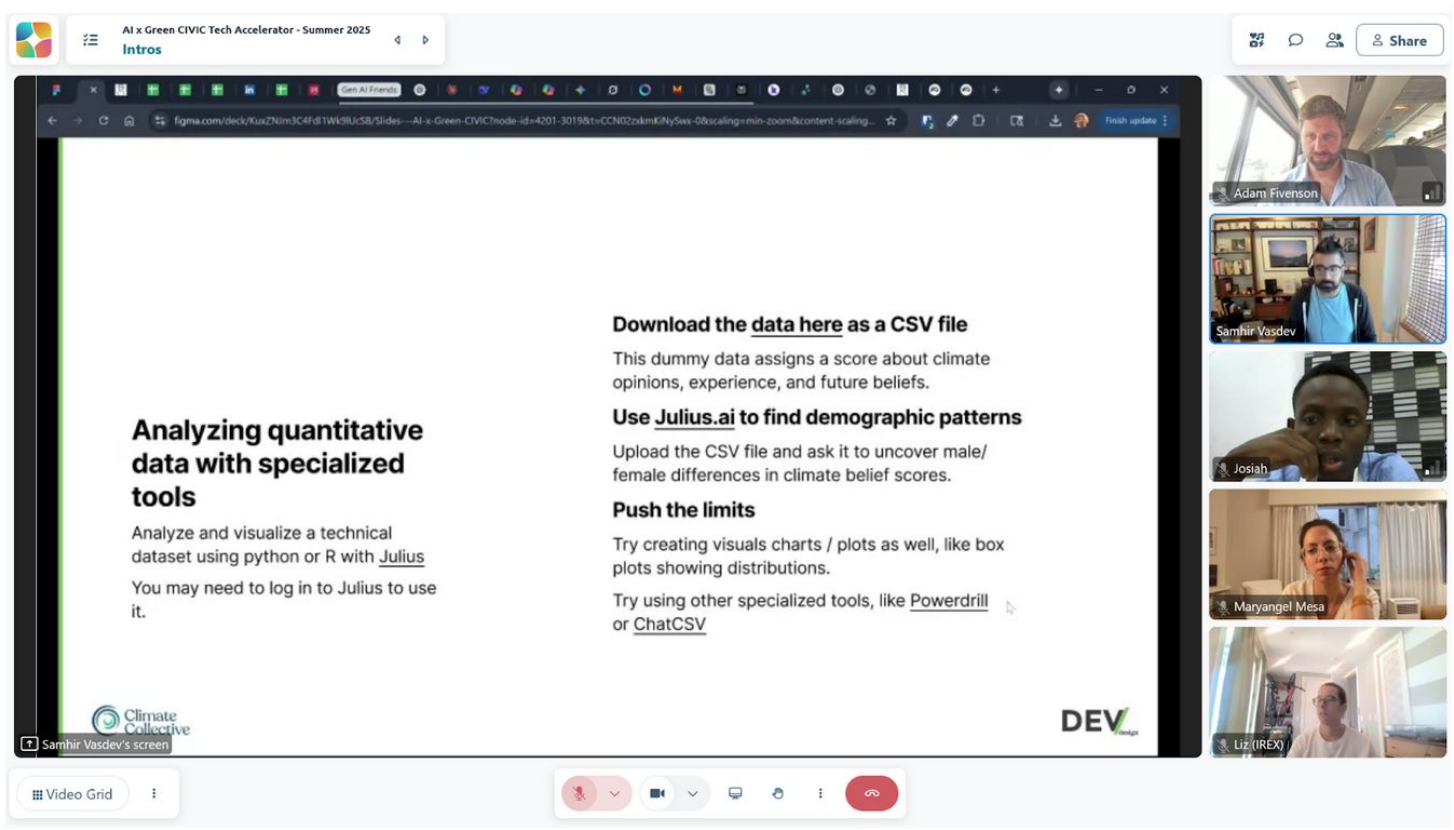
Follow-on opportunities to join events and share knowledge as part of Climate Collective and World Bank’s global network.

5. Programming – Discovery Sessions

Six two-hour discovery sessions across seven weeks, including up to two participants from each of the 20 participant organizations. These live sessions anchored the experience, and focused on the basics of LLMs, AI chatbots, AI for research, AI for communications, and AI for resource mobilization. Screenshots follow.

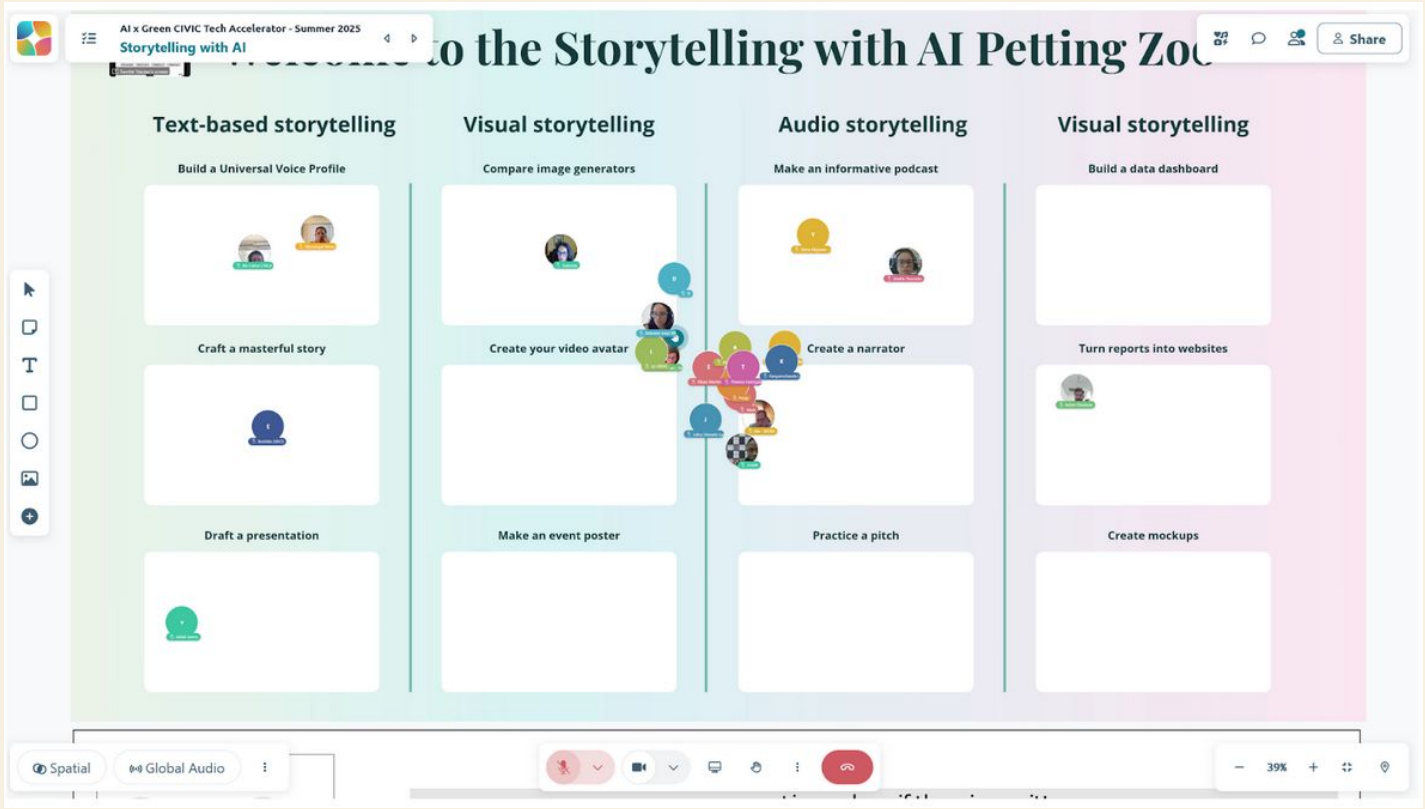


5. Programming – Discovery Sessions



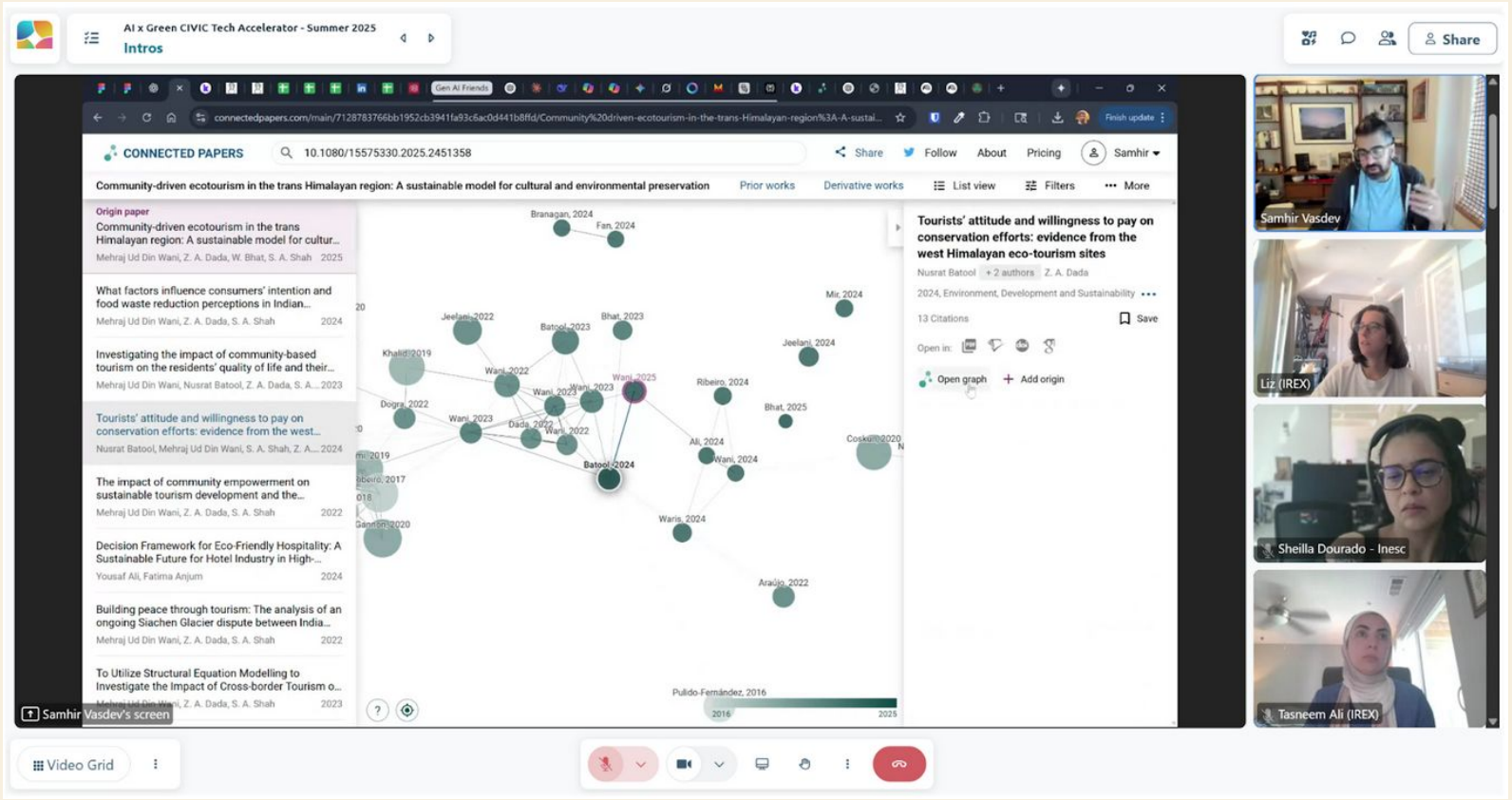
Lead Trainer Samhir Vasdev introduces the cohort to AI-powered data analysis and visualization tools.

5. Programming – Discovery Sessions



Participants use the Kolab platform to test AI tools targeted to known potential use cases for climate orgs

5. Programming – Discovery Sessions



Lead Trainer Samhir Vasdev introduces participants to an AI-powered research platform called Connected Papers

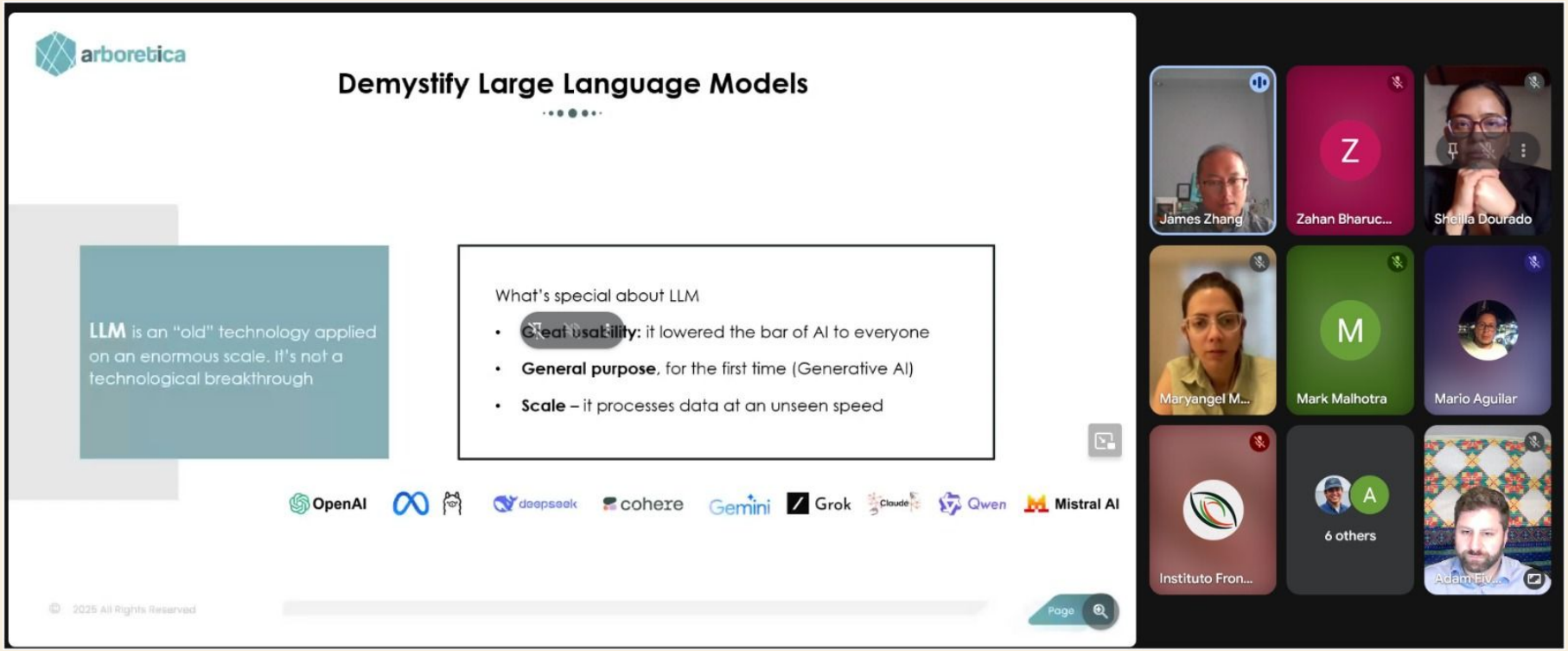
5. Programming – Expert Guest Speakers

Guest speakers connected participants to the latest research and perspectives, and wrestled with challenging topics such as AI's energy usage, automation, and tool demos with climate tech founders and creators.

Jul 11 - James Zhang on ChatNetZero and NetZeroTracker
Jul 18 - James Martin on understanding AI's energy usage
Jul 23 - Mikel Maron on the Earth Index and AI for earth observation
Jul 31 - Tim Lockie on The Human Stack, AI automation for nonprofits
Aug 8 - Jennifer Turliuk on the double-edged sword of AI for climate

5. Programming – Expert Guest Speakers

James Zhang



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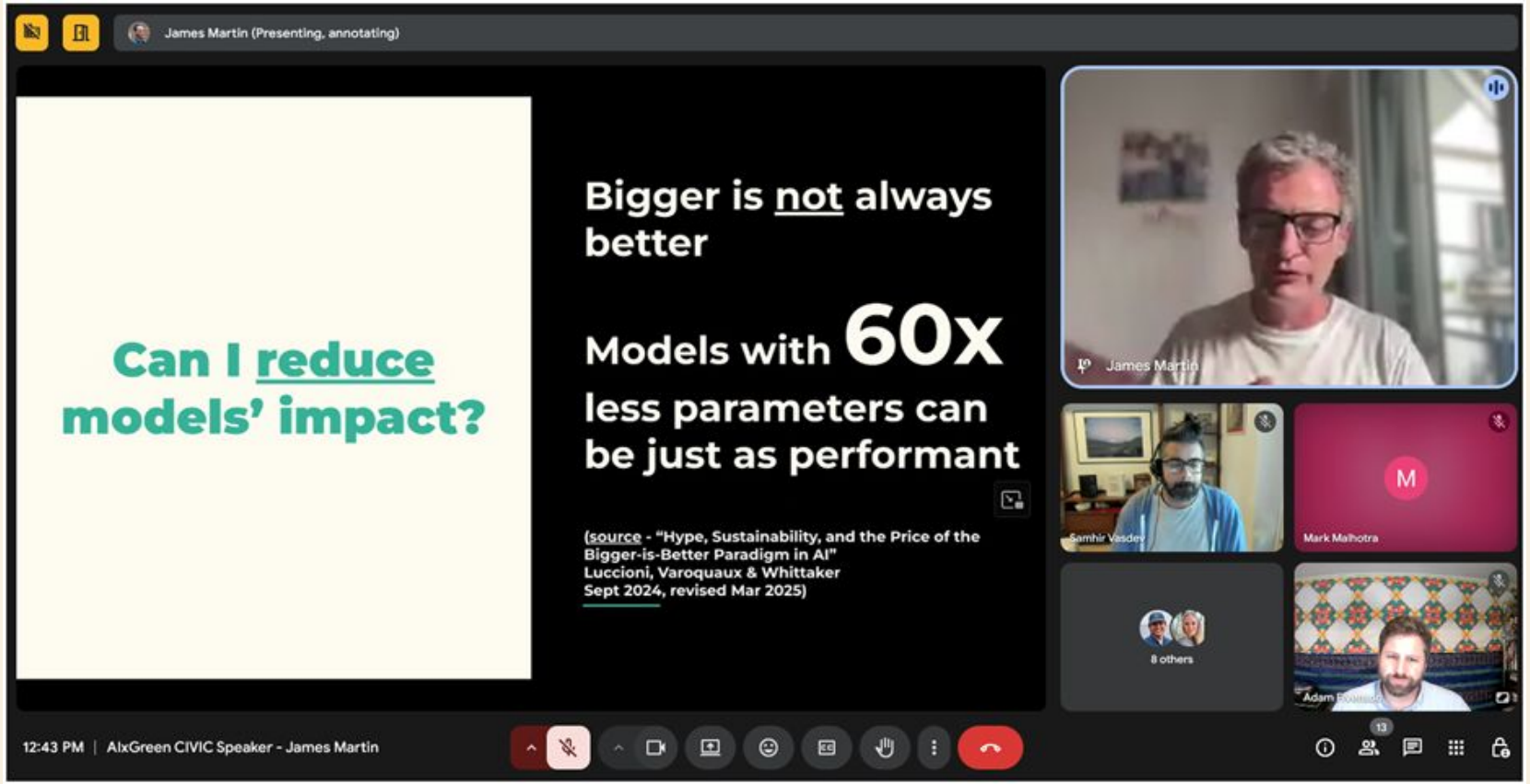
James Martin

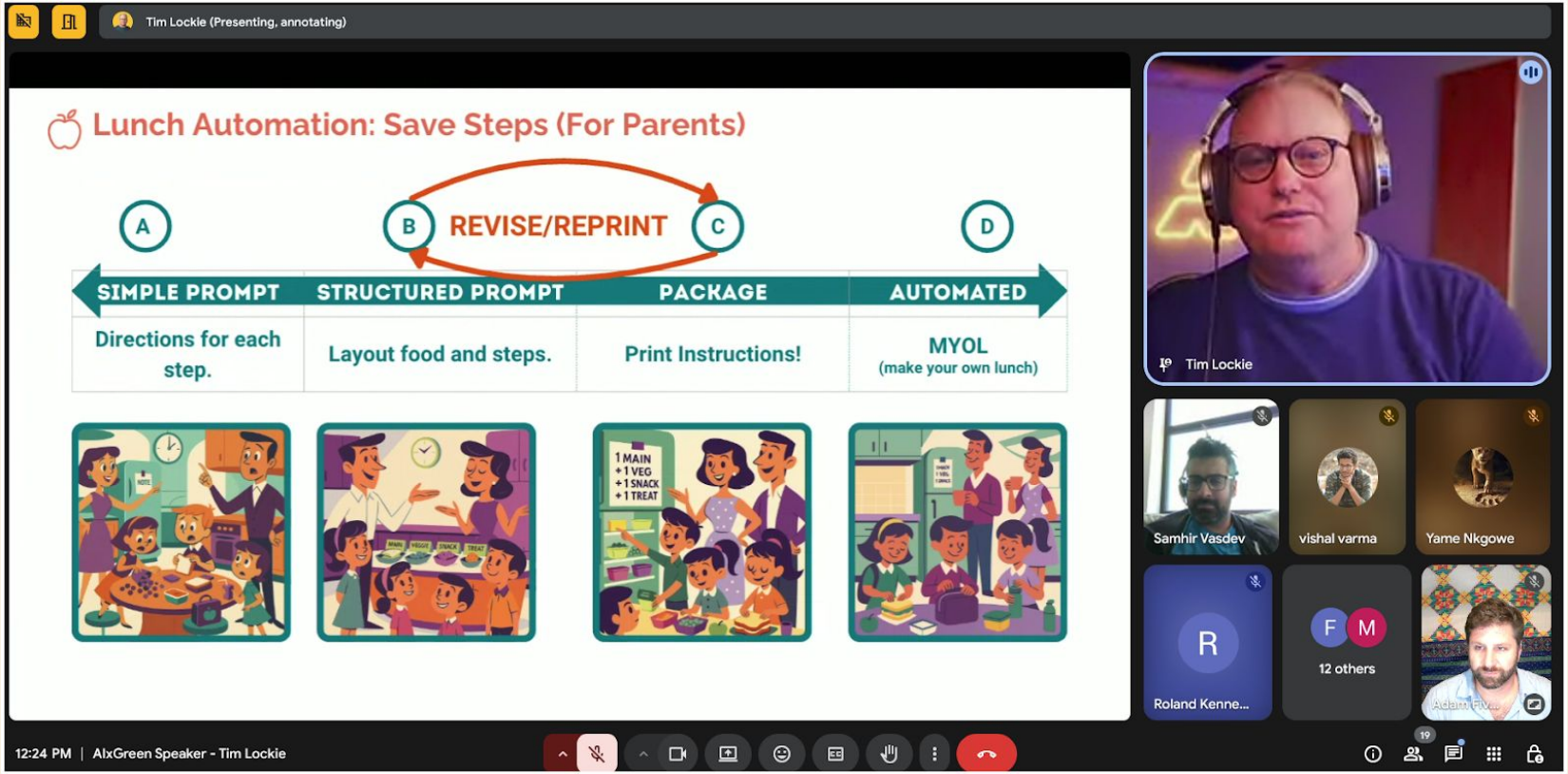


5. Programming – Expert Guest Speakers

[Mikel Maron]

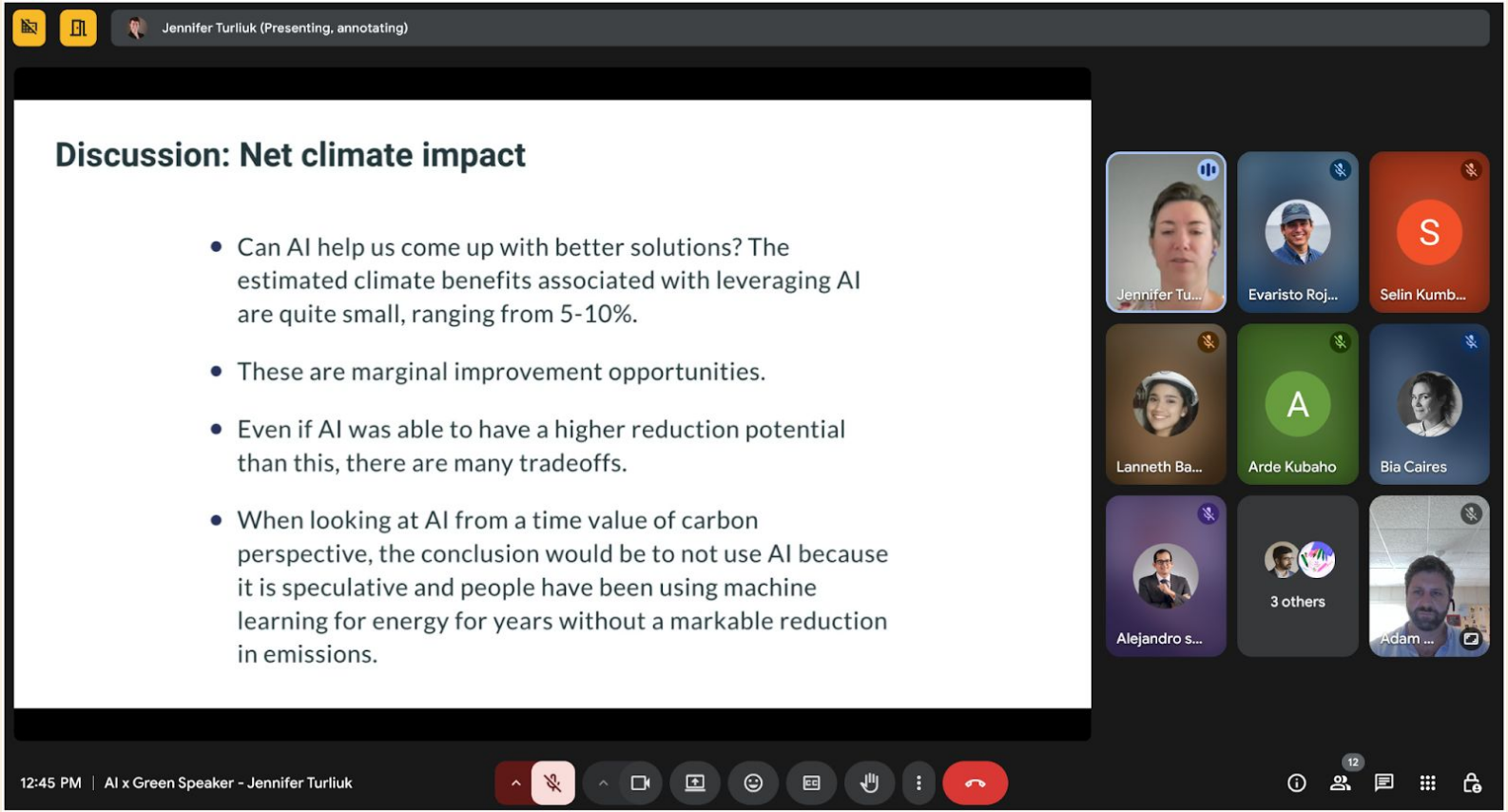
5. Programming – Expert Guest Speakers

[Tim Lockie]



5. Programming – Expert Guest Speakers

[Jennifer Turliuk]



5. Programming – WhatsApp Community

The WhatsApp group was a lynchpin of the cohort's experience, serving as a "student lounge" in between discovery and speaker sessions. The group was a venue for:

Session previews, reminders and summaries

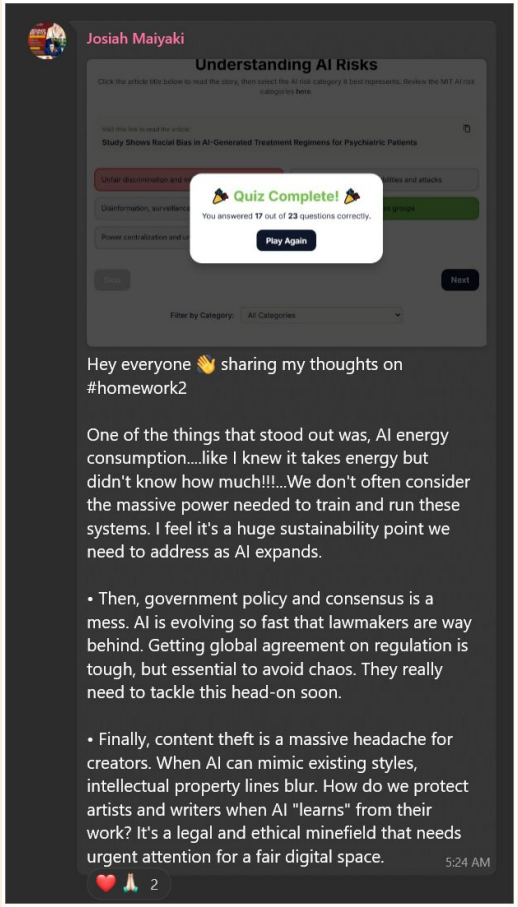
Homework submissions and group discussion

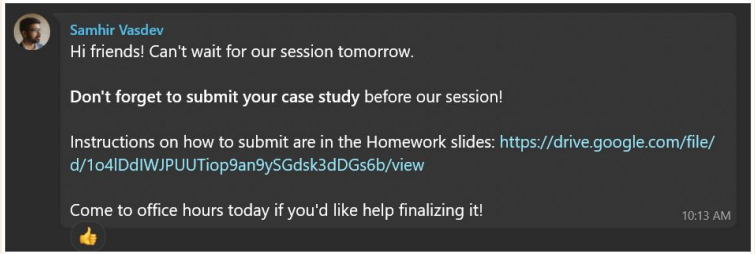
Dialogue on climate-related news and research

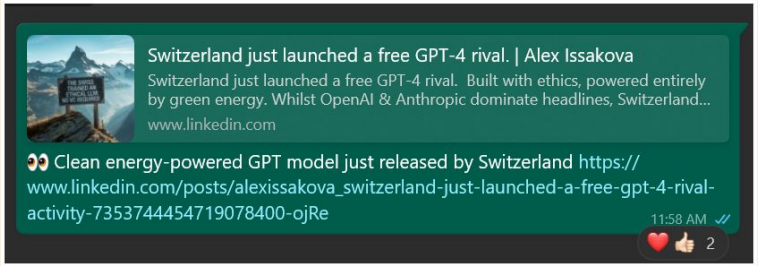
Building community and exploring partnerships

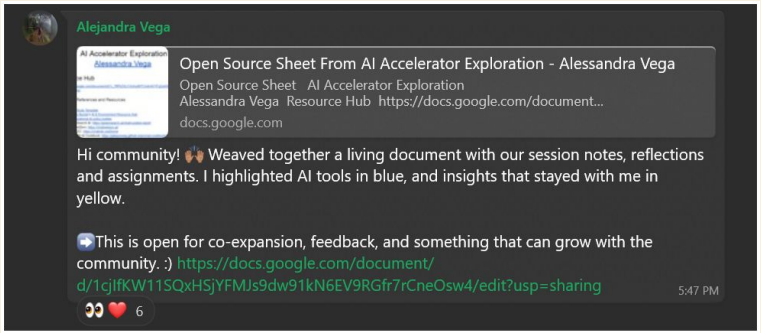
More than a month after course completion it still remains active, demonstrating the value of building learning communities across continents.

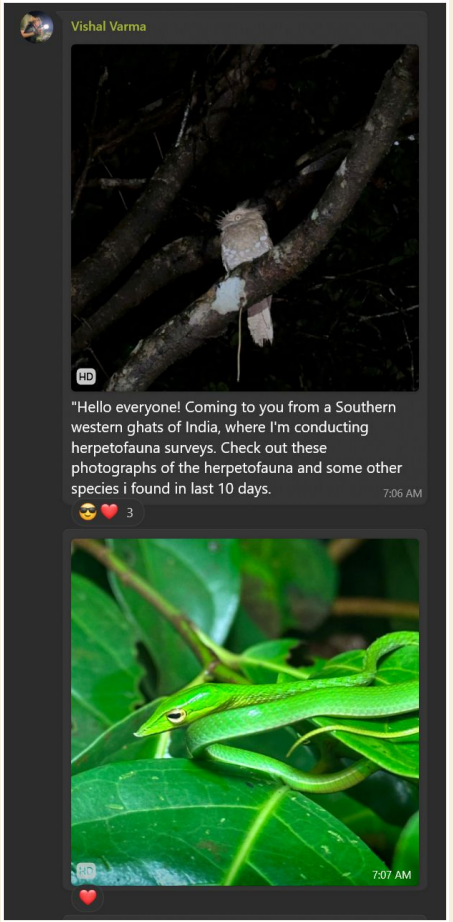
5. Programming – WhatsApp Community









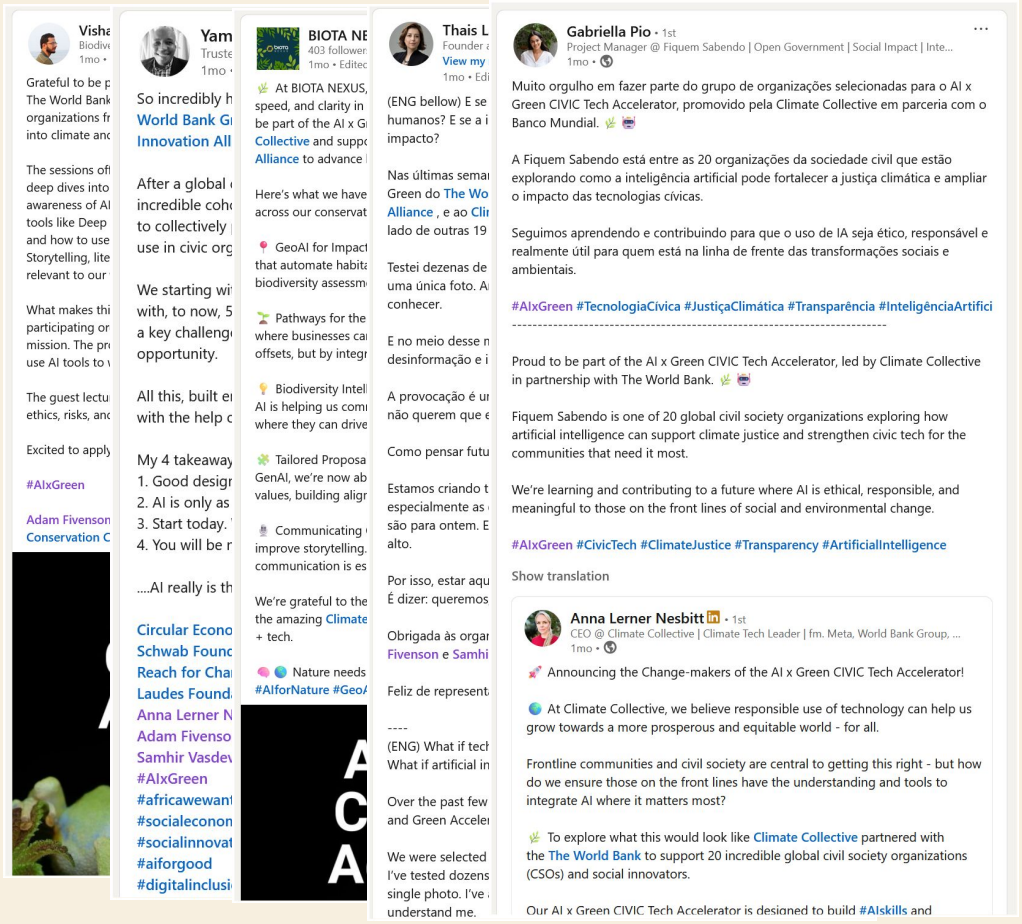


5. Programming – LinkedIn FlashMob

Goals: Generate buzz around the Accelerator and its participants. Give organizations choosing to participate a signal boost from Climate Collective on LinkedIn.

Method: Coordinated LinkedIn posting and engagement using the #AIxGreen hashtag.

Metrics: 15 posts, 421 likes, 98 comments, 31 reposts (as of late September).



5. Programming – Ongoing Engagement

- 2 participants joined Climate Collective's AI Explorers event on September 21st, 2025 during NY Climate Week. Both were interviewed for the Pop Up Studio and will appear on LinkedIn.

AI x Green Participant Roland Kennedy Jr. is interviewed by Nick Martin

AI x Green Participant Thais Lazzeri is interviewed by Program Manager Adam Fivenson

5. Programming – Ongoing Engagement

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- 6 participants presented their AI use case studies at a virtual “Climate AI Showcase” event with the CIVIC team at the World Bank during September 2025.

- 10 participants took advantage of an opportunity to further their AI education with the renowned AI Impact Hub, and will receive 2 free months of AI coaching and lessons at the end of 2025.

6. Exploring Case Studies - Categories Identified

Streamlining Core Operations

Using AI to automate back-office, administrative, and internal program management tasks

Efficiency & Administration

Accelerating Strategic Growth

Using AI to enhance external engagement, storytelling, and resource mobilization (funding and outreach)

Fundraising & Communications

Enhancing Technical Mission

Using AI to analyze complex data, build models, and boost the technical capacity of field teams

Data Analysis & Capacity Building

6. Exploring Case Studies - Category #1: Operations

Category	Organization	Country Focus	Problem Addressed	Key Outcome
1: Streamlining Core Operations	IREX CTI	USA (Global South focus)	Fellowship alumni engagement newsletter takes significant staff time.	AI agent reduced research time from 5–10 hours to 3, which could save over 500 staff hours annually.
1: Streamlining Core Operations	Fiquem Sabendo	Brazil	Manual, time-consuming evaluation of training program applications.	AI applied a 25-point rubric, matching 36% of top human decisions and flagging 17% of strong candidates.
1: Streamlining Core Operations	beVisioneers	Germany (Global focus)	Fellows have many program questions, consuming coach time.	Created an AI help desk/lean canvas tool to answer basic questions, saving time for coaches.
1: Streamlining Core Operations	Carnegie Corporation	USA	Drafting board minutes was highly time-consuming.	AI-generated template and prompts streamlined processes, cutting multi-day tasks to hours.
1: Streamlining Core Operations	BudgIT Senegal	Sénégal	Difficulty managing complex budget data and proposals.	AI tools used to simplify complex documents, increasing efficiency and timely completion of quarterly goals.
1: Streamlining Core Operations	Wetlands International	Panama	Managing correspondence, data, and communications for many projects.	AI agent provides real-time project status and helps get quick answers from large documents.

6. Exploring Case Studies - Category #2: Strategic Growth

Category	Organization	Country Focus	Problem Addressed	Key Outcome
2: Accelerating Strategic Growth	APECF	Botswana (Africa focus)	Fundraising is slow and difficult while implementing projects.	Reduced a 17–21 day grant task to 7.5 hours using an LLM to build proposals.
2: Accelerating Strategic Growth	Media InnoTech	Nigeria	Maintaining engagement across platforms and tailoring content to demographics.	AI-powered personalization boosted targeted reach by 5x with improved CTR and open rates.
2: Accelerating Strategic Growth	RegenIntel	USA (Global focus)	Messaging process was inefficient, leading to creative fatigue.	Saved 4–6 hours/week of manual input and enabled scheduling of a month of content ideation in one day.
2: Accelerating Strategic Growth	CATIE	Costa Rica	Lack of visual materials due to time required for design management.	Cut the design process for print and digital materials from a week to 1–2 days.
2: Accelerating Strategic Growth	Inesc	Brazil	Infographics are highly time-consuming to produce.	AI saved time and enabled a new process of infographic creation without prior design experience.
2: Accelerating Strategic Growth	Fundación Futuro Latinoamericano	Ecuador	Fundraising is time-consuming and expensive.	Gen AI tools used to search for funding, cutting proposal preparation time by at least 50% (30 to 15 hours).

6. Exploring Case Studies - Category #3: Technical Mission

Category	Organization	Country Focus	Problem Addressed	Key Outcome
3: Enhancing Technical Mission	BIOTA	Costa Rica	Difficulty estimating the value of Biodiversity Conservation Units (BCUs).	Reduced time from 3 weeks to 2 days to generate the first scalable valuation model for conservation units.
3: Enhancing Technical Mission	Grupo de Ecología**	Mexico	Difficulty for field biologists to modify R scripts for data exploration.	Reduced 20 hours of manual coding to minutes, increasing field biologists' autonomy in data analysis.
3: Enhancing Technical Mission	ARDE/KUBAHO	Rwanda	Difficulty managing inputs around program strategy and resilience planning.	AI-driven tool analyzes data (Julius, Gemini) to identify risk zones and target climate resilience interventions more precisely.
3: Enhancing Technical Mission	FALA Impact Studio	Brazil	Disaster risk communication strategies ignore the most vulnerable groups.	AI tool used for research/screening to develop a comprehensive, inclusive climate alert communication strategy.

7. Monitoring & Evaluation - Approach

After each Discovery session, anonymous feedback was collected to improve the following week's session, and acknowledged at the outset of the following session to encourage sharing.

At the end of the program, participants were asked to complete a 32-question Retrospective Pretest (RPT) to assess their growth and their perspectives on the accelerator experience.

18 participants responded.

7. Monitoring & Evaluation - Quantitative Results

100% of respondents:

- would **recommend the program** to their peers.
- **gained new ideas** for storytelling, fundraising, or research using AI.
- were **comfortable using AI tools** after the program, compared to 60% before.

93% of respondents

- became **more confident identifying AI use cases** as their organization.

90% of respondents **found the sessions to be relevant** to their work

60% of respondents said the program **accelerated responsible AI adoption** at their organization.

On average, each participant **shared knowledge from the program** with 3.4 colleagues.

7. Monitoring & Evaluation - Participant Notes

Africa Place & Equity Cities Foundation (APECF), Botswana

Typically it takes anywhere from 17–21 days to write a fundraising proposal. Through AI x Green, APECF became aware of specialized AI tools that dramatically cut proposal creation time to less than a single day, instantly providing tools that enhanced their ability to engage potential partners and grow their mission.

7. Monitoring & Evaluation - Participant Notes

“[This has been] … **a richly rewarding experience**, demystifying generative AI in a **safe, non-judgmental environment.** I highly recommend it to any mission-oriented founders and leaders wishing to get to grips with the tools of tomorrow, today.”

Yame Nkgowe: Founder & Trustee, Africa Place & Equity Cities Foundation (Botswana)

7. Monitoring & Evaluation - Participant Notes

Wetlands International Panama, Panama

Wetlands International struggled to efficiently track key learnings across numerous, overlapping mangrove projects. Their solution was to build and deploy an AI tool to track project status on an ongoing basis and query large documents. The tool ended up boosting efficiency, provided rapid data-driven answers, and helped staff better manage their time.

7. Monitoring & Evaluation - Participant Notes

“I recommend the AI x Green accelerator **for those who are still a little reluctant to embrace AI** and want to understand exactly what it is, what it is used for, and how to use it correctly in our field.”

Lanneth Barrera, Wetlands International Panama

7. Monitoring & Evaluation - Participant Notes

BIOTA, Costa Rica

BIOTA in Costa Rica needed a rapid and accurate way to estimate the value of Biodiversity Conservation Units (BCUs). Utilizing AI-assisted prompt engineering, they developed a valuation tool using forest biomass and other data. This reduced the time needed to build a pricing model from three weeks to two days, establishing the foundation for a scalable, automated BCU valuation engine.

7. Monitoring & Evaluation - Participant Notes

"[Participating in this accelerator] … **opened new pathways for integrating AI into our mission** as a small organization. Working on climate and nature-related challenges demands both efficiency and responsibility—this course **laid a solid foundation** to advance in both areas."

Alejandro Solis Duran, Co-Founder, Biota Nexus (Costa Rica)

7. Monitoring & Evaluation - Participant Notes

FALA Impact Studio, Brazil

Recognizing that disaster risk communications often overlooks the most vulnerable groups, FALA Impact Studio in Brazil used an AI tool to develop a comprehensive and inclusive climate alert strategy, amplifying social impact and strengthening community resilience.

7. Monitoring & Evaluation - Participant Notes

[The course was] "**… a turning point for my work** at FALA – inspiring, practical, and transformative. I left empowered, equipped, and already making real-world change."

-Thais Lazzeri, Founder, FALA impact studio (Brazil)

7. Monitoring & Evaluation - Participant Notes

ARDE/KUBAHO, Rwanda

ARDE/KUBAHO in Rwanda faced challenges in identifying key climate risk zones. After the accelerator, they deployed an AI-powered resilience planning tool that analyzes environmental and community data. Doing so resulted in more focused project activities, improving land restoration and food security outcomes.

7. Monitoring & Evaluation - Participant Notes

“[The AI x Green CIVIC Tech Accelerator] … **greatly enhanced my AI skills** and tool knowledge.”

Kanyamuhanda Louis, Finance Manager, ARDE/KUBAHO (Rwanda)

7. Monitoring & Evaluation - Key Learnings

Scheduling: Live sessions and office hours sometimes conflicted with work schedules. Juggling timezones from Asia to US Pacific was perhaps too much. Future iterations might benefit from regional clustering.

Pacing: The course sometimes felt rushed; more time is needed for hands-on practice and troubleshooting. Timing had been adjusted from the last GreenAccountability Accelerator (first time it had been too slow, and too stretched out). The right timing is probably somewhere in the middle.

Content: Too many tools were introduced; participants wanted to master fewer tools. This is always a balance to strike. For future iterations we will prioritize slightly fewer tools and go deeper.

Facilitation: A need for more in-class interaction and direct, consistent support on individual projects. Office hours - or lab times - were highly rated and will be given more attention in future sessions.

Collaboration: Lack of structured networking limited connections among participants from different regions. All participants asked for more ‘community building’.

Homework: Some assignments felt disconnected from participants’ daily work.

Contact

Questions?

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