

The Kohala Center is an independent, 501(c)3 center for research and education that respectfully engages the Island of Hawai'i as the world's most vibrant research and learning laboratory. With 11 of the 13 major climate zones, and with waters that range from shallow coral reefs to depths of 16,500 feet, the Island of Hawai'i has long been recognized as an international scientific treasure and, indeed, a microcosm of the planet. The stress that the island currently experiences at the intersection of human and natural systems has also proven to be of great scientific interest. For example, with a population of only 160,000 residents, the Island of Hawai'i currently spends US\$1,000,000,000 on importing fossil fuels. In addition, 85% of the food consumed on the island is imported. Since Hawai'i is the world's most isolated land mass, shipping lines are extraordinarily long and vulnerable; thus, worries over security are added to the island's financial burdens. This dire situation stands in sharp contrast to the potential for food and energy self-reliance. The Island of Hawai'i is not only rich with agricultural lands and ocean resources, it also has an abundance of natural resources for the production of renewable energy, including solar, wind, hydro, wave, and geothermal resources. The stress experienced by the island, its completely bounded nature, and its potential for successfully addressing issues of self-reliance and security make the island ideal for developing and deploying new technologies and new public policies, as well as new economic and business strategies that can realign human and natural systems. In this manner, the Island of Hawai'i is a model *of* and a model *for* the world.

The Kohala Center recognizes the Island of Hawai'i's natural and cultural assets—and the challenges to those assets—as intellectual assets. By building partnerships that connect island-based, regional, national, and international expertise, The Center carefully engages those assets to build teaching and research programs that serve island communities and enhance island environments. And given Hawai'i Island's unique physical and socio-economic characteristics, those programs also benefit the world as a whole: local knowledge and local solutions have global impact.

The Kohala Center has developed great expertise in, and derives great comfort from, building partnerships, working with island and scientific communities, and supporting the development of effective teaching and research programs. The Center currently works with the County of Hawai'i, the Edith Kanaka'ole Foundation, Hawai'i Community College, the Kamehameha Schools, the University of Hawai'i at Hilo and Mānoa, Brown University, Cornell University, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the Redlands Institute, the School of Forestry and Environmental Studies at Yale University, the U.S. Office of Naval Research, the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the University of California at Santa Barbara, and the University of Washington at Friday Harbor, among many others.

In addition to designing research projects with its university and research agency partners, as well as the K-12 educational and public outreach portions of those projects, The Kohala Center fulfills all the typical functions of a research institute, including: (a) accessing viable research sites, (b) providing logistics support, (c) locating suitable accommodations, (d) accessing appropriate laboratory space,

(e) offering grant writing and grant management services, (f) managing foundation and government relations, (g) developing major donor relations, and (h) providing fiscal services. The Kohala Center is noted for its critical and key competence in community and public relations, without which research programs often run aground and without which educational programs garner little support from local educational institutions.

In its work with its partners, The Kohala Center prides itself in “taking care of anything and everything that can get in the way of good research and good teaching.”

Below are some examples of current projects at The Kohala Center:

- An environmental leadership program for high school students with Brown University
- A semester-long environmental field studies program with Cornell University
- A January term graduate biology research training program with Cornell University
- Kahalu‘u Bay restoration project in collaboration with Keauhou Resorts, University of Hawai‘i Sea Grant College Program, the Girl Scouts of Hawai‘i, Hawai‘i Tourism Authority, Outrigger Hotels and Resorts, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Ala Kahakai National Historic Trail, and Cornell University
- Development of a comprehensive energy self-reliance plan for the Island of Hawai‘i in collaboration with the County of Hawai‘i and the School of Forestry and Environmental Studies at Yale University
- Development of a comprehensive food self-reliance plan for the Island of Hawai‘i in collaboration with the Rocky Mountain Institute, the County of Hawai‘i, and the School of Forestry and Environmental Studies at Yale University
- Construction of the GeoCollaboraory, a unified GIS infrastructure that integrates Hawaiian scientific and cultural data with Western scientific data in collaboration with the Edith Kanaka‘ole Foundation, the Ala Kahakai U.S. National Historic Trail, the Redlands Institute, Cornell University, School of Forestry and Environmental Studies at Yale University, the University of California at Santa Barbara, and the National Endowment for the Humanities
- Creation of a seed bank and seed repository that serve native habitats on Hawai‘i Island in collaboration with the Edith Kanaka‘ole Foundation, Ka‘ahahui O Ka Nahelehele, and the University of California at Santa Barbara

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