

Foundation Launches Campaign to Fund Transformative Growingdome for Remote Sherpa Community

Mission of the nonprofit is to secure \$250,000 for advancing food security through innovation in high-altitude agriculture.

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The intrepid campaign is reaching out to individuals and forward-thinking corporate entities supportive of issues involving environmental preservation, innovative small-scale farming, food security, biodiversity, sustainable-regenerative practices, and waste management science. [An official GoFundMe site](#) has been established to accommodate direct contributions. The Growingdome in the Clouds Project hopes to connect with businesses that share a vision for positive, eco-sensitive, and ethno-aware initiatives, to make a meaningful and global impact.



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Proceeds will fund the design, construction, and initial operation of the first solar-powered, geodesic growingdome high in the Himalaya of Nepal.”

Gary Mark Lesley

“The genesis of the Growingdome in the Clouds Foundation grew from the vision of a school principal and the food sovereignty challenges faced by a remote, Indigenous community with an epic history,” explained Gary Lesley, founder and president of the organization. “Although ‘remote’ in this scenario translates to a place half a world away, and over 12,000 feet high, our resolve to overcome these obstacles will not be diminished.” he added.

Lesley's connection with the Sir Edmund Hillary School came as a result of his ethnographic studies in the region back in 2021. Rooted in the essence of cultivating a harmonious coexistence between age-old wisdom and modern aspirations, this bold initiative was born. [\(Read more: Seeds of Indigenous Intelligence... Clouds of Everest.\)](#)

The revolutionary geodesic dome measures 42 feet in diameter and stands 16 feet at its center. Operating off-grid and harnessing solar energy, the polycarbonate-paneled structure will employ automated temperature regulation, enabling year-round cultivation of a diverse array of nutrient-dense vegetables, herbs, and fruits for the school and community. Growing methods will include an evolving blend of time-tested, indigenous farming practices with cutting-edge, horticultural techniques. Daily operation and management of the growingdome will be undertaken collaboratively by school staff, students, and volunteers from the village, fostering purpose and stewardship.

"We are reaching out with passion, to all those curious of learning more about our mission," Lesley emphasized. "Our commitment 'for people - by people' is rock solid as the mountains that cradle our fellow Khumbu brothers and sisters living in the clouds of Everest." he added.

About the Sir Edmund Hillary School; Khumjung Village, Nepal

Perched 12 miles from the foot of Mt. Everest, the Hillary School in Khumjung Village, Nepal, stands as a testament to Sir Edmund Hillary's profound admiration for [the Sherpa Community](#). Built in June 1961 by Hillary and his team, the school continues to radiate his impact. Presently under the able guidance of Principal N.D. Rai, the school educates over 250 students from surrounding villages, shaping their futures from pre-school to the 10th grade. The original two-room Schoolhouse in the clouds building has been transformed into a captivating museum, while a series of purpose-built structures now make up the school campus. With Khumjung Village situated at a lofty elevation of 12,400', the journey to the nearest roadway is a formidable five-day trek on foot. For more information, please visit: www.himalayantrust.org

About Growingdome in the Clouds Foundation, Inc. (GDITCF)

The Growingdome in the Clouds Project is passionately committed to transforming vision into reality for the Sir Edmund Hillary School and the neighboring communities of Khumjung and Khunde in Nepal. A grassroots crowdfunding campaign, initiated by this dynamic new foundation, seeks to raise the necessary funds and support for the ambitious two-year, \$250,000 mission. Established in July 2023 as a nonprofit, 501(C)(3) organization, GDITCF is dedicated to fundraising and overseeing the critical procurement process. For more information, please visit: www.growingdomeintheclouds.org. The foundation is now launching its public relations campaign, guided by a team of visionary individuals. Foundation President Gary Lesley, residing in Mankato, and Treasurer Susan Michaletz from Minneapolis, both MNSU alumni, remain actively engaged with their university, in addition to a diverse array of business pursuits. Serving as the organization's Secretary is Lem Tingley, the owner of Growing Spaces, based in picturesque Pagosa Springs, CO, and the manufacturer behind the innovative growingdome. For more information, please visit: www.growingspaces.com

Gary M Lesley
Growingdome in the Clouds Foundation, Inc.
+1 704-860-2367
gmlesley@gmail.com

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