



The Take Action for Power Fellowship

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Between a sweeping global pandemic, systemic racial and gender oppression, growing wealth inequality, and a growing climate crisis, the past several years have demonstrated the extraordinary failure of our existing systems to support the full humanity of our people. It's clearer than ever: to achieve real equity, we will need powerful, broad-based social movements that can take action at many levels.

At the Funders' Collaborative on Youth Organizing (FCYO), we believe that young people, especially those most directly impacted by injustice, have a critical role to play in catalyzing these social movements. Grounded in racial, gender, and economic justice, youth organizing is the process of engaging young people in building power for systemic change while supporting their individual and collective development.

Since 2000, FCYO has helped to build a stronger youth organizing field by bringing together funders and youth organizers to ensure that young people have the resources, capacities, and infrastructure they need to fight for a more just and democratic society.

Grounded in racial, gender, and economic justice, youth organizing is the process of engaging young people in building power for systemic change while supporting their individual and collective development.

Since 2000, FCYO has helped to build a stronger youth organizing field by bringing together funders and youth organizers to ensure that young people have the resources, capacities, and infrastructure they need to fight for a more just and democratic society.

There is a whole generation of young people ready to make some serious changes.

This current moment has mobilized a whole generation of young people across the country who are hungry for transformation and committed to its realization. Young people are stepping into the frontlines, taking on critical leadership roles, mobilizing their communities, shepherding social movements, and securing exciting changes.

Much of this activation is happening outside of traditional organizations, with many young people not connected to the broader social movement and leadership development infrastructure.

THE TAKE ACTION FOR POWER FELLOWSHIP

At FCYO, we see a need for opportunities for newly mobilized leaders to come into closer connection with one another and the youth organizing field as a whole. We've created this fellowship to develop the capacity of young people for strategic thinking while building in collective ways. We are so excited by the possibilities of expanding our community in this way, which is why we are launching the Take Action for Power Fellowship.

The **Take Action for Power Fellowship** is a year-long leadership development program designed for emerging organizers ages 18-24 passionate about social justice and transformative systemic change. Through the Fellowship, organizers will receive political education and organizing training, opportunities for collective practice, a peer learning community, and financial resources that will support them to build and implement a social justice project in their own community.

This program is about building collective leadership and requires fellows to apply and jointly work on a project in pairs or a group of three. Specific supports offered by the Fellowship include:

Leadership Development

Developing into a strong organizer requires assessing conditions, developing analysis, building strategy and evaluating learnings. This means becoming social justice leaders with the skills to analyze power and organize significant bases with the social-emotional skills to navigate difficult conditions, support authentic human connection, and build unity across divisions.

The leadership development program of this fellowship will offer political education sessions, community organizing training and opportunities to develop skills for resilience, emotional intelligence, and principled ways of addressing conflict.

Peer Learning Community

Each fellow will also participate in the cohort peer learning community. This will be a space to receive peer feedback on group organizing projects.

Fellows will be expected to be honest and vulnerable with each other with the goal of strengthening individual project strategy while building the leadership and connection of the collective.

Project Development Support and Resourcing

The skills of organizing can't be refined in training - it requires real life experience - which is why this fellowship includes resources and support to execute an actual organizing project that will have impact on the participants' community.

Each project can access up to \$15,000 to be used toward the expenses of the project. This will also include project advising sessions with a seasoned organizer to guide the overall strategy and define a clear vision, set goals and benchmarks, create implementation and evaluation plans, and develop strategic communications.



Through these core components of the Take Action for Power Fellowship, it's our goal to build a national learning community of grounded youth organizers who hold sharp political analyses, a commitment to collective practice, and the skills to build our communities' power to fight for the changes we need and deserve.



Sound like you?

Read on for details on applicant and project criteria and information about how to apply!

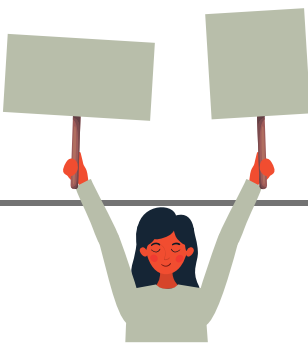
APPLICANT REQUIREMENTS

- **Age 18-24**
- **Apply as a group of at least 2-3 young people** with a demonstrated track record of working together and capable of committing the same amount of time to a group-designed project (Note: each individual will need to complete a part of the application).
- **Have a track record that indicates a strong commitment to organizing collective action for social justice** in impacted communities (e.g. disability rights, economic justice, gender justice, environmental justice, racial justice, militarism, etc.)
- **Identify as members of impacted communities**, including BIPOC, low-income and working class, and gender oppressed communities (i.e. women and queer and trans folk)

Please note the following:

- Applicants do not need to be enrolled in college or members of a community organization to apply.
- While this Fellowship is open to young people who are members of an organization who would benefit from space to experiment with a new project, we will not make awards to organizations or to paid staff of organizations.
- Applicants do not need to be academically inclined, but do need to embrace learning and complete assignments that may include reading articles and written/oral reflections. FCYO will make an effort to use different formats and mediums for all of us to learn and share together.

- **Show capacity and desire to engage in a learning community** based in FCYO's Theory of Change framework that will be a shared space in which participants will discuss and learn about organizing and power building strategies, and willingness to experiment and try things that may not be comfortable
- **Be available for and prepared** to make the time commitment required by the Fellowship (detailed below).
- **Have an existing idea for a new community organizing project** (does not have to be fully developed; details below)



PROJECT CRITERIA

We are excited by the organizing that young people are leading in– from demanding healthy learning communities through school walkouts and solidarity with teachers, to moving city councils to direct money from institutions connected to criminalization towards social services. We are looking to support community organizing projects on any range of social justice issues through the lens of race, class, ability, gender/sexuality, Indigenous Peoples' sovereignty, etc.

There must be an orientation to building a base from the community as well as engaging in a campaign that builds power and wins concrete changes in the community (refer to [FCYO's Theory of Change](#) for details). If there is already a project in progress, it should be less than two years old. Preference will be given to projects outside of established organizations.

WHAT WE WILL NOT FUND

While we believe that the following ways of organizing people are effective in different contexts, we do not center these methods as the primary means to change power structures. Therefore, we will not accept projects whose main strategies are:

- Art installations
- Social media campaigns
- Healing circles
- Cultural/language programs
- Community clean-ups
- Entrepreneurial enterprises
- Mutual aid or service provision

TIME COMMITMENT

This Fellowship is grounded by a peer learning community that will require everyone to participate in collective activities including the following:

- 2 online pre-orientations in June
- 2 convenings (one week-long in July 2022, one 3-day weekend in 2023)
- Weekly 1-hour project group meeting with an advisor
- Bi-weekly 1-hour individual meeting with an advisor
- Monthly national cohort webinars, including some prep readings throughout the Fellowship
- Engaging in project work at least 30 hours a week during the summer of 2022, and then regularly throughout the year (about 8-10 hours a week)

PAYMENT

Applicants who are accepted into the fellowship program will each be awarded a total of \$15,000*, to be given out in three payments over the course of the year-long fellowship program. In addition, each project can access up to \$15,000 for expenses related to the implementation of the project.

*(All payments will be reported to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) as income on an information return ("form 1099"). Federal, state, local or social security taxes will not be withheld from payments; Fellows will be responsible for their tax filings and any payment of taxes owed to the IRS.)



APPLICATION PROCESS



If you are interested in applying to the Take Action for Power Fellowship, follow the instructions on how to submit a Letter of Interest (LOI) via the [Survey Monkey](#) portal. The deadline to submit your LOI is **Sunday, March 13, 2022 at 11:59pm PT**. The LOI process will require you to provide basic personal information, answer some demographic information, and respond to narrative questions.

We are asking for one LOI for each project. However, each person in the group applying will have their own portion of the application to fill out. If it is helpful, you can [use this document](#) to work on your responses and then cut and paste into the SurveyMonkey application portal.

Submission of a proposal does not guarantee acceptance into the fellowship program. All LOIs will be reviewed by FCYO staff and partners from the field. We anticipate that you will be notified in April 2022 regarding our decision whether we will move your application forward in the process.

Should you have questions about the program please contact helena@fcyo.org. We will host an informational webinar on **March 3, 2022**. [Please refer to our website to register.](#)

Follow these steps to begin the application process:

1. Go to bit.ly/TAPFellowship
2. Click "Register" to create an account Or click "Log in" to access your account
3. Click on Take Action for Power Fellowship to begin the application process
4. Be sure to save your work if you choose to return to it at a later time.
5. Remember the portal will close on **March 13th at 11:59 pm PT**.

Should you experience technical difficulties navigating Survey Monkey, please refer to the [SurveyMonkey FAQ](#) and a helpful [video](#). If you continue to experience technical difficulties please contact jen@fcyo.org.

FAQS

There are a lot of words/terminology here I don't know or understand. Do I need to be an experienced organizer?

This Fellowship is specifically designed for emerging organizers who have been active in social justice work (whether participating in a walkout or organizing a vigil) and want to start a new project in your community, but need support to turn your ideas into action. You do not have to have mastery (or even familiarity!) with organizing terminology.

Why do 2-3 people need to apply together? What if I have a project idea that I want to implement by myself?

Starting a new community project is not easy! We are looking to support a small group of people who want to work together to start a new project in your community. We will support you as a group and you will have each other to bounce around ideas and to move your project along together.

What are the stages of the application process?

The application process starts with submitting something called a Letter of Interest (LOI). You will upload your letter into this SurveyMonkey link. You will also be asked to answer some demographic information about each of the applicants. Once we have reviewed your letter, we will notify you to let you know if you will be asked to complete the rest of the steps of the application process, which include submitting a fuller application and possible interviews.

Is there someone we can speak with? Where can we get our questions answered?

We will host a live informational session on **March 3, 2022, 5:00 PM EST!** RSVP [here](#) for the link. The session will be recorded. Should you have questions that are not answered, you can email them to Helena at helena@fco.org.

