The GenPower Labs: Organizing to Win Lab Request for Proposals (RFP)
We are in a critical moment.

A global pandemic, systemic racial and gender oppression, growing wealth inequality, and climate change pose grave threats to a healthy democracy and livable planet. Young people, especially those most directly impacted by injustice, have critical roles to play in catalyzing social movements that can build the power to transform 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.

The past few decades have been a remarkable period of growth and development for the field of youth organizing. In this time organizers committed to the development and leadership of young people have passionately built an infrastructure that spans across the entire country. In doing so youth organizing has achieved critical victories in educational justice, the fight against mass incarceration, immigration justice, health justice, environmental justice, and more.

In order to meet this moment, however, the youth organizing field will require a new level of capacity, alignment, resources, and power. This means engaging in honest ongoing organizational and movement assessments, coordinated strategies, shared practice, and shared learning in order to test what methods and infrastructures work best for building power with young people and their communities.
FCYO's Analysis

The Funders' Collaborative on Youth Organizing (FCYO) envisions a society free from exploitation and oppression, in which communities support the full human development of all people based on principles of equity, democracy, and ecological stewardship. FCYO is driven to help the youth organizing field develop its leadership capacity for the powerful social movements required to actualize this vision.

Over the last two years, FCYO has worked closely with youth organizing groups from across the country to assess how to build the capacities needed to meet this moment.

Through the Pipelines to Power project we supported 16 groups to experiment with new approaches for building power. Through the Youth Power Lab, we developed a shared assessment of key growth edges for youth organizing and supported over 40 groups to engage in organizational assessments and collective political education.

Critical to our approach is our Power to Win Framework. It states that to win liberation, our movements must achieve the power to transform economic and social conditions for our communities and society as a whole.

This means gaining positions within key decision-making bodies while also having the ability to apply pressure from the outside to hold them accountable. To do this youth organizing must build bases at significant scale, develop broad strategic alliances, and elevate public narratives that promote our vision of social justice and true democracy.
The GenPower Labs

The GenPower Labs is FCYO’s response to the charges we face at this moment.

As the core of our new program, the GenPower Labs is a three tiered strategic grantmaking and capacity building initiative designed to build a more powerful, strategic, and aligned youth organizing field with the capacities to address the challenges of this moment.

Our goal is to support a robust youth organizing ecosystem in which groups share a common long-term strategic orientation and interdependent programming while operating at different scales, with diverse constituencies, and utilizing approaches most appropriate for their particular conditions.

The GenPower Labs will support groups to align their organizing strategies and base building and leadership development models with a long-term agenda that shifts policies, systems, and culture to transform material conditions for working class communities of color.

With multiple entry points and a structured ladder of engagement, our approach will create opportunities to engage a wide range of organizations while also developing a core of groups that can initiate a new level of coordination and shared strategy. Each tier of the GenPower Labs will include grantmaking, a dynamic peer learning community, strategic education, and capacity building support. Groups interested in applying should ensure that they are committed to participation in the full program.

Three Tiers of the GenPower Labs

Tier 1: The Organizing to Win Lab

The Organizing to Win Lab is a one-year grantmaking initiative and the entry point into FCYO's GenPower Labs. It will support a broad range of youth organizing groups addressing the most pressing issues of the moment. Groups will be introduced to our Power to Win Framework, strategic political education, organizational assessment tools and a peer learning community rooted in vulnerability and transparency toward the building of meaningful power. It is intended for groups who are evaluating their strategic approach to strengthen their organizing methodologies.
**Tier 2: The Level Up Lab**

Scheduled for launch later this year, the Level Up Lab is a two-year strategic grantmaking initiative designed to build capacity and alignment around core components of building the Power to Win. The peer learning community will focus on assessing political conditions, developing long-term strategy, and clarifying the strategic role of young people in social movements. Each organization will have the opportunity to examine the strengths and limitations of their current approach to organizing and identify key organizational shifts to help them build the power to achieve their vision for change. It is intended for groups who have made preliminary organizational assessments and have identified a need to further develop their organizing practices toward building meaningful power. Organizations for this tier will be notified by FCYO.

**Tier 3: The Praxis for Power Lab**

The Praxis for Power Lab will bring together a small cohort of strategically aligned groups to test out new approaches for building power. Groups will engage in shared programming in which collective success is prioritized as much as the outcomes of a single organization. This will entail conducting ongoing organizational and movement assessments and engaging in shared learning and shared practice in order to determine which methods and infrastructure work best for building power with young people. The goal is to develop common frameworks and methodologies that can be tailored to fit the specific conditions of a given locality or region. Organizations for this tier will be notified by FCYO and will expand in size over time.
Program Overview

The Organizing to Win Lab will present a series of virtual sessions on strategic education, offer capacity building tools, and foster a peer learning space throughout the course of one year. The sessions, facilitated by Grassroot Policy Project, will combine interactive lectures, small group discussions, and space to grapple with various organizing models. There will be assigned readings and/or videos. Throughout the process, participants will complete mini assignments to reflect on their organizing methodology and power building approaches.

The strategic education offered in this program is intended to establish a common framework among participants for assessing their organization’s current work and thinking about what kinds of shifts in organizational strategy may be necessary to win meaningful social change. We will do an introductory analysis of U.S. Racial Capitalism and the ways in which race, class, and gender intertwine to shape the social and political conditions of this country. This will involve taking a closer look at how the system has functioned over the past 40 years to create the levels of inequality and repression that our communities are currently living through.

Participants: 2-3 participants from each organization are required to participate in all cohort activities. This should include one Executive Director, Organizing Director, or Lead Organizer and 1-2 Youth Organizers or additional staff/key leaders.

Time Commitment
The Organizing to Win Lab will hold 14-16 virtual workshops over the course of one year. Workshops may range from 1.5-3 hours. The total amount of time commitment is 45-50 hours.

Goals

Groups selected to participate in The Organizing to Win Lab will strengthen relationships through a peer learning community rooted in vulnerability, transparency, and a commitment to collective movement building, with an aim toward:

- Increasing capacity for long-term strategy and power building by examining organizing campaigns, approaches to base building, and leadership development models.
- Building collective understanding of the conditions that led to the current political moment and assessing the role young people play in catalyzing multigenerational movements.
Applicants must:

- Have a 501c3 IRS designation or a fiscal agent
- Be a base building organization with an explicit commitment to anti-oppression and a practice of running grassroots organizing campaigns (FCYO's Definition of Youth Organizing)
- Practice shared decision making power with youth in determining organizational direction and center young people of color, gender oppressed and/or working class young people
- Be committed to grappling with questions of effective power building strategies
- Be willing to be honest and vulnerable about the strengths and limitations of their current and historical approach to organizing and organizational model
- Commit to have at least one organizational leader defined as someone who has significant decision making power or influence within your organization and one additional organizer to participate in the full virtual program

Preference may be given to:

- Black-led and Indigenous-led organizations
- Organizations in areas with less philanthropic resource (refer to FCYO's 2020 Funder Scan: Investing in the Power of Young People)
- New and emerging organizations looking to strengthen their organizing methodology
- Cohorts of organizations in networks, alliances or regions looking to jointly build power; organizations will apply individually and name their network, alliance, etc

This Project will NOT fund:

- Organizations that provide direct social services that do not have a youth organizing and social change component (refer to FCYO's Definition of Youth Organizing)
- Publications, reports, workshops, classes, conferences, media events, arts, or theater productions unless they are a part of an ongoing community organizing effort
- Research, litigation, or legal organizations unless it is a part of a larger community organizing effort
- Individuals
- Organizations located outside of the United States
- Lobbying, support for legislation, or support of candidates of any kind. Any election related activity including voter registration or get out the vote must be fully non-partisan and in compliance with state and federal law. (For more information see this resource from Alliance for Justice.)
Application Process

If your organization is interested in applying to The Organizing to Win Lab please follow instructions on how to apply via the Survey Monkey portal. The deadline to submit applications is **August 20th at 11:59pm PT**. The application will require you to provide basic information on the organization, answer some demographic information, upload attachments, and respond to narrative questions. For the narrative section you will have the option to write your answer or submit a 10 minute video.

Submission of a proposal does not guarantee approval of and receiving a grant. All applications will be reviewed by FCYO staff and partner organizations from the field. We anticipate that your organization will be notified in October regarding our decision concerning your grant application.

Should you have questions about the program please contact jennifer@fcyo.org.

We will host an informational webinar on **July 29th at 10:00am PT**. Please refer to our website to register.

**Follow these steps to begin the application process:**

1. Go to [https://fcyo.smapply.io/prog/genpower_labs_organizing_to_win_lab/](https://fcyo.smapply.io/prog/genpower_labs_organizing_to_win_lab/)
2. Click “Register” to create an account Or click “Log in” to access your account
3. Click on Organizing to Win Lab to begin application process
4. Be sure to save your work if you choose to return to it at a later time
5. If you choose to upload a video response to answer the narrative questions, please make sure your video format is; mp4, .avi, .mov, and no longer than 10 minutes. Keep in mind there are 4 narrative questions, please segment your answers accordingly.
6. Remember the portal will close on **August 20th at 11:59pm 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 luis@fcyo.org.
Documents Necessary for Upload:

1. 501(c)3 IRS Determination Letter (for your organization or fiscal sponsor)
2. Most recent IRS 990 form (for your organization or fiscal sponsor)
3. Fiscal sponsorship agreement or letter (if applicable)
4. List of Board of Directors
5. Organizational budget for the current year
6. Most recent financial statement (audited if available)
7. Signed & completed IRS W9 form

Narrative Questions (750 word limit):
1. What is your organization's vision for the community you organize?
2. How is your organization part of building the power to achieve that vision?
3. What are the biggest current organizational (internal) strengths and limitations towards building that power?
4. In what ways do you hope participating in the Organizing to Win Lab will build on those strengths and address the limitations mentioned?

Projected Timeline:
- July 15th- Release Request for Full Proposals
- July 29th- Informational Webinar
- August 20th- Full Proposal Due
- August to September- Review Process
- October- Announcements
FAQs

1. Can past grantees apply?
   a. Yes. If you were in Pipelines to Power and/or The Youth Power Lab, the Organizing to Win Lab has similar components. You can apply and/or share this with your coalition/partner organizations. There will be other opportunities for past grantees to apply to as we are rolling out the full suite of GenPower Labs.

2. Do networks and affiliates fill out an application together?
   a. No, we ask that networks, coalitions, and alliances apply separately from affiliates. Affiliates are asked to name the coalition, alliance, network they will be representing.

3. What does “emerging” and “new” refer to?
   a. We consider organizations that have been established for five years or youth programs that are five years old or less.

4. Do you have to be in the first tier to get into the second and third tier?
   a. The Organizing to Win Lab acts as a primer for participation in the Level Up Lab and Praxis to Power Lab, which build on the foundational theories and shared practices of the Power to Win Framework. Organizations who have completed the Pipelines to Power or Youth Power Lab programs and who have demonstrated organizational capacity and alignment may be invited directly to the Level Up Lab or Praxis to Power Lab upon their launch. Being accepted into the first tier DOES NOT guarantee acceptance into the second or third tier.

5. Is there a particular issue area focus for the Organizing to Win Lab?
   a. No, we welcome all issue areas as long as young people of color, low-income, and gender oppressed youth are at the center of leading in those issue areas.

6. What resources are available to learn more about this grantmaking program?
   a. About Youth Organizing
   b. Youth Power Lab
   c. Three Faces of Power
   d. FCYO Youtube
   e. 20 Years of Youth Power: The 2020 National Youth Organizing Field Scan
   f. FCYO’S 2020 Funder Scan: Investing in the Power of Young People
The Funders’ Collaborative on Youth Organizing, a managed project of Bend the Arc: A Jewish Partnership for Justice, is a philanthropic intermediary that brings funders and youth organizers together to ensure that young people have the resources, capacities, and infrastructure they need to fight for a more just and democratic society. FCYO believes that to move toward justice, BIPOC youth, working class young people, young women, and queer and trans youth have a critical role to play in transforming economic and social conditions. To build this kind of power, youth organizing must build bases at significant scale, develop broad strategic alliances, and elevate public narratives that promote our vision of social justice and true democracy. Our work is grounded in our close relationships with the youth organizing field and a commitment to meaningful partnerships between funders and youth organizers.