

**FCYO**

**THE YOUTH ORGANIZING FOR  
CLIMATE ACTION &  
RACIAL EQUITY  
CAPACITY-BUILDING FUND**

**RFP OVERVIEW**





## Context

In the midst of a global pandemic, increased wealth disparities, attacks on gender and reproductive justice, and a growing climate crisis, the past several years have demonstrated that the dominant system of racial capitalism has not supported the full humanity of people nor ceased our ability to extract from and pollute the Earth.

There is perhaps no one that understands this more clearly than young people - specifically, BIPOC youth whose communities face rampant environmental and social injustices. From staging mass walkouts to negotiating local, state, and federal action, young people are in no way sitting silently by. They are organizing en masse to demand that we confront the widespread harm happening at the intersections of a climate crisis and deep-seated racial inequities.

To truly contest these threats and advance deep structural change, the youth-led social justice movement will need to seriously increase its capacity, strategy, alignment, and resource bank. Importantly, the leadership of youth organizers from the communities most harmed by environmental injustice and racism is and will continue to be essential to finding and implementing solutions that are meaningful to all.

This is why the Funders' Collaborative on Youth Organizing is excited to launch the [Youth Organizing for Climate Action and Racial Equity \(YO-CARE\) Capacity-Building Fund](#) - a bold effort to grow the power of youth organizing at the intersections of racial justice and climate justice.

For the past 20 years, FCYO has worked to ensure the youth organizing field, with racial justice at its core, has the resources, capacities, and infrastructure it needs to fight for a more just and democratic world. While the YO-CARE is a new initiative for us, we are not new to supporting climate justice work.

Between 2007-2010, we ran ReGenerations: Leadership Expansion for Environmental Justice, a multi-year funding initiative through which 11 environmental justice groups built their capacity and expanded their youth leadership development opportunities. From that initiative came [Looking Forward: Youth Leading the Way Towards a Sustainable Planet](#). In addition, as the pandemic reared its head in 2020, we targeted a batch of resources to support 8 climate justice organizations through our [Moment to Movement Fund](#).

## Program Overview

Through the YO-CARE, FCYO will directly provide grantmaking and capacity building resources to young people of color and young people from other frontline communities who are collectively organizing to address the climate crisis.

As part of a year-long learning community, we are looking to support youth organizers from both racial justice and climate justice organizations to deepen their analyses of the root causes of climate injustice and racial inequality, develop and sharpen their organizing capacities, and build and strengthen relationships. The specific goals of the YO-CARE include:

- Strengthen organizations' power to drive the transformation necessary for their communities to thrive. This includes developing clarity on the base-building strategies, leadership development programs, and advocacy and communication campaigns that best achieve their vision.
- Create opportunities for cross-sectoral learning and relationship-building between climate justice and justice organizations with an orientation towards connection, shared frameworks, solidarity actions, and future collaboration.

## **COHORT ORGANIZATION**

FCYO will select 40 youth organizing groups to participate in this initial cohort, including organizations on the frontlines of climate justice organizing and racial justice organizations that want to address climate change within their communities. This includes organizations that have experienced climate disasters or environmental racism as well as organizations on the frontlines of racial justice whose efforts hold clear overlap with climate justice (for example, leading a Defund Police campaign with the goal to redirect funding towards green youth jobs).

We also encourage groups that work around gender, disability, land rights, or sovereignty that have an intersectional approach to climate and racial justice organizing to apply as well. Our hope is to strengthen the climate justice movement by deepening relationships and connecting strategies across the social justice sector.

## **Program Components**

### **GRANTMAKING**

Each organization will receive a general operating grant of \$100,000 to be disbursed in two payments of \$50,000. The first disbursement will be in August 2022 and the second will be in July 2023.

### **CAPACITY-BUILDING PROGRAM**

Each organization will identify two organizational leaders (defined as someone who has significant decision making power or influence within your organization) and one additional organizer to participate fully in the community peer-learning space.

Participants will learn about power building from leading thinkers, exchange lessons from current and past organizing, and receive support to develop and implement an individualized strategy for building the power to achieve their vision for their community.

Capacity-building will happen through two in-person convenings, regular virtual workshops and peer learning sessions, and individual organizational clinic hours with a consultant.

### *In-Person Convenings:*

There is nothing like the energy and connections that are made at a cohort convening! As young organizers are exposed to other young organizers nationally dealing with similar issues, it often opens up a whole new world to share questions and challenges, learn about different campaigns and strategies people are trying, and build lifelong connections.

Pending COVID-19 concerns, we are currently planning for two capacity-building and peer learning convenings during the duration of this grant. The first one will be a hybrid combination of in-person/virtual gathering taking place in September 2022. We ask that one person from each organization attends in person. The second convening is currently envisioned to be completely in-person, taking place in July 2023.

### *Capacity-Building and Learning Webinars*

Capacity-building and learning webinars will cover topics including base building, leadership development, and campaign development. Attendance at the webinars is open to up to 5 people from each organization: it is required for each organization's two main participants and optional for up to 3 more people from each organization.

### *Organizational Clinics*

Following each webinar will be an opportunity to work with a leading organizing consultant in an individual organizational clinic. Organizations can access up to 10 hours of consulting time to work on base building, leadership development, and campaign development. All organization members who participate in the webinars are also invited to the clinics with the consultant to concretely dive deeper into your organization's work.

## **SELF-ORGANIZED PEER LEARNING EXCHANGE**

Organizations have consistently indicated that having the resources to visit another organization and understand their on-the-ground organizing first-hand is invaluable. Each organization can access a one-time small grant of \$5000 for an in-person peer exchange with other grantees in the cohort. Groups can also pool resources together. We ask for a one page request for resources stating the goals and desired outcomes of the exchange, and a one page report on lessons and learnings to submit to us for the grant.

## 12-MONTH GRANT COMMITMENT

Selected organizations will be part of a peer learning community that will require everyone to participate in collective activities that will include the following:

- Three-day in-person/hybrid cohort convening in September 2022 (we ask that at least one person from the organization attends)
- Three-day in-person convening in Summer 2023
- Three capacity-building learning sessions with optional follow-up individual clinics (up to 5 people in the organization can take part in the capacity-building work)
- Mid-grant survey and phone call (to take place between March-April 2023)
- Final grant report due by August 15, 2023
- Optional self-organized peer learning exchanges (resources provided)
- Optional attendance at 1-2 funder briefings to share work with funders or learn about what funders may be interested in supporting

## APPLICANTS MUST:

- Have a 501c3 IRS designation or a fiscal agent
- Be a local or state-wide base-building organization with an explicit commitment to anti-oppression and a practice of running grassroots organizing campaigns (for more detail see [FCYO's definition of youth organizing](#) and our [Theory of Change](#))
- Be a youth-led organization or multi-generational organization with a practice of youth (ages 13-24) in leadership (as staff, decision-makers, board, or program leadership)
- Commit to having at least two people, one leader (defined as someone who has significant decision making power or influence within your organization) and one organizer to participate fully in the community peer-learning space. Please do not send development staff to this space (unless they are an organizer in your organization) - the peer learning space will not be a space to meet other funders.
- Commit to grappling with questions of effective power building strategies and organizing practices within your organization
- Be based in the US or are US territories
- Be an organization that is organizing around climate justice in BIPOC communities OR an organization whose racial justice work may not currently be around climate but will develop a climate justice lens and analyses in your work
- Have an annual organizational budget that is under \$2,000,000

## 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

## RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER FCYO PROGRAMS

- Groups currently in the Organizing to Win Lab may apply for this program.
- For organizations that have been invited to apply to the Level Up Lab, your organization will only be considered for either this program or the Level Up Lab at the discretion of FCYO staff.
- Groups in Praxis for Power are not eligible to apply, but may participate in all the convenings and access peer-exchange resources.

## THIS FUNDING WILL NOT SUPPORT:

- Organizations that provide mutual aid or 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, social media, 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
- Art installations, healing circles, cultural/language programs, community clean-ups, or community farms unless they are a part of an ongoing community organizing effort
- Entrepreneurial enterprises
- 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.)



## Applying to YO-CARE

The deadline to submit applications is **Monday, May 30th at 11:59pm PT**. The application will require you to provide basic information on your 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. For the narrative section you will have the option to type in your responses or submit a 10-minute video addressing all of the narrative questions.

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. In some instances we may request a site visit in June to help us understand your organization better. We anticipate that your organization will receive final notification in July regarding our decision concerning your grant application.

We will host an **informational webinar** on **Wednesday, May 4th at 1:00pm ET**. Please refer to our [website to register](#).

Should you have any further questions about the program please contact [helena@fcyo.org](mailto:helena@fcyo.org).

## Process

If your organization is interested in applying to YO-CARE please follow these steps to begin the application process:

1. Go to <https://fcyo.smapply.io/>
2. Click "Register" to create an account or click "Log in" to access your account
3. Click on YO-CARE 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 **Monday, May 30th 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](mailto: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. Project budget for the current year (if there is a separate youth organizing project budget)
7. Most recent financial statement (audited if available)
8. Signed & completed IRS W9 form

## PROJECTED TIMELINE

- April 15th- Release Request for Full Proposals
- May 4th- Informational Webinar
- May 30th- Full Proposal Due
- June-July- Review Process (some organizations may be asked for interviews at this time)
- July-August- Decisions announced

## FAQs

### 1. Can past grantees apply?

Yes, past grantees can apply.

### 2. Can current grantees apply?

Current grantees that are participating in the Organizing to Win Lab may apply. Current grantees in Praxis for Power may not apply, although they may participate in the convenings and access peer-learning resources. Organizations that apply to this program and the Level Up Lab will only be considered for one of the programs at the discretion of FCYO staff.

### **3. My organization is intergenerational. Can we apply?**

Yes, as long as young people of color, low-income, and gender oppressed youth ages 13-24 are part of decision-making and leading their own programs as well. We welcome intergenerational organizations that invest in the leadership of young people in their organizations to apply.

### **4. Do networks and affiliates fill out an application together?**

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. We are only considering local and state-wide networks. Regional and national groups will not be considered.

### **5. What does “emerging” and “new” refer to?**

We consider organizations that have been established for less than five years or youth programs that are five years old or less to be new and emerging. Organizations that have been around longer are also welcome to apply.

### **6. Does my organization have to be a Climate Justice organization to apply?**

No, we welcome all issue areas as long as there is a commitment to build upon the organization's current climate justice analyses into ongoing organizing and intentions/plan to take on campaigns that address racial and climate justice.