



EQUITY & ENVIRONMENT INITIATIVE

The Environmental Justice Fund Guidelines

A program of the City of Seattle. Administered by Seattle Foundation.

OVERVIEW

The Environmental Justice Fund is a new grant opportunity for community-led projects that improve environmental conditions, respond to impacts of climate change and get us closer to achieving environmental justice. Community members and Seattle City Council worked together to create the Environmental Justice Fund in 2017. The Fund is overseen by the Environmental Justice Committee, twelve people with deep community roots working closely with communities on environmental justice issues.

There is \$250,000 in funding available for projects. The amount awarded for any project will be no less than \$10,000 and no more than \$40,000 for an 18-month period beginning January 11, 2019. Proposals must be received by 4:00pm on October 15, 2018.

GOALS

Environmental hazards and climate change affect everyone, but communities of color, immigrants, refugees and Native people experience more significant harms because of where they live and work. We know that the most effective environmental and climate solutions come from the community itself. This Fund provides grants for projects where community members are in positions of leadership, where their lived experience is honored, where their knowledge influences the work, and where they meaningfully participate in project design and implementation.

The Fund advances the goals of the Equity & Environment Agenda. **The Agenda is a call to action for different sectors to work together with communities of color, immigrants, refugees and Native people to advance environmental equity in Seattle:**

- Healthy Environments for All – Improving air, water, green space, food, safety and quality of life.
- Jobs, Local Economies and Youth Pathways – Creating opportunities for local green careers.
- Equity in Environmental Programs – Increasing community access and decision-making.
- Environmental Narrative and Community Leadership – Celebrating stories and investing in community.

Projects should be led by and benefit the people most affected by environmental and climate issues: communities of color, immigrants, refugees and Native people – including people with low incomes, youth and seniors – who live, learn, work, worship and play in the City of Seattle.

To better understand the community work that led to the creation of this fund, we recommend you read about the Equity & Environment Initiative [here](#). On this page, you can also download the Equity & Environment Agenda, which is available in [Chinese](#), [English](#), [Somali](#), [Spanish](#) and [Vietnamese](#).

WHO SHOULD APPLY

Applicants to the Environmental Justice Fund **must** meet these criteria:

- The applicant has 501(c)3 nonprofit status or has a fiscal sponsor with 501(c)3 nonprofit status. If you do not have a fiscal sponsor, please contact us at ejf2018rfp@gmail.com.
- Projects must be in Seattle city limits and primarily benefit people who live, learn, work, worship and play in Seattle.

Applicants to the Environmental Justice Fund should be able to demonstrate that:

- Racial justice is a lived organizational value.
- Operations include a decision-making role for communities of color, immigrants, refugees and/or Native people – including people with low incomes, youth and seniors.
- They have a deep understanding about environmental justice and are able to describe what environmental justice means for their community.
- They have an understanding of the nuances of working with and within communities of people of color, immigrants, refugees and/or Native people.
- There are deep relationships with and accountability to communities of people of color, immigrants, refugees and/or Native people.

Please note:

- The Fund cannot make grants to individuals.
- Only one application per nonprofit organization is allowed, except if the nonprofit organization is serving as a fiscal sponsor for multiple projects.

TYPES OF PROJECTS

The Fund welcomes your innovative ideas and creative approaches. Projects can include capacity building, ongoing visioning, collaboration and community-defined solutions that improve environmental and community conditions and respond to impacts of climate change, such as climate preparedness, air quality, food insecurity, green jobs and other environmental and climate justice issues. We welcome everything from pilot projects to existing projects that can be strengthened with support from the Environmental Justice Fund.

Projects that demonstrate a desire to learn, take risks and focus on long-term outcomes are welcomed. We want applicants to be creative and propose interesting approaches they think will be effective in addressing environmental and climate justice issues in their communities. We are very interested in projects that include community, culture, nature, family, health, food and/or education as part of how they address environmental or climate justice.

Projects should be led by and benefit the people most affected by these issues: communities of color, immigrants, refugees and Native people – including people with low incomes, youth and seniors.

For examples of eligible projects, please see the Samples of Eligible Projects section.

Please note:

- Proposed projects must be held in Seattle city limits and primarily benefit people who live, learn, work, worship and play in Seattle.

- If the project involves doing something to a physical building or a space, there must be documentation showing that this is authorized.

Activities NOT Eligible for Funding

The following projects and activities are **not eligible** for funding:

- Acquisition of real property or land.
- Construction of buildings.
- Maintenance of existing facilities and physical improvements to non-natural areas of parks or existing recreational facilities that do not have a clear environmental justice purpose. This includes such things as park benches, shelters and sidewalks.
- Projects that are not accessible by the public.
- Scholarships.

GRANT PERIOD AND AMOUNTS

Grants will be made for up to 18 months, beginning January 2019. Shorter-term projects will be considered, but applicants are encouraged to apply for the full 18 months. All projects must be completed by June 30, 2020. Final reports will be due by July 31, 2020.

All grantees will be expected to participate in three to four Learning Circle meetings during the grant period. These convenings offer opportunities for grantees to share their work, problem-solve and build community with each other.

Grant amounts will vary. The amount awarded for any project will be no less than \$10,000 and no more than \$40,000 for the full 18-month period. The total funding pool is \$250,000.

FUNDING DECISIONS

Proposals will be reviewed for project purpose and clarity, alignment with Equity & Environment Agenda priorities, community benefits, feasibility and budget. Decisions will be made using a combination of scores (which serve as a starting point) and deep discussion within the Grantmaking Committee, which is made up of community members.

Funding decisions will be made based on the following criteria:

Project	<p>Does the project have environmental justice and/or climate justice outcomes?</p> <p>Is racial justice a lived organizational value?</p> <p>Will the project increase the capacity of communities of color, immigrants, refugees and Native people – including people with low incomes, youth and seniors – to design and implement activities that have beneficial environmental justice outcomes for their communities?</p> <p>Does the project support communities of color, immigrants, refugees and Native people to take the lead in this work?</p>
----------------	---

Target audience	Does the project benefit communities of color, immigrants, refugees and/or Native people – including people with low incomes, youth and seniors?
Community engagement	Are community members meaningfully engaged in planning, leading and implementing the project? Will the project strengthen or deepen networks, relationships and/or partnerships within and among communities of color, immigrants, refugees and/or Native people?
Organization/Leadership	Does the applicant demonstrate its ties to the community? Does organizational leadership come from and reflect the communities being served? Does the project leadership have the skills needed to successfully implement the project?
Other considerations	Geographical diversity, historically underfunded communities or neighborhoods, innovative approaches, cultural diversity and/or ethnic diversity.

SAMPLES OF ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

Below is a list of project examples.

Project Example #1: A nonprofit organization and a community group partner together to remove asphalt and install rain gardens at a local community center. Rain gardens will treat stormwater and provide heat island mitigation. The project includes raised bed gardens to raise awareness about stormwater, climate resilience and the health benefits of green infrastructure.

Project Example #2: A nonprofit or community group serving indigenous communities launches a native food initiative where native plants and vegetables are planted, grown, harvested, prepared and delivered to urban Natives in need. Culturally relevant education and outreach events for the Seattle urban Native American community are provided year-round. The project supports a sustainable local food system and builds healthy soil.

Project Example #3: A community group organizes a walking tour that highlights environmental justice challenges in their neighborhood. It also creates a community-based participatory research program where community members from the neighborhood suggest solutions. These recommendations are collected and formally presented to elected officials and other decision-makers.

Project Example #4: A mosque expands the activities of its youth leadership program by working with youth to collect stories from within their community about efforts community members are taking to address environmental and climate justice. These stories are captured on video and are assembled into a short film. The completed film is shown at a community screening.

Project Example #5: A group of at-home child care providers work together to create an environmental science program where young children learn about food production by tending an urban garden, learn about food waste by learning how to compost and practice other environment- and climate-related STEM activities.

Project Example #6: A youth club learns how to install a greenwall at their church/youth center. They develop a community demonstration and a series of workshops for youth in other churches and neighborhoods to do the same thing in their own communities.

PROCESS AND TIMELINE

September 12, 2018: Call for proposals released.

September 12-October 11, 2018: Applicants who have questions or need general guidance about the application process may contact ejf2018rfp@gmail.com during this period.

4:00pm, October 15, 2018: Applications must be received by this date and time. Late applications will not be considered. Applications may be submitted via email (preferred), mail or hand delivered to Office of Sustainability & Environment.

October 18-31, 2018: The Grantmaking Committee will review proposals. The Grantmaking Committee is nominated by the Environmental Justice Committee.

November 1-9, 2018: Applicants will have the option to present their proposal in person to the Grantmaking Committee. In-person presentations are in addition to – and not in place of – written applications. If an applicant is interested in an oral presentation, they must make themselves available during the dates and times offered by the Committee. Interpreters will be provided, if requested.

November 12-December 6, 2018: Applicants may be contacted with follow up questions as needed. The Grantmaking Committee will make recommendations for grant awards, which will be submitted to the Office of Sustainability & Environment for review and approval.

December 10, 2018: Applicants are notified of funding decisions via email.

January 11, 2019: Grant period begins.

January 2019: Checks will be disbursed to successful applicants. Checks will be sent by Seattle Foundation.

January 2019-June 2020: Learning Circle meetings occur three to four times during the grant period.

April 1, 2019: Preliminary, short email updates are due.

September 1, 2019: Mid-point reports are due.

June 30, 2020: Projects are completed.

July 31, 2020: Final reports are due.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What will it fund?

We are open to your ideas. We welcome everything from pilot projects to existing projects that can be strengthened with support from the Environmental Justice Fund.

Projects should respond to environmental and climate justice issues, including issues such as climate preparedness, air quality, food insecurity, green jobs and other climate change impacts. Innovative ideas, creative approaches, and projects that demonstrate a desire to learn, take risks and focus on long-term outcomes are welcomed.

Projects should be led by and benefit the people most affected by these issues: communities of color, immigrants, refugees and Native people – including people with low incomes, youth and seniors – who live, learn, work, worship and play in the City of Seattle.

What are the eligibility requirements?

Applicants to the Environmental Justice Fund **must** meet these criteria:

- The applicant has 501(c)3 nonprofit status or has a fiscal sponsor with 501(c)3 nonprofit status. If you do not have a fiscal sponsor, please contact us at ejf2018rfp@gmail.com.
- Projects must be in Seattle city limits and primarily benefit people who live, learn, work, worship and play in Seattle.

What other qualities are you looking for in proposals?

Applicants to the Environmental Justice Fund should be able to demonstrate that:

- Racial justice is a lived organizational value.
- Operations include a decision-making role for communities of color, immigrants, refugees and/or Native people – including people with low incomes, youth and seniors.
- They have a deep understanding about environmental justice and are able to describe what environmental justice means for their community.
- They have an understanding of the nuances of working with and within communities of people of color, immigrants, refugees and/or Native people.
- There are deep relationships with and accountability to communities of people of color, immigrants, refugees and/or Native people.

Can an individual apply?

No. The Fund cannot make grants to individuals. Applicants must either have 501(c)3 nonprofit status or have a fiscal sponsor with 501(c)3 nonprofit status.

Do I have to be a nonprofit organization to apply?

Applicants must either have 501(c)3 nonprofit status or have a fiscal sponsor with 501(c)3 nonprofit status. If you have questions about how to find a fiscal sponsor, please email ejf2018rfp@gmail.com.

Can youth apply for funding?

Yes, as long as the applicant group has 501(c)3 nonprofit status or has a fiscal sponsor with 501(c)3 nonprofit status.

My office is in Burien, but the community my group serves is based in Seattle. Can we apply?

Yes. If your office is located outside of Seattle, but your project takes place within Seattle city limits AND primarily benefits people who live, learn, work, worship and play in Seattle, you can apply.

Can a collaborative submit a proposal?

Yes. But, one group in the collaborative must serve as the applicant group.

How much can I apply for?

The minimum grant award is \$10,000. The maximum grant award is \$40,000.

Do I have to do an oral presentation?

This is not required, but we strongly encourage all applicants to take advantage of this opportunity. We are offering this for applicants who would like the chance to talk in person with the Grantmaking Committee about their project. These in-person presentations are in addition to – and not in place of – written applications. If an applicant is interested in an oral presentation, they must make themselves available during the dates and times offered by the Committee in early November. Presentation meetings will be conducted in English, and interpreters will be provided, if requested.

How do I ask for an interpreter for my presentation?

Please complete this section on the application form. Let us know:

- if you would like an interpreter; and
- the language for which you request interpretation.

Can I submit more than one proposal?

Only one application per nonprofit organization is allowed, except if the nonprofit organization is serving as a fiscal sponsor for other projects.

Can I act as a fiscal sponsor for another organization and submit an application on behalf of my own organization?

Yes, you can be a fiscal sponsor for another group and submit an application on behalf of your own organization.

How long should my proposal be?

The narrative section should be no more than six pages. The application cover sheet, project budget and attachments do not count towards this six-page limit.

Are grants for general operating or for projects?

The Fund will make grants for both general operating and for projects, as long as the activities in the proposal are directly focused on environmental justice outcomes.

Will you fund existing projects?

Yes.

What information will we be required to collect for grant reporting? How often do we need to submit a report?

The reporting schedule is as follows:

- April 1, 2019 – A preliminary, short email update is due.

- September 1, 2019 – The mid-point report is due.
- July 31, 2020 – The final report is due.

Seattle Foundation will communicate with grantees about reporting requirements.

In addition to these formal reports, there will also be Learning Circle meetings that will provide opportunities for grantees to share their work, problem-solve and build community with each other.

I would like to learn more about the Equity & Environment Agenda. Where can I find more information?

The Equity & Environment Agenda is a call to action for different sectors to work together with communities of color, immigrants, refugees and Native people to advance environmental equity in Seattle. It has these goals:

- Healthy Environments for All – Improving air, water, green space, food, safety and quality of life.
- Jobs, Local Economies and Youth Pathways – Creating opportunities for local green careers.
- Equity in Environmental Programs – Increasing community access and decision-making.
- Environmental Narrative and Community Leadership – Celebrating stories and investing in community.

The Agenda focuses on geographic areas where communities of color, immigrants, refugees and Native people – including people with low incomes, youth and seniors – tend to live. These areas are highly impacted by socio-economic and environmental challenges.

The Agenda includes strategies to guide the development of policies and programs to address cumulative burdens of environmental and socio-economic challenges. These include:

- Aligning work across local, state, and federal agencies, city departments, philanthropic communities, community-based organizations, and local environmental organizations to target investments in areas where communities of color, immigrants, refugees and Native people live, work, learn, and play.
- Prioritizing building community capacity to reduce exposure to identified environmental hazards, and improving health issues due to those hazards, while increasing climate resiliency. Efforts should also increase community ownership of solutions and create new environmental programs that focus on avoiding displacement and alleviating poverty.

Learn more about the Equity & Environment Agenda and the Equity & Environment Initiative [here](#). On this page, you can download the Equity & Environment Agenda, which is available in [Chinese](#), [English](#), [Somali](#), [Spanish](#) and [Vietnamese](#).

If I have questions about the application, who do I contact?

Please email us at efj2018rfp@gmail.com. While we cannot help you write your proposal, we are happy to answer questions, help you problem-solve and help you understand the application and the application process.