Source: Young Women Empowered

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE FUND

2023 APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Seattle
Office of Sustainability
& Environment

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ABOUT THE FUND

Seattle's Environmental Justice Fund is a grant opportunity to support efforts that benefit and are led by, or in partnership with, those most affected by environmental and climate inequities: Black, Indigenous, People of Color, immigrants, refugees, people with low incomes, youth, and elders. Community members and Seattle City Council worked together to create the Environmental Justice Fund which launched in 2018 to improve environmental conditions, respond to impacts of climate change, and get us closer to achieving environmental justice. The EJF is administered by Seattle's Office of Sustainability & Environment (OSE).

OSE partners with Seattle's Environmental Justice Committee (EJC) to make funding recommendations to the City of Seattle. EJC members are individuals with deep community roots working closely with communities to advance environmental and climate justice. Members understand how to advance racial equity, environmental justice, and climate justice for communities who have been disproportionately impacted by environmental issues and climate change.

Visit the Equity & Environment Initiative to learn about the community work that led to the creation of this fund.

WHAT WE FUND

Across the United States, race is the most significant predictor of a person living near contaminated air, water, or soil. It is for this reason that the Environmental Justice Fund supports efforts that benefit and are led by, or in partnership with, those most affected by environmental and climate issues: people who are Black, Indigenous, People of Color, immigrants, refugees, people with low incomes, youth, and elders.

Eligible projects/programs must:

- Focus on advancing climate and/or environmental justice
- Be led by or in partnership with those most affected by environmental and climate inequities (as defined above)
- Benefit people who live, learn, work, worship and play in Seattle.

FUNDING DETAILS

I**n 2023, there are two funding options available**. Applicants may select to apply for the Mid-Size Project Fund ($10,000-$40,000) or the Large-Size Project Fund ($40,001-90,000).

MID-SIZE PROJECT FUND	LARGE-SIZE PROJECT FUND
$250,000 total funding available *7-9 awards anticipated*	$750,000 total funding available *8-12 awards anticipated*
Grant sizes: $10,000 - $40,000	**Grant sizes: $40,001- $90,000**
Application Components: ☑ Completed application form ☑ Project budget (download template) ☑ Landowner agreement, if applicable ☑ Q&A Responses, if review team requires additional details	**Application Components:** ☑ Completed application form ☑ Project budget (download template) ☑ Project timeline (download template) ☑ Organizational budget ☑ Landowner agreement, if applicable ☑ Q&A Responses, if review team requires additional details
If awarded, additional components to be developed and submitted with support of the EJ Fund Program Manager: • Project timeline • Negotiated scope of work • Fiscal sponsor agreement, if not currently a 501c3 or fiscally sponsored	If awarded, additional components to be developed and submitted with support of the EJ Fund Project Manager: • Negotiated scope of work • Fiscal sponsor agreement, if not currently a 501c3 or fiscally sponsored

WHO SHOULD APPLY

Tribes, tribal organizations, non-profit organizations, and community groups whose work is led by or in partnership with Black, Indigenous, people of color, immigrants, refugees, people with low incomes, youth, and/or elders.

Eligible applicants must:

- Have **501(c)3 nonprofit status; or**
- Have a **fiscal sponsor with 501(c)3 nonprofit status; or**
- Be willing and able to secure a fiscal sponsor with 501(c)3 nonprofit status by December 1, 2023 if awarded a grant
  - For groups that must hire a fiscal sponsor, a fee of 8% to 15% of the total grant award is often charged. This fee may be included in your proposed budget
  - *During the contracting period, EJ Fund staff can help connect groups to potential fiscal sponsors if the group has not already selected one.*

Note: Only one proposal per organization is allowed, except if the organization serves as a fiscal sponsor for multiple projects.

HOW TO APPLY

PROPOSALS MUST BE SUBMITTED ONLINE HERE BY JULY 26 AT 5PM.

For Mid-Sized Project Proposals: an application worksheet can be found here for reference and drafting purposes only.

For Large-Size Project Proposal: an application worksheet can be found here for reference and drafting purposes only.

INFO SESSIONS

Join an information session to learn more about the Fund, the review process, qualities of a strong proposal, and to ask questions!

SESSION 1 - VIRTUAL:

- Wednesday, June 21; 12-1:30 pm
- ***Register here***

SESSION 2 - IN-PERSON:

- Tuesday, June 27; 6-7:30pm
- ***Register here***
- Location: Columbia City Library
  4721 Rainier Ave S, Seattle, WA 98118

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

The Environmental Justice Fund seeks to support a variety of projects and programs that advance environmental or climate justice. The following activities are eligible for funding and proposals may incorporate more than one activity.

- Arts and storytelling
- Capacity building* for the organization, group, and/or community
- Climate change adaptation
- Climate change resilience
- Climate or environmental justice education
- Climate or environmental justice engagement, and/or outreach
- Coalition building to advance climate or environmental justice
- Community health
- Community organizing
- Cultural knowledge preservation and/or education
- General operating support
- Neighborhood and community planning or visioning, *including the design phase*
- Organizational strategic planning or visioning
- Skills building and development for green jobs pathways

Capacity building *is "the process of building and strengthening the systems, structures, cultures, skills, resources, and power that organizations need to serve their communities."* [1]

PROJECT EXAMPLES

#1) A trusted community-based organization seeks funds to conduct a visioning process with their community members. The process involves understanding the priorities for a community hub that can provide benefits to the community including cooling during extreme heat events, distribution of air filters, and intergenerational programing.

#2) A mosque works with their members to collect stories about the efforts their community members are leading to advance 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 and used for climate and environmental justice education.

#3) Black, Indigenous, and youth of color have asked their trusted community-based organization to develop programming that will prepare them to join the environmental workforce. The community organization works with the youth to develop and facilitate a 10-week training series that will prepare them to join apprenticeship programs. Participants provide feedback to inform the programming for future cohorts.

[1] "Transformational Capacity Building" Stanford Social Innovation Review. April Nishimura, Roshni Sampath, Vu Le, Anbar Mahar Sheikh, and Ananda Valenzuela. Fall 2020.

INELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES & FUNDING RESTRICTIONS

- Scholarships
- Purchase of land or buildings
- Capital projects including construction and renovation of facilities or site improvements
- 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 things like park benches, shelters, and sidewalks.
- Projects that are not accessible by the public
- Purchase of equipment including cameras, video recording equipment, laptops, tablets, phones, cellphones, etc. *The Fund can support rental of this equipment.*
- Organization's overhead costs not related to the Environmental Justice Fund project or program
- Individuals are ineligible for funding

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CONSULTANTS

Technical Assistance consultants are available to applicants seeking support on their applications. **Consultants will be able to provide support in the following ways**:

- Discuss your project idea for EJ Fund alignment
- Review your draft proposal and provide feedback
- Provide high-level edits on your draft proposal

Consultants will not be able to:

- Help you design your project idea
- Draft your application responses

Learn about the consultants here

FILL OUT THIS FORM TO REQUEST TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE BY THURSDAY, JULY 12.

If the number of requests for TA exceeds consultant capacity, applicants will be prioritized by organizational budget and staff sizes in order of smallest to largest. In addition, groups and organizations led by individuals for whom English is not a first language will be prioritized and interpretation will be provided.

GRANT APPLICATION SCHEDULE

2023

Jun. 21: Info Session 1 - *Virtual*

Jun. 27: Info Session 2 - *In-person at Columbia City Library, 6:30pm*

Jul. 12: Last day to request Technical Assistance

Jul. 26: APPLICATIONS DUE BY 5 PM PST

Aug. 17: Review Team's questions sent to applicants

Aug. 30: Applicants' written responses due, if applicable.

Nov. 6: Applicants notified of funding decisions via email*

Nov. 6 - Dec. 14: Contracting period to finalize grant agreements

Dec. 15: Grant agreements signed

KEY PROGRAM DATES

2024

Sept. 20: Mid-point progress meeting*

2025

Jun. 30: Project deadline

Jul. 31: Final reporting meeting*

**Dates are subject to change.*

GRANT APPLICATION PROCESS

Date	Application Stage	Who
Jun 14 - Jul 26	Application Period	Applicants
Aug 2 - 16	Initial Proposal Review	Review Team Members
Aug 17 - 30	Applicant Response Period to Review Team's Questions (Written)	Applicants
Sept 1 - 15	Final Proposal Review and Scoring	Review Team Members
Sept 18 - Oct 10	Deliberation and Decision-Making	Review Team Members
Oct 16 - Nov 3	Funding Recommendations Approval Process	OSE Staff
Nov 6*	**Notification of Funding Decisions to Applicants**	OSE Staff

REVIEW PROCESS & EVALUATION CRITERIA

All proposals will be pre-screened for basic eligibility requirements before being sent to the Environmental Justice Committee, which is the group that will review applications (Review Team). Review Team members will perform an initial review of eligible projects. If they have additional questions about the proposal, they will submit questions which will be sent to applicants during the "Q&A" period. Applicants will have until August 30 to provide written responses to Review Team questions. After the Q&A period, Review Team members will have two weeks to incorporate the additional information in their final review and submit their scores.

The Review Team will use a deliberative decision-making process over the course of 3-4 meetings to discuss proposed projects on the strength of individual proposals and the collective inclusion of a broad range of projects. The Review Team will then recommend to the Office of Sustainability & Environment a portfolio of proposals that best align with EJ Fund priorities and includes a range of:

- Geographic areas prioritizing communities most impacted by climate and environmental inequities
  - *The EJ Fund utilizes the City's Racial and Social Equity Index to identify priority neighborhoods.*
- Populations served
- Project types
- Project sizes
- History working in the climate or environmental arena
- Groups previously funded by the EJ Fund ("deepening impact"), and
- Groups not previously funded by the EJ Fund ("broadening impact")

The Review Team reserves the right to recommend an award amount that is different from the requested amount based upon these factors.

Funding recommendations will be approved by the City of Seattle's Mayor's Office. Once approved, EJ Fund staff will work with grantees to develop a grant agreement to proceed with their project/programming. An application that is approved is not guaranteed funding. To receive funding, the grantee must complete and sign a grant agreement that meets program and City requirements.

The EJ Fund Scoring Rubric is available here.

WHAT TO EXPECT IF AWARDED

If funded, groups, organizations, and fiscal sponsors (if applicable) will be required to:

- Participate in an introductory meeting[KR1] with EJ Fund Staff
- Work closely with EJ Fund Staff to finalize project/program outcomes to be included in a grant agreement
- Participate in reporting meetings
- Secure and provide evidence of Commercial General Liability insurance

Reporting Requirements

Grantees will be required to meet with EJ Fund staff twice during the grant cycle to complete the reporting requirements as follows:

- **Mid-point progress meeting:** Grantees will meet with staff to discuss project progress and provide a budget update.

- **Final reporting meeting:** Grantees will meet with staff to close out their project and provide a final budget update.

Written reports are generated by EJ Fund staff during the reporting meetings and grantees will review to approve the content. Grantees will be asked to share a budget update, photos, videos, flyers, and other written materials prior to these meetings to be included in the reports.

In addition to these two formal meetings, grantees may reach out at any time to discuss opportunities or challenges that may impact their scope of work. For example, staffing changes that impact project the timeline or milestones, and/or budget changes.

Grant Disbursement

The EJ Fund award is disbursed in two installments. The first half of the award is disbursed after the grant agreement is signed. The second half is disbursed after the midpoint progress meeting is completed and a budget update has been provided.

The grant agreement will require grantees to maintain records and receipts documenting all uses of the grant funds. Receipts will not be submitted to the City, however, the City does include in the grant agreement the right to audit the records. As a result, grantees are expected to retain those copies and provide them to the City upon request of EJ Fund Staff.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What qualities are you looking for in the groups that apply?

Organizations or community groups should be able to demonstrate the following: 1) their work is led by or in partnership with those most affected by environmental and climate issues, 2) they have ties to their community and understand their community's(ies') environmental and climate justice issues, and 3) their proposed project/program is informed by their community.

What steps can we take to develop a strong proposal?

1. Carefully review the eligibility requirements before you get started.
2. Discuss your project idea with a project manager or technical assistance consultant before investing time in drafting your proposal.
3. Allow plenty of time to develop your project idea with your fellow team members.
4. Use the provided application worksheet to draft responses offline.
5. Carefully review the scoring criteria while developing your responses. (The strongest proposals will address all the items outlined in the "green" sections of each of the criteria categories.)
6. Allow yourself plenty of time to submit your final responses on SurveyMonkey, in case there are unexpected hiccups. **The deadline is July 26, 5 PM PDT.**
7. Be sure to hold time during the Q&A period (Aug 17-30) to prepare and submit responses to review team questions.

How is the Mid-Size Project Fund application different from the Large Project Fund application?

The narrative questions are generally the same. However, as the Large Project Fund involves larger investments, we would expect the proposal responses to reflect greater level of detail on who is involved, how the project will be implemented, and what project impacts are anticipated. Large Project Fund applicants will also need to submit their organizational budget and complete their proposed project timeline as part of their application. Applicants awarded in the Mid-Size Project Fund will have the opportunity to develop their project timeline with the EJF program manager during the contracting phase.

How do we make sure we're providing the information the Review Team is looking for?

The scoring rubric is the best guide for knowing what the Review Team members will be looking for when they evaluate proposals. Review Team members will also be submitting questions during the Q&A period to ask for information they will need to score your proposal. Applicants will have between Aug 17-30 to respond to these questions.

Can our project budget include general operating expenses?

Yes, the EJ Fund can support general operating expenses as long as the proposed activities are directly focused on environmental or climate justice outcomes.

We are not a 501c3 and don't have a fiscal sponsor yet. How should we account for the fiscal sponsor fee in our project budget?

We encourage you to include an estimated fiscal sponsorship fee into your project budget. The fee will vary depending on the fiscal sponsor and can often range between 8% - 15%. If you are selected for a grant, you will have the opportunity to revise your budget to reflect your fiscal sponsor's fee.

If my organization has received a grant from the Environmental Justice Fund in the past, can we submit a proposal in the 2023 grant cycle?

Yes, but if your project is less than 75% complete at the time of application, please reach out to EJ Fund Program Manager, Ximena Fonseca-Morales at ximena.fonseca-morales@seattle.gov prior to drafting your proposal. If you have a grant open, a new proposal must be an expansion of your currently funded project or a new project/programming. The Review Team will consider previously funded organizations and applicants that are new to the EJ Fund during their decision-making process. Being a past grantee does not guarantee funding.

My office is not in Seattle, but the community my group serves is based in Seattle. Can we apply?

Yes. If your office is located outside of Seattle, you can apply if your project/programming takes benefits people who live, learn, work, worship and play in Seattle.

Can a collaborative submit a proposal?

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

Can I submit more than one proposal?

Only one application per nonprofit organization or community group is allowed, except if the nonprofit organization is serving as a fiscal sponsor for multiple proposals.

Where can I find more information about the Equity & Environment Agenda?

Download the Equity & Environment Agenda, which is also available in 繁體中文 (Chinese), Soomaali (Somali), Español (Spanish) and Tiếng Việt (Vietnamese).

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

Please email equityenviro@seattle.gov or **request Technical Assistance**. While we cannot help you write your proposal, we are happy to answer questions, provide feedback, and help you understand the application and the application process.