



CNCA Game Changers | Transformative Governance

Topic. Climate Justice Funding Priorities

Leadership. The Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance (CNCA) members guiding this effort are Glasgow, UK; Minneapolis, MN, USA; and Washington, D.C., USA.

Problem statement. The causes of disproportionate negative outcomes for people of color, Indigenous Peoples, immigrants and refugees, low-income people, and other marginalized people (priority communities) and the climate crisis are both rooted in interlocking and extractive systems in our governments, economies, and societies that exploit natural resources at unsustainable levels and perpetuate the oppression of priority communities. Therefore, climate action must be led by priority communities and address these broken systems. However, cities struggle to: (1) systematically embed social justice and racial equity in climate action through deep collaboration with priority communities; and (2) activate actors across city government and in other sectors to advance systems-scale solutions. Key issues are:

- A need for deeper understanding of the historical roots (e.g., colonialism, genocide of native peoples, slavery, etc.) of the systems which perpetuate the oppression of priority communities, and the interplay between these systems and root causes of the climate crisis
- Capacity to design climate action in collaboration with and to improve the lived experience of priority communities
- The externalization of the costs of the fossil fuel economy, which fall disproportionately on priority communities
- The costs of climate action are disproportionately born by priority communities
- Those in power generally and in the climate movement do not reflect our communities

Theory of change. It would be game changing to design climate action in collaboration with -- and to work first and best for -- those with the greatest obstacles to meeting their needs and thriving. This will help realize emissions reductions at the scale needed to achieve carbon neutrality and foster a more just society. CNCA members have identified a need for the following to advance climate justice:

- Capacity to take a person-centered and whole government approach to climate action
- Techniques for and examples of collaborative governance approaches that shift power to those who have historically been systemically excluded, including Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) women, youth, and elders
- Plans to foster a just transition as fossil fuel-based jobs are lost and clean energy jobs are created
- Mechanisms to mitigate the disproportionate cost of the transition to carbon neutrality for those who can least afford to bear the costs, including developing revenue sources that internalize the externalities of the fossil fuel economy



- Systems scale approaches that engage the governance, economic, and social society actors needed to implement just climate action
- BIPOC representation in the field of urban sustainability and climate planning and implementation

By investing in systemic and institutional changes, cities can develop, enact, and scale local actions that advance their shared social equity and climate priorities.

Funding priorities. The CNCA Game Changer Fund seeks to support city efforts to advance climate justice through transformative governance approaches. Table 1 outlines funding priorities and targeted outcomes of successful climate justice efforts as identified by CNCA members. As funds are raised, CNCA will call for projects that advance these priorities in measurable ways.

Table 1. Climate Justice Funding Priorities and Targeted Outcomes.

| Funding Priorities: | Targeted Outcomes: |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Collaborative governance models, that empower priority communities in problem definition, solutions development, and evaluation ● Methods for analyzing the benefits and burdens of proposed climate action, including the social, health, and economic impacts ● New economic models that equitably distribute the benefits and burdens of climate action, including the cost of action, the jobs lost/gained, and wealth creation opportunities in the transition to a clean energy economy ● Whole government approaches that work across departmental and agency silos and across different levels of government ● Collaborations among government, environmental, racial equity and health organizers, industry, artists etc. ● Equitable mechanisms to generate revenue to fund the costs of climate action for those who can least afford to pay them | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● People's needs and voices are centered in climate planning ● Communities / neighborhoods are empowered to test, innovate, and experiment with climate mitigation and adaptation strategies ● Governance structures have significantly improved ability to be agile and responsive to climate justice opportunities ● Climate justice evaluation frameworks are guiding climate action planning processes ● Investments are made in people and organizations to build capacity for community participation in climate action ● Decision makers in the field reflect the communities they serve ● Climate work is approached with respect, humility, and a commitment to building trust and shifting power ● Employment pathways are created for those whose jobs are lost in the transition to a clean energy economy and the new jobs created are available to those who most need jobs |