JUSTICE OUTSIDE

GRASSROOTS ORGANIZING & MOBILIZATION FUND

Environmental justice is won through collective power, and this fund backs the communities building it. **When communities organize, they shape the decisions that affect their land and water.** But the people hit hardest by environmental harm often have the least funding to organize and little say in what happens to their own neighborhoods.

To this end, Justice Outside invests in organizations building power from the ground up. This includes emerging movements and youth-led campaigns, along with coalitions and advocacy led by the people closest to environmental harm. The Fund has a special focus on water equity.

WHAT WE FUND

- **Coalitions & Collective Action:** Grassroots groups and their allies joining forces on shared campaigns for change.
- **Youth-Led Campaigns:** Youth-led movements amplified through strategic communications, new technologies, and social media.
- **Resource Mobilization:** Funding and training that help communities win local fights for environmental health.
- **Community-Led Research:** Communities collecting their own data and using it to shape their organizing strategy.
- **Education & Awareness:** Local learning programs that help people understand climate change and how it affects their community.
- **Policy & Advocacy:** Policy campaigns led by the communities that environmental decisions affect most, especially in the fight for water equity.

ANTICIPATED IMPACT

- Local wins that close gaps in who is exposed to polluted water and air, toxic chemicals, and flooding.
- Community-led wins that conserve land and protect Indigenous sacred sites.
- Increased awareness of climate change impacts on communities facing environmental injustice.
- Communities facing environmental injustice better informed about how climate change affects where they live.
- More trained grassroots advocates meeting with officials and building advocacy networks in their states.
- New environmental justice leaders from the communities this fund serves.

Out of Scope for This Fund

- *Clean energy and just transition work*
- *Lobbying prohibited by federal tax code*

2026-2030 GOALS

$5 Million invested across
30 organizations in 5-10 states

Initial phase: ***$3 million supporting 18 organizations***

WHEN COMMUNITIES ORGANIZE, CHANGE FOLLOWS

THE CASE FOR INVESTMENT

Lasting environmental change starts with the people who live closest to the problem. Grassroots groups know their neighborhoods and their elected officials, yet they get a small share of environmental funding. The research below shows what these groups accomplish when they're funded.

WHAT GRASSROOTS ORGANIZING CAN DO

- Builds durable community power
- Creates policy change from the ground up
- Addresses environmental health disparities
- Centers those most impacted as leaders
- Connects local action to systemic change
- Protects water, air, and sacred lands

THE RESEARCH IS CLEAR GRASSROOTS POWER DELIVERS RESULTS

Powerbuilding

Resources turn into community power. Resources turn into community power. A review of 88 studies links resources for organizing to stronger community power, and ties local organizing to broader social change.

Raj, et al. Environmental Innovation and Societal Transitions. 2022.

The Policy Connection

Policy change needs community voice. This research agenda on sustainability transitions names power and politics, along with culture and social movements, as central forces in environmental change. The communities most affected by a policy belong at the center of shaping it.

Köhler, et al. Environmental Innovation and Societal Transitions. 2019.

Water Justice

Contaminated water falls hardest on Latino communities. Across 39,466 community water systems, those serving the most Hispanic residents had elevated nitrate nearly three times as often as those serving the fewest. Organizing is how these communities push for safe water.

Schaider, et al. Environmental Health. 2019.

Communities Ready to Lead

People who live with water hazards want to act. A 2021 study found that people of color and people who have lived through flooding or water hazards are more willing to take environmental action. That makes water infrastructure a natural place to organize.

Scarlett, Subramaniam, et al. arXiv. 2021.

THE PATH FORWARD

The research is clear. The communities are ready. The strategy is proven. **What's missing is investment.** Partner with Justice Outside to build lasting power where it's needed most.

LET'S COLLABORATE!

Robert Sindelar
Chief Advancement Officer

justiceoutside.org

robert@justiceoutside.org