

Request for Proposals

Frontline Resource Institute: 2022 Funding Opportunities

Frontline Resource Institute (FRI, pronounced “free”) is releasing two grant opportunities through our Collective Action Fund at the Tides Foundation. Intended for environmental justice (EJ) and climate justice (CJ) organizations serving frontline communities, both opportunities will assist in building organizational capacity and promoting shared learning and peer exchange among grant recipients. Recognizing that organizations have different needs depending on their longevity, financial capacity, and development journeys, FRI plans to disburse funds via two tracks:

- Track 1 - Organizational Strategy Development (up to \$150,000)
- Track 2 - Organizational Capacity Building and Organizational Sustainability (up to \$50,000)

This RFP describes the process and requirements for both Track 1 and Track 2. Applicants may apply to only one track, so please read the information about both tracks carefully to determine which track is the best fit for your organization at this time.

For additional information about FRI, please visit: <https://www.frontlineresourceinstitute.org/>

For additional information about 2022 Funding Opportunities, please visit:
<https://www.frontlineresourceinstitute.org/grant-applications/>

To apply for a FRI grant, visit www.justfund.us to log in or register for a new account.

- If you have an existing JustFund account, click ‘Sign In’ and go to ‘Funding Opportunities’ to review the RFP and start your proposal. If you are having trouble accessing your account, reset your password or contact info@justfund.us.
- If you do not have an existing JustFund account, click ‘Sign Up’ and complete the registration form and note “FRI” in the “What funding opportunity are you applying to?” field. **Please note that registrations may take up to 48 business hours for approval. We encourage applicants to register as early as possible.**

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1. FRI Overview

Our Vision: FRI supports frontline communities working to advance environmental justice and climate justice by providing the resources and technical assistance to build a world where all can achieve healthy, safe, and sustainable environments.

EJ and CJ organizations have long fought for equal environmental protection and equitable solutions that support historically marginalized and overburdened communities. Environmental injustices, coupled with significant health disparities and accompanying economic challenges, disproportionately affect people of color, Indigenous peoples, and low-wealth communities. Many organizations working to address environmental injustices are challenged by a lack of financial and technical resources and inadequate funding opportunities.

FRI aims to provide integrated resources to frontline communities to address these critical needs. The Institute is guided by an 11-member Conceptual Committee, which currently meets monthly to refine its mission, vision, and strategic direction. In parallel with the advisory committee's efforts, Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) is working to set up an endowment for the center that will ensure a long-term and sustainable funding model for FRI as an independent, free-standing entity.

2. 2022 Funding Opportunities Description

A. Funding Opportunities Overview

FRI is releasing two grant opportunities intended to assist in growing the capacity of EJ and CJ organizations that serve frontline communities and to promote shared learning and peer exchange between grant recipients. Recognizing that organizations have different needs depending on their longevity, financial capacity, and development journeys, FRI plans to disburse funds via two tracks, as described below.

Grantees in both tracks will have the opportunity to participate in a learning cohort with other grantees in their track. Additionally, grantees in both tracks will attend a convening at the end of the grant period to network, share solutions, and report out on their progress. Grantees will experience long-term gains in capacity building by developing relationships with and hearing/learning from their peers via cohort check-in calls and at the convening.

B. Track 1 - Organizational Strategy Development

Approximately four grants of \$150,000 each will be offered to support organizational strategic planning. These grants are intended for EJ, CJ, and frontline-serving 501(c)(3) organizations that have a track record of sound financial and grants management. Note: Fiscally sponsored projects will not be eligible for Track 1. To review Track 2, see below.

The goal of this award is to allow established EJ and CJ organizations to take a step back from day-to-day mission-based activities and take time to set, plan for, and meet strategic planning or organizational development goals.

For the purposes of this award, strategic planning activities are broadly defined as:

- Developing a strategic plan (e.g., an organizational development strategic plan OR a strategic plan focused on a specific area of growth such as fundraising and development, communications, program development, policy development, or an advocacy initiative).
- Hiring additional full-time or part-time staff (e.g., fundraising/development director, advocacy initiative director, communications director, organizer).
- Hiring a strategic planning consultant to support the planning effort.
- Meeting other long-term organizational strategic needs.

C. Track 2 - Organizational Capacity Building and Organizational Sustainability

Approximately eight grants of \$50,000 each will be offered to support organizational capacity building and organizational sustainability. These grants are intended for smaller organizations that may not be eligible for the Track 1 grant but whose work is nonetheless impactful and promising.

The goal of this award is to fund the work of EJ and CJ organizations that need programmatic or operational support and may not yet have an established track record of grants management in the \$50,000 range.

For the purposes of this award, organizational capacity building and organizational sustainability are broadly defined as:

- Launching a new EJ initiative or program.
- Expanding or extending an existing EJ initiative or program.
- Covering organizational costs such as staff salaries/benefits, operations-related costs, accounting software and/or other relevant programs, or attaining 501(c)(3) status.
- Establishing a stand-alone EJ group or initiative.

3. Eligibility Criteria

A. Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for a grant award, applicant organizations must meet the following criteria:

- Organization has (or is seeking to establish) initiatives or programs that advance EJ, CJ, or related environmental and/or social causes.
- Organization can demonstrate sound grants management of at least one previous grant award greater than \$1,000.
- Organization has its own IRS 501(c)(3) designation, or has a fiscal sponsor, who is a 501(c)(3).

Additionally, Track 1 applicants must be 501(c)(3) EJ or CJ organizations that can demonstrate a track record of sound organizational, financial, and grants management. To that end, before applying for Track 1 funds, please ensure your organization meets the following additional criteria:

- Organization has its own IRS 501(c)(3) designation. Projects that are fiscally sponsored will not be eligible to apply for Track 1.
- Organization can demonstrate sound grants management of at least one previous grant award greater than \$50,000.
- Organization conducts independent annual financial audits and can attach a copy of the audit from the last fiscal year as part of the Track 1 application. Or, can provide organizational budget, or any other documentation that demonstrates organizational management of at least one grant above \$50,000 USD.
- Organization has a mission directly connected to advancing EJ or can demonstrate that EJ (or CJ, frontline justice, etc.) is at the core of the organization's identity and work.
- Organization has an established board of directors.

B. What work will not be funded?

The following considerations would make a project ineligible for a grant award:

- Project is inconsistent with a legitimate charitable purpose and applicable law, including any political campaigns.
- Project is inconsistent with the Tides Foundation's [vision, mission, and approach](#) and organizational values and FRI's funding priorities.

4. Proposal Submission Information

A. Submission Schedule

The chart below describes the anticipated schedule¹ for the application submission, review, and award process for Track 1 and Track 2 grants. *Please note, applicants must choose one track to apply to. Your organization cannot apply to both tracks.*

RFP posted online and circulated	July 18, 2022
Informational Webinar	July 21, 2022
Questions about the RFP due to FRI@edf.org	July 22, 2022
Response to questions posted	July 27, 2022
Applications due	August 16, 2022
Grant applications under review by an Independent Advisory Committee	August 16 – September 16, 2022
Grant Recommendations to Tides Foundation	Week of September 26, 2022
Grant Announcements Released	Week of October 10, 2022

Informational Webinar: On July 21, 2022 at 2 PM ET, please join us for a webinar and Q&A regarding FRI's inaugural grants. To register, [click here](#).

B. Selection Criteria

Applications will be evaluated by an independent group of EJ experts established solely for the purpose of recommending awardees. Following their review, an Independent Advisory Committee will make final recommendations to the Tides Foundation for recipients in both tracks based on the following guidelines:

- Applicants have demonstrated that their organization meets eligibility guidelines for the relevant track.
- Applicant responses completely answer each question in the application.

¹ Tides Foundation and EDF reserve the right to adjust the schedule as needed in response to the number of submissions received and other factors that may arise.

- Applicant responses clearly demonstrate the purpose, planned activities, outcomes, and impact of the proposed use of grant funds.
- Priority may be granted to:
 - Organizations led by people of color, Indigenous leaders, and low-income leaders from communities served by the organization.
 - Applications that center the leadership of young people in the proposed work.
- Consideration may also be given to selecting a diverse cohort of recipients for each track, including considerations such as geographic location, EJ subject matter of the grant proposal, types of communities served, size/longevity of recipient organizations, etc.

After receiving recommendations from the Independent Advisory Committee, the Tides Foundation will review applications for alignment with the eligibility criteria and award the grants.

C. Application Instructions

To apply for a FRI grant, visit www.justfund.us to log in or register for a new account.

- If you have an existing JustFund account, click ‘Sign In’ and go to ‘Funding Opportunities’ to review the RFP and start your proposal. If you are having trouble accessing your account, reset your password or contact info@justfund.us.
- If you do not have an existing JustFund account, click ‘Sign Up’ and complete the registration form and note “FRI” in the “What funding opportunity are you applying to?” field. **Please note that registrations may take up to 48 business hours for approval. We encourage applicants to register as early as possible.**
- Justfund utilizes a common proposal model, allowing organizations to submit a single proposal to as many funding opportunities as they wish. The Common Proposal includes four narrative questions:
 - Proposal summary (max 140 characters): Think of this like a tweet. Please tell us about the mission of this proposal in a couple sentences.
 - Proposal Description (recommended 2500-3500 characters): Tell us about your proposal.
 - Team Description (recommended 1250-2500 characters): Tell us about who the organizers are.
 - Financial Need (recommended 1250-2500 characters): Please describe what you will use the funding for.

D. Supplemental Questions

Alongside JustFund’s Common Proposal, we have included the following questions:

- **Track 1**
 - Please describe the anticipated impact of your proposed activities. How will the proposed activities strengthen your organization? How will the proposed activities support your organization in advancing Environmental Justice and/or Climate Justice outcomes?

- What are the most pressing challenges that your organization has faced over the last several years, and what kind of resources or assistance would strengthen your team in the face of these challenges? Why is organizational strategic planning work vital for your organization at this moment?
- Please provide the dollar amount, in USD, of the three largest grants you have received.
- **Required Attachments (Track 1 Only):** A copy of your most recent financial audit, organizational budget, or any other documentation that demonstrates organizational management of at least one grant above \$50,000 USD.
- **Track 2**
 - Please describe the anticipated impact of your proposed activities. How will the proposed activities strengthen your organization? How will the proposed activities support your organization in advancing Environmental Justice and/or Climate Justice outcomes?
 - What are the most pressing challenges that your organization has faced over the last several years, and what kind of resources or assistance would strengthen your team in the face of these challenges?
 - **Optional Attachment:** A theory of change or other relevant programmatic materials.

5. Reporting Requirements, Grantee Cohorts, and Grantee Convening

A. Simplified Grantee Reporting

At the middle of the grant period, awardees will be asked to submit a 2 – 4 page narrative in preparation for the September 2023 grantee convening. The narrative will respond to the following questions:

- Of the goals you identified in your grant application what have you accomplished so far? What advocacy or policy impact have you created? What local conditions have changed or are changing?
- Have you experienced any challenges? How did you address them and/or what additional support do you need to address them?
- What lessons learned would you like to share with fellow grantees?
- How did you utilize the grant funds (e.g., salaries/benefits, rent/equipment, advocacy campaigns, materials)?

B. Grantee Cohort Learning Calls

Grantees will be asked to participate in quarterly update calls (including an in-person meeting during the final quarter) with members of their grantee cohort (Track 1 or Track 2) to begin building relationships and share information about their grant implementation progress (including successes, challenges, and lessons learned).

C. Grantee Convening in September 2023

In lieu of additional detailed grant reporting, grantees in both tracks will prepare for and attend a convening at the end of the grant period to network, share solutions, and report out on their progress. This convening is anticipated to be held in September 2023, and funding to attend the convening will be provided separately from the grant award.

At the convening, grantees will be supported in progressing toward achieving intermediate and long-term capacity-building goals through developing relationships with and learning from their peers, as well as technical experts who can provide one-on-one coaching on topics pre-identified by the grantees (e.g., fundraising and grants management, building an effective data-driven local/regional case study and narrative, effective public policy advocacy strategies, community science projects, and data collection).

6. Key Contacts

FRI's 2022 funding opportunity is part of FRI's Collective Action Fund at the Tides Foundation.

Grant awards will be administered by the Tides Foundation. For questions regarding the Tides Foundation and their role in grant administration, please go to www.tides.org.

FRI's Conceptual Committee is being supported by EDF. For questions regarding FRI or EDF's role, please contact FRI@edf.org.

For questions about how to set up your JustFund account or submit your proposal, please refer to JustFund's [Help Center](#) or contact info@justfund.us.