Who We Are

The Women’s Environmental Leadership Fund (WE LEAD) is a Tides Foundation grantmaking initiative and impact invested fund with a focus on addressing historic inequities by directing resources to Black, Indigenous, women of color (BIWOC) leaders and BIWOC-led climate justice organizations.

Launched in 2020, WE LEAD seeks to promote a shift in historical power imbalances from those who have caused—or failed to address—the climate crisis, and lift the vision and self-determination of Black women, women of color, and Indigenous women taking on big polluters with local, community-based action and sustainable solutions.

Funding Priorities

**Leadership.** Elevating the leadership of Black women, women of color, and Indigenous women and directing funding to organizations that intentionally sustain, grow, and/or heal women’s leadership.

**Environmental justice.** Emphasizing work that contributes to building a broader and more inclusive movement, prioritizing organizations leading work at the intersection of racial, gender, and environmental justice movements.

**Community.** Lifting up organizations that center the voices of community members historically and systematically overburdened by climate change, where the organization is building community power and advancing advocacy efforts for long-term impact.
Our Approach

Flexible unrestricted, general operating and project support grants to support the sustainability of environmental justice organizations and women’s leadership.

Trust-based philanthropy practices that are accessible, transparent, and responsive.

Investment in the health, well-being, and sustainability of the women leaders and organizations we support.

Draw upon Tides’ 45 years of experience working hand-in-hand with movement leaders and grassroots environmental, social justice, and women’s rights organizations.

WE LEAD Grantees

Spring 2020

The strategic focus of WE LEAD’s first round of grantmaking in 2020 was in the state of Texas, and more specifically, to organizations in the Houston region. Houston is home to over 400 chemical and manufacturing facilities, over 150 concrete batch plants, and more than 140 metal recycling facilities that can expose residents to harmful air pollutants. Due to the absence of adequate land-use policies, many residents live, work, and play in close proximity to these sources of air pollution. In partnership with the Hive Fund for Gender and Climate Justice, WE LEAD supported the first of three years of general operating support to the following four organizations.

Texas

Jolt Initiative

Texas Freedom Network Education Fund / Texas Rising Program

Air Alliance Houston

Achieving Community Tasks Successfully / ACTS

“We are taking on the mantle of values-based, justice-focused work with a new authority.”

Michelle Martinez
Michigan Environmental Justice Coalition
Winter 2020

The goals for this grantmaking cycle were to build on our Texas grantmaking, expand our geographic reach, partner with, and learn from donors in the climate space supporting organizations within our growing geographic focus (Southwest, Pennsylvania, and Appalachia), and test our strategic priorities by establishing trust-based relationships with new grantee partners.

Arizona
- Native Renewables

New Mexico
- New Mexico Environmental Law Center
- TEWA Women United
- Diné CARE/ Citizens Against Ruining Our Environment
- NAVA / Native American Voters Alliance Education Project
- NM Comunidades en Accion y de Fe / CAFe

Pennsylvania
- New Voices Pittsburgh
- Make the Road Pennsylvania
- Grounded Strategies

Tennessee
- Highlander Center

Texas
- Link Houston
- Coalition for Environment, Equity, and Resilience

National
- National Black Food and Justice Network
- National Black Environmental Justice Network
- NAACP Environmental and Climate Justice Program
- Women’s Earth and Climate Action Network/ WECAN

WE LEAD Giving History

$1,500,000

$1,200,000

$900,000

$600,000

$300,000

$350K AWARDED TO 4 GRANTEES

$650K AWARDED TO 16 GRANTEES

$1.35M AWARDED TO 48 GRANTEES

SPRING 2020

WINTER 2020

SPRING 2021
Spring 2021

This grant cycle aimed to expand our reach nationally. Through an open and inclusive letter of inquiry (LOI) process, the independent advisory committee worked collaboratively to make grant decisions that expanded WE LEAD geographies and ensure that 100% of grants went to BIWOC (Black, Indigenous, women of color) led or co-led organizations.

**Alabama**
- Center for Rural Enterprise and Environmental Justice / CREEJ

**Alaska**
- Native Movement
- Native Peoples Action Community Fund

**Arizona**
- Black Lives Matter Phoenix Metro

**California**
- Asian Pacific Environmental Network / APEN
- Climate Innovation
- East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice
- Environmental Health Coalition / EHC
- HEAL / Health, Environment, Agriculture, Labor Food Alliance
- Indigenous Climate Action / ICA
- International Indian Treaty Council
- Yurok Tribe Environmental Program

**Colorado**
- Colorado People’s Alliance

**Florida**
- Miami Climate Alliance

**Illinois**
- Grassroots Collaborative
- People for Community Recovery

**Louisiana**
- Another Gulf is Possible
- Deep South Center for Environmental Justice
- Imagine Water Works
- Water Collaborative of Greater New Orleans

**Michigan**
- Michigan Environmental Justice Coalition

**Minnesota**
- Honor the Earth
- TakeAction Minnesota Education Fund

Climate justice demands democratic, community-based solutions, and equitable spaces where impacted communities are at the center of decision-making. By elevating BIWOC leaders, and redistributing resources and power, we can address the root causes of climate change while supporting solutions with the greatest chance of seeing us through to a new era of social justice and climate security.
Montana
Indigenous Caucus of Western Mining Action Network

Nevada
Make the Road Nevada

New Jersey
New Jersey Environmental Justice Alliance

New Mexico
Divest Invest Protect
Nihi Ké Baa
Pueblo Action Alliance
San Juan Collaborative for Health Equity / SJCHE
Youth United for Climate Crisis Action / YUCCA

New York
ALIGN: The Alliance for a Greater New York
Black Farmer Fund
UPROSE

North Carolina
Southern Coalition for Social Justice

Pennsylvania
Philly Thrive

Rhode Island
Racial Environmental Justice Committee

South Dakota
Indigenous Peoples Power Project
Thunder Valley Community Development Corporation

Texas
Centro por la Justicia / Southwest Workers Union
Fenceline Watch
For the Greater Good
Mi Familia Vota Education Fund
PODER / People Organized in Defense of Earth & Her Resources
Public Citizen
Rio Grande International Study Center
West Street Recovery

Washington
Native Organizers Alliance
WE LEAD is profoundly grateful to our philanthropic partners who are responding to the urgency of our climate crisis and advancing equity and justice in the U.S. by resourcing the individual and collective power of BIWOC leadership and community-driven solutions. Your generous support has increased the expansion of our unrestricted grantmaking in 2021 and will grow this initiative for years to come. We thank you.