WHO WE ARE

Launched in 2022, the Frontline Justice Fund (FJF) ensures community groups on the frontline of the ecological/environmental crisis, who utilize legal advocacy to advance environmental and climate justice, have the resources they need to succeed and thrive beyond the courtroom.

Frontline leaders often take the biggest risks to their livelihoods and well being and dig most deeply into personal and professional reserves of time, energy, and resources. Yet many do not have access to rapid response or multi-year funding to cover non-legal costs associated with mounting and sustaining successful legal advocacy campaigns. Lack of resources directly impacts the size, the life and ultimately, the chances of winning the most courageous legal fights of our time. The frontline justice fund is designed to protect, repair, and prepare communities to confront environmental and climate legal battles in the short to long term against some of the biggest and baddest actors in history.

Our bedrock environmental laws were established to protect us all. They help create a more level playing field for people, communities, and ecosystems in harm’s way to check abuses by corporate polluters and government in the courts, where facts still matter more than money. The expert environmental lawyers arguing cases before the courts cannot do this work alone. Local partners, Tribes and Pueblos, community
groups, environmental justice and climate justice organizations, and others on the frontlines of environmental threats are mission-critical to the success of this work — success that is only possible with a foundation of partnership and deep relationship. These sustained relationships, driven by shared values and community concerns, are essential to protect the health of all communities. Change doesn’t happen overnight — and effective, lasting progress takes hold when it is seeded from the grassroots up. Too many frontline groups critical to the environmental movement are overlooked by funders and do not have the resources to sustain a long legal fight.

In response, FJF will provide grants to groups representing communities who are living with and fighting against toxic pollution, the fallout from climate disasters, and the looming threat of new and expanding oil pipelines, mines, deadly petrochemical plants, and other dangerous and destructive projects.

In concert with public mobilization, leveraging the power of the law with highly-impacted community-based plaintiffs, is by far the most compelling pathway in advancing equitable environmental protections and safeguards.

By directing funding to under-resourced communities who are using legal advocacy to address environmental degradation and injustice, we can help to secure the rights of people and nature and create durable and impactful systemic change so that all can thrive.

FUNDING PRIORITIES

Using a participatory grantmaking framework, FJF fills a major gap in funding for grassroots and frontline groups with limited resources who are taking part in critical legal and regulatory fights to advance justice across the spectrum of the most important environmental and climate fights today. FJF prioritizes support for groups that:

/ Utilize litigation and other legal advocacy strategies to advance environmental and climate justice.

/ Are led by Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) and/or represent low-income frontline communities most impacted by environmental harm, racism, and injustice.

/ Success will have a direct impact on the frontlines, in communities most impacted by environmental harms, and broader implications in the fight for environmental and climate justice.
OUR APPROACH

/ Flexible unrestricted, general operating and project support grants to contribute to the sustainability of frontline environmental and climate justice organizations.

/ Provide rapid response grants to cover urgent legal battles and multi-year grants on a case by case basis to help groups thrive for the long term.

/ Funding decisions through a participatory grantmaking model designed to work directly in partnership with frontline groups, leaders, and activists.

/ Trust-based philanthropy practices that are accessible, transparent, and responsive. The FJF seeks to practice the Six Principles of Trust Based Philanthropy to address the inherent power imbalances between funders and grant recipients.

/ Partner closely with national and regional environmental litigation groups to ensure that grantmaking is aligned with larger legal campaigns and strategies.

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

GOVERNANCE

The Frontline Justice Fund is a Tides Collective Fund led by an Independent Advisory Council (IAC) comprised of a majority of environmental justice movement leaders and several funders with significant experience in funding the frontlines. Responsibilities of the IAC include:

/ Develop the strategic plan and roadmap for the fund

/ Create grantmaking framework and criteria for funding

/ Make grant recommendations

/ Stay abreast of rapid response needs and funding gaps in frontline communities

/ Collaborate with regional and national environmental litigation groups to ensure alignment
Inaugural IAC members include:

**MOVEMENT LEADERS**

Colette Pichon Battle | Gulf Coast Center for Law and Policy
Patti Gobin | Natural Resource Treaty Rights/Tulalip Tribes
Angela Mahecha | Environmental Justice Movement Fellowship, at the Tishman Environment and Design Center
Douglas Cox | Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin

**FUNDERS**

Ash McNeely | Pacific Foundation Services
Peter Martin | Tides Foundation

Tides Foundation is the sponsor of the fund and holds control and discretion over grantmaking activities. Tides will serve as fund manager and is responsible for grants management, fundraising, financial reporting, legal and fiduciary oversight, project management, and operational support.
HOW YOU CAN HELP

The total annual fundraising goal is $5 million per year. To date, Tides has secured over $2 million in year one to support the fund’s launch and initial rounds of grantmaking. We’ve also secured $1.5 million per year for years two and three. We are actively seeking annual and multi-year gifts of $100,000 or more.

Tides works closely with major climate funders in a variety of capacities, both as Tides partners and as major funders for our fiscally sponsored projects and initiatives. In partnership with our environmental allies, we have built a potential funder list for FJF. Our initial outreach conversations have generated a lot of enthusiasm and early commitments of nearly $3 million. Please reach out to FJF@tides.org for more information and to get involved.

ABOUT TIDES

Tides is a philanthropic partner and nonprofit accelerator dedicated to building a world of shared prosperity and social justice. Tides works at the nexus of funders, changemakers, and policy makers to solve society’s toughest problems; We do so by providing our partners with the necessary impact solutions and expertise, including philanthropic grantmaking, pooled funds, impact investing, fiscal sponsorship, and policy initiatives.

Tides Frontline Justice Fund ensures community groups on the frontline of the ecological/environmental crisis have the resources they need to succeed and thrive beyond the courtroom. Contact FJF@tides.org to get involved.
ABOUT TIDES CONTINUED

Tides has supported collaborative initiatives throughout our history, particularly pooled funding models that helped drive marriage equality, immigrant rights, racial justice, health care reform and just climate solutions. Today we house over 30 active collaboratives, ranging from pooled funds to national networks, grantee cohorts, and donor circles. The Frontline Justice Fund aligns closely with our organizational goals, values, and expertise.

Tides is proud to align with the vision of the Donors of Color Network and became one of the initial supporters of their Climate Funders Justice Pledge. Tides is among the Top 40 Climate Funders who have pledged to increase funding to BIPOC-led powerbuilding groups by at least 30% within two years.

Examples of other collaborative funding efforts through Tides Collective Action Funds include:

**Women’s Environmental Leadership Fund / WE LEAD**

In April 2020, Tides launched a bold initiative and new strategic investment — the Women’s Environmental Leadership Fund — established to elevate, center, and resource women’s grassroots leadership on the frontlines of climate disruption in the United States. WE LEAD promotes a shift in power and resources to those making a tangible impact on the ground, namely Black women, women of color, and indigenous women (BIWOC) taking on big polluters with local, community-based action. 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.

**Healthy Democracy Fund**

Launched in fall 2019, Tides Healthy Democracy Fund (HDF) partners with social justice donor networks and movement leaders to foster a healthier, more inclusive, and more reflective democracy. The primary purpose of the fund is two-fold: 1) Close the voter turnout gap, and 2) Defend the voting rights of communities of color, young voters, and the economically disadvantaged. HDF grantmaking supports national movements and targeted local campaigns through more than 50 organizations that build community power and local leadership, drive voter education and turnout, protect voting rights, and combat disinformation.