

THE Climate + Clean Energy EQUITY FUND

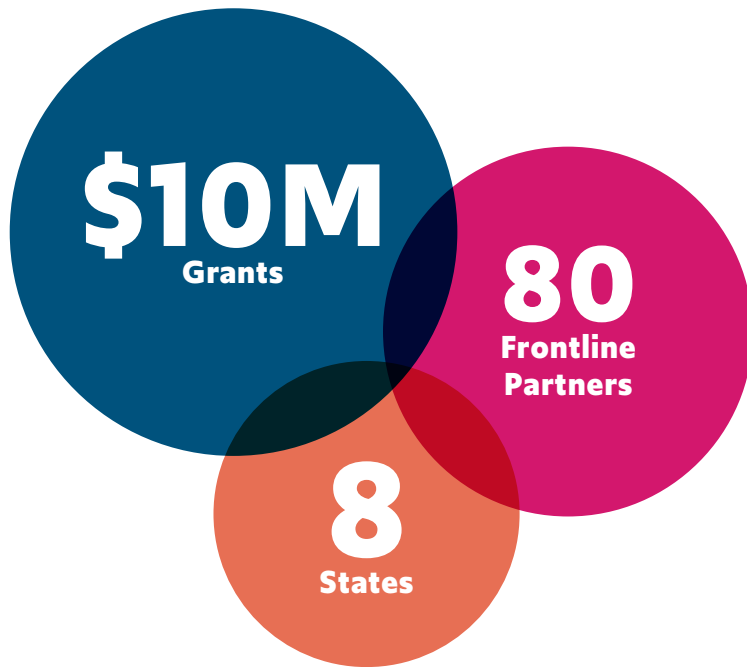


Cover photos courtesy of MN350 (top) and Organize Florida Education Fund (bottom three)

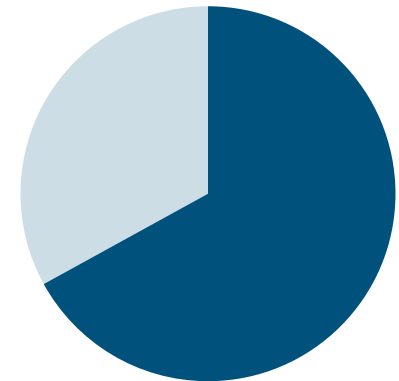
2020 Impact Report

The Climate and Clean Energy Equity Fund is building a powerful movement to stop climate change and create an equitable clean energy future.

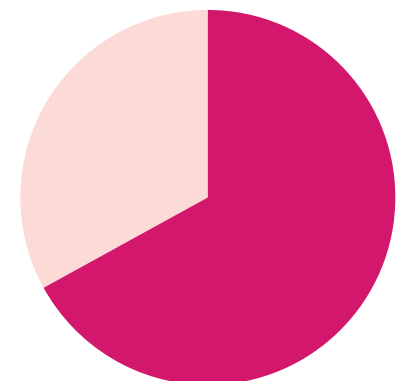




50%
grantees led by
Women of Color



67%
grantees led by
Directors of Color



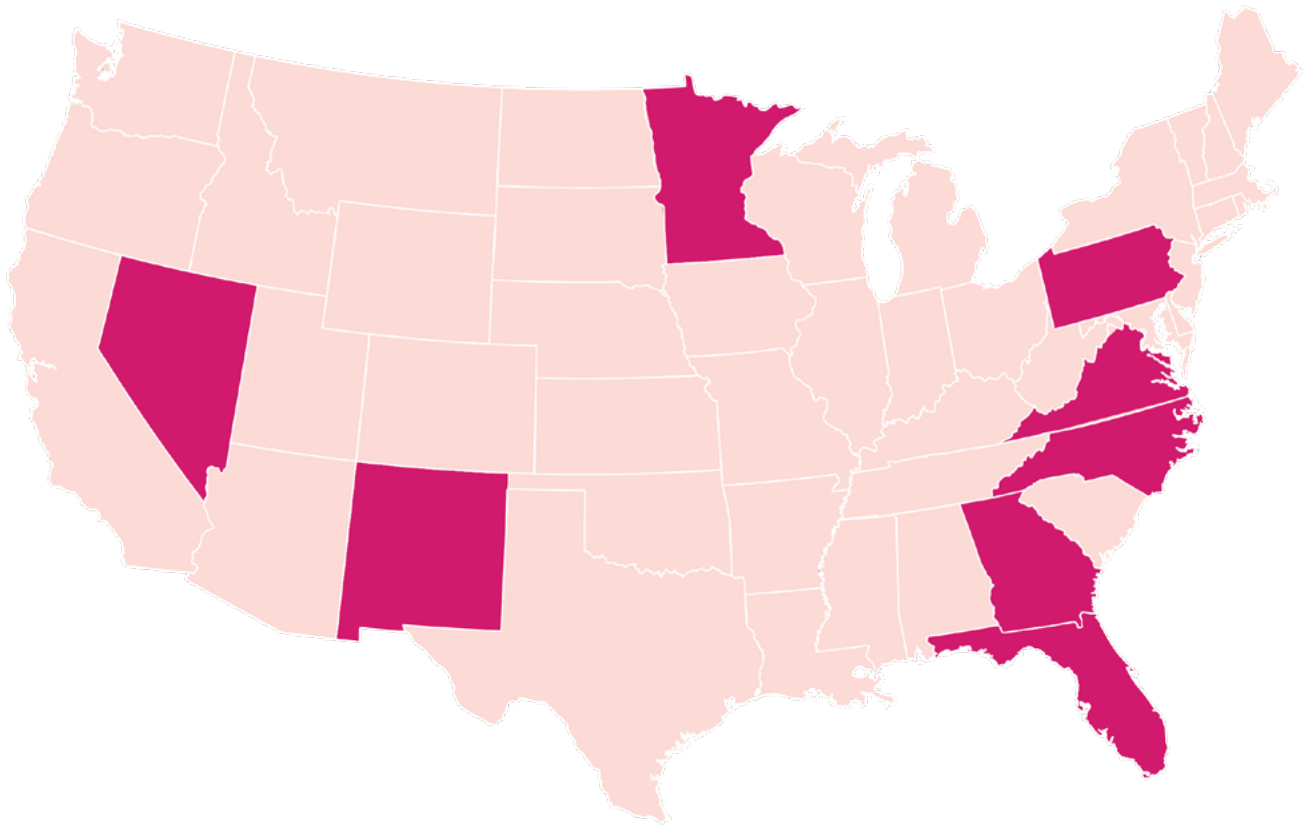
67%
increase in grantmaking
compared to 2019

2020 A Year of Intensity

The Equity Fund's grantee partners operate in communities that face systemic challenges which 2020 intensified. Health disparities were exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, which also increased unemployment and economic vulnerability. 2020 also highlighted the widespread erosion of voting rights, as well as racial injustice and police brutality. Layered on top of all of this are inequities in climate change impacts and transitioning energy systems. The Equity Fund is tremendously inspired by the heroic efforts of our grantee partners, who as multi-issue organizations, rose to meet all of these challenges and were still able to deliver civic engagement programs that made a pivotal difference in an absolutely critical election year. We are thrilled to share our partners' successes in this report and invite you to celebrate them with us. We also want to thank the funders who understand the enormous importance of investing at the nexus where our grantees operate, and who supported our work in 2020.

Grantmaking

In 2020, with a budget of \$12.4M, the Equity Fund advanced our strategic grantmaking, civic engagement and power-building strategies across 8 target states: Minnesota, Pennsylvania, New Mexico, Virginia, Florida, Georgia, Nevada, and North Carolina. The Equity Fund awarded \$10.3M in total 2020 grants to 80 grantees in these 8 states. This included \$3M in grants to over 50 organizations specifically for nonpartisan voter education and GOTV efforts, provided through a Civic Engagement Rapid Response Fund. This special funding stream provided vital support to our grantees to enable them to adapt their operations in light of the challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, and the urgency of ramping up operations during a critical election year.



State Strategy

Florida grantee partners led climate justice education and engagement programs in central and south Florida. As our grantees expand multilingual communications that reach Latinx communities and broader communities of color, they are learning that climate justice is already a priority issue for residents impacted by rising seas, extreme weather, and power shut offs that threaten the health and economic sustainability of their communities. 2020 Highlights include:

- + Co-created the statewide Climate Justice Policy Strategy to be implemented over the next 1-5 years.
- + Successfully advocated for the county to pass a resolution urging Florida Power and Light to extend its shut-off moratorium 60 days past the declared State of Emergency.
- + Launched Central Florida Climate Action.
- + New Florida Majority Education Fund mobilized more than 2 million Black and Brown voters this year, educating voters on the connections between ballot issues and the climate crisis, as well as how to safely cast their votes.



FAMILY ACTION NETWORK MOVEMENT

Climate Justice in Little Haiti

Family Action Network Movement works with the Haitian immigrant community in South Florida. In 2020, they hired a new full-time climate organizer, who supports Little Haiti residents to understand the issue of [climate gentrification](#) through traditional organizing techniques such as door knocking and petitions. Projected sea level rise in the Miami area is creating pressure on residents in neighborhoods on higher ground, like Little Haiti, as developers buy up property less prone to flooding. FAMN also organizes and advocates for affordable energy efficiency (insulation, windows, roofs, ACs) for low-income homeowners.

Georgia grantee partners led large-scale GOTV and vote-by-mail education strategies to reach the state's rural Black population leading into the 2020 election and recall. In 2020, our GA partners are developing a statewide policy agenda to address energy burden, transportation, clean energy jobs, and housing. Some key achievements in 2020 were:

- + Pro Georgia launched their Environmental Justice Workgroup, consisting of multiple grantees and led by grantee partner, GA Conservation Voters.
- + Grantee partners trained 300+ volunteer leaders during a global pandemic through fellowship programs and virtual summits.
- + Grantee partners reached a voter universe of over 1M people throughout the 2020 election cycle.

Minnesota grantee partners are engaged in the 100% Campaign, a powerful coalition of 51 organizations from faith, labor, environmental justice and Indigenous and rural communities, to work with the governor to plan effective policies to power MN with 100% clean energy by 2050. Grantees also continued to engage in the Native-led fight against the construction of the Line 3 pipeline on Anishinaabe land, which has escalated to a nationwide call for President Biden's intervention. Topline outcomes include:

- + Deepening alignment around 100% Campaign.
- + BIPOC climate organizing increased: several new BIPOC organizers hired, BIPOC table formed, alignment on incinerator fight, Line 3 and cumulative impacts bill.
- + Over 4,000 people trained up and turned out to "caucus for climate."



NEW GEORGIA PROJECT

Black & Green Agenda

New Georgia Project is an organization primarily focused on civic engagement and defending voting rights. However, like many of our grantee partners, their work is also cross-cutting. In 2020, they established an environmental justice program called the [Black & Green Agenda](#). Focusing on community education, they trained over 90 volunteers and teamed up with partners like the Hip Hop Caucus to host virtual town halls that focused on the connections between COVID and environmental justice.

Nevada grantee partners have been organizing BIPOC and faith-based communities across the state around climate justice issues. Highlights for 2020:

- + Voters approved a constitutional amendment for 50% RPS by 2030.
- + Opportunity to improve an NV Energy-backed electric vehicle infrastructure bill during the 2020 special session.
- + Launch and strengthening of the Nevada Environmental Justice Coalition, of which the majority of our grantee partners are members.
- + Record number of young Latinx people voted in the 2020 election.

New Mexico grantees focused on implementation of the Energy Transition Act, a rural workforce and economic opportunity study, and economic opportunities on native lands in light of the San Juan Generating Station closure. Through the Power4 NM table, our grantees collaborated with the New Mexico House Speaker and our Policy Accelerator to develop state policy that centers equity. Ultimately this legislation passed in early 2021, with much of the legwork performed in 2020. Our grantees:

- + Secured a commitment to replace the San Juan Generating Station with 100% solar and storage, blocking the natural gas replacement option on the table.
- + Co-led a community-informed workforce development study with the University of New Mexico that will be used to inform just transition legislation in 2021.
- + Authored first-of-its-kind just transition bill for 2021 legislative session based on workforce development study recommendations.

North Carolina grantees have established a climate equity “brain trust” tasked with developing a proposal to create a joint climate strategy for the state that addresses energy democracy, just transition, and economic opportunities for climate-impacted communities. In 2020:

- + Grantee partners distributed thousands of PPE kits to voters and dispatched election protection volunteers to 400 events at polling locations.
- + Grantee partners and other coalition members moved \$229,500 in rapid response re grants for COVID-19 relief, prepared a response to the potential impact of Hurricane Isais, and moved funds to support groups impacted by Isais.
- + Grantee partners called, texted, and canvassed a universe of nearly 1M voters.

Spanish Language Access

Chispa NV advocated for language accessibility in the feedback process around the new Nevada Climate Initiative which was launched in 2020. Chispa NV recruited and prepared over 50 Nevadans to participate in Spanish-language listening sessions with the State Climate Coordinator in fall 2020, providing testimony and sharing stories about how climate change is affecting their lives.

Pennsylvania grantees are working together through the PA Climate Equity Table to coordinate statewide education and build power to reduce carbon emissions and the harmful health impacts of petrochemical industries on communities in Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Reading, and York. Our grantee partners collaborated with the labor movement to raise awareness at the community-level about clean energy transition and workforce development and job opportunities.

- + Increased coordination, policy and lobbying capacity at the PA Climate Equity Table.
- + Won defensive fights against fracking subsidies, and attempts to weaken the EPA under COVID.
- + Met with Governor Wolf and progressive caucus on just transition policies.
- + Won more city 100% resolutions.

Virginia grantees helped pass the VA Clean Economy Act, a bill that will end fossil fuel electricity generation in Virginia by 2050. Our grantees also passed a bill to codify environmental justice review of all state policies, and enacted legislation to launch a long-awaited study on the impacts of coal dust in Hampton Roads. Our partners are focusing climate justice community education campaigns around utility accountability, transportation, electrification, and workforce development to advance clean energy progress in 2021 and beyond. Other achievements include:

- + Passage of significant climate equity legislation:
 - + Environmental Justice Act
 - + Solar Freedom Act
 - + Clean Economy Act
- + Partners formalized the Climate Equity Work Group and hired a part time coordinator to facilitate a space to coordinate and strategize year round.
- + Supported the Climate Equity Work Group to pilot a climate equity legislative policy institute with the Virginia Legislative Black Caucus, scheduled to take place in 2021.



Rural Climate Justice Organizing

One session of the Equity Fund's **2020 Power Building Summit** was dedicated to exploring the unique challenges involved in rural climate justice organizing. A panel composed of leaders from our grantee cohort included speakers from **Georgia WAND**, the **Center for Coalfield Justice**, and **NM CAFé**. The session was moderated by Lydia Avila, Program Officer at the Equity Fund, and covered in [The Forge: Organizing Strategy & Practice](#), a leading online journal dedicated to elevating the field of organizing by sharing best practices.

Strengthening the Movement

The **Policy Accelerator** provides grantees with coaching and technical assistance to advance climate and energy equity policies. We added two new [Policy Briefs](#) on Electrifying Transportation and Air Quality and Climate Change in 2020. The Policy Accelerator team also began compiling a Playbook to help grantee partners navigate the existing and emerging clean energy policy landscape in their states, and across the country since the 2000s to today. Finally, Policy Accelerator staff launched the Policy Learning Community in response to grantee partners' request for a regular space to gather, network, and collaborate on policy strategy across state lines. Regular Zoom calls create space to share lessons learned, policy ideas, and open discussions to foster peer learning among grantee partners and Equity Fund staff. It is also a platform for the team to share resources and information, including briefings on what is happening at the federal level.

The **Communications Accelerator** supports the development of communications capacity and strategies that help grantees communicate more effectively with diverse communities, and at scale. In 2020, the Communications Accelerator provided funding to the Race Class Narrative project in the Midwest, led by ISAIAH, supporting work in Minnesota and Pennsylvania. The aim was to test, identify, and implement a climate equity narrative within the lens of addressing race and class divisions head-on, and train organizers to incorporate this narrative into their policy campaigns. The Communications Accelerator also supported ReFrame to build infrastructure and power to advance the narrative on climate change and clean energy in the state of Florida.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Equity Fund held its **2020 Power Building Summit** online. The virtual gathering involved 11 sessions held over four weeks, with about 60 grantee partners represented. A full report of the event is available [here](#). Summits strengthen relationships among grantees, help advance in-state and cross-state coalition work, and provide space for cross-organizational learning about timely issues and campaign tactics.

Collaborating with **Philanthropic Partners** is a final, important area of activity where the Equity Fund regularly shares learnings from our grantees with the funder community. We support funding peers to better understand the complex challenges that frontline communities face, promising opportunities for equitable climate and clean energy policies, and innovative organizing and campaign strategies that our grantees are leading. These analyses guide our work and strengthen the field of climate philanthropy.

THE Climate + Clean Energy EQUITY FUND

Stay in touch with us at
partnership@theequityfund.org

theequityfund.org