



## **Announcing the Climate Justice Initiative Spring 2024 Cycle Request for Proposals**

*Advancing Equitable and Just Climate Resilience in Marin County*

### **OVERVIEW**

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MCF's [Climate Justice Initiative](#) recognizes that climate change and social justice are profoundly intertwined. Communities that have long endured chronic stressors, including poverty and racial segregation, are more vulnerable to the health, economic, and environmental impacts of climate change. These same communities are deeply rooted in social and cultural strength, but their capacity to build resilience in the face of unprecedented climate disruption is limited without additional financial and political capital.

Recent federal and state legislation has made available hundreds of billions of dollars for infrastructure projects, renewables deployment, and other approaches to reduce climate risks and create healthier communities. These unprecedented public funds present an immediate opportunity to center community voice in advancing equitable and just climate solutions while laying the groundwork to ensure progress that is made continues beyond this immediate windfall.

### **GOAL and STRATEGIES**

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The primary goal of MCF's Climate Justice Initiative is to leverage significant public and private climate investments that provide near-term opportunities and long-term benefits for low-income communities and communities of color in Marin County, California.

Through three aligned strategies, we aim to distribute, shape, and secure significant resources for community-led, equitable climate resilience that improve and protect health and prosperity for all:

1. Build local capacity to advance local equitable climate resilience processes and projects
2. Expand and amplify climate justice advocacy at the local, regional, state, and federal levels
3. Catalyze climate action through partnerships, collaboratives, and coalitions

This Spring 2024 Climate Justice RFP welcomes proposals that address one or more of these strategies, with particular interest in the first and third. Additional funding opportunities for all strategies are expected to open in Fall 2024.

### **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

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The Climate Justice Initiative is guided by the following principles:

- Seek [multisolving](#) approaches that lead to long-term and near-term benefits for community well-being.
- Embrace [targeted universalism](#) by centering local populations and communities that are at most risk from the impacts of climate change.

- Build local capacity to advance culturally relevant, affirmative strategies that increase both human and ecological health.
- Invest in partnerships and collaborations that cultivate mutual trust and balance of power.
- Support innovation, iteration, evaluation, and learning.

Additionally, we have adopted this definition of climate resilience:<sup>1</sup>

***Climate Change Mitigation + Adaptation + Deep Democracy = Resilience***

- *Mitigation* is about reducing the greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change.
- *Adaptation* is about planning and shifting our built environment and practices to account for current and anticipated effects.
- *Deep democracy* is about fostering social cohesion, inclusion, power, and participation — especially in communities that are already confronting new climate realities.
- To be effective, climate resilience must incorporate all of these elements; it is a broad, multidimensional response to the causes of climate change and the potential solutions.

**KEY PRIORITIES FOR THE SPRING 2024 FUNDING CYCLE**

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We are especially interested in receiving proposals that:

- Support the prioritization of community-scale climate resilience projects.
- Increase the organizational capacity of community-based organizations working to increase equitable climate resilience.
- Bolster local government’s capacity to resource, plan, and implement equitable climate resilience projects.
- Provide economic benefits through green workforce training opportunities toward sustainable wage jobs and through cost savings from climate-related incentives.

**PRIORITY COMMUNITIES**

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Priority consideration will be given to proposals from applicants serving communities in Marin County that are most impacted by social and economic inequity due to race, income level, gender, identity, religion, immigration status, disability, age, sexual orientation, or zip code.

Data shows these communities are largely concentrated in four geographic areas: **Marin City**, the **Canal neighborhood of San Rafael**, **Novato**, and **West Marin**. The Foundation also recognizes that there are communities experiencing these inequities who reside in other parts of the county. We welcome proposals from entities that are advancing equity and are working outside of these four geographic areas.

**FUNDING PARAMETERS**

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- The anticipated grant range for single applicants is \$80,000-\$150,000 per year.
- For collaborative applications, the maximum amount requested is capped at \$30,000 per organization and up to \$100,000 for the lead entity, per year.
- The requested grant period may range from 12-24 months.
- Approximately 15-20 awards are expected to be made in this cycle.

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<sup>1</sup> Rosa Gonzalez, Lead Author, Movement Strategy Center, and National Association of Climate Resilience Planners, 2017. Community Driven Climate Resilience Planning Framework 2.0

- Lesser amounts or shorter grant periods than requested may be awarded, if necessary.

## **ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES**

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The following outcomes are expected as a result of investments made through this RFP:

- Organizations will build their internal capacity to lead and participate in climate resilience planning, processes and projects, and to engage in coordinated climate policy advocacy.
- Public and private climate funding will be leveraged for priority communities based on the success of MCF-funded projects.
- More residents from marginalized communities will have opportunities to engage meaningfully on climate resilience issues at a local or state level, and to reap economic benefits from climate investments.
- Community-based efforts to increase climate resilience will make significant progress toward their stated goals. Specific milestones will be determined by project leaders.

## **ELIGIBILITY**

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The following entities are eligible to apply to the Climate Justice Initiative Spring 2024 Cycle:

- 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations
- Projects that are fiscally sponsored by a 501(c)3 organization
- Public agencies or local jurisdictions

Collaboratives are welcome to apply. Collaboratives and coalitions may apply as independent fiscal entities, via a joint proposal from a set of organizationally independent partners, or as a lead organization on behalf of and serving as the backbone for a set of partners. An organization *can* apply as part of a collaborative, as well as submit a separate proposal as a stand-alone entity.

## **SELECTION CRITERIA**

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MCF will consider applicants who meet the following criteria. Applicants may demonstrate greater strength and focus on some criteria than others, but priority will be given to those who fit all criteria.

- **Commitment to equity.** Successful applicants will:
  - Serve a priority population described above.
  - Demonstrate leadership by, direct involvement, and/or collaborative partnership with priority populations.
  - Reflect a community-driven approach and/or expand the use of democratic practices that uplift diverse community voices in the project's various stages.
  - Represent the diversity of the community served, including in organizational leadership.
  - Articulate a clear commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion; and demonstrate how DEI principles are integrated into the project.
- **Alignment between the climate change project being pursued, your organizational/agency goals, and your community's needs.** Successful applicants will:
  - Highlight how the project being pursued is a fit for your organization or agency's mission and purpose.
  - Demonstrate how the project supports climate resilience and adaptation needs in your community.

- **Systems Change approach.** Successful applicants will:
  - Use policy, systems, or environmental approaches to address barriers to progress on equitable climate resilience.
  - Where possible, align with community or government plans that address climate resilience.

Projects focused exclusively on educational or awareness outcomes, or on approaches to advance individual behavior change, will not be competitive under this funding opportunity, nor will one-time events or other temporary projects.

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## SUPPORT BEYOND THE GRANT

Climate Justice Initiative grantees will be invited to join a 9-month Community of Practice with curated technical assistance offerings and collective learning opportunities.

Project budgets may include staff time to participate in monthly cohort meetings of 2 - 3 hours plus an allotment of individual technical assistance hours. Consistent participation is expected by the executive director and/or senior program leader(s) who are directly involved in project implementation.

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## CONTACTS:

Content questions: Patti D'Angelo Juachon, Program Director for the Environment:  
[pjuachon@marincf.org](mailto:pjuachon@marincf.org) or 415.464.2547

Technical questions: Renee Lazzareschi, Program Assistant for the Environment:  
[rlazzareschi@marincf.org](mailto:rlazzareschi@marincf.org) or 415.464.2509

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## HOW TO APPLY

Proposals must be submitted online through [MCF's Grant Center system](#). If you are new to the Grant Center, please allow 2-3 days for your [registration](#) to be approved.

## TIMELINE

- **Funding Guidelines posted:** February 15, 2024
- **Grant Center Application Opens:** February 15, 2024
- **Online Information Session:** Tuesday, February 27, 1-2 PM. Pre-registration is required. Sign up [here](#). A recording will be posted on MCF's website.
- **30-minute 1:1 Office Hours** will be available if you have specific questions after viewing the Information Session. A link to sign up will be posted on the website after the presentation.
- **Proposals due:** Wednesday, March 20, by close of business
- **Funding decisions announced:** Late May, 2024
- **Grant Start Date:** June 1, 2024

Registered users in the Grant Center can go to the Funding Opportunities webpage in the Grant Center to access the Marin Climate Justice Initiative Spring 2024 Cycle application, where you will be able to submit all required proposal documents:

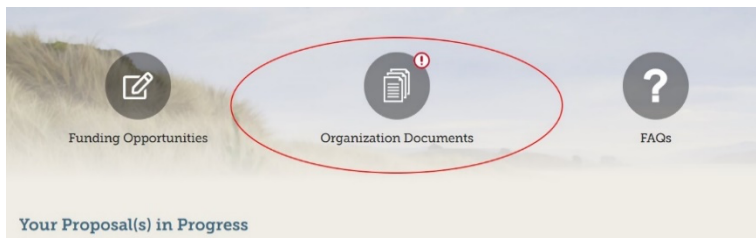
- **Responses to Narrative Questions.** Questions are included below for easy reference. Please upload your responses as a PDF to the Additional Documents section.
- **Proposed Project Budget** that shows pending or secured resources and itemized expenses.
  - Be sure to include in-kind support as well as indirect costs.

- Collaborative applications should include both the lead organization’s budget and the collaborative’s budget.
- Paid collaborative partners should be listed as sub-grantees in the Expenses section.
- An optional Excel project budget template is available in the Grant Center, or you may use your own budget form.
- **Organization Profile**
- **Organization Documents** (detailed below)

## Organization Documents

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Please ensure the following required documents have been uploaded to the Organizational Documents section of the Grant Center, as shown in this screenshot:



- Signed Non-Discrimination Policy
- Financial statements (audited or unaudited)\*
- IRS Form 990\*
- Board Member Information
- Most recent, board-approved, detailed organization budget

\*Public agencies or jurisdiction applicants should contact [Renee Lazzareschi](#) regarding required documents.

## Narrative Questions (500 words max per question):

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1. Briefly describe your organization or agency’s **mission** and how climate justice relates to your overall goals.
2. What is the **climate resilience problem or challenge** that your project aims to address? Please be specific, and cite current data and/or other sources of information.
3. Briefly describe the Marin County priority **population(s)** or community/ies your climate project supports; the approximate unduplicated number of people who will directly benefit, and how they are or will be involved.
4. What are the **specific outcomes and community impacts** anticipated for the proposed project? Include how the project, if successful, will help leverage new public or private climate investments and/or will result in near-term opportunities and long-term benefits for priority populations.
5. Describe the **strategies** your organization will use to achieve the anticipated outcomes of the proposed project, and how you will evaluate the success of the proposed project.
6. Describe the **timeline** for implementing the proposed project. Include **key milestones** your organization anticipates achieving throughout the grant term.
7. Does your organization have a diversity plan and/or training programs that are intended to build its capacity to address issues of **diversity, equity, and/or cultural competency**? If so, briefly describe the goals and intended outcomes of the plan or training program(s).
8. Please provide a **budget narrative** that explains the line items in your proposed budget.

9. What **additional resources** will you need to sustain your success after this grant ends? What are your plans to secure them?
10. (optional) If applicable, please describe how your organization will undertake community-based climate resilience planning. What types of outreach, education, planning, and engagement strategies do you plan to employ? What experience and expertise do you have in utilizing these strategies, and/or will you partner or contract with individuals or organizations with expertise in community-based planning?
11. (optional) If applicable, please describe how the project will scale effective green workforce training programs or demonstrate innovation that leads the target population to progressive career and wage opportunities.
12. (optional) If applicable, please describe the climate justice issue(s) or policy (ies) that your advocacy work is attempting to address. Give examples of past work you've done in this area. How will you influence the current situation and who will you partner with to make that change happen?
13. (optional) If applying on behalf of a collaborative, network, or coalition of organizations, list the organizations that actively participate in furthering the mission and purpose of the group. Describe the group's recent accomplishments and scope of work for the future.
14. (optional) Y/N/NA If an MOU is in place for a collaborative project, it has been uploaded to the Additional Documents section.
15. Is there anything else you would like us to know?

### **Grant Center Notifications**

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Throughout the grantmaking processes, the Grant Center will generate notifications to applicants and grantees. As a cautionary recommendation, please check your spam/junk mail folder periodically to ensure a notification was not diverted. Future communication about your application will come from [grantcenter@marincf.org](mailto:grantcenter@marincf.org) and/or MCF staff with @marincf.org email addresses.

### **Tips for using the Grant Center**

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- Click "SAVE" after completing each section and whenever you add/change data or upload documents. Navigating away from a page without saving may result in lost data.
- To return to your application after you have exited the system, log in, go to "Applications in Process," and click "Edit" to continue the process. **Do not start** a new application.
- After completing the application, hit the "Submit" button. The application will then be submitted to MCF and can no longer be edited. You will receive an email notification confirming that your proposal has been submitted.