



Doris Duke Charitable Foundation – Environment Program

Building an Inclusive Conservation Movement Program

Program Overview

Background

Since 2013, the [Doris Duke Charitable Foundation's \(DDCF\) Environment Program](#) has been working to support a more diverse, equitable and inclusive conservation field in the United States. Our support of these efforts is grounded in a fundamental belief that a conservation field that values and prioritizes a diversity of voices, perspectives and approaches will lead to more positive outcomes for wildlife, the environment and people.

We also recognize the modern conservation movement's current and historical racism and inequitable practices and acknowledge the philanthropic sector's underfunding of communities who identify as Black, Indigenous or people of color in the conservation field. These injustices have become acutely apparent in recent months following the national protests against anti-Black violence and the COVID-19 pandemic which has hit communities who identify as Black, Indigenous or people of color particularly hard.

In 2013, the Environment Program began to explicitly address the lack of racial/ethnic diversity in the conservation field through the [Doris Duke Conservation Scholars Program](#), which is supporting the next generation of diverse environmental conservation professionals. Since then, we have grown to support a broader set of projects including:

- Increased transparency on environmental organization demographics and research on diversity, equity and inclusion issues ([Green 2.0](#))
- Engaging environmental grant-makers in strengthening their internal diversity, equity and inclusion practices and cultivating opportunities to increase funding for Black, Indigenous and people of color-led organizations ([InDEEP](#))
- Supporting conferences and gatherings of individuals who identify as Black, Indigenous or people of color in the environmental field ([PGM One](#), [Next100 Coalition](#), and [Green Latinos](#) summits)

To further build on this work, in late 2019, DDCF's Board approved funding for two new programs to support a more diverse, equitable and inclusive conservation field: \$1.2 million for the Building a More Inclusive Conservation Movement Program and \$700,000 for a [Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Capacity Building Program](#).

Program Overview

The Building a More Inclusive Conservation Movement Program will support a cohort of at least four Black, Indigenous, and people of color-led organizations¹ that are working towards positive outcomes for biodiversity, nature and/or people with general operating support grants of up to \$300,000 over three years (for a total of \$1.2 million). The cohort will also be offered non-monetary support and opportunities to connect over the course of the grant.

Through this program, we hope to develop a more inclusive and transparent grantmaking process that can also inform the way the Environment Program makes grants in other portfolio areas. This includes a hope to build relationships and trust with individuals and organizations new to the foundation. An Advisory Community (like an advisory committee) is supporting this program and will participate in the grant decision-making process.

Program Goals

The Building an Inclusive Conservation Movement Program has the following goals:

Grantee-centered goals:

- Support communities who identify as Black, Indigenous and people of color in conservation efforts by funding and connecting Black, Indigenous and people of color-led organizations;
- Support grantees' own organizational goals for their programmatic work and financial stability;
- Support grantees' self-determined capacity building needs; and
- Provide flexible, multi-year general operating support that strengthens organizational capacity.

Process-centered goals:

- Adopt inclusive and equitable grantmaking practices that can inform Environment Program grantmaking more broadly;
- Ensure DDCF's grantmaking portfolio reflects a diversity of organizations working in the conservation field; and
- Build relationships beyond the organizations that generally have access to DDCF through our existing networks.

Philanthropic field-centered goals:

- Elevate the profile of grantees and their work through DDCF communication channels and other avenues;
- Increase other funding for grantees by making connections to funders and funder communities;
- Help highlight the strengths and impact of Black, Indigenous and people of color-led

¹ Black, Indigenous, and people of color-led organizations are those whose primary intentions, practices, and missions are by, for, and about Black, Indigenous, and people of color communities. This is usually indicated by a combination of (but not limited to) organizational mission, board, executive, and staff make-up, programmatic content, and outreach efforts/communities engaged.

- organizations within the broader environmental funding community; and
- Demonstrate broader, culturally appropriate conservation approaches and practices that provide a foundation for the conservation movement of the future.

Program Eligibility Criteria

Organizations are nominated by the Advisory Community for this program (see Decision-making Process and Timeline section below) based on the following eligibility criteria:

- Organization must be able to document their tax-exempt status under Internal Revenue Code (IRC) 501(c)(3) as amended and be publicly supported under IRC 509(a). Fiscal sponsors with 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status may apply on behalf of a project for which there is an existing fiscal sponsor relationship.
- Organization is based in the United States or its territories.
- Organization spends a significant portion of its resources (staff, financial, time) on conservation issues in the United States and its territories (see text box below for further explanation).
- Organization identifies as a Black, Indigenous, and people of color-led organization.
- Organization has broad geographic reach or ambitions to broaden its work.
- There is no minimum annual operating budget to be eligible for funding.

For the purposes of this program, DDCF recognizes conservation organizations as those that center positive outcomes for biodiversity and nature in their work. Their efforts might also center positive outcomes for people, such as human well-being and access/cultural connections to nature, and engagement of people as stewards of and advocates for nature. This may include, but is not limited to, organizations that focus on the protection, restoration, or stewardship of nature across different settings – from urban areas to remote geographies – or varied political jurisdictions – local, state, federal and/or tribal. This may also include work to address climate change through solutions focused on land and water.

Organizations may take a range of approaches to the protection, restoration or stewardship of nature. This includes, but is not limited to, environmental work that centers on-the-ground efforts, advocacy/policy work,² and land protection/acquisition, reparations, or repatriations for communities that identify as Black, Indigenous or people of color. DDCF acknowledges the application of traditional knowledge or other culturally distinct conservation methods as essential to combatting white supremacy in conservation. Organizations that may use such practices alongside or instead of western science are eligible and encouraged.

We recognize that conservation is multidimensional and intersectional, and requires the engagement of many different communities, stakeholders and sectors to succeed. Organizations that work at these intersections or across multiple issue areas (e.g., education, health, religion, arts, etc.) are also eligible as long as there are clear connections to conservation or a significant portion of their work is focused on conservation.

² Note that DDCF is unable to fund legislative or grassroots lobbying.

Decision-making Process and Timeline

DDCF is engaging an Advisory Community of individuals, as well as a consultant, to help implement the program and make recommendations for funding. The Advisory Community members each nominated four organizations to be considered for funding (totaling 20 organizations). A combination of DDCF staff and Advisory Community members will engage in discussions with each nominated organization to learn about their work and determine which will be recommended for funding. At least four organizations will be invited to submit a proposal to DDCF (i.e., we only intend to invite proposals from organizations we think we will ultimately fund). Once the proposals are submitted, Environment Program staff and DDCF's grants management team will conduct their final grant review.

Our anticipated timeline is:

- Late-June through mid-August: DDCF staff and the Advisory Community members schedule introductory calls with the 20 nominated organizations. Follow-up calls will be scheduled with a subset of organizations (approximately eight to 10).
- Late-August: DDCF staff and the Advisory Community identify at least four organizations to invite to submit proposals.
- Early October: Organizations submit proposals to DDCF. DDCF staff review the proposals and conduct final pre-grant due diligence reviews. Assuming there are no issues, staff approve the final grants and process grant agreements and payments.

Capacity Building Opportunities and Non-Monetary Support During the Grant Period

Over the course of the three-year grant period, funded organizations will be offered capacity-building opportunities and non-monetary support. These opportunities will be determined by the needs of the individual grantees and the cohort of funded organizations. This might include, but is not limited to:

- *Communications*: elevating the voices and stories of grantees through DDCF's and other communications platforms;
- *Funding connections*: making one-on-one connections between grantees and funders and offering grantees a platform through [Biodiversity Funders Group](#) or [Environmental Grantmakers Association](#), which are funder-affinity groups or networks for environmental funders, or other funder gatherings;
- *Technical assistance or trainings*: offering trainings or workshops on topics determined by grantees (e.g., strategic communications, fundraising, etc.); and
- *Covernings or conferences*: offering virtual calls or in-person convenings for grantees to support peer learning and relationship building; or resources for grantee staff or community partners to attend conferences or other professional development opportunities.

Additional Information

For additional information on the program, please see the [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#) document.

About DDCF and the Environment Program

The mission of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation is to improve the quality of people's lives through grants supporting the performing arts, environmental conservation, medical research and child well-being, and through preservation of the cultural and environmental legacy of Doris Duke's properties. For more information, please visit <https://www.ddcf.org/>.

The mission of the Environment Program is to ensure a thriving, resilient environment for wildlife and people, and foster an inclusive, effective conservation movement. The foundation's awareness of climate change as the greatest emerging threat to biodiversity — and the need to aggressively mitigate it without unnecessarily sacrificing wildlife habitat — shapes its environmental grant making priorities. More than \$415 million in grants related to the conservation of wildlife in the United States have been made by the foundation since it was established in 1997. To learn more, visit: www.ddcf.org/what-we-fund/environment