SOLIDAIRE NETWORK IS A COMMUNITY OF DONOR ORGANIZERS MOBILIZING CRITICAL RESOURCES TO THE FRONTLINES OF INTERSECTIONAL MOVEMENTS FOR RACIAL, GENDER AND CLIMATE JUSTICE. OUR DISPATCHES UPLIFT KEY ISSUES OF MOVEMENT WORK BROUGHT TO US BY OUR MOVEMENT PARTNERS FUNDED THROUGH OUR GRANTMAKING VEHICLES. EACH DISPATCH TACKLES EMERGING ISSUES FOR FUNDERS AND HIGHLIGHTS THE WORK OUR PARTNERS ARE DOING ON THE FRONTLINES.
WHAT PHILANTHROPY GETS WRONG ABOUT CLIMATE JUSTICE

Climate justice is central to the vision Solidaire members hold for a just and equitable future for life on Earth. Since our inception, we have funded the fight against climate catastrophe in a robust, movement-engaged and intersectional way. Our commitment to social justice movements is critical in this space, because a staggering majority of philanthropic dollars go to big environmental organizations and scientific research.

The groups on the ground organizing to address the root causes and pushing for systemic changes are direly underfunded, receiving only 2.8% of environmental funding in 2018.¹ Frontline communities are underresourced, and the expertise of Indigenous and Black leaders, who have been protecting the world’s biodiversity, is ignored. The environmental movement is rife with greenwashing and false solutions that further economic and racial injustices. The movement partners resourced by our pooled funds are the vanguard of innovators leading society toward climate justice.

“Climate justice is a place where intersectionality is front and center. Solidaire’s strong grounding in racial justice and climate justice is apparent in our grantmaking commitments to Indigenous sovereignty and regions like Alaska and the Gulf Coast.”
- Robin Beck, Solidaire board member

A 2023 study by Yale School of the Environment found that the largest mainstream environmental organizations have received more financial support than all environmental justice organizations combined. InDeep Initiative revealed that between 2014 and 2018, $3.2 billion of the $3.7 billion given to environmental organizations was given to white-led organizations, while just $498 million was allocated to Black, Indigenous and people of color-led organizations.

**OUR POOLED FUNDS LEAD THE WAY**

Through our pooled funds we are working to close this funding gap by focusing on climate change groups. For example, climate justice groups make up 40% of our Movement Infrastructure Fund (MIF) movement partners. Since 2020, Solidaire has moved $9,077,786 to frontline climate change groups.

We provide multiyear commitments to general operations, with grantmaking practices that reduce the burden on grantee partners. We fund grassroots organizing for racial, economic and climate justice that resists systemic injustice while advancing mechanisms and practices for the new world we aim to build.

We are also among the few national funders resourcing the urgent, holistic security and collective care needs of grassroots movement organizations and leaders, such as a community of Black women, genderqueer survivors of gender violence and Indigenous Peoples who came together to purchase a 300-acre property dedicated to collective healing. When the community began facing vandalism from neighbors and harassment from local law enforcement, they turned to Solidaire’s Janisha R. Gabriel Movement Protection Fund to resource a physical security infrastructure.

Taproot Earth was founded in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, when federal disaster recovery work excluded Black and Indigenous communities. They provide relief and legal services, advance community stewardship of resources and create movement infrastructure across the South. Taproot Earth is a leader in the fight against climate catastrophe creating solutions and alliances to repair the harms caused by extraction and disinvestment in communities on the front lines of climate change. They work on campaigns like #WeChooseNow: Gulf to Appalachia Climate Action Strategies and coordinate the Gulf South for a Green New Deal regional strategy.

“Climate change is not the problem,” she said. “Climate change is the most horrible symptom of an economic system that has been built for a few to extract every precious value out of this planet and its people, from our natural resources to the fruits of our human labor.”
- Colette Pichon Battle, Taproot Earth4

FRONTLINE COMMUNITIES HOLD THE SOLUTIONS

Black and Indigenous communities are at the center of fights for climate, racial and economic justice, because they bear the brunt of land dispossession and racial capitalism. For instance, Black people are 75% more likely than white people to live next to a commercial facility producing pollution.\(^5\) Indigenous Peoples are most at risk of toxic exposure, and a majority of nuclear waste is dumped on tribal lands.\(^6\)

Funders should prioritize Black, Indigenous and low-income communities for long-term funding, allowing for innovation and experimentation. These communities have the most experience adapting and creating alternative models. Of our [Black Liberation Pooled Fund](#) (BLPF) movement partners, 19% work toward climate justice. While Indigenous Peoples make up only 2-3% of the U.S. population, over a third of our MIF fund, and 40% of our climate change partnerships are with Indigenous-led groups. We have moved $5,525,000 to Indigenous-led groups since 2020.

“Alaska is so underfunded and at the frontlines of climate catastrophe. The multi-year giving we received from Solidaire gave us the confidence to hire the on the ground organizers we need.”
- Margi Dashevsky, Fairbanks Climate Action Coalition and Solidaire member

We also invest in underresourced communities and geographies that are disproportionately impacted by climate change, including Alaska, the Gulf Coast and Appalachia. We prioritize these geographies and then use an ecosystem funding approach, because robust movements require a variety of formations and tactics. We support membership organizations, political education, networks and alliances, self-determination and sovereignty, and resource providers such as legal aid, bail funds and those providing messaging and security. We foster a culture of collaboration over competition by bringing funding to clusters of organizations, LLCs and collectives. We listen to our movement partners and ask who else in the area we should be funding.

The Indigenous Environmental Network (IEN) is an international alliance of Indigenous Peoples whose mission it is to protect the sacredness of Mother Earth from contamination and exploitation by strengthening, maintaining, and respecting Indigenous teachings and natural laws. IEN works with Indigenous grassroots community organizations, Tribal governments, Indigenous national organizations, multicultural alliances, Tribal universities and colleges, as well as Tribal Knowledge holders and spiritual leaders. We work to empower and build the capacities of Indigenous Peoples and frontline communities to develop mechanisms to demand environmental justice, protect our sacred sites, land, air, water, the health of our people and all living things, and to build sustainable communities.

INDIGENOUS SOVEREIGNTY IS CLIMATE JUSTICE

Indigenous lands hold 80% of the world’s remaining biodiversity, while only making up 20% of the Earth. Indigenous Peoples, armed with their Traditional Knowledge, are the most effective stewards of the environment and have been protecting all of us. Well-resourced Indigenous leadership is essential in designing sustainable solutions at scale.

7 International Institute for Sustainable Development, Indigenous Peoples: Defending an Environment for All, 2022.
An example practice is Indigenous fire management or cultural burning, which restores depleted soil and prevents large-scale wildfires due to climate change. We must accompany Indigenous Peoples’ fight for self-determination through the defense of Indigenous sovereignty, collective land rights and the requirement of free, prior and informed consent\(^8\) to all major projects impacting Indigenous territories.

The MIF supports a cluster of climate justice and Indigenous sovereignty groups in Alaska, including Native Movement. Alaska is home to 228 of the 574 federally recognized tribes in the United States. In Regenerative Economies: A Guide to a Thriving Alaska, the collective writes, “Indigenous stewardship of Alaska is vital to maintain subsistence ways of life and restore sacred connections which, fortify the health of our communities.”\(^9\) Indigenous worldviews and leadership are keys to climate justice for all. Margi Dashevsky, a Solidaire member and administration co-executive director of our movement partner Fairbanks Climate Action Coalition, credits Native Movement with sparking a movement for climate justice across the state.

“Native Movement brought grassroots organizing to Alaska. They offer training in decolonization and organizing, including direct action. They challenged the assumptions of some very well-intentioned white conservationists and gave us a shared vocabulary and analysis. That wasn’t happening before and it energized the whole organizing ecosystem in this area.”

- Margi Dashevsky, Fairbanks Climate Action Coalition and Solidaire member

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JUST TRANSITION, NOT FALSE SOLUTIONS

Just Transition, the Jemez Principles and Buen Vivir are examples of frameworks that guide many leading climate justice formations. The Climate Justice Alliance notes that “Just Transition, is a vision-led, unifying and place-based set of principles, processes and practices that build economic and political power to shift from an extractive economy to a regenerative economy.”\(^\text{10}\)

Our partners at the Ironbound Community Corporation engage the Jemez Principles in their climate justice work. These principles encompass being inclusive, emphasizing bottom-up organizing, letting people speak for themselves, working in solidarity and mutuality, building just relationships and committing to self-transformation. Based on a long history of Latin American Indigenous movements’ fights for freedom and sovereignty, the concept of Buen Vivir, note our colleagues at Thousand Currents, “implies ‘right living’ or life in balance with community, natural systems, and future generations.”

These principles are the best defense against the many false solutions that plague environmentalism. As the state of Alaska tries to move away from an economy that relies solely on fossil fuel extraction, some present mining as an alternative. Our movement partners in the region, including Native Movement and Fairbanks Climate Action Coalition, are amplifying local residents’ opposition to a proposed open-pit mine in Nome for graphite, a material used in the production of battery anodes.

\(^{10}\) Climate Justice Alliance: Just Transition Principles, 2019.

Christian Rodriguez from Ironbound Community Corporation, with Sha Grogan-Brown, Adrien Salazar, and Jaron Browne at the Grassroots Global Justice Alliance Membership Assembly | Brooke Anderson Photography
“Apache Stronghold has shown the importance of just transition because this is a frontline community being hurt by false solutions. We can’t replace one mega industry with another one rooted in racial capitalism that will continue to abuse frontline communities.”

- Robin Beck, Solidaire board member

Apache Stronghold is fighting another example of greenwashing. Oak Flat, a sacred site for the Apache, is being threatened by plans to create a copper mine. Copper is a key material in renewable energy efforts and the making of electric cars. The mine will deplete groundwater, contaminate the environment and destroy a sacred site. Solidaire board member Robin Beck has been accompanying Apache Stronghold through his family’s foundation, The Max and Anna Levinson Foundation. “It is not just legal methods and organizing strategy of Apache leaders,” explains Robin. “The work that they are doing is sacred. It is a spiritual practice to save this sacred site. There is profound power in their leadership that taps into the core of humanity’s culture.”
OUR GROWING EDGES

**Land back** purchases are an essential part of returning power to frontline communities. Solidaire board member Laura Flynn supported the 10-year struggle to Stop Line 3, fighting a pipeline bringing tar sands from Alberta, Canada, to Wisconsin and cutting across Anishinaabe tribal land, the Mississippi River and threatening Lake Superior. When construction was announced, Laura mobilized Solidaire’s rapid response to raise an initial $20,000 for our movement partners Honor the Earth and the Giniw Collective to seed resistance camps in Northern Minnesota.

Laura met Solidaire member Katie Redford, of the Equation Campaign, on the Line 3 frontlines. Laura and Katie teamed up, organized donor briefings, and once again, Solidaire members showed up with resources. Some put their bodies on the line for civil disobedience. Solidaire members and other aligned funders moved over $3 million to the Indigenous-led Stop Line 3 resistance and funded three landback purchases.

“The Line 3 struggle birthed dozens of ongoing environmental justice campaigns, land back and just transition projects. Rapid response organizing made that possible, but people need consistent year over year support. And especially for land back purchases, communities need ongoing support to build on and maintain the land. Solidaire’s pooled funds do that.”
- Laura Flynn, Solidaire board member

“We funded them throughout the struggle,” explained Laura. “Solidaire’s Movement Protection Fund made crucial grants to protect people and communities taking huge personal risks. As the protests wound down we really didn’t want folks to come home with debt and charges.” The Stop Line 3 struggle is a great example of the progress that can be made, even when a campaign doesn’t achieve the desired outcome. Providing continuing support after land back purchase is an area where funders and donor networks can grow.
CAMPAIGNS

Apache Stronghold
Gulf South for a Green New Deal
LandBack
Sogorea Te’ Land Trust
Stop Cop City
StopWillow

FURTHER STUDY


United Frontline Table, A People’s Orientation to a Regenerative Economy: Protect, Repair, Invest, and Transform, 2020.

Taproot Earth, #WeChooseNow: Gulf to Appalachia Climate Action Strategy, 2023.
OUR MOVEMENT PARTNERS IN CLIMATE JUSTICE

Alaska Public Interest Research Group
CLIMA Fund
Cooperation Jackson
Earth-Bound Building
Earthseed Land Collective
Earthseed Permaculture Center
Fairbanks Climate Action Coalition
Forward Montana
Grassroots Global Justice Alliance
Grow Dat Youth Farm
Honor the Earth
Indigenous Climate Action
Indigenous Environmental Network
Ironbound Community Development Corporation
Ko’ihouna
María Fund
Medicine Bowl, INC
Mississippi Center for Cultural Production (Sipp Culture)
National Black Food & Justice Alliance
Native Movement

Nfungotah Ile Osain Ecological Epicenter of New Orleans
Parceleras Afrocaribeñas
People’s Advocacy Institute
Prutehi Litekyan
Ramapough Culture and Land Foundation
Sacred Earth Solar
Seventh Generation Fund for Indigenous Peoples
Southeastern African-American Farmers Organic Network (SAAFON)
Taproot Earth
Tewa Women United
The Black Feminist Project
The Come Up Project feat. Gangstas to Growers
The Fields at Rootspring
The NY Black Ecosystem
Urban Growers Collective
Urban Tilth
We the People of Detroit
White Earth Land and Recovery Project

LEARN MORE

SolidaireNetwork.org
Visit our sister organization, Solidaire Action, at SolidaireAction.org