

Proposal for Additional Expenditure Climate Justice Organizer position

August 9, 2021

On behalf of Carey McDonald, Andrew McGeorge, Ashley Horan and myself, we are excited to bring this request to the Board of Trustees to approve a non-budgeted expenditure of up to \$60,000 for this fiscal year to hire a Climate Justice strategist/organizer to join our Organizing Strategy Team. As per Board policy, any expenditure above \$50,000 that was not approved in the budget must be approved by the Board.

This position was initially requested by the Organizing Strategy Team in January during our regular budgeting process through a new money request. Although we recognized the need for this position, we were not able to approve it for this fiscal year as we worked to balance income and expenses for our FY 22 budget submitted to the Board in April 2021.

As the new Side With Love Organizing Strategy Team has taken shape, it's become clear that the particulars associated with climate justice organizing, including relationships with partners and constituents, and the urgency growing in both UU and movement space requires dedicated and experienced attention. UUs and our congregations are hungry to engage effectively.

Creating this position in this fiscal year feels ever more critical as climate organizing among UUs becomes more urgent with the Line 3 Pipeline protests and as the UUSC's climate organizer (who we partner with for our work) is about to go out on parental leave.

Position Description Summary

The Climate Justice organizer will equip, engage, and mobilize Unitarian Universalists for impactful, values-based climate justice organizing through Side With Love's campaigns and programs. As an integrated member of the Side With Love Organizing Strategy Team (SWL-OST), the organizer will align climate justice as part of an intersectional, distributed organizing strategy and build power and increase impact by nurturing partnerships among individual UUs, congregations, and with grassroots/frontline climate justice organizing efforts. They will also support and strengthen relationships between the UUA and key UU partners in climate organizing, such as the UU Service Committee, the UU College of Social Justice, UU Ministry for Earth, and UU State Action Networks (SANs).

They will also take primary responsibility for shepherding the Green Sanctuary 2030 and Create Climate Justice programs to emphasize the intersecting relationship of climate justice work with other kinds of organizing, and to bring a power analysis and anti-racist/anti-oppressive/multicultural posture and praxis to all climate-oriented work.

Funding the position:

First, we believe it is important to move in faith to say, “Yes” to this position in a time when we have an increasingly urgent window in which to affect change to address and respond to the reality of climate change and climate devastation. There is an opportunity here to increase our impact and capacity by the addition of this position and a potential missed opportunity by not better resourcing this work.

In addition, we have clear avenues to fund this position for this year and going forward.

1. Fundraising: Our members and donors care deeply about climate justice and have expressed interest and willingness to support greater investment in climate organizing. UU the Vote also demonstrated our capacity to increase fundraising, including small dollar donations, to support concrete work on urgent justice issues important to UUs.
2. We have additional financial flexibility this year because of open positions within the Organizing Strategy Team and will only need to fund a partial year of this position since it will take time to advertise and hire the position
3. We are encouraged by the strong APF results of FY21 and the very early results in the first month of FY22. In addition, individual giving continued to be very strong in FY21 and has continued at a strong pace at the beginning of FY22. We have budgeted cautiously knowing the uncertainties of the pandemic, but these indicators give us more confidence that we can afford this investment.

Funding in future years:

There will be additional transition on the OST after this year, meaning the overall impact to the budget in future years will be less than in this fiscal year. For a full year position in FY23, we estimate an increase of \$30,000 over what was initially budgeted for this fiscal year. We have the support of Lauren Smith, our Director of Stewardship and Development, in predicting that a full time staff person within OST dedicated to climate justice will strengthen our fundraising overall for our justice ministries.

Proposed Board Motion:

The Board approves a \$60,000 increase to the approved FY22 operating budget to fund a new Climate Justice Strategist/Organizer position. This is an ongoing position to be funded by new fundraising and upcoming transitions in the Organizing Strategy Team.

Respectfully submitted:

Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray, UUA President