

# FOUR PATHWAYS TO MOVE MONEY TO THE GRASSROOTS

Grassroots environmental justice organizations are rooted in the places most impacted by pollution and environmental racism. Here they *fight the bad* to protect their bodies, families, and communities from toxic industries — and *build the new* through transitioning toward local, living, regenerative economies. Despite chronic disinvestment in their work, grassroots environmental justice organizations are innovating, winning, and leading some of the boldest climate solutions worldwide.

Philanthropy is shifting its attention to climate equity and environmental justice with an urgent drive to scale its investments in these proven climate justice solutions. However, there's a long way to go. Foundations give a tiny fraction — just 1.3% — of their U.S. climate dollars to support environmental justice organizations, and even less is granted at the grassroots and internationally.<sup>1</sup> Grassroots organizations around the world share legacies of organizing and power-building at the intersection of racial justice and climate justice.

Grassroots climate solutions are abundant and ready for scaled investment now. While we celebrate the increase in commitments from funders in climate equity and environmental justice, there is an implementation gap that must be closed quickly. There are four pathways to move capital and other resources with speed and trust to grassroots organizing globally.



## Grassroots Organizations

Unrestricted, multi-year, funding sent directly to authentic grassroots and base-building organizations<sup>2</sup> that are of, by, for, and directly accountable to the most impacted communities is always preferred.

## Grassroots-Led Alliances and Networks

Alliances and networks created by grassroots organizations integrate resource-sharing and accountability processes in order to achieve collective impact.

## Community-Controlled Capital Infrastructure

Non-extractive loan funds, community land trusts, and worker-owned cooperatives are examples of community-controlled infrastructure that supports grassroots governance of capital and redistribution of wealth at the community level.

## Grassroots-Centric Funder Intermediaries

Intermediary funders that center grassroots communities are a critical part of movement infrastructure in the U.S. and globally. They fund grassroots groups with flexible core support and include grassroots leadership in decision-making bodies and other methods for accountability.

<sup>1</sup> Climate Funders Justice Pledge, organized by the Donors of Color Network.

<sup>2</sup> CLIMA Fund infographic: What does 'grassroots' mean, anyway?