

Boston Green Ribbon Commission

Climate Justice Best Practice Network - Request for Proposals (RFP)

The Boston Green Ribbon Commission (GRC) is seeking the services of a consultant to work with GRC staff and GRC members participating in a Climate Justice Network (CJN) in the establishment of such a network. The successful respondent will have demonstrated experience in anchor institution theory and practice and successful implementation of climate justice initiatives. The GRC seeks the services of a consultant to facilitate the creation of the network, ensure participating members are achieving key deliverables and document the network structure and best practices as they are developed.

The GRC seeks to enter into a contract with a consultant from March 2023 to September of 2023 as an initial period with potential for extensions.

The GRC expects the core work of the selected consultant to include:

- Structure engagements/meetings with institutions and community
- Facilitate engagements/meetings
- Facilitate communications between meetings
- Provide CJN content expertise
- Develop metrics for success
- Track progress against metrics
- Provide a formal report to CJN on a regular basis

The GRC is amenable to further development and refinement of the scope in consultation with the selected consultant.

Overview

A climate action plan includes goals and implementation strategies for **carbon mitigation**, **climate resiliency**, and **climate justice**. While best practices for carbon reduction and climate resiliency are relatively well-developed, ones for climate justice are not. For most organizations, climate justice strategy is a new area of effort, with limited examples of successful execution. However, some leaders in this space are pushing the edge of innovation and developing new paradigms for others.

Large place-based institutions – entities like universities, hospitals, cultural institutions, governments, and long-term commercial real estate owners – are in a position to lead. Such organizations are more likely to have an explicit “anchor” mission strategy – leveraging their institutional capacities and economic power to improve the quality of life in the communities they serve, thus strengthening the context for their own sustainable operations. Organizations with such strategies are well positioned to advance climate justice.

The GRC is interested in supporting its members and working group participants that are anchor institutions to form a best practices network to advance organizational climate justice strategies. The goal is to leverage existing climate action plans (carbon mitigation and resilience) to improve the health and wellbeing of stakeholders and the communities.

Specific Examples of Climate Justice Practices

Develop Structures and Processes for Community Engagement

- Define the target geography for community engagement and create a structure for engaging with community members.
- Bring community stakeholders into the process early to co-create engagement strategy.
- Define and be transparent about how community input will influence organizational actions; collaborate with community partners on which climate actions they can take.

Use Organizational Physical Assets to Improve Community Climate Resilience

- Structure resilience investments to maximize protection of community assets.
- Support the development of community microgrids and use organizational microgrids to support grid stability and provide power continuity to community facilities.
- Leverage organizational investments in clean transportation to make it more accessible and affordable for community members; support robust, clean public transportation and pedestrian and bike infrastructure.
- Use investments in renewables to provide community benefits, like sharing net metering credits with local NGOs and households.
- Enable organizational real estate to serve as emergency shelters and cooling centers.

Advance Local, Inclusive and Sustainable Hiring & Workforce Development

- Maximize local hiring and increase the diversity of hires, and develop workforce development programs in collaboration with local training providers for key sustainability-related skills.

Structure Procurement and Investing to Advance Local, Diverse & Sustainable Sourcing

- Integrate sustainability goals into all organizational procurement.
- Move capital and financing from national organizations to local ones, with an emphasis on Community Development Finance Institutions (CDFIs).

Use Institutional Voice and Political Influence to Advocate for Climate Justice Communities

- Make clear the institutional commitment to climate action and climate justice. Ensure that goals, plans, and position on issues are publicly stated and supported with action.
- Align political donations and work in support of candidates with climate justice values.

How a GRC Climate Justice Best Practice Network Might Be Designed

Member Composition

- Cross-sector representation, including health care, higher education, cultural institutions, local government, and commercial real estate.
- Members are committed to finding creative ways to use organizational strategies to advance climate goals in the communities they serve.
- Representative community-based organizations participate to keep the practice grounded in lived experience.

Governance

- A governance structure that engages community stakeholders in decision-making – at both the level of individual organizations and the level of the network as a whole.

Best Practice Documentation

- Begin with a baseline assessment of what institutions are already doing and develop a set of short case studies based on the baseline assessment.
- Build a detailed “menu” of ways in which anchor strategies can advance climate action.
- Provide periodic best practice sharing convenings based on specific topics.

Best Practice Scaling

- Identify a set of established best practices that can be scaled across a broader set of institutions.
 - Example: Boston Properties and SunWealth community solar project ([CityPoint, Waltham](#)).
 - Example: Boston Medical Center and their [Rooftop Garden](#).
 - Example: Development of DEI workforce for institutional construction projects, example of [Turner Construction](#).

Capacity Building

- Support members in building shared institutional capacity to advance organizational climate justice across the Boston metro region.
- Support members in developing and implementing internal tools to support climate justice strategies, such as a climate justice roadmap and a climate justice scoreboard.
- Support community partners in developing the capacity to engage with organizations and be co-equal partners in decision-making.