

## GREEN PATHWAYS FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

### CONCEPT PAPER

**SUMMARY:** Rainier Valley Corps and Got Green are seeking \$658,000 (\$329,000 per year for two years) in seed funding to address the lack of diversity in the environmental movement by developing a pipeline of emerging leaders of color with a racial equity and intersectional lens. This program, called the Green Pathways Fellowship Program, will recruit Fellows of color who will be placed in pairs to work full-time at environmental organizations. During this two-year fellowship, Rainier Valley Corps, in partnership with Got Green, will provide fellows with technical skill building and training in leadership development that is culturally relevant, community-center, and context driven. We hope to launch the program in 2019 with an inaugural cohort of 20 fellows placed at 10 organizations.

**COMMUNITY NEEDS:** In the summer of 2014 Dr. Dorceta E. Taylor released the Green 2.0 report. This report outlined the state of diversity in environmental organizations in the United States looking at the demographic characteristics of their boards and staffs. Green 2.0 highlights that ethnic minorities are severely underrepresented in the environmental workforce. For example, "The percentage of ethnic minorities on the boards or general staff of environmental organizations does not exceed 16%. Once hired in environmental organizations, ethnic minorities are concentrated in the lower ranks. As a result ethnic minorities occupy less than 12% of the leadership positions in the environmental organizations." The study also outlines, environmental organizations do not use the internship pipeline effectively to find ethnic minority workers. More than two thirds of the organizations indicated that training programs for minority and low-income residents should be developed, but less than 45% of the organizations would support such training programs.

**PROGRAM STRUCTURE:** This program will have a similar structure to RVC's successful fellowship program. Fellows of color will be recruited and hired in partnership with host sites for two-year placements. They will participate in an opening retreat to develop group dynamics and establish strong relationships and trust. Fellows will then engage in a 5-weeks Leadership Academy, where they learn leadership skills as well as professional skills to be successful in working within the environmental sector. After the Leadership Academy, fellows will work full-time (37.5 hours) at their host sites. They will work in pairs to ensure maximum mutual support, learning, and reflection. Throughout the year, the fellows will engage in monthly all-day trainings and brown bag meetings for check-ins, peer-coaching, and networking opportunities with community leaders. There will be a mid-year retreat and end-of-year celebration. Fellows will undergo performance evaluation twice during the year.

Host sites will provide fellows a living wage of \$21.24 per hour, health insurance, a profession development stipend of \$1000, and a technical equipment stipend of \$800. Host partners will also pay RVC \$15,000 per fellow per year for training and program administration, as well as agree to attend regular trainings on supervision and other relevant topics. Host partners agree to work with the capacity-building coach to develop or continue equity work.

**FELLOWS:** In partnership with host sites, we will be recruiting fellows with the following qualifications and interests:

- Demonstrated work, academic, and/or volunteer experience in social and environmental justice.
- Deep commitment to professional and leadership development.
- Strong desire to advance professionally and grow at host organization post-fellowship.
- Passion for community work and social justice, and intent to advance in the greens job sector.
- Willingness to be vulnerable, introspective, and learn outside comfort zones.
- Be legally authorized to work in the U.S.
- Be prepared to work full-time at host organization for the duration of the Fellowship Program.

**HOST PARTNERS:** Host partners will be a mix of nonprofit, government, and business organizations. We aim to partner with partners who have the following qualifications and interests:

- Authentic and active engagement with and be accountability to the communities most impacted by historical, systemic, and institutional oppression.

- Leadership that is committed to improving the ways they examine, assess, train, and implement equitable and anti-oppressive policies, procedures, practices, and behaviors.
- Commitment to provide meaningful, beneficial support in advancing the vision of an equitable green jobs sector.
- Commitment to ensure organization's leadership is diverse in representation of communities most impacted by climate change (ex: directors, board members, advisory committee, etc).
- Commitment to supporting the fellow through creating a job description that would advance a career pathway, consistent supervision meetings, and creating & tracking work plans & goals.
- Commitment to mentorship of fellow, supporting their professional development, and connection to other community members and organizational partners as needed to complete work.
- Commitment to supporting fellow to complete requirements of fellowship program (e.g. ensuring fellow attendance at Fellow meetings & retreats, and adjusting work plans & schedules accordingly), offering regular feedback and positive affirmation for the fellow's work.
- Commitment to create and actively advance a plan for fellows to obtain meaningful positions at host partner organization or similar environmentally-focused organization.

**OUTCOMES/GOALS:** The goals of this Fellowship include

- Fellows form strong relationship as a cohort and individually to one another.
- Fellows improve in targeted leadership skills (collective, adaptive, transformational, and just leadership).
- Fellows are hired at end of program into a meaningful position.
- Organizations have addressed their targeted \*equity capacity building (via fellow) as identified in Org. equity assessment.
- Organizations increase their engagement in advocacy and policy relevant to environmental issues.
- Organizations are more collaborative in advocacy, policy, and movement work.
- There are significantly more leaders of color doing environmental justice work in King County
- There is a model that provides critical lessons for the entire sector

**TIMELINE:** We aim to select partners by November 2018. Applications will be released on January 2019 with a deadline of March 15<sup>th</sup> 2019 (early) or April 30<sup>th</sup> (regular). Interviews will take place until June 15<sup>th</sup>, and all fellows selected by 4/30 for early applicants and 7/1 for all others. The fellowship program will kick off on 8/1 with a 5-weeks training. Fellows will be placed at partner organizations two days a week to start, and will work there full-time starting on 9/15/19.

**BUDGET:** For the first cohort of 20 fellows, the total budget we are seeking per year is \$329,000. This includes staffing (\$194,000, for .5FTE Program Director from RVC, 1FTE Program Recruiter, 1FTE Program Coordinator, .5FTE Capacity-Building coach, plus taxes and benefits), fellows trainings (\$60,000), evaluation (\$10,000), supplies (\$10,000), and administrative and operating costs (\$55,000). The salaries of the fellows, along with funding for training and administration, will be provided by host sites.

**ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUNDS:** This project is a partnership between two organizations: Rainier Valley Corps (RVC) and Got Green (GG). Got Green organizes for environmental, racial, and economic justice as a South-Seattle-based grassroots organization. We cultivate multi-generational community leaders to be central voices in the green movement. We move city wide policy to make sure the promises of the green movement; healthy housing, food access, green jobs, and public transportation are available to low income communities and communities of color

RVC was formed in 2014 to address the lack of leaders of color in the nonprofit sector and the difficulties faced by organizations led by communities of color to raise funds, develop infrastructure, and implement programs. RVC's flagship program is a fellowship where leaders of color are recruited, trained, and placed to work full-time for two years at organizations led by communities of color. In addition, RVC also provides holistic capacity building for organizations led by communities of color through operations support, including fiscal sponsorship and culturally-responsive capacity building.

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