



FACT SHEET: YEAR 1

# Launching the Climate Justice Organizing HUB



April, 2021.

A review of the Canadian climate justice sector's state of play in 2020-21 as well as the pivots and emergent approach to programming required to adjust rollout of a support structure during an unprecedented pandemic year.



*The Climate Justice Organizing Hub is a support structure designed around the needs of grassroots social movement organizers. Through responsive troubleshooting, skills and strategy sharing, its mission is to help organizers find their way towards building a critical mass of engaged people who are working towards a just transition.*

## Project topline

- **Date of launch:** May 1st, 2020
- **Focus:** Capacity building around organizing and mobilizing activities
- **Core communities served:** Young organizers with grassroots climate justice groups and allied organizers within grassroots social justice and Indigenous groups
- **Geographical focus:** Mostly Quebec in year 1, fully cross-Canada starting year 2
- **Status:** Charitable project of the [Small Change Fund](#)
- **Principal Funder to Small Change Fund for this project:** [Trottier Family Foundation](#)

## State of play within climate justice communities at time of launch

- Youth-led grassroots organizing was largely responsible for the climate change "movement moment" in September 2019, which brought 700 000 climate strikers onto the streets across Canada
- Months later, the stresses of relentless organizing, internal group struggles and COVID distancing had seriously disrupted these powerful networks
- The Climate Justice Organizing HUB launched in May 2020, engaging with grassroots organizers facing the difficult conditions described above, while operating in a pandemic setting where the rules of normal convening and relationship-building were greatly altered

## Active listening and emergent programming

- Due to the rapidly shifting landscape in which organizers now operated, added to the disruptions of activity caused by the COVID pandemic, program design was held back intentionally at the start
- Needs assessment conversations were launched to gather inputs, which would themselves inform programming
- In this first year, 80 separate intake conversations were held with different organizers, representing 41 groups
- Top needs emerging from these assessments centered around helping repair grassroots group culture, structure and connectedness
- Specifically, help building intersectionality and allyship into climate organizing culture
- Help with structure, decision making and remote group management
- Help with conflict resolution within groups and protocols for maintaining safe spaces

## How the HUB helped

- The HUB used a broad 'climate justice' constituency frame to include and serve social justice and indigenous organizers that climate organizers wanted to support
- The HUB virtually convened allyship 'meet and greets' that brought climate organizers into dialogue with social justice and indigenous organizers, which generated mutual support initiatives
- Ad hoc workshops were deployed by the HUB to address urgent needs, more structured workshops were developed with specialists to address deeper issues ex. conflict resolution policies (61 workshop interventions were delivered in year 1)
- The HUB developed mass trainings on movement-building and anti-oppression (80 organizers have been trained so far)
- A francophone virtual conference is being prepared for [May 3rd-9th with 10 events and a goal of hosting 500 attendees](#)

## Solving for challenges

- COVID-era dispersion of organizers and their disrupted networks led us to hire contract organizers, who are well-connected and could open doors with the target communities we wanted to serve
- Pivoting entirely to distanced engagement, we delivered interactive workshops using online collaboration tools, launched a virtual community of practice on a secure platform and hosted an all-virtual conference
- As the people we serve are often non-profits or informal groups the HUB focuses on rendering support as education and capacity-building programs for well-connected individual organizers, who will then bring their knowledge back to their groups and networks

## Next steps

- In year 2 of operations, starting in May of 2021, the HUB actively reaches out to serve organizers across all regions in Canada
- Year 2 will bring a greater focus on repeat workshops and mass training models to serve a much higher volume of organizers at a distance
- Pandemic-permitting, we also plan some real-space convenings to deepen relationships with key organizers in key Canadian centers

## Contact

For more information, we'd be happy to book a Zoom or call with you. Please contact Executive Director Tom Liacas - [tom@lehub.ca](mailto:tom@lehub.ca).