



President & Chief Executive Officer

THE SEARCH

The Climate and Clean Energy Equity Fund and The Climate Equity Action Fund -- a pathbreaking grantmaker and policy accelerator dedicated to advancing climate solutions rooted in movement and community-based power -- seeks its next President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Since their founding in 2016, the Equity Funds have grown into a formidable and influential force in philanthropy at the nexus of climate change, democracy, and equity, supporting power-building to drive change at scale and accelerate the transition to a just and equitable clean energy future.

The two funds together comprise an “eight-year-old start-up,” having formally spun off from fiscal sponsorship into independent 501(c)(3) and 501(c)(4) organizations in January 2024. Over an eight-year history, the Funds have emerged as national influencers in climate philanthropy and public policy and leaders in advancing equitable climate action and clean energy transition in the United States. The combined funding has grown from \$1 million in 2016 to almost \$40 million in 2024. From a two-person team working in just four states, the Funds today are a 35-strong team supporting community-based organizations across 13 states. This powerful portfolio champions climate and clean energy initiatives, public policies, and narrative strategies by empowering Black, Indigenous, Latinx, AAPI, and multi-racial working-class communities that are at the frontlines of the climate crisis. The Funds empower these communities through sustained, unrestricted grant funding and through strategic support, encompassing programmatic and technical assistance as well as support in targeted communications, public policy analysis, voter research, and voter mobilization.

The CEO will serve as the principal spokesperson and champion for the Funds and as an innovator, thought leader, collaborator, and catalyst in advancing values of equity and accountability within the climate movement, philanthropy, and social change advocacy. They must understand and champion grassroots community organizing and power-building, and persuasively make the case to policymakers and to the expanding universe of philanthropic partners for continued and increased support. Internally, the CEO will ensure that the Funds’ management, operational systems and policies, infrastructure, and team culture reflect the organization’s recent rapid growth and embody the values of equity, fairness, inclusivity, and accountability that undergird its mission.

A four-member board search committee has been established to conduct this search. The Board is working with Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, on this recruitment. Confidential inquiries, nominations, and applications should be directed to the search firm as indicated at the end of this document.

BACKGROUND

The Funds were established in 2016 by a group of major foundations that joined together to collectively invest in communities of color working to drive the climate movement through local and state-level organizing and action. Initially focused on four states, the Funds grew rapidly, solidifying their niche of supporting multi-racial, underrepresented communities that have been historically underfunded by climate philanthropy. The Funds invested in states where careful analysis showed there was sufficient grassroots activity to build power and resilience, to influence policy, and to heighten awareness of climate and clean energy as equity issues. They offered multi-year flexible support to grantees, taking the long view, serving as thought partners, and learning along with their grantees how best to achieve sustained impact.

At the heart of the Funds' work is the resilient network of grassroots organizations and diverse communities they support through strategic grant allocations. Grounded in the voices and experiences of communities of color, they are dedicated to fostering impactful advocacy and political engagement by supporting state-led initiatives for advocacy and political work. Through the creation of [policy](#) and [communications](#) accelerators, the Funds also began to provide coaching, policy analysis, expert technical assistance, and research to inform the advocacy needs of their grantee partners. Empowered with these resources, many of these organizations have taken on leadership roles in the climate movement, including leading successful multi-racial coalitions that have achieved ambitious climate and clean energy policies in their states.

The Funds have also served as a vital leader and advisor to funding partners, assisting them in aligning their philanthropic goals with the imperatives of just and equitable climate policies. By facilitating knowledge-sharing initiatives to deepen understanding of local climate challenges, and by leveraging staff expertise and grantee networks, the Funds offer donors a means for supporting grassroots groups who are shaping policy and implementation that they might not otherwise be able to reach. Annual [impact reports](#) outline in detail successes and challenges on a state-by-state basis.

Since their founding, the Funds have experienced tremendous and rapid growth, mobilizing a combined \$200 million in (C)(3) and (C)(4) support from their philanthropic partners over eight years.

THE CLIMATE FUNDS TODAY

Today, the Funds work in 13 states with an expectation of moving strategically into new states and continuing a growth trajectory of influence and impact. The current strategy is organized around three core priorities: defending, implementing, and strengthening 100% clean energy policies with a focus on equity and jobs and workforce development; winning economy-wide climate policy; and building power and political will to create enabling conditions for durable climate leadership.

The Funds currently support more than 200 community-based organizations advancing equitable climate action. Many of these grantees are by design issue nimble and active in intersectional issues, such as

affordable housing, economic justice, workforce empowerment, health equity, reproductive rights, and other fundamental concerns of democracy. A common denominator is the commitment to mobilize people power, lead broad coalitions, and advance policy campaigns.

Given the historic opportunity of the hundreds of billions of federal dollars for climate action and infrastructure projects from the 2022 Inflation Reduction Act, the Equity Funds are also now making major investments in supporting grantees and statewide coalitions in mobilizing for equitable implementation of this federal support. They have created [two specialized funds](#) and are calling on other climate funders to join in the effort to ensure that vulnerable and marginalized communities can access the federal funds.

In 2024, the Equity Funds have budgeted \$20 million for (C)(3) grantmaking and \$10 million for (C)(4) investments. With a current staff of 35, the combined operating budget for 2024 is roughly \$40 million.

On the operational side, the Funds' rapid growth and the recent independence from a fiscal sponsor, means that systems and operations are new and still in development. Staffing, as well as policies and structures for grants administration, human resources, finance, technology and systems, compliance, and governance – all of which were previously handled by the fiscal sponsors -- are being thoughtfully designed and developed for long-term sustainability and scaling.

Most of the Funds' 35 staff work remotely from locations across the country. There is also a shared office in Washington, DC. The organization hosts weekly virtual meetings of the full staff, regular regional and team calls, and occasional retreats. Since many of the Funds' program officers themselves came from grantee organizations or other groups focused on equity and justice, there is an unusual level of respect and trust shared among grantees and the Funds' team.

LEADERSHIP TRANSITION

Roger Kim has led the Equity Funds since their founding in 2016 at the Democracy Alliance, following a career that spanned local government, philanthropy, and environmental and climate advocacy. Kim quickly earned the respect and trust of grantees and donors alike, and under his stewardship, the Funds grew from four to thirteen states engaged in some of the most advanced campaigns for clean energy transition and climate action in the country. He solidified the Funds' role as a leader in demonstrating that organizing and equity are essential and winning climate strategies. Moving on after eight formative and impactful years, Kim leaves a strong, influential, and leaderful organization, poised for its next stage of growth and impact.

PRESIDENT & CEO

The President & CEO will report to the Boards of Directors of the Climate and Clean Energy Equity Fund and the Climate Equity Action Fund and will oversee an Executive Leadership Team comprising the Chief of Staff, Vice President of Programs, Vice President of Strategic Partnerships, and Chief Operating Officer.

The new CEO will be expected to provide strategic and visionary leadership, and operational stewardship as the Funds set their future course. The CEO will build upon the organization's remarkable momentum and record of success while continuing to raise its profile, promote its best practices, and attract continued and new investments in its mission. A strong track record and experience in fundraising and partnership development with philanthropists and philanthropies is critical to the success of the next leader.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE INCOMING CEO

Strategic Leadership

Lead the Funds in developing a multi-year strategic plan to coalesce the organization around shared goals and strategies. It is expected that the Funds will continue to grow and expand their work into other states, but determining the pace and focus of that growth will be an early challenge for the CEO, their team, and the Board. It will be important to sustain and enhance the Funds' working relationships with its current grantees even as it considers growth into new states and communities. Remaining nimble, innovative, and open to emerging challenges in the field will also be critical.

Philanthropic Influence

Influence the field of climate philanthropy by raising the visibility of the Funds' replicable strategies and highlighting their impact. Help to attract additional investment and attention not just to the Funds themselves, but to other organizations that successfully focus on infusing equity and power-building into the climate and clean energy movement. Build out the Funds' communication capabilities to tell their stories and that of their grantees, reaching ever-wider audiences. Serve as a dynamic spokesperson in advancing a vision of how to achieve a Just Transition to a clean energy future. Build strategic partnerships with diverse peer organizations focused on justice and equity to align and amplify investment potential.

Fundraising

Reinforce and deepen strong relationships with current donors and lead the work to attract considerable additional support. Make a compelling case for as much unrestricted support as possible to entrust both the Funds themselves and their grantees with knowing how the resources are best mobilized. Reach to individual as well as institutional donors newly entering the field of climate philanthropy with a well-informed and compelling case for the Funds' theory of change.

Team and Organizational Leadership

Build authentic relationships with colleagues throughout the organization. Cultivate a culture of collaboration, transparency and accountability, fairness, and mutual respect. Ensure that the structures and policies under development for the newly independent organizations reflect and advance that positive culture. Create opportunities for internal community building and change management with a remote staff team. Delegate well and effectively, empowering staff to engage independently where

appropriate and supporting their cross-departmental collaboration and team building. Pursue high standards of accountability and fiscal stewardship. Work with the newly formed governing boards to define their fiduciary responsibilities and the expectations of their service and help to recruit additional board members.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

An ideal candidate will bring many of the following attributes:

- Lived commitment to justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion with the highest level of personal and professional integrity.
- A network in the philanthropy community and understanding of grantmaking practices, including the role of funder intermediaries. Comfort working closely and productively with donors without compromising on values or programmatic commitments.
- Experience working at the state and community level, ideally with successful leadership experience in grassroots organizing and democratic movement building. Deep respect for state and local organizers and advocates. Knowledge of how communities build and wield political power.
- Enough knowledge of the climate and clean energy field to persuasively communicate how, why, and where climate is an equity issue, and conversely, that equity is a critical strategy to win on climate. The ability to quickly learn and become well-informed about the field in all its complexities.
- Exceptional communication skills with a proven track record of representing an organization, cause, or program to diverse audiences, inspiring confidence, engagement, and partnership. A knack for storytelling.
- Proven multi-million-dollar fundraising ability and skill to maximize alignment and leverage.
- Knowledge of policy making and implementation at national, state, community, and tribal levels. A sense of the interplay of policy, politics, and electoral work.
- Proven ability to relate to and build coalitions with other mission-aligned social justice organizations.
- Exceptional, highly respectful management and team-building skills, including the ability to recruit, inspire, and retain talented staff, set clear priorities, hold people accountable, and delegate effectively.
- Outstanding listening skills. Humility, tenacity, openness to risk, optimism, and a sense of humor.

APPLICATIONS, NOMINATIONS, AND INQUIRIES

The Funds are working with Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist in this recruitment. Review of candidates will begin immediately with an expected appointment in summer 2024. Nominations, inquiries, and applications, including a resume and 1- to 3-page letter of interest, should be sent electronically and in confidence to:

Karen Wilcox, Partner

Damla Williams, Senior Associate

Isaacson, Miller

[Equity Fund Search](#)

COMPENSATION & LOCATION

The starting salary for this position is anticipated in the range of \$350,000-\$450,000, plus benefits, depending on location and previous experience. The CEO may be based anywhere in the United States with an expectation of travel up to 30 percent of the time.

As newly independent 501(c)(3) and 501(c)(4) organizations, the Climate and Clean Energy Equity Fund and Climate Equity Action Fund are committed to attracting, developing, and retaining exceptional people and to creating a work environment that is dynamic and rewarding. The Funds' work environment is safe and open to all employees, respecting the full spectrum of race, color, religious creed, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, political affiliation, ancestry, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, and all other classifications protected by law.

April 2024