

## USDN 2021 Equity Diversity Inclusion (EDI) Fellowship Program

### Overview

The Urban Sustainability Directors Network (USDN) is pleased to offer summer 2021 fellowship opportunities with local governments. Fellows will receive a valuable learning experience while helping local governments advance sustainability and inclusion goals.

2021 fellowships are available with the City of Fort Collins CO, the City of Lancaster (PA), Miami-Dade County (FL), the City of Minneapolis (MN), the City of Newark (NJ), and the City of Richmond (VA). Applications for Miami-Dade County and the City of Minneapolis are closed. Applications for the City of Fort Collins are open until May 7.

Fellowships will be fulltime for 12 weeks, beginning in May or June and concluding in August or September. USDN and host sites will work with selected candidates to finalize start and end dates. While all fellows will begin working remotely, some may transition to in person work as safety permits.



*2019 USDN EDI Fellows presenting their work at the USDN Annual Meeting*

### All fellowship positions include:

- A living wage or higher for the fellowship location
- Full-time employment for 12 weeks
- The experience of working in a local government sustainability program on a well-defined project that advances a community's sustainability and equity goals

- A project that is inclusive of underserved and under-represented communities and responsive to their needs and priorities
- Mentorship from Desiree Williams-Rajee and participation in a national learning cohort of USDN EDI fellows
- Access to all USDN member discussions and products
- Membership in an informal network of past and current EDI fellows

### **Requirements**

Broad requirements for all fellowship projects are listed below. Each local government project also has specific requirements.

- Be passionate about sustainability and/or the environment
- Be new to the sustainability field of work or interested in exploring a career in sustainability
- Have the skills required to match the needs of the projects for which you apply
- Have excellent written and verbal communication skills, including the ability to relate to, communicate with, and learn from racially, ethnically, and socioeconomically diverse communities
- Have experience working with multiple communities, including communities of color
- Have experience considering the impacts of projects on multiple communities, including communities of color
- Commit to working for the entire duration of the fellowship
- Commit to participating actively in the cohort learning and mentoring programs
- Commit to maintaining the privacy of cohort and USDN discussions
- Complete a one-page summary blog post and program evaluation form at the conclusion of the fellowship to reflect on your experience
- Make a presentation on your work to USDN members

### **To Apply**

Applications should be sent to the Urban Sustainability Directors Network at <fellowship@usdn.org>. Please include the name of the community or communities with which you are seeking a fellowship in the email subject line. People of color are encouraged to apply.

Applications should include:

- Completed and signed application form available for download [here](#)
- Current resume

**Application for Fort Collins CO must be received by Friday May 7 at 11:59 PST.** All applicants will be notified of selection decisions.

Thank you for your interest!

# USDN Fellowship with the City of Fort Collins CO

## Climate Equity Fellowship

### Fellowship Title

Climate Equity Fellow

### Fellowship Summary

The primary goal of the Climate Equity Fellow is to support the application of a racial equity lens to the Our Climate Future implementation process and the associated outcomes. Staff is piloting the [Government Alliance on Race and Equity \(GARE\) Racial Equity Toolkit](#) in this planning process to assess how proposed strategies do or do not advance racial equity. This tool will be applied to the strategies and tactics, developed in the plan.

### Project Background

In 2021, the City of Fort Collins adopted [Our Climate Future](#), a combined update to the City's [Climate Action Plan](#), [Energy Policy](#), and the [Road to Zero Waste Plan](#). The City applied a racial equity lens in the planning, goal and strategy development process to better engage historically underrepresented individuals and groups in Fort Collins, reduce negative impacts and outcomes, and optimize opportunities that will benefit all Fort Collins community members.

The project used the concepts of [Big Moves](#) and **Next Moves** to structure the plans. Big Moves are transformational changes which will enable the community to find the most equitable and resilient solutions to becoming carbon neutral by 2050, being powered by 100% renewable electricity and becoming zero waste by 2030. Next Moves, which are outlined in detail in the Our Climate Future [Tactical Plan](#), are more specific strategies, steps and sequencing necessary to achieve the Big Moves. For example, the Fellow would focus specifically on the Big Move "Shared Leadership and Community Partnership" and some of the associated Next Moves to achieve it:

- "Design an equitable implementation structure of the Our Climate Future Plan."
- "Reimagine the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) to align with the City's Strategic Objective to center equity for all, leading with race and explore opportunities to share decision-making."

### Team Description

The fellow will be a Climate Team member in the Environmental Services Department, which is a part of the City's Sustainability Services Area. The City is currently hiring for an Equity and Inclusion Officer, with the hope of having an established equity office to centralize DEI efforts by the fall of 2021. The fellow will also be integrated into the Our Climate Future implementation teams, and at least one citywide equity and inclusion effort. A Climate Team member or other City staff member will accompany the fellow when working with the community and/or provide the appropriate level of support the

fellow needs to ensure success.

### **Job Description and Timeline**

Key roles for the fellow include working with staff to execute the main project goals with three associated outcomes; participating in Sustainability, Environmental Services and Climate Team activities while at the City; and providing honest, candid feedback about their experience.

### **Outcome 1: The EDI Fellow will become familiar with Fort Collins (community and local government), Sustainability Services Area, and the Our Climate Future process.**

#### **Strategy:**

- Establish interviews/informal conversations with key stakeholders in Fort Collins and the OCF process, particularly our current group of Community Partners and Plan Ambassadors. Community Partners are organizations we have partnered with and Plan Ambassadors are individuals in the community who have been involved in developing OCF.
- Encourage Fellow to connect and build relationships with current and past USDN Fellows. Past fellow, DeAngelo Bowden, will serve as a resource/mentor. Currently DeAngelo Bowden serves as the City Manager's Office Graduate Management Assistant.
- Become familiar with the project's goals and products to date, including review of research and work conducted in the fall/spring of 2020/21 (supported by one of our previous EDI Fellows).
- Join the OCF Implementation and Community Engagement Teams.

#### **Timeframe: 2 weeks and ongoing throughout (Month 1)**

**Deliverable:** Summary of lessons learned and suggested refinements to the overall EDI Fellow scope because of the onboarding.

### **Outcome 2: Working with City staff, create a framework for embedding racial equity into the redesign of the Fort Collins Climate Action Plan Community Advisory Committee and Our Climate Future implementation structure.**

#### **Strategy:**

- Review GARE's racial equity toolkit and prior internal and external applications of the toolkit. In addition, review Movement Strategy Center's [Community Engagement to Ownership](#) and the [USDN Nexus Framework](#) as key starting points for shifting power from government to community.
- Review the history of the [CAP Community Advisory Committee](#) (CAC), including how an equity lens has been applied for increasing representation on the CAC and in meeting design. Leveraging the work of our prior EDI Fellows, review best practices for standing up a community-led equity committee for a municipality. Assess opportunities to apply the Nexus Framework of the Community Engagement to Ownership strategies to the

current structure.

- Review the OCF Plan and prior community input during the engagement process to gain an understanding of what community priorities and needs are related to OCF, particularly historically underrepresented groups and BIPOC communities. Prioritize understanding the origins and development of the Big Move focused on “Shared Leadership and Community Partnership” and the specific Next Moves associated with the CAP CAC and designing an equitable accountability structure for implementation.
- Working with staff and the community, create an engagement process to assess community member perspectives on how to redesign the CAC to better embed racial equity. This could include having 1x1 meetings with community members who are on the CAC, as well as some who are not, to gain an understanding of historical decision-making power and possible ways to transform the CAC going forward. In addition, staff and Fellow could meet with the City’s Attorney Office to gain a better understanding of legal requirements for embedding an equity lens. A key aspect of this outcome will be assessing how staff and community will need to navigate the power dynamics when the CAC reimagining takes place and ongoing needs after the reboot to ensure all CAC members and staff are provided with the education and training needed, e.g., unconscious bias training and other tools to begin mitigating historical power imbalances.
- Synthesize findings from the analysis and conversations into a summary report and briefing for implementation design teams to review. This will include a review of what legal requirements there are for equity in this space, so that it can be shared with the USDN Network and peer cities.

**Timeframe: 8 weeks (Months 1-2).**

**Deliverable:** Design and implementation of a community engagement process for exploring redesigning the CAC and embedding racial equity into the Our Climate Future implementation structure; report and briefing prepared on the process and outcomes of the community engagement, including recommendations for how the CAC could be redesigned for racial equity and any limitations identified along the way.

**Outcome 3: Share lessons learned, feedback, and insights within the City and as appropriate, with the community.**

**Strategy:**

- Identify at least three opportunities for the Fellow to share lessons learned and insights in the community as well as within the organization. These could include a staff report to City Council and/or a presentation to the City’s Executive Leadership Team and/or the CAP Executive Team.

**Timeframe: 1-2 weeks (Month 3)**

**Deliverable:** A summary and/or briefing of the impact of the experience on the fellow, including slides.

Participation in high-level discussions around Climate Policy and approaches will also be part of the fellow's experience. It is expected that the fellow will present their work to the CAP Executive Team which includes the Chief Sustainability Officer; Climate Program Manager; Utilities Executive Director; Director of Planning, Development and Transportation; and the Environmental Services Director. In addition, staff will support the fellow in presenting a staff report to City Council to share the purpose and discuss the results of the fellowship.

### **Required Skills**

Successful candidates will be able to demonstrate a combination of the following skills, experiences, and abilities:

- Experience working directly with or living among people from diverse racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds.
- Understanding of how people engage differently due to cultural and socioeconomic differences.
- Passionate about climate justice, making a difference in communities, and finding collaborative solutions to achieving goals.
- Proactively identifies and takes initiative to communicate issues and solve problems.
- Ability to communicate by phone, email, or in person in one-to-one or group settings.

**In addition, the following skill sets, and experiences would be beneficial for this position:**

- Ability to present to and engage with diverse audiences.
- Ability to connect sustainability, environmental issues, and/or climate change to the lived experiences of people of color, disabled, and low-income populations.
- Knowledge of Microsoft Office.
- Black, Indigenous, and People of Color are encouraged to apply.
- Bilingual Spanish preferred.

### **Professional Development**

Sustainability Services is a very supportive and welcoming environment. The Fellow will have a primary supervisor, the Climate Team's Senior Community Engagement Specialist, who will provide general support and resources available to be successful. The Fellow will be provided onboarding and orientation to the organization and the City to help develop a network of people with City Departments and community partners. The Fellow will also have additional mentoring and training opportunities through the Environmental Services Department, and specifically the City's previous Equity Diversity and Inclusion fellow.

The City anticipates the Fellowship will provide the Fellow with many benefits including professional experience working in municipal government, building a network of public and non-profit community groups, and an expanded knowledge and experience from being directly involved in the implementation of Our Climate Future that has equity as a guiding framework.

### **Pay Rate and Housing**

This Fellow will receive a stipend of \$17.00 an hour. While Fort Collins does currently have housing shortages, the organization is well-positioned to assist and help secure lodging for the fellow or support them working virtually. The City has a variety of strategies to deploy to help ensure they are housed in a situation that is comfortable and accessible for them, including connecting them with a Homeshare program managed by the nonprofit Neighbor 2 Neighbor; helping secure a summer sublet; and asking staff if they can provide the fellow with a room free of charge.

### **COVID-19 Response and Virtual Options**

If best, the City of Fort Collins Environmental Services Department will develop the best strategy for engaging the Our Climate Future Equity Fellow virtually through online platforms such as Microsoft Teams, Zoom meetings and other tools as appropriate and available. The City of Fort Collins and the Urban Sustainability Directors Network will work together to provide any necessary materials for the Fellow that may be required for them to be successful in their role, including everything stated in the **Professional Development and Support** section virtually.