Emerald Cities
COLLABORATIVE

ENERGY COMMUNITIES CAPACITY BUILDING* EVALUATION REPORT

2024

*Formerly known as
Emergent Communities Capacity Building

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Energy Communities Capacity Building* (ECCB) program provides training, funding, and technical assistance to support Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) and frontline communities nationwide to more deeply understand, organize, design, and implement Energy Democracy policies and projects. The cohort curriculum is designed to develop language and analysis about energy systems and to build the capacity of communities to apply for federal funding opportunities made available through historic legislation, such as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the Inflation Reduction Act, leveraging frameworks such as those provided through executive orders that established the Justice40 Initiative. Technical assistance provided by the program heavily emphasized deep community engagement tools and skills to develop community-defined and -driven energy democracy policies and projects.

As of January 2024, engagement in ECCB Cohort 1 yielded exciting outcomes for organizations such as:

- $5.5million+ additional dollars accessed by cohort participants,
- 12+ public comments and meetings with government agencies and offices,
- 55+ Energy Democracy community engagement events, and
- 15+ communications developed with the support of Climate Nexus.

Through various evaluation methods throughout the duration of the program, ECC has made the following recommendations on how to refine and expand the next iteration of ECCB programming.

- A low-effort application process with clear language
- Time to build deep relationships in the work and personally
- Unrestricted Funds
- Low-effort/aligned deliverables
- Community Learning & Peer Sharing Technical Assistance

ECCB is funded by the JPB Foundation, the Kendeda Fund, the Bezos Earth Fund, the Kresge Foundation, and the Broad Foundation.

This report explains how the program was designed, administered, implemented, and evaluated and provides a model for implementing equitable grantmaking.

PROGRAM SUMMARY

ECCB increased the capacity of ten BIPOC-led organizations across the United States to deepen their understanding of energy democracy and how to access and leverage federal funding opportunities. This was achieved by designing and implementing a program that provided funds of $25,000-$50,000, training in the form of monthly workshops, and technical assistance through 1:1 meetings. Monthly training workshops covered such topics as community-driven policy, utility justice, mapping and data, community engagement, anchor institutions, federal funding opportunities, economic inclusion, storytelling and policy, and energy democracy. The monthly 1:1 technical assistance meetings supported organizations to dig deeper into how the monthly workshop topics were relevant and applicable to on-the-ground organizing, such as, but not limited to, supporting public comments, reviewing grants, providing letters of support, in-person facilitation support, and sharing funding opportunities and information and resources on how to access those funding opportunities.

Lastly, ECC partnered with Climate Nexus who provided additional technical assistance in storytelling and communications, which included social media campaigns, press releases, toolkits, and more.

Grantees were requested to complete an Energy Democracy Scorecard, which was developed into a community benefits plan outline, and evaluate the impact and outcomes of participation in the cohort, with side-by-side support from the ECC Civic Infrastructure team, which included the National Director of Civic Infrastructure, Senior Energy Democracy Manager, Policy Director, and Eco-Communicator.
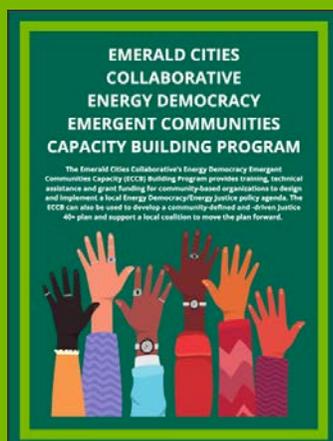
The ECCB program was formerly known as the Emergent Communities Capacity Building program. The name changed as a result of recognizing the difficulties in defining "emergent" as an encompassing factor of the program.

PRE-PROGRAM

ELIGIBILITY

Organizations that served and were led by BIPOC/frontline communities with a prioritization of 501c3 or fiscally sponsored organizations with a budget under $1 million were encouraged to apply. Eligibility included applicants who were incorporating energy, energy systems analysis, and energy democracy into their intersectional justice lens and who wanted to take their work deeper in a way that may leverage the Justice40 Initiative.

APPLICATION

The Civic Infrastructure team collaboratively designed and reviewed the application with other colleagues across Emerald Cities Collaborative. It was critical that the application be clear and not a heavy lift for organizations to complete. It had five parts that included basic information, interests from offerings, organization background, project scope, budget/personnel, audited financial statements, list of board of directors, and 501c3 designation. The Eco-Communicator designed this application.

To ensure the communities the program intended to serve received the application, we not only sent the application through listservs such as Emerald Cities Collaborative network, Energy Democracy Project, ReAmp, Water Equity and Climate Resilience (WECR) Caucus, the Equity Fund, and Climate Nexus, we also sent emails directly to organizations, as well as offering two webinars on energy democracy, the program, application, deliverables, and expectations with partners such as the Equity Fund. We also had many 1:1 conversations with organizations to share this opportunity and support them in developing their applications. The application was also prominently posted on the ECC website and was open for two months. The application outreach resulted in 44 applicants, including in places that ECC does not typically work in. The map below shows applicant locations.
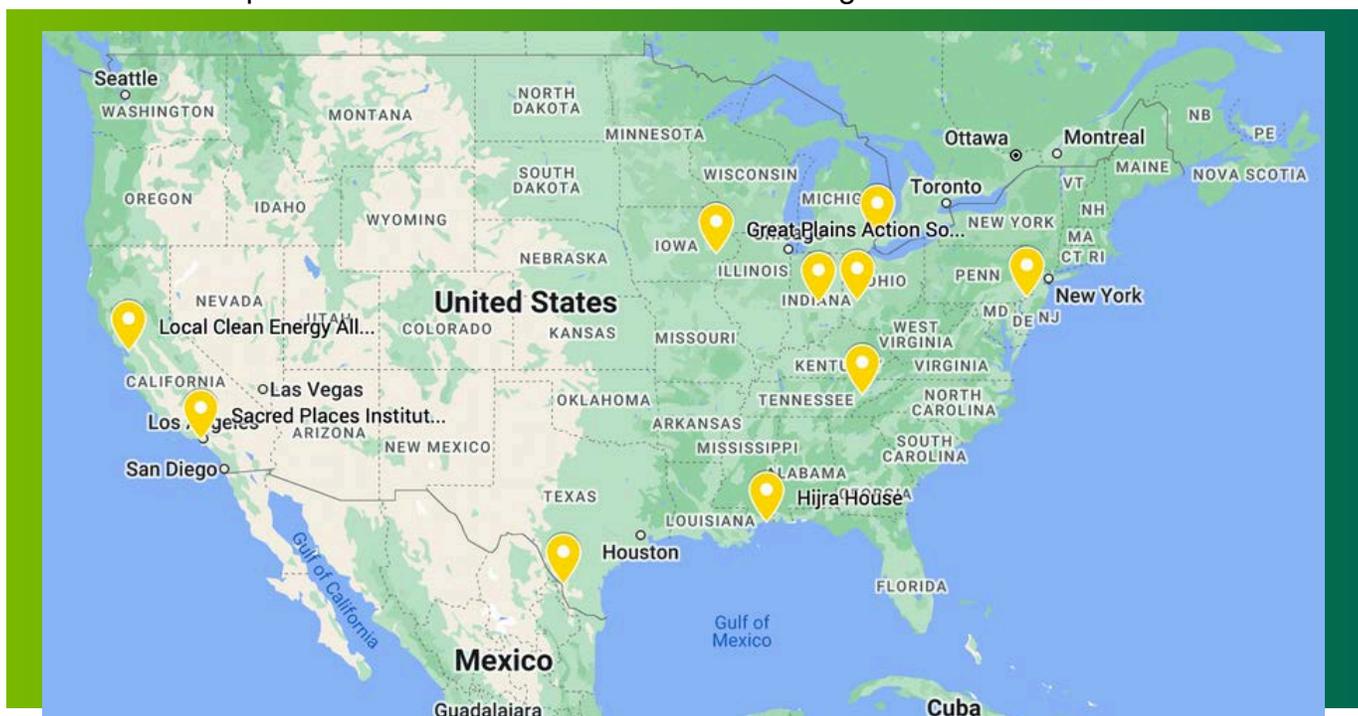
REVIEW PROCESS

Ten out of 44 applicants were selected. It was apparent that this was both a much-needed opportunity in the community and an opportunity to expand the reach of where ECC works. The projects ranged from equitable electrification and decarbonization, coalition building, community solar, abolition, and generally community-oriented issues tied to the energy system.

The goal was to review all applications within a month. First, members of the Civic Infrastructure team reviewed applications separately in a Matrix to assess how much of a match applicants were regarding the application requirements, like budget size of under $1 million, BIPOC-led, and how their project description matched the program's goals. A short list was created by the Civic Infrastructure team, which was taken to a seven-person committee of more comprehensive ECC staff to review top selected applicants and narrow down to get a more collective perspective on the organizations and how they fit into the Emerald Cities mission and offerings. Eventually, organizational finances were reviewed.

All organizations received a letter notifying them of the status of their application and whether or not they would join the first cohort. One organization did not respond to their acceptance, so we returned and selected another organization. Two organizations that were not accepted asked for an explanation, which was provided. Organizations that were selected received a welcome letter with a logistics survey. The logistics survey was to ask about accessibility needs, a potential in-person gathering, a web presence to promote the organizations through our networks, individuals who will participate in the program, and setting up monthly 1:1 meetings. Below is a map of the locations of the ten selected organizations.

GRANTMAKING AGREEMENT PROCESS

First, the Senior Energy Democracy Manager reviewed an existing grant agreement that ECC used previously and created **an initial ECCB grant agreement template** (**2024 updated template**) to be reviewed by the C-Suite. While we took steps to be as effective and efficient in designing a grant making process that went smoothly, we could not account for the unknown administrative delays, including legal review and modifications, that significantly delayed the timeline.
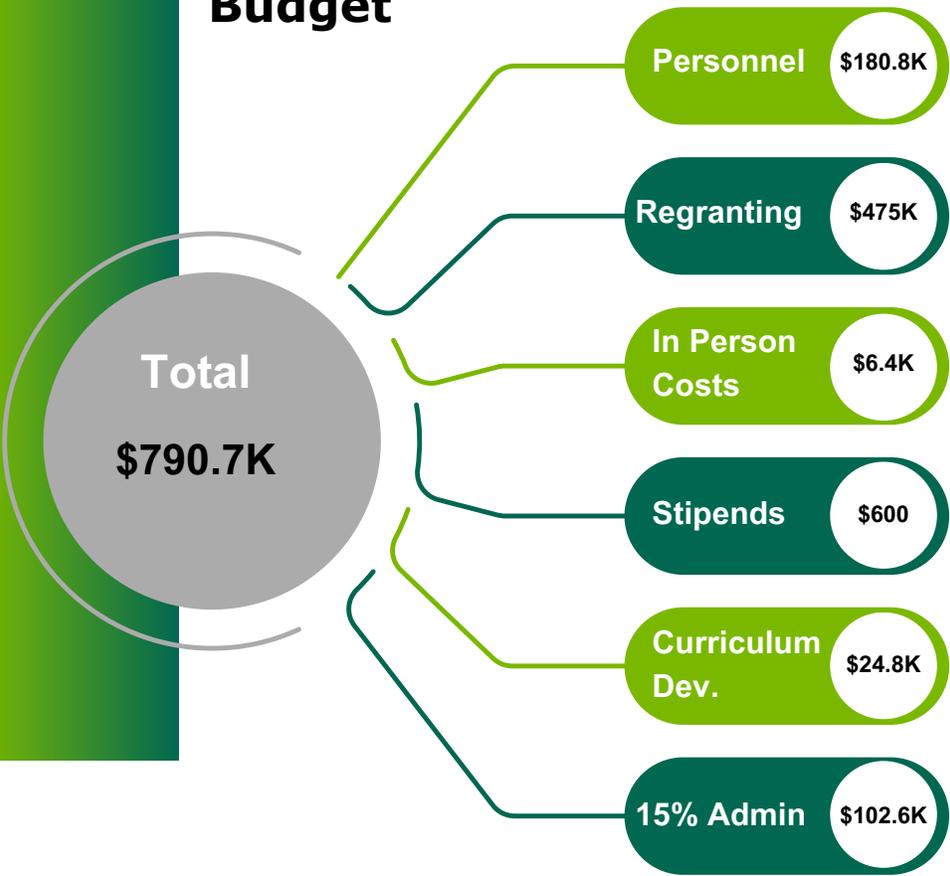
PROGRAM COMMUNICATION

The Civic Infrastructure team communicated and shared information with the cohort in various ways. A listserv was created so that all cohort members had/continue to have access to share information and use it as the main point of email communication for the group for things such as workshop reminders and opportunities. The follow-up emails were often long, but they were organized with headings, using ways to identify each section. A shared Google folder was created to share the presentations, any resources, and the content of follow-up emails. We primarily communicate via email and Zoom. These emails resulted in organizations applying for and receiving additional funding and other technical assistance from partnering organizations. One example is that the Human Rights Coalition took advantage of the opportunities sent through this correspondence. They applied for and were accepted as part of an inaugural cohort of the Movement for Solar Capacity and Leadership offered by **People Solar Energy Funds**, which gives them increased access to funding resources and pro-bono technical assistance. HRC also increased access to other grants and networks, such as through the Environmental Protection Network—more on outcomes below.

(Photo at RGISC in-person facilitation of the Energy Democracy Scorecard, highlighting places of importance for the community.)
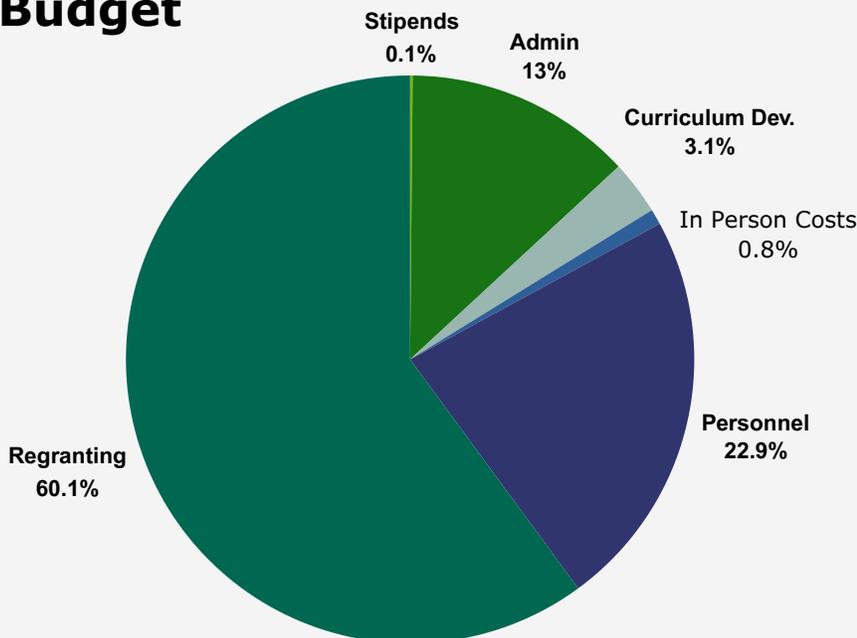
FUNDRAISING & BUDGET

ECCB Cohort 1 Budget

Total
$790.7K

Category	Amount
Personnel	$180.8K
Regranting	$475K
In Person Costs	$6.4K
Stipends	$600
Curriculum Dev.	$24.8K
15% Admin	$102.6K

ECCB was funded initially by the Kendeda Foundation, the JPB Foundation, the Bezos Earth Fund, and the Broad Foundation. The Kresge Foundation additionally gave support during the program. Most of the budget went to grantmaking and staff capacity, with a small amount of funding used to support in-person facilitation and workshops and honorariums for guest speakers who presented at the program's monthly workshops. We did not spend as much as anticipated for in-person convenings or workshops and hope to be able to fund more of these in the future. We also want to fundraise for a specific ECCB convening where all community organizations across cohorts can come together for 2-3 days of training, peer-to-peer sharing, and celebration.

ECCB Overall Budget

Pie chart showing ECCB Overall Budget:
- Stipends 0.1%
- Admin 13%
- Curriculum Dev. 3.1%
- In Person Costs 0.8%
- Personnel 22.9%
- Regranting 60.1%

OFFERINGS

- **Grant funding of up to $50,000**
- **Monthly workshops on topics related to energy democracy**
- **Monthly 1:1 Technical Assistance**
- **Virtual/In-person facilitation support of the Energy Democracy Scorecard (EDS)**
- **Community Benefits Support**

GRANTMAKING

One of the core elements of the ECCB program is the funding opportunity of $25k-$50k. All but one organization requested and received the full $50k. The funds were used in various ways, as can be read about in the **notable outcomes** section. This included stipends, narratives, storytelling, and community engagement, to name a few. Completing the EDS is very time-intensive. It must be noted that while organizations were able to move the needle on their work, this seed funding can only go so far in offering sufficient resources and capacity, especially when requested to engage with the EDS.
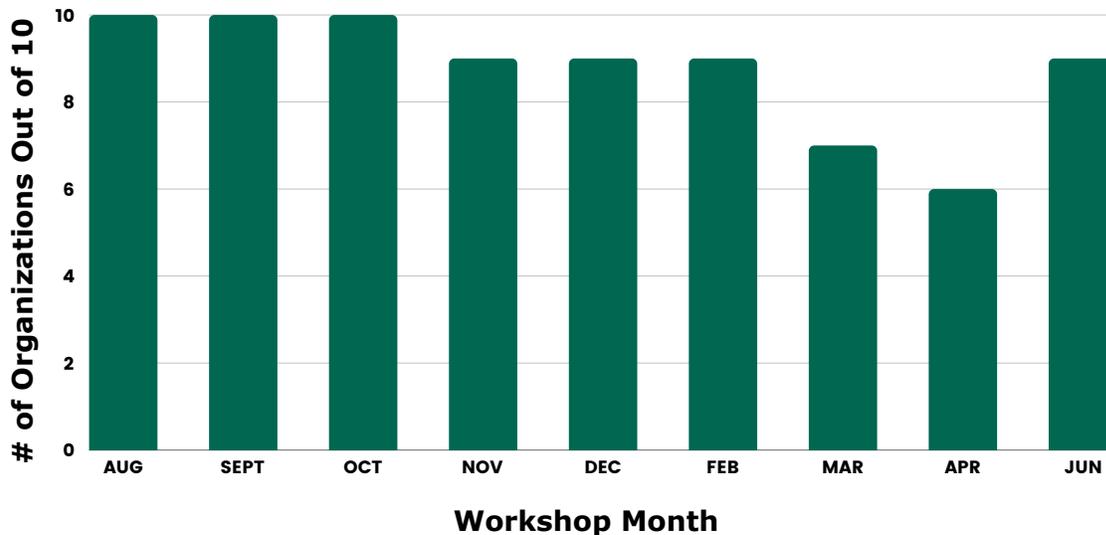
MONTHLY WORKSHOPS

Monthly workshops are much administrative work with a relatively short turnaround time. The workshops were designed based on the interests of organizations they put in the **logistics survey**. Before each monthly workshop, we send out three reminder emails with the agenda and often include a variety of opportunities such as funding, webinars, and training. We set the agenda, worked with internal and external presenters to plan their workshops, and created presentations/workshops when facilitated by the Civic Infrastructure team while working and prepping for ten monthly technical assistance requests. On average, organizations only missed 1-2 workshops, resulting in an 80% attendance rate. While the utility justice workshop had the lowest attendance, it was mentioned multiple times as one of the favorite workshops.

Each workshop included introductory dyads for groups to get to know each other more personally, building deeper, multifaceted connections. Presentations were made accessible to different learning styles —using visuals and text in presentations, interactive activities, and breakout rooms for each organization to dive into a pillar of the scorecard. All workshops are recorded with live transcription and shared with the cohort. A follow-up email with all relevant links to presentations, Zoom recordings, and associated resources and opportunities was sent to cohort members.

PROGRAM OFFERINGS SUMMARY

WORKSHOP ATTENDANCE

Organizations were requested to attend at least seven workshops out of the offerings. Most organizations had at least one attendee per organization. Below are two graphs that outline the overall organization attendance and individual attendance of the monthly workshops. As seen in the table below, April, the Anchor Institutions workshop, had the lowest attendance rate for overall organizations, with only six organizations present. This could be due to a lack of capacity at that time, resonance with the topic of engagement, or seasonal transition in the nonprofit world, to name a few. The impact of seasonal transition also appears when analyzing the overall attendance of the monthly workshops. November had the lowest overall attendee turnout, which can be directly correlated to the holiday season and the urgency to close out the end of the year. These intensive periods of the non-profit cycle should be considered when determining how many workshops and when they are held.

Monthly Workshop Attendance by Organization

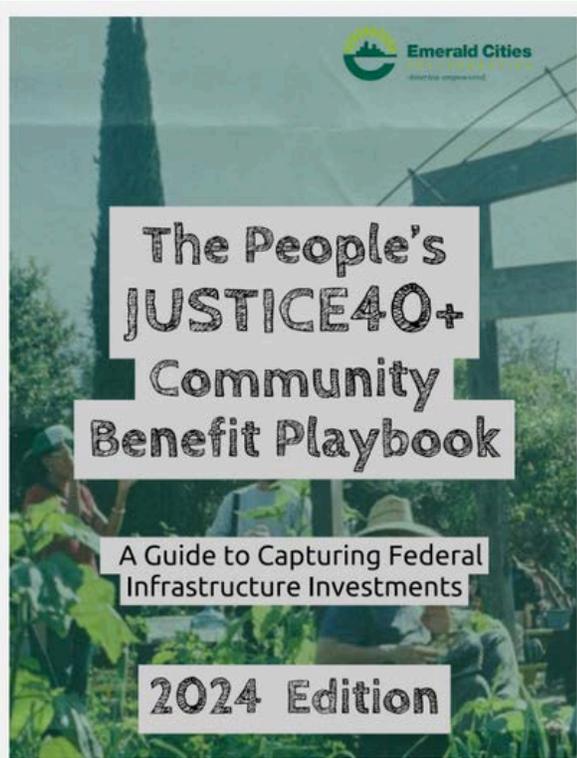**Overall Monthly Workshop Attendance**

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

August 2022: Welcome + Introduction to Emerald Cities Collaborative and Energy Democracy

Description: Introduction to **energy democracy**, what our stories are, how they connect to energy democracy, the pillars of energy democracy, and how to use the energy democracy scorecard. This workshop was a basic introduction to energy democracy and the energy democracy scorecard facilitated by the **National Director of Civic Infrastructure and Senior Energy Democracy Manager**. It introduced who Emerald Cities is and its mission reviewed the deliverables and what is expected in the program and gave space for introductions and team building. Twenty people attended. Each organization introduced who they were in 2 minutes. The workshop created space for groups to build camaraderie, deeper understanding, and appreciation for the work they are each doing and how to support each other. It was a moment of seeing the interconnectivity of the work organizations with something related to energy at its core. It was clear that attendees were present in the conversation. One thing that stood out was the focus on electricity and water as energy sources.

September 2022: Bridging the Gap From Community Organizing to Influencing Policy

Description: Provides an overview of the **Justice40 Initiative** and how the Federal Initiative can be leveraged for community benefit. It also provides an overview of The People's Justice40+ Community Benefits Playbook and how the Playbook can be used to advocate for community benefits. **The National Director of Civic Infrastructure, Senior Energy Democracy Manager, and Policy Director** presented on energy democracy and the connection to the Justice40/Community Benefit Plan. Clearly, the content was too dense and fast to absorb at once. A more condensed version of the presentation was re-recorded. It made us realize that we must remember that groups coming to this work come from very different levels of understanding and engagement with energy democracy. Additionally, we need to more intentionally design and practice presentations and take into deeper consideration the varied understanding.

October 2022: **Diving into the Social Justice Pillar + Leveraging Lived Experiences for Policymaking and Advocacy**
Description: **Sabrina Williams of Climate Nexus joined the Civic Infrastructure Senior Energy Democracy Manager** to offer a workshop on storytelling and the social justice pillar of the energy democracy scorecard. Preparing collaboratively took time; we were still working on it the week of the presentation.

November 2022: Utility Justice & Regenerative Energy
Description: The workshop was supposed to be facilitated by the Program Manager and Yesenia Rivera of Energy Allies but was instead facilitated by the **National Director of Civic Infrastructure and Senior Energy Democracy Manager.** The workshop reviewed energy democracy and its relationship to utility justice with a focus on the regenerative energy pillar of the energy democracy scorecard. It also introduced the Energy Democracy Project, a national group of organizations working for energy democracy. The workshop clearly laid out utility history, tactics, and fighting back strategies based on the Energy Democracy Project's People's Utility Justice Playbook. Only 12 people attended, but there was also a lot of story-sharing that generated good discussion and peer learning. Local Clean Energy Alliance was uplifted due to their utility justice campaign with Reclaim Power.
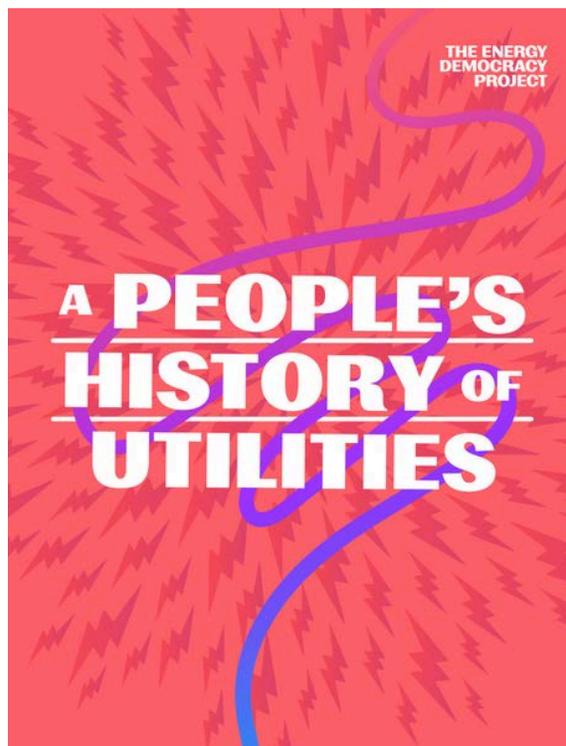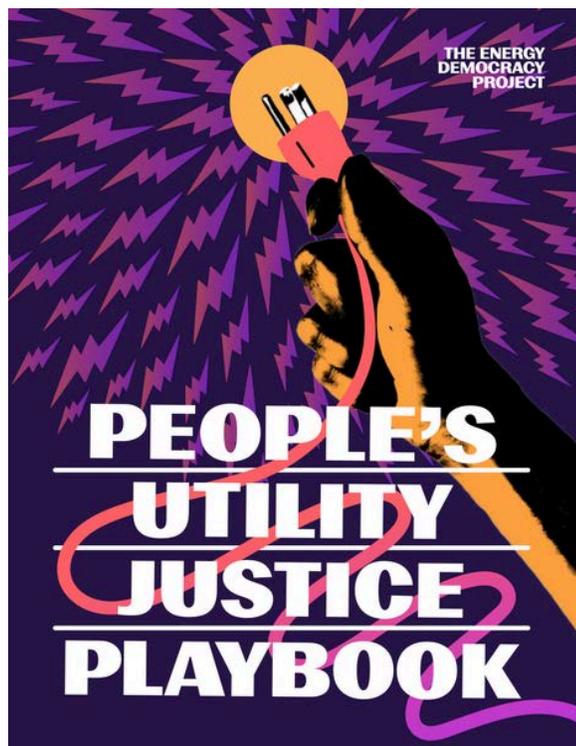
December 2022: Equity in the Clean Energy Workforce
Description: This workshop was facilitated by **Steve Gelb, the ECC Northwest Regional Director**. The presentation was organized by including information about workforce development and local hiring and using the moral economy pillar of the scorecard in organizational breakout sessions. Steve also added another question to the pillar that was relevant based on the work that he does, labeling this question as Diverse Representation. The below image was a suggestion from Steve of a question to the Moral Economy pillar of the Energy Democracy Scorecard.


MORAL ECONOMY

| | Extractive (0-1) | | Better, but NOT Good or Great (2-5) | | | | Energy Democracy (6-7) | |
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Diverse Representation	The clean energy workforce is composed of almost exclusively white men.		The workforce is open to all races and genders but lacks a planned program to erase past & current racist and sexist practices.		The workforce is becoming more diverse with training programs focused on "under-represented" groups and a pathway to fair representation.		The clean energy workforce reflects the race and gender diversity of the community within all trades and all managerial levels.	

February 2023*: **Community Engagement in Policy Development**
Description: This workshop was led by **Simran Noor,** who co-created the **wepowerpolicy.org** toolkit to deepen the practice of policy organizing and collective governance and policy-makers who are looking at how to do policy differently. It gave a strategic outline for organizing communities to impact and shape policy that uses a community-centered process to create transformative change and to add to the many voices calling for a change of status quo, top-down policymaking. This workshop was particularly engaging as more cohort members shared their own personal experiences with community-driven policymaking. Below is an excerpt from Simran's presentation.


Status Quo vs Participatory Policymaking
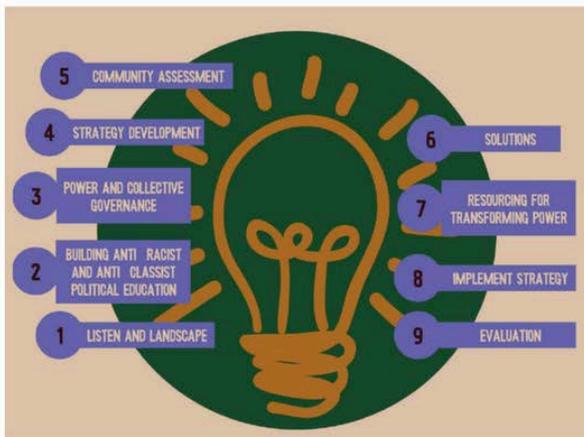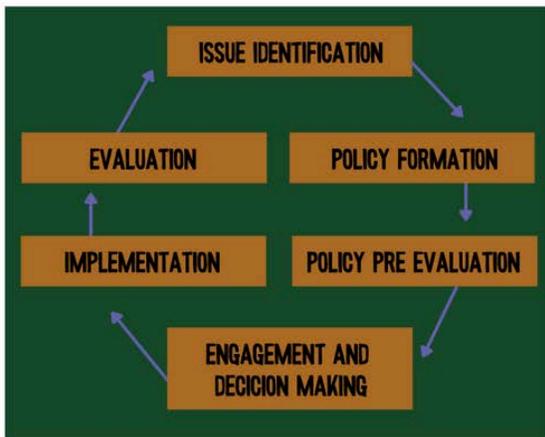
March 2023*: Using mapping in organizing and storytelling to advance equitable policy*
Description: Esther Min, Director of Environmental Health Research Partnerships at Front and Center, led this workshop on the **Washington State Environmental Health Disparities Map** - how and with whom it was created and used in organizing and shaping policy. She discussed the process for deciding what data is useful to use, what and where was data sourced from, and how to use it as an advocacy tool.
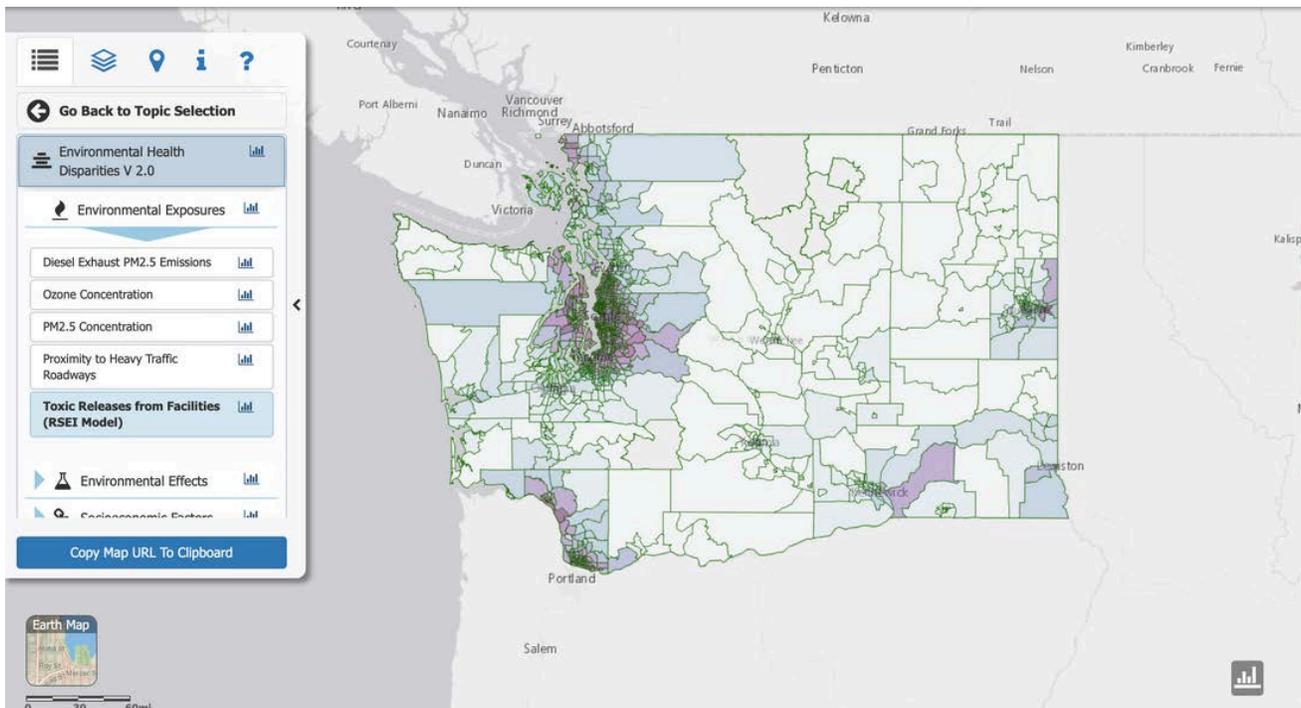
April 2023*: Anchor Engagement to Advance Community-Based Needs*
Description: ECC staff Carli Yoro, Mandy Lee, and Katie Del Castillo-Beltran led this workshop, talking about the **anchor institution relationships** that Emerald Cities Collaborative holds, the definition of an anchor institution, as well as outlining steps for communities to engage with anchor institutions to achieve organizational goals. In addition, it shared ingredients for a successful community-anchor strategy, nuts and bolts of strategies and obstacles, community engagement, and anchor engagement for a just transition.

**June 2023***: Celebration of Conclusion of ECCB Cohort 1*
Description: This workshop brought cohort members together to reflect on and celebrate the year's achievements.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE 1:1

Each organization received monthly 1:1 time with assistance, as possible, related to their energy democracy goals. Some technical assistance included researching funding opportunities, preparing public comments, translating federal and local legislation, and more. Some topics in the logistics survey that became offerings were individual presentations on mapping, net metering, community solar, and community engagement. TA was mostly offered through the Civic Infrastructure team and a few times when internal and outside experts were invited to the conversation. External experts provided TA pro bono, such as the **Environmental Protection Network**.

August TA focused on determining priorities and areas of support needed. September looked at how the facilitation of the EDS would be completed and any requests in the first TA session. October discussed a topic of interest. November began to discuss facilitating the EDS and the topics of support requested throughout the rest of the program. June 1:1 focused on exit interviews assessing the outcomes of those who completed the program by June.

The graph below outlines how many 1:1 technical assistance meetings we conducted each month. It shows that March had the lowest attendance of 1:1 technical assistance than any other month. While some organizations did not attend meetings, Civic Infrastructure worked with them outside of those scheduled times, and that was also work-intensive outside of meetings themselves, such as with IN NAACP.

Technical Assistance Attendance by Organization
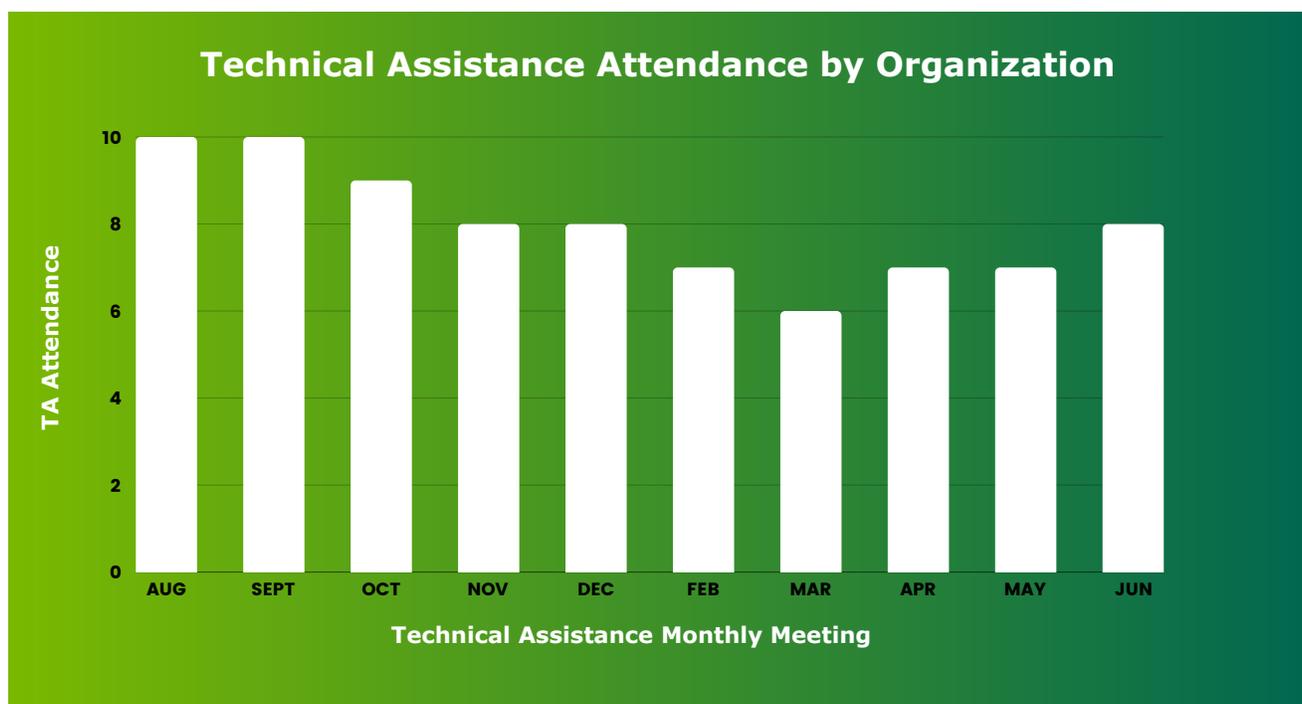
COMMUNICATIONS SUPPORT

One of the program's benefits was connecting with Climate Nexus, who provided a pro-bono communications strategy as experts on climate messaging. They offered storytelling workshops and developed toolkits, media content creation and placement, and general support on organizational messaging. Climate Nexus worked incredibly closely with IN NAACP, Black Appalachia Coalition (BLAC), Great Plains Action Society (GPAS), Rio Grande International Studies Center (RGISC), Highland Park Community Crisis Coalition (HPC3), and Knoxville Water and Energy Alliance (KWEA). The first photo is from the top of an article written by RGISC staff member Sheila Serna with the support of Climate Nexus. The bottom images come from an article that quotes Denise on the position of the Alliance on EV infrastructure.


TEXAS OBSERVER SINCE 1954

ENVIRONMENT

BIG LEAKS, LITTLE REGULATION

Lax regulation by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality means oil and gas facilities are able to pollute with impunity.

by **SHEILA SERNA**
SEPTEMBER 1, 2022, 11:33 AM, CDT

IBJ INDIANAPOLIS BUSINESS JOURNAL

Indiana plans 100 EV fast-charging stations on major roads

September 9, 2022 | Peter Blanchard

Denise Abdul-Rahman, who heads the Indiana Alliance for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion of Electric Vehicle Infrastructure and Economic Opportunities, is also advocating for apprenticeship and training programs for Black and racially diverse people to have opportunities to participate in installing and managing the stations.
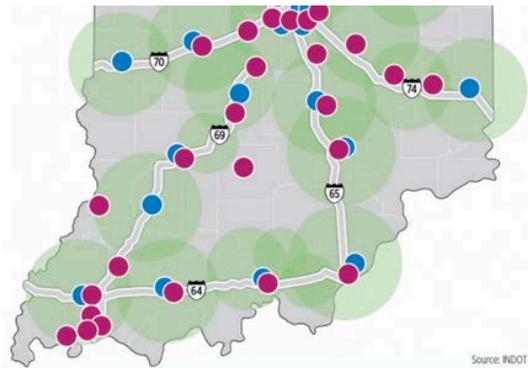
"The plight of our condition is so concerning that some of us are coming together around electric vehicles because we see the opportunity to make our communities more resilient to the impacts of climate change and air pollution," Abdul-Rahman said.

The alliance is calling on INDOT to revise its plan to include commitments to post transparent metrics online that show progress of inclusion on the project and to place EV charging stations in Black and racially diverse communities, along with the supporting grid upgrades such stations need.

DELIVERABLES

ENERGY DEMOCRACY SCORECARD

One of the deliverable requests of ECCB was completing an Energy Democracy Scorecard (EDS) with their communities. The EDS is a dense booklet with 9-11 questions organized around four pillars: social justice, moral economy, regenerative energy, and co-governance. Communities identify where their community lands along the "energy economy spectrum" concerning each question (extractive to energy democracy). The goals of the EDS are to build shared language and analysis around our energy systems and their impact on daily life to build community power. The Scorecard also serves as a tool for accountability and planning towards energy democracy and to ensure frontline communities are resourced. Since the program was virtual, the EDS was made to be interactive using a **Google Jamboard** - a virtual whiteboard - for each organization to visualize their responses of where their community is on the energy economy spectrum and take notes using virtual post-its with feelings, explanations, questions, push back, examples, etc. This tool is user-friendly, and we offered group and individual training on how to use it and how to build technology skills. It allowed us to follow and support the progress of completing the scorecard. Unfortunately, Google Jamboard will sunset in October 2024 and they recommend other tools like Miro and Mural.

Category	Extractive (0-1)		Better, but NOT Good or Great (2-5)				Energy Democracy (6-7)	
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Renewable Energy Generation and Procurement	Community achieves renewable energy goals by buying and selling renewable energy credits and all external energy generation is held by generating utilities or private third-party entities with no community ownership		80% of renewable energy on grid is through renewable energy credits 20% of energy is locally generated, but controlled by private utilities or third-party providers with no community ownership		50% of renewable energy on grid is through renewable energy credits. 30% is locally generated but controlled by private utilities or third-party providers with no community ownership 20% is communityowned/governed and locally generated and decentralized energy systems and/or power purchasing agreements with community-owned/governed projects in the state or region, no racial equity		100% is communityowned/governed/governed and locally generated and decentralized energy systems and/or power purchasing agreements with community owned/governed projects in the state or region. There is clear investment and prioritization of Black, Brown, Indigenous and EJ led projects.	
Energy Source	Energy is almost all extractive coming from sources such as: natural gas, coal, nuclear, coal waste, oil, and nuclear		Energy efficiency is recognized as first conversation fuel, with deep investments in efficiency, but less than 50% of energy is from renewable resources		Energy efficiency is recognized as first conversation fuel, with deep investments in efficiency, and 50 – 90% of energy is from renewable resources		Energy efficiency is recognized as first conversation fuel, with deep investments in efficiency, and 100% Renewable Energy	
Energy Resilience	The energy system is completely centralized and the region could lose power due to a brown-out, black-out, or climate disasters		The energy system is still centralized, less than 10% of energy system has community microgrids around the region that can provide power in case of disasters or grid failure		30% of the local energy grid is decentralized with communityowned/governed systems and microgrids		Over 50% of the local energy grid is communityowned/governed systems and microgrids, there is stability and easy access to energy resources in case of any disaster or grid-failure	

Each community utilized the EDS in different ways. Monthly workshops introduced each of the pillars connected to a particular topic, how to facilitate a conversation around the questions, and how to use the Jamboard. These workshops on the EDS were meant to act as train-the-trainers, hoping organizations would take what they learned and implement it with their communities. Some organizations requested more support than others to facilitate the completion of the EDS on their own. The EDS is a lot of heavy information with questions that people don't always know the answers to or would even think to ask.

TYPE OF FACILITATION SUPPORT

Organizations requested different types of support to facilitate the Energy Democracy Scorecard. All organizations received training and materials to complete the EDS in their communities during the monthly workshops and technical assistance meetings. It was then up to the community's needs to determine how they needed us to support them in completing the EDS with their community. The pie chart below shows the percentage of organizations that facilitated EDS ultimately independently, virtual facilitation support, and in-person facilitation support. Being able to meet in person significantly impacted the relationships developed on a personal and professional level.

Type of Facilitation Support

Virtual
30%

Independent
50%

In-Person
20%
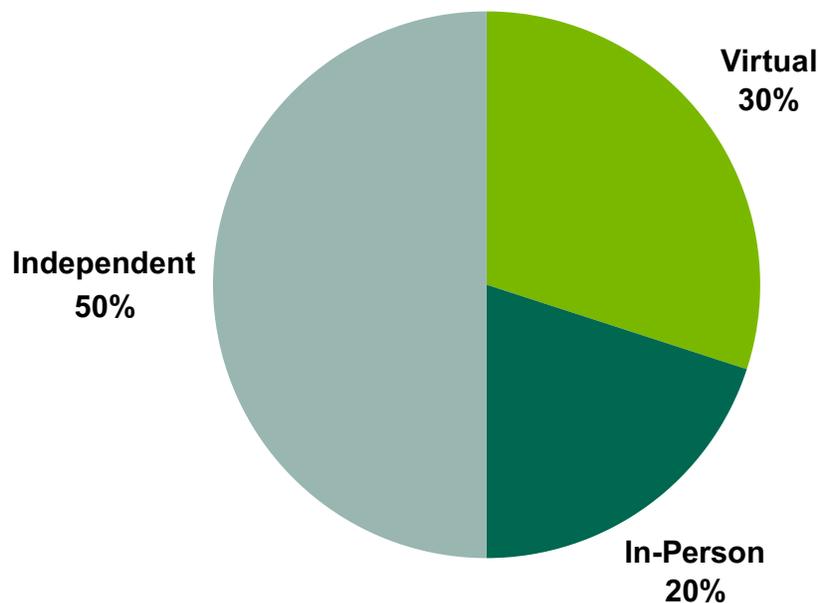
COMPLETELY INDEPENDENT FACILITATION

Knoxville, Water, and Energy Alliance (KWEA), Hijra House, and Great Plains Action Society (GPAS) were three organizations that were able to facilitate the completion of their EDS completely on their own. Their introduction to energy democracy and EDS came at exactly the right time in their work, as they are not only organizing the community to understand and be driven by the values of energy democracy but also to become very aware of the available federal funding that can move their work forward in energy.

Highland Park Community Crisis Coalition (HPC3) had more experience and a deeper understanding of energy democracy than most other cohort members, especially as they are part of the Energy Democracy Project and had created their own Blueprint for Energy Democracy before participating in the cohort. While it took a while, HPC3 completed the EDS with their community without additional support from ECC staff.

IN-PERSON FACILITATION SUPPORT

Rio Grande International Studies Center (RGISC) invited ECC to co-facilitate their first workshop in-person as a train-the-trainers and then supported workshop design for their three subsequent workshops they facilitated on their own.

Human Rights Coalition responded to two pillars during monthly workshops, and ECC co-facilitated its last two in-person workshops. Human Rights Coalition addresses energy through the lens of environmental injustice in placing prisons on coal ash sites, integrating concepts of abolition and environmental justice more deeply into energy democracy by reframing some of the questions, especially in the moral economy pillar. In presenting ideas of energy democracy, we highlighted things like Chevron funding police foundations across the country and how that impacts our ability to live in clean environments. Photo above is at the Human Rights Coalition office facilitating the EDS.

(Top Photo above is at the Human Rights Coalition office facilitating the EDS.
Bottom Left Photo: Facilitating EDS with RGSIC
Bottom Right Photo: Facilitating EDS Train-the-Trainers with RGISC)

VIRTUAL FACILITATION SUPPORT

IN NAACP Environmental and Climate Justice Hub met bi-weekly for 16 months, tackling 1-2 questions each meeting, which ECC facilitated. This gave ECC an intimate understanding of the context of conversations and being able to dive deeper into hearing what people have to say from their respective places in Indiana. Even with such an integrated approach, it was still, at times, hard to directly connect the questions in the EDS to the tangible work people are doing on the ground, yet it also provided a framework for how to think about approaching some of the work they are doing on the ground. This type of partnership that was built through the facilitation of the EDS allowed us to build community with the IN NAACP ECJ Hub and support them in all the ways mentioned in the outcomes. It allowed us to help their electric vehicle infrastructure work organically with other organizations; they were poised to take real advantage of the opportunities offered through technical assistance, individual facilitation support, and Climate Nexus support. They had already been organizing and preparing around Electric Vehicle infrastructure advocacy, and the EDS provided added information and questions to think about while developing their plans. And ECC team expertise provided added capacity to make their voices more powerful.

With Sacred Places Institute, we combined virtual and in-person support. The Senior Energy Democracy Manager worked closely with SPI staff to co-design their workshop and feel comfortable presenting the content of energy democracy. The manager also provided virtual introductory support at the beginning of the workshop, and the ECC Eco-Communicator supported in-person note-taking at their convening.

ENERGY DEMOCRACY SCORECARD REFLECTIONS

Working through EDS with communities demonstrated that it can be challenging to work through the questions on a variety of levels - often resulting in spelling out literally the poor state our communities are in due to the extractive economy. The content is heavy to often be able to get through the content itself. There were some questions about what some terms meant - some were in the full Energy Democracy Scorecard, but there were some questions that also used acronyms that were not spelled out.

One of the goals of EDS is to build shared language and power, so it needs to have a group of at least two people working on each pillar. It takes some time for people to fully see the purpose and how the EDS moves their work forward, however continuous conversation and workshops make this more clear. As we become more and more familiar with the EDS as it relates to the organization's mission and work, it will be easier for us to know how to center the work they are doing within the EDS questions.

(Photos from RGISC in-person EDS workshop)

COMMUNITY BENEFITS PLAN

One of the ECCB goals was to use community responses generated on the EDS to inform the **Community Benefits Plan** (CBP). The hope was to prepare communities with a plan for when federal funding becomes available for "disadvantaged communities" based on the Justice40 Executive Order. A template of questions was created to guide communities in how they would articulate such a plan, starting with identifying the community, the problem, objectives, scope of plan, strategies, short/long-term goals, stakeholder mapping, resources, and next steps. While transcribing responses from the EDS for the CBP, responses were pulled that directly related to each organization's already existing work as much as possible, particularly from what was requested and worked on in TA sessions.

Community Benefit Plan Questions

MAJOR PROBLEMS:	this should be connected to a current initiative of your work or an initiative you and your community want to engage with. LANGUAGE: can come from materials you've already developed or can be developed with the support of Climate Nexus and/or ECC.
OBJECTIVES of CBP	(i.e. policy initiative to increase investment in renewables, increase green jobs for communities, lower energy burden, etc) - this should connect to current objectives of your work or new objectives that build on the work you are currently engaging in. LANGUAGE: can come from current materials you've already developed or can be developed with the support of Climate Nexus and/or ECC.
COMMUNITY VOICE	used to complete scorecard who did you complete the scorecard with?
NARRATIVE OF COMPLETED EDS	to provide context/a landscape analysis and, using the completed EDS, naming the benefits you want to see realized in your communities.
SCOPE OF PLAN	is it a community-wide plan (target community), a sector-specific plan (energy, water, food, workforce, green jobs) or a population-specific plan (e.g., low-income, racial, ethnic group. etc)?
STRATEGY (IES)	you and your community are currently engaging in and/or are planning to implement. LANGUAGE: can come from current materials you've already developed or can be developed with the support of Climate Nexus and/or ECC.
STAKEHOLDER & ASSET MAPPING	who are partners you want in this space, who are the decision makers, who holds relevant resources to help realize these benefits, who is missing from the conversation?
RESOURCES	that can help you meet your objectives. ECC will help identify federal, state and local agency funding that can be targeted to help meet your objectives, particularly those tied to the Justice40 Initiative.
SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES	what can you achieve in the short-term that leads to your overarching goals?
NEXT STEPS	what actions and activities will you carry out to reach your short-term and long-term goals?

NARRATIVE

The narrative was a deliverable to reflect the way the organizations were able to use the funding. It was initially offered as an opportunity for storytelling that could be submitted in any format. As we recognized that the EDS took up a lot more capacity than expected, we designed an exit interview to capture each organization's outcomes and impact, which can be read about in **notable outcomes** (next section).

NOTABLE OUTCOMES & IMPACT

OUTCOMES + IMPACTS

Organizations noted the ability to increase their capacity to achieve equitable policy changes and community engagement activities, networking and connections, application support, and increased funding due to their participation in ECCB. The ability to fund positions indeed added capacity for moving their work forward. Additionally, organizations collectively fundraised $5.5million+ based on email notifications, decision-maker meetings, or networks connected through the ECCB program. The NEVI work that IN NAACP has been doing has led to gaining attention and meetings with Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg to understand the importance of a just transition, the need to reduce pollution, and the importance of prioritizing job benefits for disadvantaged communities. Another notable outcome reported by SPI was that they attended the UN Permanent Forum for Indigenous Peoples and were able to present a resolution on the floor to the chairs. KWEA leveraged $70,000 from United Way and $25,000 from the anchor institution, the University of Tennessee.
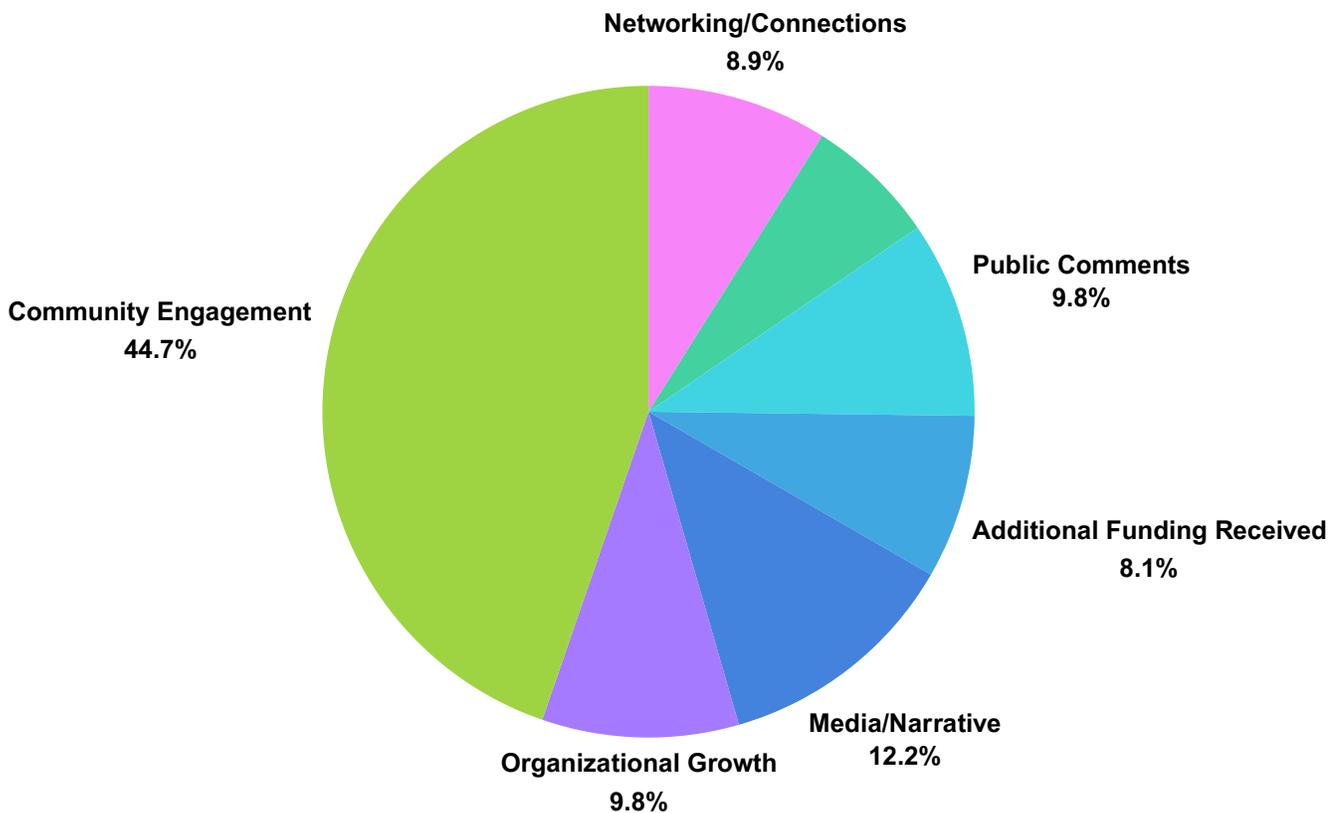
Facilitation of the scorecard allowed supported communities to integrate energy democracy more deeply in their work. The EDS was an instrumental tool to collect community feedback and create community plans collectively to make energy utilities more sustainable and just, as a way to reclaim power and energy as a human right that is deserved and a birthright. In addition, communities expressed not only an obligation but an opportunity to participate in the transformation of people's knowledge bases. Participating in this program provided a framework to address and solve social justice issues that stem from historical and structural economic inequity. Many organizations reported having a deeper understanding of how the extractive energy system is extracting from land and labor, which needs to be assessed more profoundly and will require change on a deep systemic level. LCEA used the co-governance pillar of the EDS to inform and support its position within the Community Choice program.

The diagram below highlights some of the overarching outcomes and impacts of the ECCB program based on participant interviews. The circles represent the number of outcomes achieved, the rectangles represent outcomes, and the transparent boxes represent the impact. (Image Cover of BLAC Storytelling Toolkit)

OUTCOMES

	COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	GRANT APPLICATION SUPPORT	PUBLIC COMMENTS	ADDITIONAL FUNDING RECEIVED
Impacts	building shared language and analysis and community power	capacity building, access to additional funds/resources	refined community benefits, articulated equity benchmarks, participatory policy-making	increased recognition and $500k+ increased funding to support work
#s	55+	8+	12+	10+

OUTCOMES

	MEDIA NARRATIVE	ORGANIZATIONAL GROWTH	NETWORKING & CONNECTIONS
Impacts	amplify equity advocacy, BIPOC voices	capacity building to carry out the work effectively	building community power, solidarity, and connections
#s	15+	12+	11+

The pie chart below illustrates the percentage of outcomes that were achieved based on ECCB participation - based on outcomes above. Based on these results, it is clear that ECCB achieved its goals including storytelling, policy change, and increased capacity and resources.

Networking/Connections
8.9%

Public Comments
9.8%

Community Engagement
44.7%

Additional Funding Received
8.1%

Media/Narrative
12.2%

Organizational Growth
9.8%

FUNDING OUTCOMES

Funding was mostly unrestricted, with the notable exception that it could not be used for lobbying. All ten organizations reported using funding for stipends for organizing, overhead costs, contracts, in-person convenings, and community engagement events. The organizing stipends made a big difference to the work across all organizations, especially in funding people to do the work. For KWEA, it was the first time they received funding for their alliance, which gave them leverage when they applied for other funds they were aware of through ECC and other sources. Additionally, the Human Rights Coalition was able to produce a documentary about their Toxic Prisons campaign called "I Can't Breath," as well as begin to brainstorm an environmental justice curriculum for those incarcerated and their families. Through being part of this cohort, organizations were connected to other networks and grants that propelled their work even further.

By receiving funding, communities expressed that many doors were opened, especially as there was increased visibility of the work of the organizations through the ECC network. The stipends assisted in organizing the work and provided food and other resources. Communities expressed value in gaining new relationships with networks and learning about each other's projects to cross-connect within the cohort and through networks offered through ECC relationships. One example was the opportunity for GPAS to become part of the PowerForce Cohort and was chair of the consulting team. While Microsoft did not fund its repatriation project, Save Our Future Fund heard about it through the same networks and offered consulting and funding.

The pie chart below represents the percentage of how funds were used.

Community Engagement 25.9%

Overhead 11.1%

Programs/Projects 25.9%

Personnel/Labor 37%
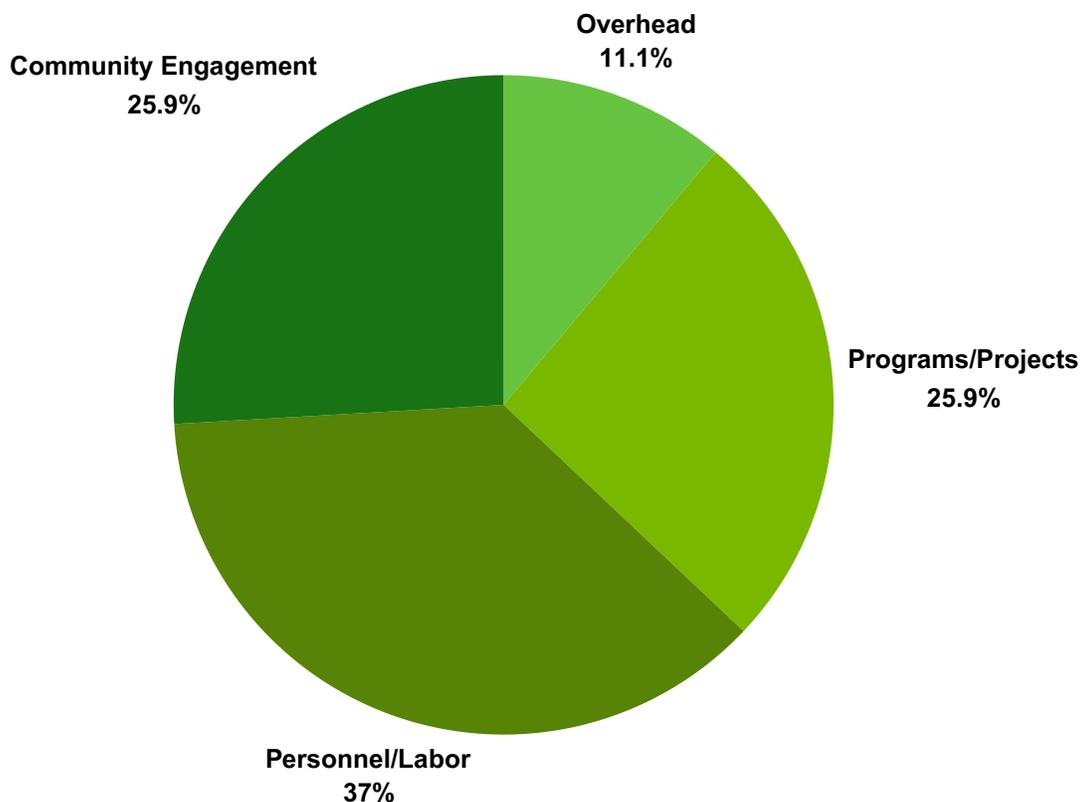
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OUTCOMES

Technical assistance provided through the program covered a wide range of topics, including supporting advocacy efforts for equitable implementation of federal programs, securing funding and resources for community projects, building organizational capacity through training and strategic planning, facilitating collaborations between groups, and, through a partnership with Climate Nexus, developing strategic communication strategies to amplify the organizations' narratives and perspectives. ECC leveraged its expertise and connections to help these groups navigate complex policy landscapes, access relevant funding opportunities, and strengthen their ability to drive equitable and sustainable development in their local communities. The technical assistance was tailored to each organization's unique needs and priorities, showcasing ECC's flexible and comprehensive approach to supporting grassroots efforts toward Energy Democracy policies and projects.

Organizations felt the opportunity provided more intimate interactions to achieve their specific goals. These intimate spaces were not just about the work but also about building caring partnerships in the work. They felt like ECC always had someone to connect them to achieve a goal. Many of these TA sessions resulted in connections to federal agencies and funding opportunities to support communities in accessing funding that is earmarked for disadvantaged communities. Below is an excerpt from an article in the Guardian that Denise Abdul Rahman of the IN NAACP was quoted in.

The Guardian

Is Biden's goal to build charging stations for electric cars leaving low-income areas behind?

The US government is throwing billions of dollars at building a network of charging stations to help boost uptake of electric cars. But some advocates worry the charging spots will bypass the disadvantaged communities that have until now found electric vehicles well beyond their reach.

In Indiana, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) has complained that the state's draft plan for the rollout of electric vehicle (EV) chargers has not properly consulted people of color, doesn't specify any chargers in Black-owned businesses and focuses the new infrastructure on highways that cut through neighborhoods, rather than the neighborhoods themselves.

"We think the process is flawed and rigged against Black communities, Black businesses and other frontline communities of color," said Denise Abdul-Rahman, Indiana state chair for the NAACP's environmental justice program. "There's been no real outreach here.

"We want the economic benefits of these chargers too, the modernized grids so we don't have so many power outages, to get our school buses off diesel. We don't want two Indianas and two Americas, one with roundabouts and clean air and charging stations and another riding around in fossil fuel cars and breathing in all the pollution. We want a just transition."

NAACP **IN NAACP Climate and Environmental Justice Hub**

Through the technical assistance provided by the Civic Infrastructure team - especially the Policy Director - and partner organizations (Climate Nexus and Lawyers for Good Government), ECC continues to support IN NAACP's advocacy efforts for equitable state implementation of the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Program funding. By providing support with NEVI program analysis and equity analysis of state electric vehicle planning documents (that included comments and recommendations for equitable NEVI implementation), IN NAACP was able to develop a Six Point Equity Plan and respond to several public comment periods (often with very limited timelines) that provided pointed feedback outlining the inequities of state plans and tangible recommendations to address their equity concerns. This advocacy resulted in refined community benefits, eliminating harmful language that could have led to disinvestment in Black and Brown communities, and articulated equity benchmarks that community members can use to hold the state accountable. IN NAACP was able to use these public comments and recommendations to amplify their equity advocacy by publishing press releases and Op-Eds. Further, when the state was told to remove disadvantaged business enterprise (DBE) goals and requirements from state NEVI implementation, through the support of the Civic Infrastructure team and Lawyers for Good Governance, IN NAACP was able to push back on the removal of these goals and advocate for alternative goals and requirements that would help increase Black and Brown worker and business participation within state NEVI plan implementation. This resulted in including XBE criteria in state contract proposals and a commitment from the Indiana Department of Transportation to work with IN NAACP to ensure state contracts for NEVI implementation are responsive to the state's equity benchmarks. The 1:1 TA with IN NAACP was at least four monthly meetings, not including bi-monthly meetings facilitating the EDS.

Additionally, through TA provided by ECC, IN NAACP is negotiating with their Community Benefits Plan to advocate for benefits from three projects in the process of development in Indianapolis: city-funded and owned Hilton capital improvements, a new soccer stadium, and a medical facility. Some benefits they seek are good wages and close childcare for workers, a guarantee to contract with the Black Business Consortium to support air pollution reduction (such as investment in EV charging stations), affordable housing, community/rooftop solar projects, and energy efficiency.

Climate Nexus worked in collaboration with a larger coalition led by the Indiana NAACP. Climate Nexus executed strategic communications efforts to hold state transportation officials accountable for the lack of racial equity in the EV infrastructure plan submitted to the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT). Communications efforts yielded op-ed placements (South Bend Tribune, Indianapolis Star Tribune), numerous local and national news coverage (The Guardian, Grist, Indianapolis Business Journal, Indiana Public Radio), and a digital advertising campaign targeting Indiana Department of Transportation and USDOT resulting in USDOT officials coming to Indiana to meet with Black leaders to hear their concerns about the state's plan.

Black Appalachia Coalition (BLAC)

Like IN NAACP, BLAC has requested and received additional 1:1 time and support beyond the monthly sessions. This included planning and facilitating conversations in two policy summits, as well as designing, facilitating, and producing a strategic plan report. The Policy Analyst and Legislative Director spent much time supporting BLAC in the Justice40 arena. Like all organizations, BLAC was connected to various networks, expanding and propelling their storytelling work forward. Climate Nexus worked with BLAC to implement strategic communication tactics for scaling BLAC's narratives that debunk the myth that Appalachia means rural and white to achieve equity, inclusion, and environmental policy changes that improve the lives of Black Appalachian families and communities. This included creating a storytelling toolkit for BLAC, a Facebook Live event with Bishop Marcia to talk about the toolkit and the power of storytelling, and a webinar to dive deeper into how their partners can use the toolkit.

Great Plains Action Society (GPAS)

The technical assistance provided to GPAS took the form of a thought partner around various energy and land maturation projects. This included discussing project language and potential opportunities. It also offered a deeper understanding and training about energy democracy and integration of the Energy Democracy Scorecard into GPAS's work. GPAS also received the Climate Nexus Microgrant of $25,000. ECC provided a tailored presentation on net metering in Iowa for the land repatriation project.

Hijra House

The TA supported Hijra House in securing funding through SRF, WECR, and the BuildingsUp Prize, propelling their work on sustainable community development and a just transition in the Gulf South in water, agriculture, and infrastructure. During TA sessions, Hijra House requested support in a deeper understanding of net metering in Mississippi and Justice40 and what it looks like in the work of Hijra House so they could use this knowledge to apply for grants. This included applying for the BuildingUp prize, Fund for Frontline Power, and Communities Infrastructure Alliance. The BuildingsUp Prize alone was an award of $200,000 for Phase 1. ECC worked closely with Hijra House to understand and access SRFs and get involved with the WECR, which resulted in Hijra House being awarded a grant from WECR and from American Rivers specifically to advance SRF efforts in Mississippi. These sessions also provided support on community and anchor engagement, as well as table-setting.
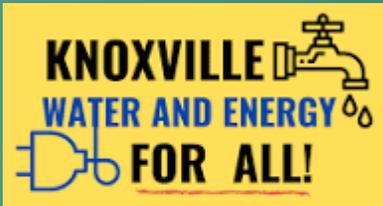
Knoxville Water and Energy Alliance (KWEA)

The ECCB TA supported KWEA's research and development of their Percentage of Income Payment Plan (PIPP), which they received a grant from UT Knoxville to carry out a demonstration last winter. This grant measures the benefits of well-being and supports documentation and evaluation of the process. Through meetings, ECC connected KWEA directly to the Department of Energy to increase understanding and receive specific support around PIPP. Additionally, the KWEA organizer's participation in ECCB TA yielded support to help develop their board, build a deeper understanding of energy democracy as it relates to their work, and how to create a community benefits plan, which they utilized in framing grant applications. Technical assistance also included using the technical tool Jamboard and organizing toolkits on energy democracy (such as the **POWER Energy Summit Toolkit** and the **People's Utility Justice Playbook**), which they used in later meetings with their team.

Rio Grande International Studies Center (RGISC)

ECC worked very closely with RGISC, especially on understanding and navigating Justice40. RGISC also designed and launched a **Justice40 Symposium** with the support and participation of ECC. Additionally, through connections provided by ECC, RGISC was connected with Matthew Tejada for a Community Change Grant, which ECC knew was targeting Laredo, TX, where they are based. A lot of time was spent learning about community engagement and popular education around energy democracy. This led to RGISC conducting three in-person workshops without facilitation support from ECC. As a result of opportunities shared by ECC to cohort participants, RGISC successfully applied for $25,000 from the Climate Nexus microgrant opportunity. Climate Nexus assisted with op-ed development and placement in the **Texas Observer** for RGISC. They renewed their grant as part of the second funding cycle of our Energy Equity Grant program.

Human Rights Coalition
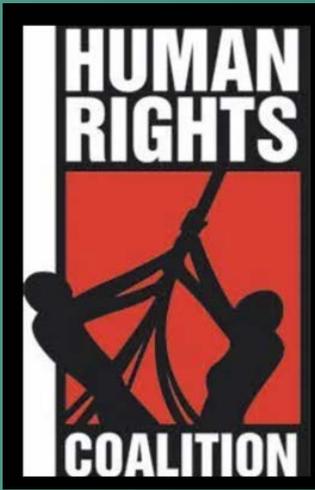
TA sessions were spent diving deeper into what energy democracy means, how it relates to abolition, and how to use their **documentary** of the Toxic Prisons campaign to create a public narrative for organizing around energy and environmental justice in and outside of prisons. This also included train-the-trainers workshops that developed skills in designing and facilitating popular education workshops on energy democracy and abolition, which is the basis for creating energy democracy programs for prisons. Technical assistance also included in-person co-facilitation support to complete the EDS. One TA session presented the use of mapping data in organizing work and understanding the conditions of communities.

ENERGY DEMOCRACY SCORECARD WORKSHOP

JULY 10, 2023
5:30-8:30 PM
DINNER INCLUDED

Join Human Rights Coalition and Emerald Cities Collaborative for an invigorating workshop that assesses where our communities are in terms of environmental, climate, racial, and economic justice. With the scorecard we will chart our pathways towards an energy economy system that works for all.

Human Rights Coalition Office:
316 N. 42nd, Philadelphia
Register:
www.xyz.com

Local Clean Energy Alliance (LCEA)

LCEA's 1:1 TA was focused primarily on supporting the development of their popular education regarding building decarbonization. ECC provided LCEA with materials such as ECC's Equity & Buildings: A Practical Framework, Building Electrification report, Climate Equity & Community Engagement in Building Electrification Toolkit, and Sustainable Design & Green Building Toolkit for Local Governments. ECC also flagged the Climate Nexus Energy Equity Grant program and provided a letter of support for their application. Additionally, ECC ensured LCEA's participation and funding to attend the Leadership Retreat for Green and Healthy Homes in 2023. ECC Bay Area also works closely with LCEA as they are both members of the Building Energy, Equity & Power (BEEP) Coalition and participated in an EJ coalition convened to equity concerns associated with the Bay Area Air Quality Management District's phase-out of residential gas appliances. Additionally, LCEA was one of the community partners that joined ECC's Anchors in Resilient Communities Convening to determine climate/food/local energy priorities to understand where local health anchors could better support these efforts. ECC Bay Area and LCEA continue to be in partnerships through conversations around community climate resilience efforts in the East Bay, specifically around how to advise the local CCA, Ava Community Energy, to build out their new Climate Resilience Hub Initiative that is set to roll out in 2024.

Highland Park Community Crisis Coalition (HPC3)

HPC3 was interested in discussing their Community's LEAP Scope of Work, which included how to formulate and specify their interested project. There was also much discussion about Justice40 and how it can benefit the Highland Park community. This included sharing information about the Department of Energy Community Energy Prizes and discussing the potential benefits and outcomes. Climate Nexus' Energy Transition team developed press materials and strategy for their ribbon cutting event that took place in 2023 (Press Release: Announcing PV x Dreambuilders partnership, Media advisory: Ribbon cutting event, Post-event press release). Climate Nexus pitched these materials to 53 reporters in the Detroit area. These materials brought visibility to the HPC3 member organization, Parker Village. They received much interest from journalists, many of whom didn't know about Parker Village and were hearing about the project for the first time. The ribbon-cutting event may not have been "enough news" for them to cover, but it developed interest from some in doing a profile or feature story. A few wanted to be kept in the loop on future developments.

Sacred Places Institute (SPI)

Being in the SoCal region, it was imperative to invite the ECC SoCal team to the meetings, which led to the development of a new relationship. ECC SoCal had been seeking to partner with an Indigenous group to increase representation at the many tables of which ECC is a part. Furthermore, they collaborated on various youth educational opportunities and improved access to workforce development. ECC and SPI discussed concerns about access to IRA and other federal funding opportunities for land rematriation and programming for tribes that are not federally recognized. This led to having a conversation with the Department of Interior to discuss this funding concern. ECC also designed and facilitated the training of the trainers on energy democracy and facilitating the EDS, which allowed the SPI staff to run their workshop for their community with little day-of support. Lastly, ECC supported efforts to write a letter responding to references to Indigenous communities in the LA Just Transition report.

Unexpected Collaboration: RGISC + GPAS

As a result of conversations in separate TA 1:1 sessions, the topic of eminent domain became known to be a part of the work of RGISC and GPAS. In response, a joint webinar was co-designed to understand the complexities of fighting against eminent domains and the ways that law is used to dispossess people from their land.

WORKSHOP OUTCOMES

Communities felt empowered in understanding that power/energy is a human right and that there is an obligation of popular education around the energy systems. Moreover, recognizing lived experience is an important form of expertise to achieve this empowerment. Communities want to reclaim their power both figuratively and technically. People expressed feeling increased passion for sharing this knowledge they gained about energy democracy, for some, particularly the residents in and out of the carceral systems, loved ones, family, friends, and neighbors, and keeping people informed.

The workshops offered participants new information that they found useful in their work. By learning more about the interconnectedness between current energy systems and corporate greed, which greatly influence government decision-making and impact everyday life, organizations recognized the importance of grassroots and community-centered work in taking the lead to self-determination and community equity.

Workshops highlighted in feedback included utility justice, the good governance pillar, regenerative energy systems, especially introducing energy democracy, the EDS, and the community benefits plan. For some organizations, it was the first time their community had deep conversations about how energy is related to daily life and their missions of justice, which inspired a different kind of action. The mapping workshop illuminated the power of data in democratizing and making data more accessible to underserved communities. The workshop on local hiring had organizations thinking about what opportunities exist and how communities already were and needed to engage with them.

While the April "Anchor Institution Engagement" workshop had the lowest attendance rate, those who attended found it helpful to really understand the different types of anchor institutions, how one's own organization can be an anchor institution, and how it can support true community-centered design.

TESTIMONIALS

" This grant helped re-energize the work and make it possible. We didn't have much funding before this. "

" Loved 1:1. Felt like I made friends, caring, could see intention of diving into work more deeply - nice to have personal attention, usually in big cohorts you don't have a chance to talk so much. "

" I was able to get a clearer understanding of the broader picture in terms of how industry is ultimately connected to corporations and greatly influences federal, state and local government decision making. Therefore, the importance of grassroots and community centered work is critical to take the lead to self-determination and community equity. "

" Understanding each others challenges and sharing collective solutions "

" Networking, it's good to know there are like minded individuals and groups who are passionate about social reform. This will be a good opportunity to connect with others. "

" We have an obligation and opportunity to participate in transformation of people's knowledge bases, of people's understanding and awareness of what utilities do, how they both fund and how they transmit their energies, using exploitive people and how government partners with these utilities in order to mask much of the source of the energies and process of communicating these energies to people's homes. It has caused me to become passionate about sharing the knowledge that I currently have, increasing the knowledge base for myself, and getting word out - residents in and out of the carceral system, loved ones, family. increasing passion to keep the public informed. "

" 1:1 [was] extremely helpful because it felt more personal, felt like we were thought partners, which you don't get in a cohort. My favorite part of the whole program because it was intimate and intricate. "
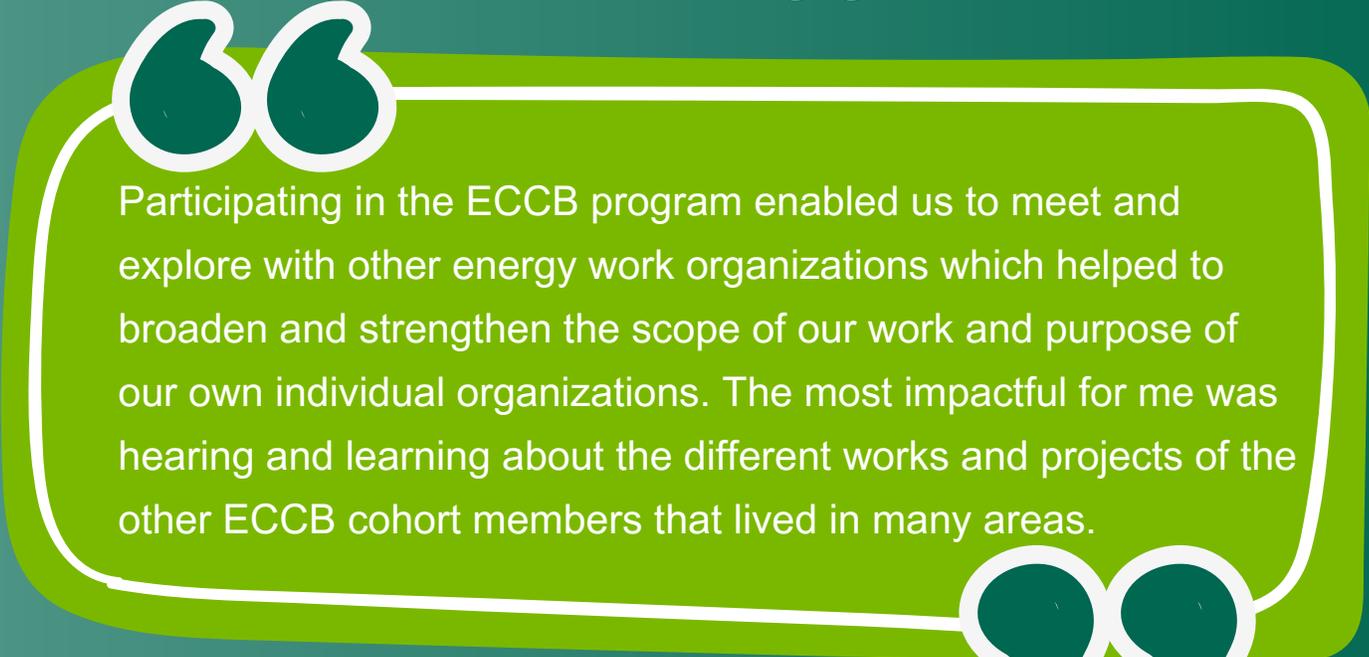
" Participating in the ECCB program enabled us to meet and explore with other energy work organizations which helped to broaden and strengthen the scope of our work and purpose of our own individual organizations. The most impactful for me was hearing and learning about the different works and projects of the other ECCB cohort members that lived in many areas. "

"The one on one sessions were impactful as they provided an opportunity for more intimate interactions for specific questions we may have had and space to explore ways to the goals we seek."

"The ECCB program equipped RGISC with new language and structures for advocating community resiliency and a just energy system for all. Our participation in the program has strengthened our general understanding of our current energy systems and has expanded our outreach efforts to communicate the importance of local control and proactive thinking. Aspects of the program that we would like to implement in our day-to-day work include providing future workshop participants with an interactive range of possibilities related to our projects."

"Participating in the ECCB program enabled us to meet and explore with other energy work organizations which helped to broaden and strengthen the scope of our work and purpose of our own individual organizations. The most impactful for me was hearing and learning about the different works and projects of the other ECCB cohort members that lived in many areas."

RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY

PRE-PROGRAM & ADMIN

- Increased clarity on definitions and expectations for application (ie. BIPOC, emergent, technical assistance, etc..)
- Appropriate time frame for outreach and engagement to networks for applying to the ECCB program
- Extended time to review applications carefully
- Engage previous cohort to be part of community review - redesign program and direction appropriately and participate in selecting a second cohort
- Host a webinar with financial offices and accounting staff with grantees and their fiscal agents to walk through the grantmaking process clearly. Also, put this date of the webinar as a mandatory event on the call for applications.
- Have weekly meetings with accounting with updated information on grantmaking until all grantmaking is complete.

WORKSHOPS & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- Take into account the administrative work associated and time needed to plan appropriately for each workshop and technical assistance 1:1
- Must have honorariums for outside facilitators/"experts"
- Limit workshops to quarterly
- Create more opportunities for community presenting and learning
- Update and finalize grant agreement with lawyer before call for applications goes out.
- TA 1:1 - ensure continuity of participants, particularly when working with community coalitions

DELIVERABLES

- Provide ample time and support for completing Energy Democracy Scorecard to inform Community Benefits Plan.
- Continued offering of pro-bono narrative support
- Create user-friendly tools to engage with the Energy Democracy Scorecard and Community Benefits Plan (for example - Mural to replace Jamboard)
- Reconsider organizational labor to complete deliverables

RECOMMENDATIONS

EXPLANATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

APPLICATION

- Increased clarity on definitions and expectations (ie. BIPOC, emergent, technical assistance, etc.)
- Outreach and engagement to networks
- Extended time to review applications carefully
- Engage previous cohort to be part of community review - redesign program and direction appropriately and participate in selecting a second cohort

In the title itself, it is important to define "emergent" and "BIPOC-led" more clearly. Regarding "emergent," some of the applicants were selected either due to taking their energy democracy work a step further in a slightly different direction or coming into the energy democracy space with the intention of beginning this journey. This both works and could be improved. As a group with varying levels of engagement with energy democracy, it allows for more stories and case studies to learn from one another. On the other hand, there are different target audiences when designing monthly workshops. Defining BIPOC-led could be inspired by how NEC Black Solidarity Economy Fund defines Black-led. Other applications also ask for specific demographic data about the organization. Because of this, we have changed the name to the Energy Communities Capacity Building program.

Another area of improvement is to have asked participants to respond to the question, "What technical assistance do you want from ECC?" This could help us curate a cohort that looks at "emergent" in a particular way. It also allows us to begin planning workshops and technical assistance at an earlier stage and bring people in earlier from within and beyond the organization to design very targeted workshops.
(Image below from RGISC Justice40 Symposium)

REVIEW PROCESS

(Photo from RGISC Justice40 Symposium)

For the multi-step review process, it would be helpful to give 2 months to review applications and/or bring extra reviewers in earlier. Depending on the goals of the program, members from Cohort 1 could be included to both co-design and review program design/expectations and applications.

GRANT AGREEMENT PROCESS

- Update and finalize grant agreement with a lawyer before the call for applications goes out.
- Host a webinar with Tola and accounting staff with grantees and their fiscal agents to clearly walk through the grantmaking process - and put this date of the webinar as a mandatory event on the call for applications.
- Have weekly meetings with accounting with updated information on grantmaking until all grantmaking is complete.
- Organizational financial information should be sent to the Chief Financial Officer right away to assess financial capacity for organizations, as this part took longer than expected. There was a lot of back and forth with the organizations to get the right information and paperwork, especially those organizations who have fiscal sponsors.

The grant agreement and transferring funds to organizations was a bit complicated, as the Civic Infrastructure team was not fully aware of the steps that needed to be taken. Now that we know, we have a template of the process to explain what to look for and what to expect regarding funds disbursement that could be turned into a 1-pager and shared right away in the welcome email. It took too long to disburse funds after organizations were accepted, which made it difficult for some organizations to be able to fully take advantage of program offerings. The grant agreement should have very clear deliverables associated with the program.

MONTHLY WORKSHOPS

- Take into account the administrative work associated with each workshop and time needed to plan appropriately
- Must have honorariums for outside facilitators
- Limit workshops to quarterly
- Create more opportunities for community presenting and learning
- Incorporate workshop feedback into upcoming workshops
- Create a 4-week process for designing the workshops:
  - Learning objectives/initial outline - include external presenters in grounding conversation
  - Fuller outline w/ initial script - review for flow & incorporate/coordinate w/ any external presenter materials
  - Testing script, initial PPT, internal run through
  - Full run-through of presentation/tech prep (Breakout rooms, chat management, links, jamboards, etc)
- Incorporate workshop feedback into upcoming workshops

When working with outside presenters, it is important to factor honorariums into the budget. Some key external support requires funding to dedicate time to a two-hour workshop. We must always consider who the audience is as we plan for multiple levels of engagement with energy democracy.

The program must rethink how the workshops are organized to be most useful and effective with the cohort. While there was a lot of positive feedback, some organizations still felt they were lost. We partially ameliorated this through the TA 1:1.

One idea is to have four main, more focus-driven sessions spread apart throughout the program or intensive workshops at the beginning of the program. Workshops could offer more time to use the tools tangibly with the work each organization is doing.

(Photo to the right is from the RGSIC Justice40 Symposium)

COMMUNITY BENEFITS IMPROVEMENTS

- In the set-up of this program Community Benefits Plans were rooted in completion and detail of discussion of the Energy Democracy Scorecard, which took longer than planned.

While we provided a template, we were limited in how we could offer support in a direct way to translate the EDS responses to a CBP for a number of reasons. ECC staff did not facilitate most of the community workshops on the EDS and even though we created a Jamboard to document responses - it was not always utilized, capturing richness of conversation in a post-it is unrealistic, making it difficult to support from the backend to translate responses for the CBP.

Due to staff capacity, working on the CBP throughout the program was challenging because it relied upon responses from EDS, which took much longer to complete than expected.

There were gaps in the CBP that were hard to fill because the EDS responses did not always directly relate to an organization's work, even when coupling it with what was learned in technical assistance meetings and application proposals. In addition, each organization was at a different stage of knowledge, capacity, and interest to engage with the preparatory federal funding goals that the CBP was meant to support.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE IMPROVEMENTS

To coordinate 10 individualized meetings each week and work on what is needed in between was a lot of administrative work on limited staff capacity in regards to the wider program and other programs. It could also be beneficial to have funding for bringing in outside organizations to provide some direct 1:1 support. This would also relieve some of the administrative research and prep that is put into the 1:1. To bring outside technical assistance into these spaces would require the consideration of stipends.

DELIVERABLES

Overall, organizations provided mixed feedback on how useful the EDS was to their work. Some organizations found it integral in learning about their community needs and building their collective knowledge around energy systems. At the same time, one organization shared, "Deliverables were very time-consuming and not super relevant to our work. They ended up taking a lot of our time. We appreciated the tools, but they didn't line up with where we were at in our campaign."

It is important to select organizations based explicitly on the support of the EDS, work closely to align the use of the EDS as a tool with community work, and/or reconsider the EDS as a deliverable.

(Visual Summary of the Social Justice Pillar of the Energy Democracy Scorecard)
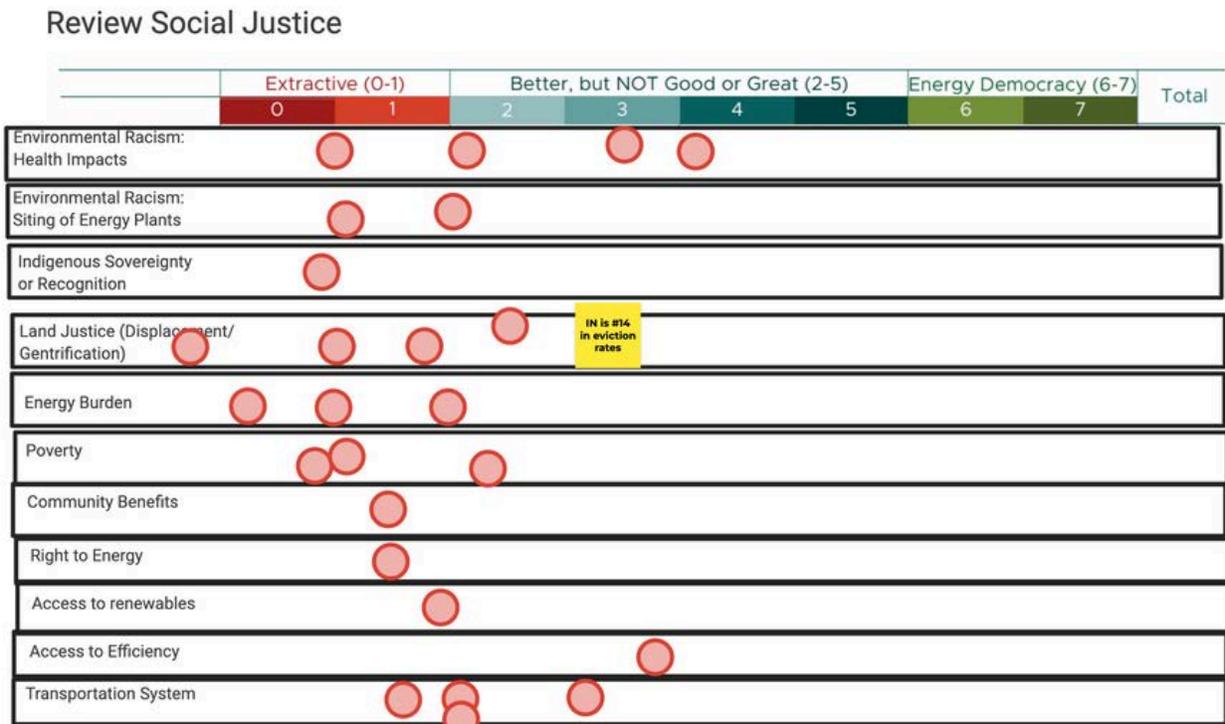
NEXT PHASE OF ECCB

One outcome of the ECCB program is to continue to be partners in the work with organizations we have already begun to create deep relationships with since the beginning of the program. With tiered programming and potential integration across ECC programs, it is an opportunity to offer increased support and capacity-building for organizations that ECC already has relationships with, as well as build new relationships organically through the support of localized organizing.

Tiered Programming

- Tier 1 will work with organizations who are building their language, analysis, and strategy through the lens of energy democracy focusing on maximum increased capacity.
- Tier 2 has taken shape to support three organizations from Cohort 1 to move their energy democracy work forward in the realms of cooperatively owned energy systems, abolition and energy democracy, and electric vehicle infrastructure implementation.

Potential Coordination across ECC

ECC Regional Offices: These offices hold a myriad of relationships with local community-based organizations and conduct a lot of community engagement programming.

- With community as the guiding star, there could be an opportunity to increase the capacity of organizations that Regional Offices are currently working with or new ones they want to build relationships with, integrating energy democracy principles and outcomes.

Model for designing a capacity-building program based on ECCB findings

- Low-effort, clear application process
- Unrestricted Funds
- Low-effort/aligned deliverables
- Community Learning & Peer Sharing
- Technical Assistance

APPENDIX

1. Energy Democracy Scorecard and facilitation guides and presentations
2. Energy Communities Capacity Building Program Application
3. Template for Energy Democracy Scorecard Jamboard
4. Template for Energy Democracy Visual Summary
5. Template Community Benefits Plan

GLOSSARY

- **ECCB:** Energy Communities Capacity Building Program, formerly known as Emergency Communities Capacity Building Program
- **EDS:** Energy Democracy Scorecard
- **ECC:** Emerald Cities Collaborative
- **EDP:** Energy Democracy Project - a network of organizations working for energy democracy