

# ANNOUNCEMENT

# ECCBDC 2024-2026



**Emerald Cities**  
COLLABORATIVE  
*America empowered.*

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ECC's National Civic Infrastructure team and DMV  
Region Join Forces for Transformative Impact



## Strengthening Local Capacity in Energy Communities: Emerald Cities Collaborative Invests \$225,000

**Emerald Cities Collaborative (ECC)** is excited to announce its continued commitment to empowering energy communities with a significant investment of \$225,000. Of this total, \$150,000 has been invested on a national scale as part of the ongoing [Energy Communities Capacity Building \(ECCB\) program](#). Additionally, \$75,000 has been specifically allocated to a place-based cohort in Washington, DC, to advance and expand energy democracy. This initiative has successfully engaged with ten organizations from 2022 to 2024.

### **Expanding Energy Democracy: Introducing the Tier 1 and Tier 2 Cohorts**

Building on the success of the first cohort, the National Civic Infrastructure team is thrilled to launch a second iteration of the ECCB program. This phase includes a new place-based Tier 1 Cohort in Washington, DC, in collaboration with the ECC's DMV region, as well as continued partnerships with three organizations from the initial cohort in a Tier 2 Cohort capacity.

#### **Tier 1 Cohort**

In a strategic partnership with the ECC DMV Regional office, the Tier 1 Cohort in Washington, DC, comprises five dynamic organizations:

- **Young, Gifted, and Green**
- **Interfaith Power and Light DMV**
- **Green New Deal DC**
- **Washington Interfaith Network**
- **Dreaming Out Loud**

These organizations will benefit from grant funding, bi-monthly in-person workshops, and bi-monthly virtual technical assistance to deepen their energy democracy initiatives. This program also includes the completion of an [Energy Democracy](#)



[Scorecard](#) assessment focused on DC, aimed at shaping policies and projects that enhance their existing efforts.

## Tier 2 Cohort

The Tier 2 Cohort continues the journey with three organizations from the first ECCB Cohort:

- **Human Rights Coalition**
- **Cleveland Owns**
- **Black Sun Light Sustainability**

These groups will receive grant funding and monthly technical assistance to further advance their energy democracy projects and policies.

## Meet the Tier 1 Cohort Members: Pioneers in Energy Democracy

**Interfaith Power & Light (DC.,MD.,NoVA)** is a grassroots organization working with over 1,200 congregations in the region and thousands more individuals. We work to support these communities and people of faith as they live by their values to care for our common home and our most vulnerable neighbors. This includes going green in their houses of worship and speaking out for creation care and environmental justice.

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**Dreaming Out Loud's (DOL)** mission is to create economic opportunity within Washington, DC's marginalized communities by creating a healthy, equitable food system. DOL has developed an asset-based approach that engages, empowers, and leverages community institutions in developing solutions. Founded in 2008, DOL was created as a response to the persistent disparities in Wards 7 & 8. Although these wards are historically disenfranchised neighborhoods within the district, the realization that these disparities were at the heart of an unsustainable food system motivated us to seek solutions. Through our programs and strategic partnerships, we have developed an innovative approach to providing economic stimulation in addition to food access in the district. DOL operates in five main program areas within the food system: Urban Agriculture, Food Distribution, Food Entrepreneurship Training, Workforce Development, and Advocacy.



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**Washington Interfaith Network (WIN)**, founded in 1996, is a broad-based, multi-racial, multi-faith, strictly non-partisan, District-wide citizens' power organization rooted in local congregations and associations. WIN is committed to training and developing neighborhood leaders, addressing community issues, and holding elected and corporate officials accountable in Washington, DC. WIN's 45 dues-paying members represent 25,000 families in every section of the district and reflect its theological, racial, geographic, and economic diversity. All of WIN's work comes out of dedicated community listening. Right now, key priority areas include preservation of affordable housing, building Black equity through homeownership, creation of healthy homes free from fossil fuels, and violence prevention.

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**The Green New Deal for DC (GND4DC)** was founded in 2022 by environmental justice leaders in DC to push forward, pass, and implement legislation about, and provide education about, the intersection of climate action, racial and environmental justice, labor issues, housing, and pollution. The GND4DC believes in a District where workers are respected and paid fairly to build and retrofit the infrastructure we need to weather the climate crisis, from public transportation to housing to schools to lead pipe removal. Our mission is to fight for racial justice, climate resilience, and good jobs by bringing about a bold Green New Deal for Washingtonians that creates a healthier, safer, and more just city for all. Our top issues are a campaign for social housing and lead pipe removal. We are also working on transportation affordability and accessibility, and a just transition to renewable energy.

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**Young, Gifted & Green** is a national civil rights and environmental justice organization based in Washington, DC, dedicated to combating environmental injustices in disadvantaged communities. Our mission centers on advocacy, education, and community empowerment, while upholding our core values of community, education, and equity, ensuring that the voices of those most affected by environmental issues are heard and prioritized. Through our comprehensive 4 Point Action Plan, we raise resources to support impacted communities and educate the



public about environmental challenges and mobilize communities on building strategies to create healthier and safer environments. Our initiatives range from community leadership training and development (including workforce development) and youth engagement to public policy advocacy and digital education platforms. By building coalitions with like-minded organizations, we strive to create lasting change and promote environmental justice for all.

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## **Meet the Trailblazers: Tier 2 Cohort Members Advancing Energy Democracy**

**The Toxic Prisons Campaign of the Human Rights Coalition** has been in collaboration with Emerald Cities Collaborative for more than 2 years now. We have been the gracious recipients of 2 grants to assist us in 2 dynamic strategies. As part of our mission to engage, educate and prepare persons who are caged behind prison walls and their families, loved ones and friends outside, we desire to help them better understand the extractive nature of the utility system, its roots in systemic racism and its ongoing deleterious impact on society and especially on Justice impacted persons. As our unique lens affords us and Nora with Emerald Cities has labored excellently with me to work to bring to life Toxic Prisons Campaign Documentary entitled 'I Can't Breathe: The Toxic Prisons Campaign's Fight for Environmental Justice and currently a carceral based energy democracy scorecard which we will turn into a curriculum to be used inside and outside of prison walls, as we seek to strengthen our educational outreach and prepare people to understand and work towards a regenerative economy inclusive of a regenerative energy system in Pennsylvania.

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**Cleveland Owns** is an economic democracy incubator that supports groups of workers and neighbors who want to build wealth and grassroots power by starting co-ops and organizing for change in our economic system. We know that in racial capitalism, ownership matters, so we're organizing multiracial, grassroots cooperatives that enable member owners to build wealth and power. Cleveland



Owens' Energy Democracy Initiative fights for a Just Transition through community control of our energy system. As the climate crisis accelerates, we work to ensure Northeast Ohio residents closest to the inequalities of our energy system – Black, brown, and low-income communities – have the resources they need to achieve a Just Transition. We've helped incubate Cleveland Solar Cooperative, a community-owned cooperative that aims to crowdfund and collectively own rooftop solar arrays. Cleveland Solar Cooperative recently welcomed its 90th member-owner! Through community-ownership of solar arrays, we are building the people, political, and economic power to radically change our energy system.

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**Black Sun Light Sustainability (BSLS)** is at the forefront of transformative change, collaborating, connecting, and changing communities both domestically and abroad. With a focus on all aspects of energy and climate liberation. We support communities' building power, advocate for fair and just energy development, and spur Black Business Enterprise contracting opportunities. BSLS leverages culturally competent practices to provide training and hiring resources for Black disadvantaged workers and support a fair chance for those returning from the carceral system. BSLS accomplishes our work through multiple strands, including fair and just clean energy projects, racial justice community planning, and equitable policy education.

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