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**The BECU Foundation Announces 2022 Green Equity Initiative Grant Recipients**

*Co-op commits funding for nonprofits dedicated to environmental and climate justice, circular innovation, and renewable energy*

**SEATTLE (August 29, 2022)** — The [BECU Foundation](https://www.becu.org/members-matter/community-involvement/scholarships?_ga=2.105017219.1065701500.1660856483-1377364615.1654032292) today announced the 2022 nonprofit recipients of the inaugural [Green Equity Initiative](https://www.becu.org/members-matter/community-involvement/giving-and-scholarships/green-equity-initiative-grants), a commitment of up to $875,000 to support environmental sustainability through green workforce development and entrepreneurship. The BECU Foundation is an independent non-profit corporation that is provided with financial and other support from BECU.

“Through our Green Equity Initiative, we are aligning the BECU Foundation's giving efforts with nonprofits dedicated to positive long-term environmental impacts,” said Gloria Dixon, BECU’s director of Philanthropy and executive director of the BECU Foundation. “Our members, employees and communities care about environmental action, which makes supporting sustainability a natural next step in our philanthropic strategy."

Through an invitation-only submission process, nine local nonprofit organizations were awarded grants between $50,000 and $150,000 to aid endeavors devoted to addressing climate change, elevating circular innovation (waste-to-use), and promoting workforce development focused on renewable energy.

Selected nonprofits will apply grant funds to a variety of areas, including:

* Administrative and program costs associated with helping start micro businesses.
* Social enterprise accelerators for emerging entrepreneurs and small business owners.
* Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) workers and business growth in the construction and green energy industry.
* Pitch competitions for students and startup businesses on PreCycle, Circular Innovation, and renewable energy projects and tools.

**The 2022 Green Equity Initiative grant recipients and funded projects include**:

**Addressing Climate Change:**

* [**Washington Wild**](https://wawild.org/)(*Indigenous Climate Impacts Oral History):* Produce 15 three- to five-minute video interviews with tribal elders and leaders, in collaboration with This Indian Country.
* [**EarthGen**](https://earthgenwa.org/)*(Expanding Youth Climate Science Education and Action Through Technology):* Expand access to climate science education and action for K-12 students in Washington state, helping advance environmental solutions with the implementation of technology.
* [**Our Climate**](https://ourclimate.us/) (*Empowering Young Climate Justice Leaders in Washington):* Create a structured curriculum gearing young people across Washington to become powerful climate advocates.

**Elevating Circular Innovation:**

* [**Refugee Artisan Initiative**](https://refugeesarts.org/)(*Coffee Bag Reuse: Upcycled Rollstock Portable Outdoor Gear)* Project aimed at diverting coffee bags from landfills by upcycling them into a diverse portfolio of household products.
* [**Bike Works**](https://bikeworks.org/)*(Bike Works Recycle & Reuse Expansion & Support): S*upport the growth and effectiveness of its Recycle & Reuse initiative, which processes between 7,000-8,000 bike donations per year for use in its youth and adult programs, free bike giveaways and social enterprise bike shop.

**Supporting Workforce Development Focused on Renewable Energy:**

* [**Black Farmers Collective**](https://www.blackfarmerscollective.com/)*(Stewarding the Next Generation of Black Farmers):* Support its vision of stewarding a new generation of Black farmers, bridging gaps in current food systems, striving toward food sovereignty and Black liberation.
* [**Center for Inclusive Entrepreneurship**](https://www.cie-nw.org/)(*The North Olympic Peninsula Green Equity Accelerator):* Pilot a social enterprise accelerator for emerging social entrepreneurs in marginalized and BIPOC rural communities.
* [**Emerald Cities Collaborative**](https://emeraldcities.org/)*(E-Contractor Program):* Provides small minority construction businesses with comprehensive training, support services and business opportunities to enable rapid and profitable growth, particularly within the clean and renewable energy sector.
* [**Harbor WildWatch**](https://harborwildwatch.org/)(*Developing the Next Generation of Environmental Sustainability Professionals):* Support the implementation of a new internship program that will reduce access barriers for BIPOC and marginalized students with the goal of providing the experience needed to secure first jobs in the field of environmental sustainability.

“Each of these nine nonprofit organizations have long been championing innovative work to increase sustainability, clean energy and small business development,” said Natasha Rivers, BECU’s director of Sustainability & Measurement. “Through the Green Equity Initiative, we can bring more projects from these entrepreneur-centered community partners to life, furthering the positive environmental and financial impact they have on people and our planet.”

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About BECU

BECU is federally insured by NCUA. With more than 1.28 million members and over $26.8 billion in assets, BECU is the largest not-for-profit credit union in Washington and one of the top five financial cooperatives in the country. As a member-owned credit union, BECU is focused on helping increase the financial well-being of its members and communities through better rates, fewer fees, community partnerships and financial education. The credit union currently operates more than 50 locations in Washington and two financial centers in South Carolina. For more information, visit [www.becu.org](http://www.becu.org/).