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East Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District  
Grants Program  
**2020 Partners in Conservation (PIC)**  
Deadline: 12/18/2019

## Ecotrust Food Systems Leadership Fellowship

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**\$ 57,500.00** Requested  
\$ 105,000 Total Project Cost

Submitted: 12/16/2019 3:13:21 PM (Pacific)

**Project Contact** Tel:

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### Ecotrust

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**Executive Director**

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EIN

### Application Questions [top](#)

Some answers will not be presented because they are not part of the selected group of questions based on the answer to #22.

### Organization Background

#### 1. Has your organization applied for a PIC grant previously?

- Yes  
 No

#### 2. Briefly describe your organization.

*Include your mission, year organization founded, primary programs and constituents.*

Founded in 1991, Ecotrust's mission is to inspire fresh thinking that creates economic opportunity, social equity, and environmental wellbeing. Our goal is to foster a natural model of development that creates more resilient communities, economies, and ecosystems here and around the world. Ecotrust's programming focuses on three heavy-impact sectors: food and farms, fisheries, and forestry. We deploy strategic interventions across these sectors to manage natural resources for the good of the earth and people, cultivate healthy, regional businesses, and support front-line communities and improve livelihoods in under invested communities.

#### 3. Please indicate the type of organization?

- Non-profit (501)(c)(3)  
 Education (school, school district, college)  
 Public agency (city, county, other govt.)

- Native American tribe
- Other

**4. How many board members does your organization have?**

18

**5. How many paid staff members does your organization have?**

63

**6. Does your organization have an equity and/or non-discrimination policy or statement?**

*If yes, please include in a separate PDF document uploaded in the Documents tab.*

- Yes
- No

**7. If you have a fiscal agent to receive funds on your behalf, please provide the name of the organization, the Executive Director and contact information.**

*A fiscal agent is different from the lead applicant. When using a fiscal agent, you must provide a letter of support indicating their willingness to serve in that function. If no fiscal agent, please write N/A*

N/A

## Your Project

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**8. Project Location**

*Provide the physical address of all locations where the project will take place (or nearest intersection). If no locations, please write N/A.*

Multnomah County

**9. Identify the watershed(s) where project activities will occur (check all that apply):**

- Columbia Slough
- Columbia River
- Johnson Creek
- Sandy River
- Willamette River

**10. Identify the primary natural resource issue addressed by the project (select only one based on how the majority of the funds will be used).**

*Please see the PIC Guidelines in the library tab or on the EMSWCD website for more detailed information about each of these categories.*

- Habitat Restoration / Monitoring
- Naturescaping / Stormwater Management / Urban Forestry
- Sustainable Agriculture / Urban Food Gardening
- Environmental Education for Youth / Adults

**11. Provide a short description of the project.**

The Food Systems Leadership Fellowship is a train the trainer program designed to build the capacity of 10-15 local food systems leaders of color to successfully develop and implement regenerative agriculture projects that promote growing practices rooted in the conservation and restoration of our region's resources. This collaborative initiative aims to address a lack of culturally-specific training opportunities needed to lead regenerative agriculture projects in East Multnomah County.

## Project Details

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**12. Provide a statement of the conservation problem your project is addressing, what has been accomplished to date by your organization, and how the project furthers one or more of the EMSWCD grant program goals.**

*The grant program goals are described in the PIC Guidelines.*

The Food Systems Leadership Fellowship addresses two interrelated conservation problems currently impacting people of color in East Multnomah County: 1) a lack of culturally-specific educational and training opportunities to build content knowledge needed to build and lead regenerative agriculture projects that result in both the sequestration of greenhouse gases and support sustainable local food production and 2) a lack of culturally-specific leadership development to support pipelines into sustainable agriculture and local food systems careers.

This project furthers two EMSWCD program goals: 2) Increase environmental literacy of EMSWCD residents and 3) Increase capacity and strengthen organizational structures needed to advance equitable conservation outcomes. While the climate crisis has a disproportionate impact on the health & financial wellbeing of low income and communities of color, local, community-owned solutions are emerging to address it. With the recent passage of the Portland Clean Energy Initiative and the Metro Parks & Nature Bond, there will be an unprecedented amount of funding and capital investments to support regenerative agriculture, green infrastructure, and conservation easements, all of which have the potential to contribute to habitat restoration, carbon sequestration, and the production of nutritious foods for communities.

The Food Systems Leadership Fellowship is a partnership between Ecotrust, the Black Food Sovereignty Coalition, OSU, Multnomah County Health Department, and Mudbone Grown. This train the trainer program is designed to build the capacity of 10-15 experienced and/or aspiring local food systems leaders of color to successfully develop and implement regenerative agriculture projects that promote growing practices rooted in the conservation and restoration of our region's resources. Regenerative agriculture is a system of growing principles and practices that seeks to rehabilitate and enhance the entire ecosystem of the farm by placing a heavy premium on soil health with attention given to water management, fertilizer use, and more. It is a method of growing food that improves the resources it uses, rather than destroying or depleting them. By promoting adoption of these practices, we can regenerate the soils of our region, produce healthy foods for community, combat climate change through carbon sequestration, build resilience in the face of extreme weather, improve water quality, and cultivate a habitat of rich biodiversity. This project is being led by Ecotrust's new Director of Food Equity, Jamese Kwele, who joined the organization in March 2019. To date, she has worked with a group of local food justice partners to develop this fellowship concept, which intentionally builds on the foundation of existing food equity work, addresses gaps in knowledge and capacity identified by participating partners, and adds value and synergy to existing programmatic efforts.

**13. Provide the details of your project, including objectives and specific activities you plan to carry out with grant funds, estimated timeline and anticipated outcomes, including the project benefits to the community and/or watershed.**

*Your answer should provide a narrative description of your project work plan (a separate application section in table format). For on-the-ground projects, please provide a detailed site description including size, habitat, and condition.*

Support from the EMSWCD will enable Ecotrust and partners to build and deliver a 18-24 month long Food Systems Leadership Fellowship. A cohort of 10-15 fellows will be trained to build their capacity to develop and lead projects that support soil regeneration, habitat restoration, and green infrastructure. In addition, the project team will form a community of practice among fellows to foster much-needed support. At quarterly community of practice meetings, Fellows will have the opportunity to connect, explore new possibilities, solve challenging problems, and create new, mutually beneficial opportunities related to regenerative agriculture, environmental education, soil regeneration, & resource conservation.

Rather than scaling up, the program will promote scaling out by supporting the sharing of experiences, knowledge, and collective action among food justice advocates, urban farmers, community builders, and other people of color who are and will be engaged in regenerative agriculture projects that result in the sequestration of greenhouse gases & support sustainable local food production. This effort is intended to seed a pipeline of food systems leaders of color whose lived experiences are essential to collective efforts to build a more equitable, regenerative, and climate resilient food system.

This Fellowship has been conceptualized to be culturally responsive and embrace the knowledge and wisdom of communities of color. Regenerative agriculture is catching on as a major solution in the face of climate change, however its practices actually mirror those that have long been used by people of color as a part of indigenous and agroecological food production methods. In *Farming While Black*, Leah Penniman, a Black woman farmer, writes about how George Washington Carver, an African American agricultural scientist and inventor born into enslavement in the 1860s, was a renaissance man when it comes to regenerative agriculture. And globally, small farmers of color have long used practices that cool the planet while feeding most of the world. The fellowship will empower us as people of color to tap into our own ancestral heritage and cultural connections to reconnect ourselves to food growing practices that regenerate soil, produce nutritious food, & mitigate climate change through carbon sequestration.

While much has been written about the scale of regenerative agriculture that is required to sequester significant amounts of carbon into the soil in order to reverse global warming,

U of W geologist and Ecotrust board member David Montgomery reminds us that this work is possible and important, at multiple scales. In an article in *Yes Magazine*, David writes, "Regenerating soil to change the piece of the planet where you live is possible at multiple scales. It might be a city yard like ours, rooftop garden, community garden, or working farmland. Add up these efforts, and we can restore fertility to degraded soils, end hunger, and pull some carbon from the sky. Cultivating living soil is something anyone can do to change the world—from the ground up." Using a mantra of "Healthy soil, healthy food, healthy people," the Fellowship will emphasize that by reconnecting with soil & land, we heal the planet & ourselves.

Ecotrust will use funds from EMSWCD 1) to develop and implement a culturally-specific leadership development program; 2) fund the project's partners to participate in monthly partner meetings, co-create the fellowship opportunity, and support outreach efforts; and 3) fund half of the fellowship stipends.

Funding Outcomes and Timeline:

1) Develop and launch the Fellowship for food justice advocates, urban farmers, community builders, and other people of color

Outcome: A collaborative-designed Fellowship will be launched by 10/15/20.

Timeline: 6/1/20-10/15/20

2) Fund project partners to attend monthly planning meetings; conduct outreach to potential fellowship applicants, facilitate quarterly community of practice meetings, and participate in the development, implementation, and evaluation of the fellowship opportunity

Outcome: Monthly meetings result in a strong, culturally-responsive fellowship program. Collaborative outreach ensures that we receive a strong pool of applicants for the fellowship opportunity. As a result, the Fellowship will be stronger and more sustainable.

Timeline: 6/1/20 - 5/31/22

3) Provide stipends for one third of the 10-15 Food System Leadership Fellows

Outcome: 10-15 Fellows increase their capacity to develop and lead regenerative agriculture projects within their community, within their own organization, or in a career in the food systems field. At least 80% will launch or significantly enhance a regenerative agriculture project during or within 6 months of completing the fellowship. Note, OSU and REACH have committed a total of \$15k to fund the 2/3 of the stipends.

Timeline: 9/1/20-3/01/20

**14. Indicate your estimated project start date.**

MM/DD/YYYY

06/1/2020

**15. Indicate your estimated project completion date.**

MM/DD/YYYY

5/31/2022

**16. Describe your project's key partners. What role do they have in implementing the project and why were they selected as partners?**

*Include specific information related to funding, time and expertise the partners will contribute to the project. Letters of support should be included in the application from those identified.*

Key partners will be engaged in both the project's development & implementation. Black Food Sovereignty Coalition is a member-based organization working in solidarity with growers, policy makers, advocates, and educators to stabilize food systems infrastructure for communities of color in the PNW. BFSC will lend its connections to BIPOC networks, the content expertise of individual members, and a physical location for field workshops. REACH is the local extension of a national program awarded by the CDC to reduce racial/ethnic health disparities. REACH's partnership will ensure that our efforts advance sustainable agriculture while also intersecting with efforts to reduce health disparities among the Black/African, immigrant/ refugee communities in Multnomah County. Mudbone Grown is a Black-owned farm enterprise that promotes inter-generational community-based farming that creates measurable and sustainable environmental, social, cultural, and economic impacts in communities. Mudbone will contribute expertise in food system workforce training and a unique perspective on the capacity building needs of organizations leading this work. OSU Center for Small Farms works to advance sustainable agriculture, community food systems, and economic progress for small and mid-scale farmers & ranchers. OSU will contribute its sustainable agriculture expertise along with connections to existing resources that Fellows will be able to access free of cost through the partnership.

**17. What is the total number of people (non-staff) that will be served by, will participate in, or otherwise will directly benefit from your project?**

People benefitting from project

TOTAL

**18. What percentage of the total number of people served/participants/beneficiaries will be from within EMSWCD's service area?**

*Where this is not known, please provide your best estimate.*

Percentage from within EMSWCD service area

TOTAL

**19. Does your project benefit low income and/or communities of color? If so, describe the benefit and the level of their involvement in the project. Also describe your organization's experience working with these communities.**

*For example, does your organization represent culturally specific groups? Does the project management team include culturally specific staff? Are project participants or volunteers low income/culturally specific?*

The Food Systems Leadership Fellowship will serve, benefit, and be led by Black and people of color. The concept was designed primarily by culturally-specific organizations and by staff with lived experience as people of color in local food systems work, including the project director, James Kwele. The Fellowship trainings will be implemented by a diverse group of instructors and leaders with field experience in regenerative agriculture, and the program is explicitly designed to uplift and build capacity among communities of color.

As described above, each of the organizations involved in this initiative possess significant expertise and a proven track record of implementing projects with culturally specific groups - in addition to our expertise in shifting our regional food system to benefit both people and place. At Ecotrust, we play the role of convener, capacity builder, project manager, and coordinator. Ecotrust has a long history of engagement with tribal communities in the Pacific Northwest, and since 2015, we have been engaged more deeply with communities of color in the Portland area, primarily through the Green Workforce Collaborative. Building social and racial equity is one of our two organizational 'imperatives,' in addition to combating climate change. We recognize that efforts that do not center low-income and people of color lead only to increased planetary degradation, massive wealth inequality, and environmental injustices.

**20. Have the required permits been obtained for the project?**

- Yes
- No
- Not Required

## Project Evaluation and Sustainability

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**21. How will the success of your project and its impact be determined? Describe how you approach project evaluation, who is responsible for conducting evaluation, and how past evaluation has influenced your programs/projects?**

Success and impact of the project will be determined collaboratively. We anticipate using mixed methods to evaluate the success of this two-year project. An evaluation plan will be built around metrics related to increased self-efficacy to serve in leadership positions on regen ag projects, increased content knowledge related to regenerative agriculture, climate resilience, and conservation strategies, and increased connectivity and social capital through mentorship, community of practice engagement, and connections to professional networks across interrelated sectors.

We will conduct process evaluation to document and refine methods for equitable partnership development, applicant outreach, and understand how the project creates and strengthens organizational and participant capacity. Using participatory methods, we will engage project partners and Fellows in the full life-cycle of an evaluation process (design, data collection, analysis, use, and dissemination). Stakeholders will have the power to shape and own how evaluation happens. Our approach is based on the research justice method championed by Coalition of Communities of Color (CCC). This method emphasizes that, "the research process needs to shift communities of color from research subjects into researchers, knowledge producers and communicators" (Leading with Race: Research Justice, 2018). We see this as an additional capacity building component that will support Fellows in gaining experience and enhancing skills and competencies related to research and evaluation. Evaluation will be administered collaboratively by Ecotrust, with the support of its Food Equity Manager, Aaron Vargas. We will provide Ecotrust's website as a platform for Fellows to share their stories and learnings throughout the two year project period. During the last three months of the project period (Feb-May '22), we will summarize the process evaluation and engage partners in how the findings should be used, who will own them, and how we should disseminate them.

Ecotrust's Food and Farms team has a long history of using formative research to develop programmatic strategies. In 2015 Ecotrust published the Oregon Food Infrastructure Gap Analysis, a comprehensive assessment of programmatic, financial, and policy infrastructure investments needed to spawn a robust, regional, and equitable food system. Based on the research conclusions, Ecotrust developed the Redd, a working hub for local food, including warehousing, cold storage, and commissary kitchens, fulfilling a need for last-mile urban food infrastructure and innovation space. In 2017, with support from EMSWCD, Ecotrust published a whitepaper containing formative research on the needs of Agriculture of the Middle (AOTM) producers supplying Oregon. This research was used to pilot the AOTM Accelerator training program to provide technical assistance to small and mid-sized farmers, ranchers, & fishers eager to scale their operations and help shift our food syst

**22. Is this project site-based?**

*Site-based projects take place at a specific location and involve on-the-ground activities. Non-site-based projects are primarily for educational and/or capacity building purposes. If both, please indicate. Answer will direct you to next question(s).*

- Yes (site-based)
- No (not site-based)
- Both site based and non-site based

**23. For on-the-ground project, please indicate how the site and project elements will be protected and managed over the long term to ensure that outcomes are sustained?**

**24. For education, capacity building, and other non-site-based activities, describe how your efforts will be sustained or expanded upon after the grant period is over?**

*For example, what can partners and beneficiaries do to adopt and continue educational programs, what measures have or will be taken to secure long-term funding?*

The Food Systems Leadership Fellowship is an example of Ecotrust's organizational efforts to put equity at the center of our work and to collaborate with humility as we advance economic opportunity and environmental well-being throughout our region. All key partners on this project view this work as a foundational part of larger, organization-wide initiatives that will continue long after the grant period is over. As such, Ecotrust and project partners will continue to fundraise and seek support for this and other food equity work during and beyond the grant period. Additional public and philanthropic funding prospects include: Prosper Portland, Portland Clean Energy Fund, the Kelley Family Foundation, and the Nathan Cummings Foundation. A grant from EMSWCD will help develop and implement the Fellowship, and we look forward to having you join us in building the capacity of local food system leaders of color who are committed to caring for the soil and water resources of our home.

**25. Does your project directly attempt to build resilience to climate change impacts, mitigate climate change through carbon sequestration or reducing emissions, and/or educate the public about climate change. If so, briefly explain.**

*Your response to this question will not impact your opportunity for funding. We are seeking to learn more about our applicants' involvement in climate change issues.*

This project seeks to build leadership capacity and content expertise related to building resilience to climate change impacts and mitigating climate change through carbon sequestration. Leaders who participate in the Fellowship will be better prepared to apply these concepts to their current work as farmers, community gardeners, food justice advocates, health equity practitioners, and more. They will be part of a community of practice that will support the enhanced capacity of its members to design and lead effective projects that promote climate resiliency and carbon sequestration. The fellowship will approach this topic in a culturally-responsive way that empowers us as people of color to tap into our own ancestral heritage and cultural connections to reclaim agroecological growing practices that regenerate soil, produce nutritious food, & mitigate climate change through carbon sequestration.

**Budget [top](#)**

<b>Project Revenues</b>	Cash Match Secured	Cash Match Pending	In-kind Match Source	EMSWCD	Total
Grants	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 12,500.00	\$ 57,500.00	\$ 105,000.00
Memberships/other cash contributions					\$ 0.00
Volunteer labor/donated services (in-kind)					\$ 0.00
Donated supplies and equipment (in-kind)					\$ 0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 20,000.00</b>	<b>\$ 15,000.00</b>	<b>\$ 12,500.00</b>	<b>\$ 57,500.00</b>	<b>\$ 105,000.00</b>

<b>Project Expenses</b>	Cash Match Expenses	In-kind Match Expenses	EMSWCD Request	Total
Project Management/Staff (payroll)	\$ 20,000.00		\$ 23,500.00	\$ 43,500.00
Contracted Services		\$ 12,500.00	\$ 19,000.00	\$ 31,500.00
Travel (\$.58/mile) or other transportation				\$ 0.00
Materials, Supplies and Equipment			\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00
Volunteer labor (@ \$25.43/hr)				\$ 0.00
Pre-implementation				\$ 0.00
Other expenses	\$ 15,000.00		\$ 7,500.00	\$ 22,500.00
Administrative/Indirect Costs		\$ 0.00	\$ 7,000.00	\$ 7,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 35,000.00</b>	<b>\$ 12,500.00</b>	<b>\$ 57,500.00</b>	<b>\$ 105,000.00</b>

**Percentage of Total Project Expenses requested from EMSWCD: 54.76 %**

## Budget Narrative

The total two year project budget is \$105,000. This includes \$20,000 secured from cash and in-kind funding and commitments of \$27,500 from cash and in-kind match funding. With support from EMSWCD, we will meet monthly, develop and launch the leadership development program, and provide the remaining stipends needed to support the fellows.

For the project period of June 2020 - May 2022, we have secured \$5,000 cash from Newman's Own Foundation and \$15,000 from Ecotrust's 2020 organizational equity budget. In addition, we have received cash-match commitments of \$7,500 from OSU and \$7,500 from Multnomah County Health Department REACH program. We have also received in-kind match commitments including \$5,000 from OSU and \$7,500 from REACH.

The proposed expense budget reflects the strongly collaborative nature of this work, including the central role of POC-led organizations and teams (e.g. BFSC, Mudbone Grown, REACH). Under Contracted Services, this request includes \$15,000 over two years for project partners to convene monthly, to co-create the Fellowship opportunity, facilitate quarterly community of practice meetings, coordinate on logistics, and meet regularly to share learnings and monitor progress. This request includes \$4,000 to compensate topical instructors for their time preparing and leading eight Fellowship workshop sessions over the course of the two year project.

We are also requesting \$15,000 in salary plus fringe for Ecotrust Director of Food Equity, James Kwele and \$8,500 for Food Equity Manager, Aaron Vargas for the two year project. James is responsible for strategic oversight, project development and implementation, partnership development, fundraising, and cross-sector networking. Aaron is responsible for program support, research and evaluation, project management, and strategic planning support. Providing stipends to support participation in the Fellowship is critical to valuing the contributions of Fellows as co-learners in this work. As such, we will provide stipends of \$1,500 - \$2,250 per Fellow. Our current cash match plus this request to EMSWCD includes enough funding to provide stipends at this level for 10-15 Fellows. In total, we respectfully request \$57,500 from EMSWCD's PIC grant program. For this two year project, we estimate that \$28,750 will be expended each year.

## Project Work Plan [top](#)

### Project Work Plan

Project Work Plan	Activities	Timeline	Outcomes/Deliverables
1	Planning meetings among four partner organizations	June 2020 - May 2022 (Monthly)	Maintenance of coordination and communication among partners; finalized work plan; finalized evaluation plan with participatory methods, collaborative development of 8 workshop series; strategic planning
2	Outreach about fellowship opportunity to solicit applications	July - September 2020	Fellowship opportunity broadly shared across networks in communities of color
3	Convene selection committee to review applications and select Fellows	September 2020	10-15 Fellows selected after open application process
4	Conduct needs and asset assessment with Fellows to inform the development of community of practice meetings and eight workshops	October 2020	Written summary of cohort needs and assets to inform community of practice agenda, networking strategies, and workshop content
5	Implement community of practice	October 2020 - March 2022	10-15 fellows participate in quarterly community of practice meetings where Fellows are connected into a vibrant network of local leaders
6	Implement workshop series	October 2020	10-15 Fellows complete 8 module workshops

- March 2022

7	Communications and evaluation dissemination	Jan 2022 - May 2022	2-3 blog posts published about Fellows and their work and process evaluation report shared with partners and community
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## Documents [top](#)

### Documents Requested \*

### Required? Attached Documents \*

Organizational budget, including prior and current fiscal years. For large institutions such as universities or cities, please provide a program budget.



[Ecotrust 2018 Actuals and 2019 Budget](#)

Biographies of key staff and/or contractors (one paragraph each)



[Biographies of Key Staff](#)

List of Board members and their affiliations. Please indicate how long each member has served. If your organization does not have a board, please provide a list of Steering Committee members or other oversight committee members.



[Ecotrust 2019 Board Members](#)

Letters of support from key partners. A letter from your fiscal agent is required if applicable. Limit: 4 letters. These should be contained in one PDF document.



[Key Partners Letters of Support](#)

Photographs of the site if it is site-based or site drawings, project design, etc. Limit: 4 photos. Photos should be contained in one PDF document.

Equity and/or non-discrimination policy or statement (include a short description of any efforts your organization is making to address and/or increase understanding of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion issues).

[Ecotrust 2020 Equity Plan](#)

Project Budget: expense detail  
[download template](#)



[PIC Project Budget](#)

Project location(s) and site maps, if applicable (map of point location(s) and/or map of project areas with defined boundary). Use Google Maps or similar map service. This is a required document if you have a site-based project.