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**52 Frontline Community Climate Groups Named to Justice40 Accelerator;
Prepare to Compete for Federal Funding Flowing from Justice40 Initiative**

*Organizations can help Biden/Harris administration fulfill Justice40 promise
that communities damaged by climate change and dirty energy
benefit from federal climate investments*

Fifty-two organizations on the front lines of the climate crisis have been selected for the inaugural cohort of the [Justice40 Accelerator](#), a national effort designed to help community-led environmental justice projects compete successfully for federal funding flowing from the Biden/Harris administration's [Justice40 Initiative](#).

The Justice40 Initiative, which directs at least 40% of the benefits from federal investments in climate and clean energy solutions to disadvantaged communities, acknowledges that communities of color and low-income communities have borne the worst effects of climate change and dirty energy.

"We've received an astounding number of applications to participate in the Justice40 Accelerator program – and this is just the tip of the iceberg," said [Gloria Walton](#), President and CEO of The Solutions Project, which joined with the nonprofit groups Elevate, Groundswell, the Partnership for Southern Equity, and the Hummingbird Firm to establish the Justice40 Accelerator. "Community-rooted climate justice projects focused on clean energy and resilient infrastructure are underway in every corner of the U.S. The Biden-Harris administration - both through its Justice40 Initiative and other programs – has an opportunity to build on this momentum. We hope not a moment is lost!" Walton said.

Independent reviewers selected the 52 accelerator participants from more than 300 community-based applicants. Their proposals included infrastructure projects such as housing, green space, coastline protection, parks, agriculture and renewable energy installations; training and workforce development efforts; and other initiatives at the intersection of environmental justice and climate action.

“There were so many excellent projects — we had to say ‘no’ to more great projects than we could say ‘yes’ to, just for budget reasons,” said [Angela Mahecha](#) of The New School’s Tishman Environment and Design Center, who served on the accelerator’s independent selection committee. “The Justice40 Accelerator is a good example of what’s needed — and what needs to be replicated — so we can move forward with the kind of systemic change that centers impactful community solutions to the climate crisis.”

Successful applicants are rooted in rural, urban and suburban communities at the frontlines of the climate crisis all over the country. A few examples:

- In the deep South, the Mississippi Association of Cooperatives is educating farmers on the economic and environmental benefits of cover crops and native longleaf pine, which reduce agriculture’s carbon footprint.
- In a lower-income, multicultural neighborhood in Brooklyn, UPROSE is working with partners to install cooperatively owned solar power systems on community facilities and industrial buildings. The project will cut greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution while lowering residents’ energy bills.
- At historically Black colleges and universities across the country, the HBCU Green Fund has identified opportunities for renewable energy installations and energy efficiency retrofits, and will work with partner organizations to establish an HBCU Energy Institute and vet a list of shovel-ready projects ripe for government and private investment.

“Addressing climate change can’t be a top-down process, where the rich and powerful decide everything. The government has to see communities not as obstacles, but as true partners in the process,” said [Felicia Davis](#) of the HBCU Green Fund. “If the Biden/Harris administration fulfills its promises to invest directly in communities damaged by climate change and dirty energy, and to work directly with leaders on the front lines of the climate crisis, then the Justice40 commitment will be truly transformative. “

Justice40 Accelerator programming ramps up this fall. Offerings will include pre-development grants, workshops and peer-learning opportunities, and technical assistance with grant applications, legal issues, and other areas that rely on specialized knowledge.

“We are a grassroots organization, and everything we do is informed by our community. That listening takes a lot of time and resources,” said Taylor Snider of the Struggle for Miami’s Affordable and Sustainable Housing (SMASH), which won a seat at the accelerator. “The Justice40 Accelerator is needed and appreciated — it will help us build

capacity, and make access to Justice40 funding easier. SMASH is exactly the kind of frontline organization that the administration’s Justice40 Initiative was created to support.”

The Justice40 Accelerator is independent of the federal government. It is a partnership among leading climate justice and community development nonprofits, including:

- [Elevate](#), a Chicago nonprofit creating a just and equitable world in which everyone has clean and affordable heat, power, and water in their homes and communities — no matter who they are or where they live.
- [Groundswell](#), which builds community power by connecting clean energy projects with economic empowerment for local communities in five states and D.C.

Justice40

Accelerator

- [Partnership for Southern Equity](#), which advances policies and institutional actions that promote racial equity and shared prosperity for all in the growth of metropolitan Atlanta and the American South.
- [The Hummingbird Firm](#), a community-engagement consulting firm specializing in face-to-face and digital public involvement, environmental communications, climate action, and cultural competency training.
- [The Solutions Project](#), a national nonprofit promoting climate justice through grantmaking and through amplifying the stories of front-line community leaders –especially women of color – in the media