



YOUTH CLIMATE ACTION FUND

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*Empowering a new
generation of
climate leaders*





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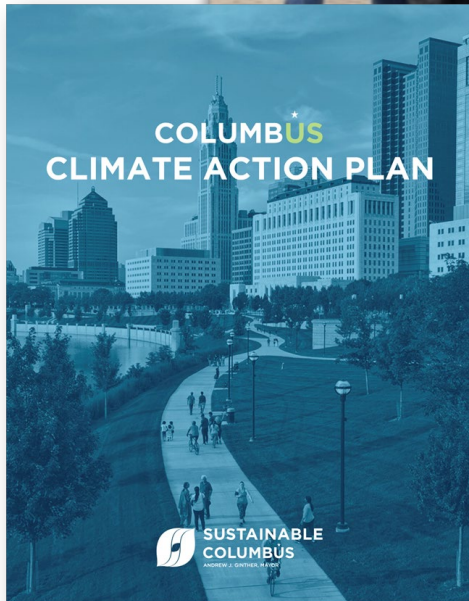
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Sustainable Columbus Program



Sustainable Columbus is the **city office of sustainability....**

We work with various city departments
AND community partner organizations
AND residents to implement the
Columbus Climate Action Plan.



Mission: Reduce climate change impacts on our community to protect the environment and improve quality of life for residents

Agenda

- **Youth Climate Action Fund Introduction**
- **Climate Change and Climate Action in Columbus**
- **YCAF Program Overview**
- **2024 YCAF Projects**

The Youth Climate Action Fund is global: 98 cities in total



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2024 Global View



2,367
Total Applications



\$4,014,032
Awarded in grant funds



38
Avg. Youth Leads per City





Program Vision

- Empower a new generation of climate leaders
- Enable young people to create the solutions they want to see in their community

Available Funding

- Approximately \$100,000 available
- Selected applicants receive microgrants of **\$1,000 - \$5,000** to support youth-led climate action projects

Eligibility

- Youth groups (**ages 15 – 24**) in the City of Columbus
- Projects that are **new** and that support the **Columbus Climate Action Plan**

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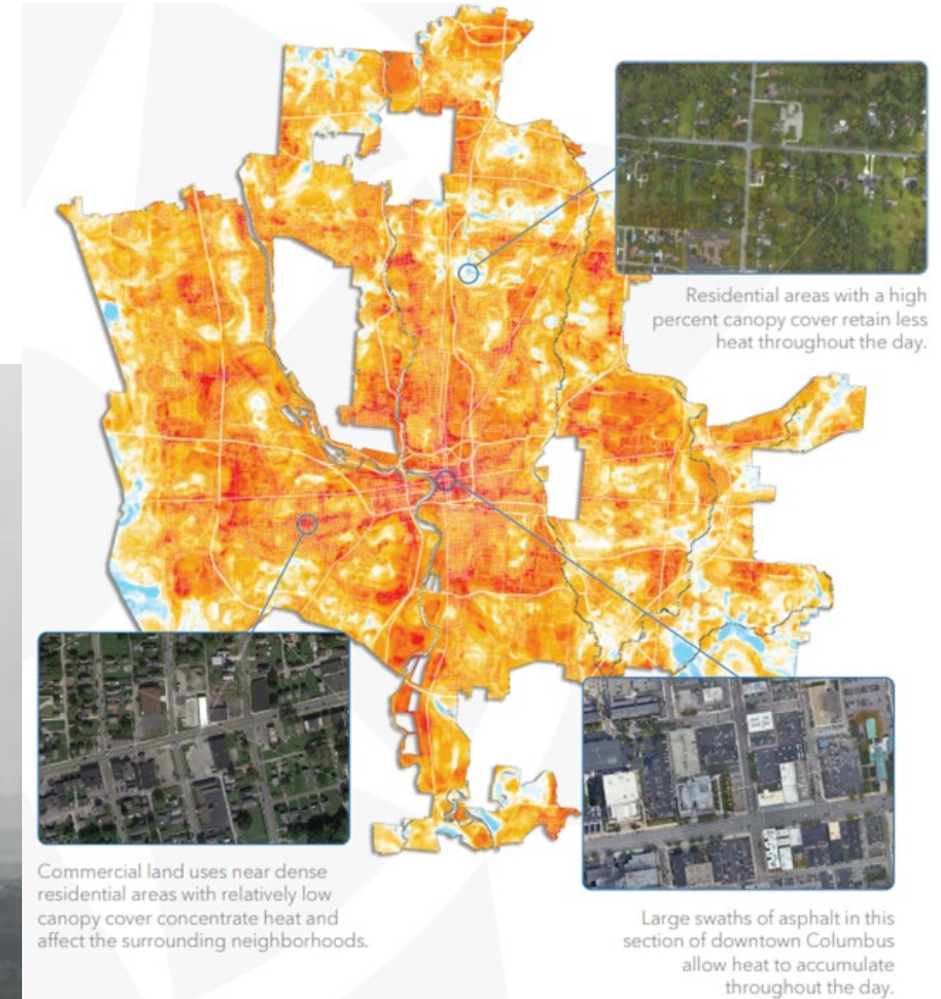
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Climate Change in Columbus





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Climate Action and Climate Projects

What does climate action look like?

- Reduce the pollution that causes climate change
- Adapt to the effects of climate change





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Large-scale climate initiatives



Residential solar co-ops



Urban Forestry Master Plan



LinkUS Mobility and Transit Plan



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Large-scale climate initiatives



**EMPOWERED Green
Jobs Training**



Bike Plus Plan



Food Waste Reduction

Climate action can also look like...

- Rain gardens
- Native species planting
- Wetland restoration
- Educational events and outreach
- Public art and awareness campaigns





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What's in the Climate Action Plan?

- **Empowering the community the “Columbus Way”:** Builds or supports community collaboration, education, awareness, leadership related to climate action
- **Sustainable Neighborhoods and Environment:** Supports climate resilient neighborhoods or a healthy environment
- **Buildings and Energy:** Promotes renewable energy or energy efficiency in residential, commercial or community buildings
- **Transportation:** Supports mode shift to bikes, scooters and public transportation or promotes zero-emission vehicles
- **Waste Reduction:** Reduces waste generated or sent to the landfill

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Youth Climate Action Fund

Eligible Applicants

Youth-led and youth-serving organizations and groups who either:

- Are incorporated as a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, with a bank account to receive funds,
- OR
- Designate an incorporated non-profit 501(c)(3) fiscal sponsor, with a bank account to receive funds

At least three youth between the ages of 15 and 24 must lead and participate in the project planning, proposal writing, and project implementation.





Do I have to be in a group already?

No!

Young people may form a group to participate in this opportunity.

Does it have to be an environmental group?

No!

Any group of young people can participate. Think about groups you're already in who may want to do a project!

What does it mean to be a fiscal sponsor?

At a minimum, a sponsor receives the grant and either manages the funds on behalf of the grantee, or transfers funds to the grantee. Sponsors are also encouraged to serve as mentors for projects where appropriate.



Grant project requirements

- Projects must be new, located in the City of Columbus, and support the Columbus Climate Action Plan
- Youth (ages 15-24) must develop, lead and implement the project
- Projects should target completion by October 31, 2025, but with approval, may be extended until the end of 2025.
- Grant recipients must submit regular reports and documentation of expenditures

Can adults participate?

Yes!

Adults may act as guides, mentors, participants, or fiscal sponsors for the project



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Youth Climate Action Fund

Youth Climate Action Fund Microgrant Timeline

Feb. 11

Applications
open

Applications
due for
initial awards

March 15

April 22

Initial award
announcements

Review and
awards continue
on a rolling basis
until funds are
depleted

April - June

October 31

Target date for
project completion

**Projects not selected can receive feedback
and resubmit**



Scoring Criterion	Description	Point Value
Community impact and Climate Action Plan support	Demonstrates clear impacts and benefits in support of Climate Action Plan priorities.	5
Project planning and feasibility	Demonstrates clear action plan, results, and how they will be achieved. Demonstrates the group has the capacity to implement and manage the project.	10
Budget rationale	Clearly describes costs and how they were determined; costs appear reasonable for the project as presented.	5

Equity and Environmental Justice

Priority will be given to projects that benefit communities disproportionately impacted by climate change. These include communities of color, low-income residents, and other neighborhoods experiencing the most severe effects of heat, flooding, drought, and air pollution.

Bonus points

Up to 2 bonus points may be awarded for new/creative/innovative solutions or approaches to climate change.

Application and Selection Process

- Pdf application available at columbus.gov/YCAF
- Submit by email
- Scoring committee will review and may contact applicants with questions or to discuss the project



Grant project requirements and process

- Kickoff meeting and grant agreement form
- Funds are provided up-front through check or electronic transfer
- Receipts and activity tracker must be submitted monthly
- Virtual check-ins monthly or as necessary
- Site visit
- Unused funds must be returned



Eligible expenses include:

- Costs for implementing the project – materials, supplies
- Costs for organizing, promoting and holding events
- Fees for project sponsorship and mentorship (must be minimal amount of the budget)
- Funds to enable youth participation – transportation, food (must be minimal amount of the budget)

See project guidance
for a complete list!

Ineligible expenses include:

- Payment to youth for participating
- Projects already ongoing
- Speaker fees (note that other incentives may be allowable)
- Partisan or lobbying activities



Tips and Advice

Start where you are!

- Think about how you can make a change in the spaces where you live, work, or go to school

Consider your capacity to accomplish the project

- Resources – people and materials
- Skills and experience
- Timeline
- Approvals that may be required
- Potential long-term maintenance

Provide supporting documentation

- Photos
- Maps
- Letters of support

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Columbus Youth Climate Action Fund Grantee

Columbus State Community College Sustainability Club

Days of Service Tree Planting

Increasing native tree canopy on campus

Celebratory event on campus

- Tree planting
- Sustainability education
- Climate Café
- ODNR forester provided education on tree planting



Columbus Youth Climate Action Fund Grantee

Nak Muay Naturalists

Edgehill Road Tree Planting and Community Garden

Transforming a vacant lot near Grandview into a community green space that includes native trees and a produce garden

Quote:

“Many have said that contributing to the garden makes them feel closer to the community, more educated about urban agriculture, and have commented that it is a positive stress-reliever.”



Columbus Youth Climate Action Fund Grantee

OHI/O

High School I/O Climate Hackathon

Participants learn new real-world technology skills, build projects, and share their creations

CHALLENGES

Beginner

Web Design
Challenge: Climate
Action and
Sustainability

Intermediate

Data Analytics
Challenge:
EnviroMetrics: The
Sustainability
Analytics Challenge

Advanced

Game Challenge
“The Climate
Quest”



Columbus Youth Climate Action Fund Grantee

Ohio Youth for Climate Justice

Mobile Upcycling Cart

- Clothing repair
- Printmaking cart for upcycling used garments
- Teaching community members how to prevent textile waste



Columbus Youth Climate Action Fund

Society for Ecological Restoration at OSU
Wetland Restoration at Scioto Audubon Metro Park

Restoring a small wetland and offering learning experiences and mentorship to high school students

- Invasive removal
- Native planting
- Educational signage





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Climate Learning Opportunity

2025 Climate Literacy Workshop for Central Ohio Youth

OSU Byrd Polar and Climate
Research Center, OSU Extension,
Franklin County 4-H

Three-day workshop for high school
students exploring climate change impacts,
participating in tours, learning from
scientists, and designing a project

June 2, 4, and 5, 2025, OSU Columbus
Campus

Applications due March 14, 2025
Small registration fee



<https://go.osu.edu/ccbp25>

*This opportunity is not part of the Youth
Climate Action Fund program, but can be a
complement to student climate education and
action.*

Questions and Discussion

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