



PROGRAM OVERVIEW and FAQs

This sounds interesting, but... what is it exactly?

It's a new, year-long capacity building program to help 350 local affiliates build the power and effectiveness of our groups. It's a chance for leaders of US local 350 groups to skill up through trainings, share peer learning and receive coaching on some of the biggest internal and external challenges that surface through climate organizing. Since some of the most important parts of this work (developing leaders, coordinating bold & visionary campaigns, building sustainable organizations, participating in broader coalitions) are also the hardest to do in isolation, the cohort program will create a resourced network of leaders through online and offline workshops, trainings, and coaching sessions.

How does it work?

A group of 20–25 leaders from local groups (2–3 coming from each group) will participate in monthly sessions from September 2018–September 2019. Each participating group will set specific goals for their internal (i.e. fundraising, leadership structure) and external (strategic campaigning, coalition efforts) work and pursue these with the support of individual coaches and peer-to-peer discussions. Additionally, there will be monthly online workshops and an opportunity to gather in-person for relationship building and skill development.



Photo by Heather Craig, Survival Media Agency

How is this different from other programs?

- 1. It's about your group:** This program will be designed directly in response to your specific group's needs. Your goals will shape your work for the year, as well as the focus of the overall program.
- 2. It's about the cohort:** Our aim is to build something exceptional together, because the goal is to create strong connective tissue – a network of leaders who can stay in touch after the year ends.
- 3. It's about movement building:** We're investing in these relationships for the long haul. And from this, we'll hopefully have more heart and muscle to sustain and grow the climate movement. And the lessons learned from the cohort will be shared throughout the local group network.

Is this an online program?

The program kicks off with a full weekend in person with our entire cohort and support team at the historic [Highlander Center](#) in east Tennessee (all travel expenses for this will be covered by the program). For over 85 years, Highlander has been a home to transformative social and environmental justice organizing, where leaders such as Ella Baker and Rosa Parks have come together to plan and strategize.

Are there other benefits to participating groups?

The goal of the program is to benefit local groups at every step of the process. Participating groups will also receive \$1,000 allotments to invest in your group to support organizational development activities connected with the cohort.

What's the cost to participate?

350.org will cover all costs of the program for leaders who are accepted into the cohort. The cohort is an investment in local group leadership. In exchange, the cohort requires a dedicated commitment to the process: that participants show up fully for their own learning and commit to their group's goals and sharing/implementing lessons.

How much time is needed to participate?

Participation in the cohort requires approximately 10–12 hours per month (total, per person) for monthly workshops, one-on-one coaching, peer discussions and individual work. Monthly workshops will be timed to fit participants' schedules and to accommodate jobs, etc. Participants will also need to attend the in-person gathering October 12–15, 2018.

Who is this program for and how does our group get accepted?

Local 350 groups that are serious about growing their capacity. If your group is asking yourselves how can we grow our local power, size and impact, then this is the program for you! The first step is to schedule a preliminary discussion with 350.org staff. The next step is completing an application. The application form asks for specific goals that your group hopes to meet through the program and for the names of 2–3 people, including at least one emerging leader and one longer term leader who would be your group's representatives in the cohort. Since we know we need to build a climate movement that is more reflective of the diversity in the U.S., groups are encouraged to select diverse teams and to prioritize the participation of people of color, women & gender non-conforming people, and younger leaders. Participants in the program will be required to include others from their group in the planning and work of the cohort year, with the hope that the program will have a ripple effect beyond the cohort members.



Photo by Joe Brusky

What's the commitment for these leaders and our group?

All participants in the cohort will be required to attend the 2–3 hour monthly full-group video calls.

These calls will be a mix of trainings and discussions. They will also need to attend the in-person weekend at Highlander October 12th–15th, 2018. Additional requirements include tailored calls with coaches (approximately 4–6 over the course of the year) and projects/ 'homework' in between sessions (this will be central to the program's success, and a way for members who aren't cohort participants to be a part of the process). We hope that participating groups' goals will be ambitious and that the time spent outside of the calls will be connected to existing campaigns and work. One additional exchange trip to visit with another local group in the same region may also be scheduled.

We're stretched pretty thin. Would you still encourage us to apply?

This is a big part of why we're offering this opportunity: we've heard from many leaders who want to increase the capacity of their groups, but don't know how. Here's where the cohort program comes in: You won't be on your own; you'll be facing these challenges with more support, resources and expertise. Ultimately, it's about finding enough time to meet the program's commitments, and then, through the program, your group will get the skills and support needed to address current limitations and develop into the group you want to become.

Is our local group right for this program?

Do you have leaders who can make the commitment above and does your group want to:

- Plan bold, strategic campaigns for climate justice?
- Recruit and retain a diverse group of volunteers and leaders?
- Connect with peers, find mentors, and share what we have learned?
- Strengthen your core leadership team and structure?
- Build lasting coalitions with allied groups?
- Care for ourselves and each other in these difficult times?
- Reflect on your group's structures and processes?

We're happy to talk this through to explore these and other questions together.

We regret that groups with budgets over \$100,000 (and their 'nodes') are not eligible.

How do we apply?

There are three steps to this process.

1. Contact LeadershipCohort@350.org for an initial phone conversation with a few leaders from your group. We will work with you to assess if your group is a good fit.
2. If yes, the people on the initial call will bring the program back to their team and together complete the online written application (including checking in with potential emergent and longer-term leader participants) and submit the application.
3. If selected (from application review), participate in a phone interview.



Photo by 350 Seattle