

ClimatePlan
Equity-Power-Trust Guidelines
[working draft, March 2017]

ClimatePlan, a statewide network in California focused on land use, transportation and climate decisions, has always strived to elevate equity across these concerns in our work. However, we realize that we may not have gone far enough to ensure that equity is an essential component of our work and ultimately the way in which these decisions shape (and are shaped by) communities across the state.

ClimatePlan recognizes that all Californians should have equal opportunity to thrive. We also recognize that low-income communities, communities of color, and other marginalized communities have faced historic patterns of inequity, racism, oppression and disinvestment. As a committed equity ally, ClimatePlan seeks to redress this.

Those most impacted by the economic, political, and health consequences of climate change—low-income communities and communities of color—must have their voices heard and their needs met in statewide, regional and local decision making. We can't realize the resilient, healthy, and prosperous communities we aim to create if low income communities, communities of color and other marginalized communities are excluded from, and not equitably benefitting from, crucial policy decisions. Equity does not involve a particular set of policies, rather it is about paying attention to the needs, decision-making role, and power of the most vulnerable communities -- and acting in ways that support this.

Equity is a filter through which we conduct our efforts, and one of the main ingredients in setting ClimatePlan's priorities, guiding our work, and determining our membership. We embrace our role as an equity ally, engaging in ongoing learning across the ClimatePlan network; partnering and supporting the leadership of equity advocates; and championing policies and projects in ClimatePlan campaigns that create benefits for all.

The following are the agreements and guidelines we see as important for deepening our network's role as an equity ally—both in attending to issues of equity in the diverse sectors in which our members work AND in structuring our membership and relationships to reflect this.

Agreements

(we believe in and act according to the following intentions)

1. **To learn:** We understand that equity may be defined differently by each individual/institution involved in our network. We commit to ongoing dialogue and education around these issues as a core component of our work. We each commit to listening attentively to each other's experience and learning from the stories we share about our work.

2. **To strengthen our relationships:** We believe that, as a network or coalition, our fundamental commitment is to our relationships with one another—not merely the results that we create. We will assume the best intentions of one another as a key foundation. We

commit to holding one another accountable and elevating issues to the Steering Committee if we cannot mediate the issue among ourselves.

3. **To be transparent:** We strive to continue to build trust as a key element of being accountable. To accomplish this, we commit to transparency about our perspectives and individual/ collective strategies. We will not undermine or manipulate any other member or member's position for any reason.

4. **To recognize who we collectively are and are not:** We define the role of ClimatePlan – a diverse network of organizations working to advance many interests – as one of an ally, seeking to meaningfully support equity-led networks and to provide a forum to incorporate equity into other issues. We strive to amplify the agenda of our equity partners through the specific work we do around climate and land use, rather than leading on what we define as an equity agenda.

5. **To value community voices and the expertise of equity-led groups:** We approach our equity-oriented work in a spirit of humility, seeking to deploy our capacities in service of those with greater knowledge and lived experience. We will honor community voices and leaders (and the understanding that local/regional advocates have developed via these relationships), as well as the expertise gained by equity-led networks and groups over decades of work. Recognizing that there are many disenfranchised communities in California who are not represented by ClimatePlan (e.g., in the rural northeastern counties), we will work to be more inclusive of additional equity concerns/partners as we proceed.

6. **To check ourselves:** We are dedicated to sharing power in an authentic way within our network and with those in communities most affected by the issues and policy decisions where we focus. We recognize that the same patterns of privilege that generate inequity in society also set the context for our work. When we do not remain attuned, we risk replicating them.

7. **To get things done, and to do them better next time:** The work of making California more equitable, healthy, and sustainable is important. That work happens in a rough-and-tumble political environment beset by external opposition. We acknowledge that we may move forward imperfectly the first time around, but we are committed to reflect upon our experiences to improve our work over time.

Guidelines and Action Steps

(we use the following practices to frame our engagement around issues of equity)

We will continue to set our policy priorities at the intersection of multiple issue areas, ensuring that priorities can also help advance a broad range of benefits to low income communities and communities of color.

To do so, we will:

- Reach out to equity-led networks and partners, particularly those with strong relationships with grassroots networks, about the priorities they have identified and use those to inform our decision-making
- Ensure diverse participation in our annual priority-setting convenings

- Commit to collaboration, not competition—all policy proposals and conversations are vetted by the Steering Committee to determine if they directly impact the work of another group/the network as a whole, and how to address this sensitively..

We will hold ourselves accountable and continuously strive to learn and improve. Building trust and sharing power within the ClimatePlan network will require us to discuss conflicts when they arise.

To do so, we will:

- Allow for time where an issue can be explored further when requested by any Steering Committee, Staff or Network member; requests are made to a Staff or Steering Committee member and Staff work to frame a meeting or call to address the concern
- Build in guidelines, learning, and practices so that anyone leading a ClimatePlan effort is equipped to identify potential equity issues/conflicts and to surface them to staff, steering committee, and/or other network members as appropriate and necessary to resolve conflicts/integrate equity into ClimatePlan’s advocacy.
- Include equity check-ups in the in-person Steering Committee meetings at our quarterly meetings. This time can be used to reflect on recent network campaign efforts and to shape the work of the quarter to come.

We will increase our transparency with one another to build our trust and better share power.

To do so, we will:

- Disclose our relationships with decision makers and funders—and respect the confidentiality of the individual/institution sharing this information.
- Attempt to effectively balance inside and outside strategies by clarifying the what, who, how, and when in navigating a particular issue. We also are determined to ask openly “who should I talk with about X issue?” or “who has access and how?” when we have a question, rather than operate based on assumptions.
- Bring to the Steering Committee our own efforts and policy proposals when they will impact the work of the network as a whole. We will bring policy or tactical disagreements to one another directly, and we commit to building relationships and debating policy issues in a supportive atmosphere. While we won’t always agree, open discussion will strengthen our relationships and avoid damaging trust by undercutting one another.

We will strive to build a network that better reflects California’s diversity.

To do so, we will:

- Work to build a diverse Steering Committee that includes strong representation from communities of color, regions around the state, and grassroots communities.
- Prioritize efforts to support grassroots organizations' participation in campaigns and workgroups, e.g., via micro-grants and travel scholarships.

Indicators

(how we know we are moving the needle on equity)

1. ClimatePlan Steering Committee, Staff, and network members act with the best intentions in their work., striving to use equity as a filter to do no harm.
2. ClimatePlan Steering Committee, Staff, and network members consult with equity advocates (within the network and others) as one of the first steps in moving policy, campaign, and project possibilities forward.
3. ClimatePlan Steering Committee, Staff, and network members consult with equity advocates (within the network and others) as one of the first steps in moving policy, campaign, and project possibilities forward. All ClimatePlan policy priorities, campaigns, and projects can clearly answer the question "how does this benefit equity?" (at the beginning, during, and at the conclusion)
4. Conflict around equity-related issues has decreased/is more immediately and thoroughly addressed.
5. All ClimatePlan members are able to talk about how their work involves/relates to an equity agenda.
6. Climate, transportation, and land use policies and regulations (and the legislative and agency staff responsible for them) demonstrate a deeper understanding of--and act upon--the importance and integration of equity.