



## **The Bridge Project: A Facilitated Hiring Experience**

Investing in the Future Leadership of the Natural Resource Management, Environmental, Conservation, Outdoor Recreation and Retail Industries

### **The Challenge:**

The conservation field can be hard to break into. Employers across the sector, from federal land management agencies to nonprofit conservation groups, environmental organizations, natural resource management companies, and the outdoor recreation industry struggle to connect with a talented, diverse pool of potential employees. Hiring pathways need to be more consistent and replicable, and they need to be cleared of barriers that have traditionally worked to keep underrepresented candidates from finding permanent jobs in conservation.

Over the past year, Covid-19 and the demand for racial justice have only increased both the challenge and the need for focused, facilitated support for equitable hiring pathways. The pandemic has had immeasurable impacts for Black, Indigenous and people of color (BIPOC), including in employment. As the outdoor recreation and conservation community has absorbed the impacts of the pandemic, and as a wave of federal employees retire, there is an urgent need to rebuild an equitable workforce across the sector.

### **The Bridge Project:**

The Bridge Project is a public-private partnership to create an inclusive and innovative hiring pathway that will embolden and diversify conservation employment practices. Launching on May 11 and 12, 2021 with a virtual two-day peer learning and hiring event, we will work to close the gap between qualified potential employees and employers in the conservation field. Our goal is to build learning and create relationships for long-term solutions by bringing together leaders from across the sector.

The Bridge Project is action-oriented: organizations that are ready to hire for full-time positions are invited to join the virtual pilot hiring event on May 12th, and will have access to a pre-screened set of qualified applicants who have the skills to succeed. The Bridge team will recruit participants from 21st Century Conservation Service Corps (21CSC) and similar programs, so that all candidates will come to the event having already had initial work experiences in conservation, recreation, natural resource management, or experiential education. The Bridge team will identify a diverse group of candidates for the event, with a focus on elevating underrepresented applicants, and will match candidates with employers based on the skills needed for each position being offered at the event.



Throughout this process, our team will work to remove barriers to entry and hiring that have historically prevented underrepresented candidates from finding permanent jobs in natural resource management, conservation, and outdoor recreation. Employers and candidates will both receive relevant training prior to the event. Before the event, prospective employers will be interviewed to assess their work to create an inclusive workplace environment, and will receive training in implicit and unconscious bias and cultural competency. All position descriptions will be reviewed to support a focus on skills needed for the job. Candidates will receive training to prepare them for the job market, including in resume writing, applying for federal jobs, virtual interviewing, and professional networking. Peer-learning, networking, dialogue and bridge-building will continue through morning and afternoon virtual sessions during Day 1 of the event, followed by virtual job interviews on Day 2.

If your organization is committed to creating equitable pathways but will not have a position ready for hiring by May 12, we invite you to join the pilot event as a sponsor of The Bridge Project. You will have access to pre-event training and will be invited to participate in all peer-learning and networking activities on May 11. You will also gain access to a second round of facilitated hiring in the fall of this year, open only to organizations who participate in the pilot event. (Tentative dates: September 20-21)

By creating a public-private partnership with representation from multiple employers within the conservation field, our goal is to catalyze real change with immediate results. Participants in The Bridge Project will learn from and challenge each other, so that the conservation leaders of tomorrow have real, replicable, and equitable pathways to building conservation careers.

By requiring pre-work for employers, we hope to build skills to help employers address bias in hiring and recruitment practices, and ensure that candidates are placed into workplaces that are welcoming and inclusive. By providing pre-event support for qualified candidates, including resume advice and strategies for virtual interviews, we hope to support their successful placement into conservation and recreation jobs and reduce or remove barriers to entry.

Beyond the pilot event, The Bridge team and partners will create a learning layer with an after-action review and report, so that we can build a replicable and scalable model for creating equitable and successful pathways to conservation jobs and careers.

Federal land management agencies, conservation and environmental groups, the outdoor industry and other natural resource companies want access to a qualified, passionate and inclusive future workforce, and that workforce exists and is hungry for opportunities. Together, we will bridge the gap and help transform the future of conservation.



# Event Schedule

## Pre-Event Trainings for Employers

Training with José González on bias in recruitment and hiring and creating an inclusive workplace

Thursday, April 29th 1:00p.m. - 3:00p.m. EST: Session 1

Friday, April 30th 1:00p.m. - 3:00 p.m. EST: Session 2

## Pre-Event Trainings for Candidates

Tuesday, May 4th 2:00p.m. -3:30p.m workshop with Dr. Carolyn Finney on preparing for careers in the environmental sector. Additional sessions on resume and cover letter writing, virtual interviewing, and USAJOBS TBA

## May 11th

Time	Sessions
<i>Time zone: Eastern time</i>	
10:00 a.m. - 10:15 a.m.	Welcome from The Bridge Project Team
10:15 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.	Opening Speaker: Leslie Weldon, Forest Service
10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	Emerging Professional Panel
11:30 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.	Bridge Awards
<i>break</i>	
noon - 1:15 p.m.	Cross-sector Employer Panel: DEI Workforce Planning and Equitable Hiring
<i>break</i>	
1:15 p.m. - 2:15 p.m.	Keynote: Dr. Carolyn Finney
2:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.	Break Out Sessions
<i>break</i>	
4:15 p.m. - 5:15 p.m.	Closing Speaker: José González
5:15 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.	Networking

## May 12th

Time	Activity
<i>Time zone: Eastern time</i>	
9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.	Candidate Breakfast with Bridge Coaches
10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.	Job Interviews
TBA	USAJOBS workshops & federal agency info. session

*\*If needed, May 13th is available for a second day of interviewing.*



# Frequently Asked Questions

**When is the event?** May 11th and 12th, 2021 plus required pre-event training. If needed, May 13th is available for a second day of interviewing. Organizations participating in the pilot event will also have exclusive access to a second round of facilitated hiring in the fall (tentative dates: September 20-21)

**Where is the event?** The pilot event will be virtual.

**Tell me more about what this experience is going to include.** We will take advantage of the unique opportunity to address hiring inequities in the environmental sector by convening organizational leadership, human resources staff, recruiters, and experts for panels, facilitated discussions, break outs, and trainings on equitable hiring and cultural competency. Participants will learn about barriers and biases in hiring and learn how to build more equitable processes to improve outreach, recruiting and organizational culture. This will include training before the event, as well as sector-wide peer learning opportunities on Day 1 of the event (May 11), followed by a facilitated hiring event on May 12. A second round of hiring will occur in the fall, and will only be available to organizations that participate in the May event.

**Does my organization qualify to participate?** The event includes a wide range of organizations including federal land management agencies, conservation nonprofits, outdoor industry companies, outdoor recreation groups, and natural resource management companies. Organizations must have a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion and be prepared to support staff of color and staff from underrepresented backgrounds. Participation in The Bridge Project is free for employers who commit to hiring through The Bridge Project in May. Please register [here](#) by March 31 if you would like to hire through The Bridge Project in May.

**Can I participate if I don't have a job to offer on May 12?** Yes. Organizations who are not hiring through The Bridge Project in May can participate as event sponsors. Sponsors for the pilot event will gain access to pre-event training and to cross-sector learning and networking on May 11, and will also gain exclusive access to a second round of facilitated hiring in the fall of this year. In kind support for the pilot event or for the candidates can count towards sponsorship levels. Please register [here](#) by April 12 to participate in the May event as a sponsor.

**How will the facilitated hiring process work?** Employers will be expected to complete an employer application by March 31. If approved to participate, The Bridge team will undergo extensive outreach and create a curated candidate selection from the deep, diverse candidate pool with whom we have trusting relationships. We will then share a slate of 3-5 top candidates recruited specifically for your organization and your role. Job interviews will take place on May 12 (Day 2 of the pilot event). We can make the platform available to your organization for second round interviews on May 13, if needed.



## Frequently Asked Questions Cont.

**Which jobs qualify?** Positions must be full time and last a minimum of one year, with a living wage plus benefits. Positions can be located anywhere in the United States.

**What candidate pool will you be drawing from?** The Bridge Project's candidate pool will draw from networks Greening Youth Foundation has built in 14 years of hiring people of color and candidates from underrepresented communities in the environmental sector as well as from networks of affinity group partners. There are also thousands of diverse and qualified job seekers who are former participants in 21st Century Conservation Corps (21CSC) and similar programs. The Bridge Project will recruit from among those potential candidates, so all candidates matched with employers through The Bridge Project will have had an initial experience working in the field, and some will have access to the Public Land Service Corps (PLSC) or Resource Assistants Program (RAP) hiring authority. You can find the over 230 21CSC member organizations [here](#). These and similar programs offer a range of work experience that includes everything from seasonal roles to multi-year positions for college and postdoctoral students and graduates. The Bridge Project team will be actively seeking all forms of diversity in our candidate pool, including people of color, LGBTQIA2S candidates, differently-abled individuals, and socio-economic and geographic diversity. Our emphasis will be on providing access to jobs in this field to underrepresented candidates.

**What types of skills will candidates have?** Our priority in facilitating this hiring experience is to tailor and curate high quality slates of candidates to meet your organization's specific hiring objectives. We do so through a candidate mapping process rooted in 14 years of trusted relationships and expertise recruiting to diversify the environmental sector. Our candidate pool includes a wide range of educational backgrounds, academic disciplines, professional experiences, and years of experience: that means we can match candidates for jobs at different skill levels. Please don't hesitate to contact Hannah Malvin at [hmalvin@gyfoundation.org](mailto:hmalvin@gyfoundation.org) with any questions about specific roles with niche qualifications.

**Can I add The Bridge Process to my normal hiring process?** We ask for full engagement with you in this process, so that employers are in good faith looking to hire candidates through The Bridge. Our goal is to create a more consistent, equitable pathway that removes the biases and barriers inherent in traditional hiring mechanisms. The Bridge Project is a curated hiring process with experts recruiting specifically for your jobs rooted in the trust Greening Youth Foundation has built over 14 years with communities of color and underrepresented communities and their experience leading recruitment to diversify the environmental sector.



## Frequently Asked Questions Cont.

**I'm interested in hiring through The Bridge Project!** What are next steps? Please fill out the employer [application](#) by March 31 if you are hiring through The Bridge Project. Feel free to reach out to Hannah Malvin at [hmalvin@gyfoundation.org](mailto:hmalvin@gyfoundation.org) with any questions.

**I'm interested supporting The Bridge Project/I want access to the fall round of hiring!** What are next steps? Please fill out this [form](#) to RSVP by April 12th for the pilot event as a sponsor! More information about sponsorship levels and benefits can be found in the next section of this packet. Feel free to reach out to Hannah Malvin at [hmalvin@gyfoundation.org](mailto:hmalvin@gyfoundation.org) with any questions.

**I know a great potential Bridge Candidate!** Our candidate application portal is open until April 19 – if you know someone who would be a great candidate, they can fill out an application at this link. You are welcome to let us know that you recommend someone by emailing [hmalvin@gyfoundation.org](mailto:hmalvin@gyfoundation.org).

**I would like to serve as a Bridge Coach:** Bridge coaches will be matched with candidates to serve as a welcoming voice and help provide advice ahead of the event and reflections afterwards. If you would like to support candidates in this way, please email [hmalvin@gyfoundation.org](mailto:hmalvin@gyfoundation.org).

### **Who can I contact for more information?**

Hannah Malvin, Project Manager: [hmalvin@gyfoundation.org](mailto:hmalvin@gyfoundation.org)

Angelou Ezeilo, Greening Youth Foundation: [angelou@gyfoundation.org](mailto:angelou@gyfoundation.org)

Meryl Harrell, Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards:

[merylharrell@wildernessstewards.org](mailto:merylharrell@wildernessstewards.org)

Troy Ettel, Turner Foundation, Inc., Advisory Council Chair: [troye@turnerfoundation.org](mailto:troye@turnerfoundation.org)



# Partnership and Sponsorship Tiers

May 11-12 is The Bridge Project pilot event for curated hiring and cross-sector learning. There will also be a second round of hiring in the fall of 2021. Participation in The Bridge Project is free for employers who commit to hiring through The Bridge Project in May.

## Foundational Partner

**Free** - organization must commit to hire at least one position through the inaugural event in May, access to fall opportunity for curated hiring, training for 15 staff, access to peer learning sessions and networking with candidates, acknowledgment on social media

Organizations who are not hiring through The Bridge Project in May can sponsor the event to have access to the pre-event training, Day 1 cross-sector learning and networking opportunities on May 11, and a second round of facilitated hiring in the fall. Note, organizations must sponsor and participate in the May event to gain access to the fall event.

## Arches Sponsor

**\$2,500** - benefits include: pre-event training on equitable hiring and cultural competency for 5 staff, access to Day 1 peer learning sessions and networking with candidates, access to fall opportunity for facilitated hiring

## Cornerstone Sponsor

**\$5,000** - benefits include: pre-event training on equitable hiring and cultural competency for 10 staff, access to Day 1 peer learning sessions and networking with candidates, access to fall opportunity for facilitated hiring, recognized as a partner in The Bridge Project materials

## Keystone Sponsor

**\$10,000** - benefits include: pre-event training on equitable hiring and cultural competency for 15 staff, access to Day 1 peer learning sessions and networking with candidates, access to fall opportunity for facilitated hiring, organizational logo added to The Bridge Project materials, sponsorship acknowledged on social media



# Partnership and Sponsorship Tiers Cont.

## Anchor Sponsor

**\$15,000 and above** - benefits include: pre-event training on equitable hiring and cultural competency for 20 staff, access to Day 1 peer learning sessions and networking with candidates, access to fall opportunity for facilitated hiring, organizational logo added to The Bridge Project materials, sponsorship acknowledged on social media

*In-kind support for the pilot event or for the candidates can count towards sponsorship levels: to discuss in-kind support, please email Hannah Malvin at [hmalvin@gyfoundation.org](mailto:hmalvin@gyfoundation.org)*

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Please indicate that payments are for The Bridge Project and they can be made out to:

Greening Youth Foundation

50 Hurt Plaza SE

Suite 980

Atlanta, GA 30303

Contact Hannah Malvin at [hmalvin@gyfoundation.org](mailto:hmalvin@gyfoundation.org) for an invoice or to request Wiring/ACH instructions.



# The Bridge Project Team

## **Greening Youth Foundation:**

Angelou Ezeilo, Laurene Hamilton, Jaina Reed, Eboni Preston

## **Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards:**

Meryl Harrell, Leandra Taylor

## **Project Manager:**

Hannah Malvin

## The Bridge Project Advisory Council

The goal of The Bridge Project is to create replicable and scalable pathways for equitable hiring in conservation and the outdoor sector. To that end, The Bridge Project's Advisory Council is helping to inform and support a thoughtful approach to the inaugural event in May 2021 and to create learning layer for the project.

**Troy Ettel**, Turner Foundation, Advisory Council Chair

**Taishya Adams**, Outdoor Afro

**LA Allen**, The Nature Conservancy

**Adam Cramer**, Outdoor Alliance

**Lee Davis**, Oregon State University

**Teresa Martinez**, Continental Divide Trail Coalition

**Jeff Parker**, Northwest Youth Corps

**Jack Soto**, American Indian College Fund

**Jared Teutsch**, Georgia Audubon

**Marie Walker**, The Corps Network