



## 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 conservation nonprofits and outdoor industry companies 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 couple years, 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 an innovative public-private partnership and equitable hiring pathway for the environmental sector focused on people of color and underrepresented communities. The pilot event in May 2021 convened 687 participants including 177 candidates and representatives from 56 organizations. 17 candidates were hired at 12 organizations. The October 12-13, 2021 facilitated hiring event will build and iterate on the pilot event in May 2021 to provide enhanced matching, professional development training and support for candidates, and employer training on equitable hiring. This will be available to the 52 participating organizations and 4 federal agencies from the spring 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. 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 support for qualified candidates, including training on resumes, cover letters, and virtual interviews, as well as matching candidates with coaches, we hope to support their successful placement into conservation and recreation jobs and reduce or remove barriers to entry. The Bridge team is committed to embedding a learning layer 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 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.



# Frequently Asked Questions

**When is the event?** October 12th and 13th, 2021 plus required pre-event training.

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

**Tell me more about what this experience is going to include.** The fall event will build on the hiring, training, peer learning, and networking from the spring. Participating organizations have the opportunity to post jobs to hire through The Bridge Project's facilitated hiring process. Bridge Project candidates gain access to job opportunities, personalized career advice from Bridge coaches, and training on resume and cover letter writing, virtual job interviews, and extensive support on the federal hiring process.

The fall event will include continued training on equitable hiring solutions, reflections on inclusive hiring from the inaugural round of Bridge employers and candidates, and opportunities to connect with change agents across the environmental sector to collaborate on advancing equitable hiring.

**Does my organization qualify to participate?** All 56 organizations who participated in the May 2021 event as hiring partners or sponsors gain access to the event and may bring 2 jobs for free. For \$5,000 your organization may bring up to a total of 5 jobs.

**Can I participate if I don't have a job to offer?** Yes. Organizations who are not hiring through The Bridge Project in the fall can participate in the cross-sector learning and networking for the event.

**How will the facilitated hiring process work?** Employers submit the employer application by August 6. The following week prospective employers will be interviewed to assess the organization's work to create an inclusive workplace environment and support staff from underrepresented communities. If approved to participate, employers will have the opportunity to make a one minute video about your organization and the role to share with candidates alongside the job announcement. 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 resumes and cover letters from a top slate of candidates recruited specifically for your organization and your role. If your candidate slate exceeds 5 applicants you may review and narrow the slate in advance of the job interviews which take place on October 13. Employers may connect with candidates for further interviews afterwards. Please aim to make initial offers to candidates by October 22.



## Frequently Asked Questions Cont.

**How do I submit jobs?** By August 6, please fill out a short application available at [www.wildernessstewards.org/thebridgeproject](http://www.wildernessstewards.org/thebridgeproject). Email the position description and draft hiring rubric to [thebridgeproject@gyfoundation.org](mailto:thebridgeproject@gyfoundation.org). Please include the following information in the position description:

- Organization name
- Job title
- Salary
- Location
- Preferred start date
- Is the role is remote, hybrid, or in person?
- Are there relocation fees available?
- Minimum qualifications and skills
- Preferred skills
- Job duties
- Travel requirements
- Are there any eligibility requirements including a background check or citizenship status?
- Required degrees, certifications, or years of experience (please include only what's truly necessary and include any options for substitute experience i.e. degree or x years of professional experience)
- Benefits (please be specific)
- Writing samples or assessments (note we encourage making the application process as simple as possible)

**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. Eligible jobs include a wide range of seniority levels and any job at an environmental organization qualifies, including roles outside of boots-on-the-ground or field-based conservation work.

**What candidate pool will you be drawing from?** The Bridge Project's candidate pool includes returning members from the inaugural cohort of 177 candidates and also builds on networks Greening Youth Foundation has built in 15 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.



## Frequently Asked Questions Cont.

**What candidate pool will you be drawing from? (cont.)** 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, people with disabilities, and socioeconomic 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 15 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.

Candidates from the pilot event were hired in law, philanthropy, communications, policy, development, membership, operations, GIS, field programs management, partnerships and education, horticulture, and sales. 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 15 years with communities of color and underrepresented communities and their experience leading recruitment to diversify the environmental sector.

**I'm interested in hiring through The Bridge Project! What are next steps?** Please fill out the employer [application](#) by August 6 if you are hiring through The Bridge Project.

**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)