

Re-Grounding Together:

Your questions answered on FGN's intersectional approach

A Knowledge Base

At the [Re-Grounding Together webinar](#) on April 29, 2025, we presented the latest developments with the Future Ground Network (FGN) and how these changes may impact the work of our member groups. This document compiles and responds to the thoughtful questions submitted by attendees and offers further clarity, guidance and context on FGN's evolving direction, particularly around intersectional organizing, support for member groups and what's ahead. We've also added some clarifying questions to ensure you have all the information you need.

In sum: rather than prescribing a specific way of organizing, our goal is to **create a shared foundation** that supports deeper collaboration across movements, whether you're focused on climate, housing, Indigenous sovereignty, racial justice or other areas. Intersectional organizing isn't about adding extra layers or changing your work — it's about acknowledging the full context of the communities we serve and building more inclusive, responsive and powerful movements.

What is intersectional organizing?

Intersectional organizing is a movement-building strategy that focuses on making real systemic change by seeking to dismantle interconnected systems of power (colonialism, capitalism, patriarchy) and prioritizes community-led solutions in response to multiple threats and risks (environmental and societal).

In practice, intersectional organizing involves:

- acknowledging different groups' susceptibility to oppression
- centering the experiences and leadership of people who are affected by multiple forms of oppression

- involving diverse perspectives in decision-making
- designing solutions that cater to varying needs rather than taking a one-size-fits-all approach
- ensuring resources are accessible to those most in need

Why is FGN practicing intersectional organizing?

By expanding our focus to include many social justice issues, we not only broaden our impact but build stronger, more resilient communities.

By connecting with other movements, climate and environmental organizations can move beyond the traditional siloed approach that makes us less effective. Collaborating with and learning from others with different backgrounds and perspectives can lead to more effective, just and sustainable outcomes.

How can we put intersectional organizing principles into practice?

- (1) We can raise awareness about how social structures, policies and systems affect individuals and groups differently and can create complex disadvantages and oppression.
- (2) We can bring diversity into our organizations with a wide range of representation across age, race, gender and other protected human rights classes and statuses.
- (3) We can build relationships with organizations from other movements.

What does the shift to intersectional organizing mean for FGN groups?

FGN groups will be invited to ground their work in the understanding that environmental issues are inseparable from social justice, racial equity, economic inequality and Indigenous rights.

Groups will work to:

Broaden the focus: don't just fight for green spaces or climate action. Instead, link those efforts to housing justice, anti-racism, food security and community well-being

Centre marginalized voices: listen to, learn from and prioritize leadership from communities most impacted by environmental and social harms

Build stronger alliances: connect with movements and organizations beyond the traditional environmental world to tackle root causes together

As we shift to practicing intersectional organizing, FGN will:

- Continue to support existing membership with resources to strengthen collaborations and adopt/develop strategies for building power intersectionally
- Help groups understand where they fit within a web of allies and movements working toward justice and sustainability
- Connect groups with broader campaigns across movements
- Help groups work through challenges in moving forward with intersectional work (these may be related to funding, policy or interacting with government structures and systems)
- Engage and educate the network about intersectional environmental and social justice and empower them to begin organizing intersectionally

What will intersectional organizing and anti-oppression work look like in practice within FGN?

At this stage, FGN is still strategizing and resourcing our intersectional organizing approach.

Many specifics are still being determined, but here is what we know so far:

- We are beginning by assessing where groups land on a spectrum of understanding and actioning intersectional organizing. This began with the 2025 Annual Impact Survey and will be part of our onboarding process for new groups in the future. Our aim is not to burden groups with additional administrative tasks. Instead, we're seeking to collect intentional information that helps us:
 - Offer tailored support and resources;
 - Map out potential for cross-movement collaboration; and
 - Understand how different groups incorporate equity and justice into their work and how we can amplify this work.
- Future tools may include light-touch assessments or polls to gather insights, always with the intent of making FGN more supportive, not more bureaucratic.

How will communication/understanding be facilitated among the diversity of member groups?

We're committed to fostering safe, accessible and inclusive spaces where individuals and groups of all identities, issue areas/missions and levels of experience can meaningfully connect.

We know groups are at different points in their journey with intersectional and anti-oppressive organizing. Our role is to provide resources, relationships and tools to help you grow at your own pace. We will continue to create spaces for shared learning through trainings, facilitated conversations and community calls to support knowledge exchange and mutual understanding. To ensure everyone can participate meaningfully, we will strive to communicate in ways that are clear, culturally responsive and adaptable to different accessibility needs.

How can we be strategic together to meet shared goals of systemic change?

Systemic change emerges from a collective vision, shared strategy and sustained action over time. Grassroots organizing is one of the most powerful drivers of systemic change. When local groups come together across regions and issues, they can shift public narratives, influence policy, build community power and create alternative systems rooted in justice and care.

Within FGN, we can be strategic together to create systemic change by:

- Investing in relationships among network members. Trust and connection are the foundation of any shared strategy, especially when groups bring different lived experiences, focuses and geographies.
- Creating safe spaces for mutual learning.
- Centering justice in climate action. Systemic change means tackling root causes, not just symptoms. By grounding our work in intersectionality and anti-oppression, we strengthen our collective ability to challenge unjust systems and build better ones.

Over time, we envision this collaboration evolving into deeper alignment around a shared vision that centres climate justice and climate action, alongside a clearer understanding of each

group's strengths, assets and needs so we can support and complement one another more effectively. This foundation will allow us to co-create strategies, campaigns and calls to action that reflect the lived realities and priorities of our communities.

FGN's role is to facilitate this process, not dictate it. These strategies will emerge from the needs, wisdom and leadership of member groups. Our job is to hold space, connect people and amplify what's already working.

Intersectional organizing seems to center humans. What about nature? Isn't this approach too adaptation-focused?

This is an important concern and a common misunderstanding. Intersectionality helps us understand how overlapping systems of oppression (like colonialism, racism and capitalism) shape people's experiences, particularly those most marginalized. It's not inherently human-centered, but it reveals how harm to people and harm to ecosystems are deeply intertwined.

Because intersectional organizing brings attention to urgent, lived realities (e.g. displacement, food insecurity, health inequalities etc.), it may appear focused on adaptation. But this doesn't mean it's *only* about that. It also strengthens mitigation by helping us design climate solutions that are more just and effective.

For example, take electrifying buildings. Replacing gas stoves, furnaces and water heaters with electric alternatives is a key climate mitigation strategy. However, without an intersectional lens, incentives and programs for electrification often benefit homeowners in wealthier, predominantly white neighbourhoods who have the financial means and property ownership to access rebates and tax credits. An intersectional approach would ask questions like: who can't access these programs due to renter status, income level, immigration status or lack of internet access? What are the cultural, linguistic and economic barriers to participation? With an intersectional lens, we could design programs that offer no-cost upgrades in multi-unit housing, provide materials in multiple languages and work with trusted local partners. This doesn't dilute mitigation — it strengthens it!

I need to understand how intersectionality relates to biodiversity and the Indigenous viewpoint that humans are *in* nature not above it.

Intersectionality helps us understand how social and ecological injustices are interconnected. It recognizes how the systems of colonialism, racism and capitalism shape not only human experiences but how we interact and treat the earth, water and non-human life.

For example: when applied to biodiversity and conservation, an intersectional lens centers Indigenous knowledge and leadership, acknowledges how environmental degradation disproportionately impacts marginalized communities and resists extractive and exclusionary conservation models.

When we center intersectionality in climate or ecological work, we're not adding an extra layer — we're returning to a more truthful, relational way of understanding the world that many Indigenous communities have long practiced.

I'm a little worried because this new direction towards intersectional organizing and anti-oppression seems top-down and hierarchical.

This is a valid concern. Many activists have experienced “top-down” models of organizing that impose rather than invite. FGN is committed to the opposite.

We're not prescribing a model — we're inviting you to join in on the growing recognition within the environmental movement that climate action and social justice are deeply interconnected. As youth-led, BIPOC-led and frontline communities have shown, these are deeply connected struggles, and organizing accordingly is how we win. In fact, many grassroots groups (even without actively realizing it) are already working at the nexus of justice and climate.

So, our goal is to co-create a shared foundation together that will enable deeper collaboration across diverse movements and support your work by offering tools, relationships and frameworks that will strengthen your grassroots power.

I've just finished filming a local conference on the need for better support for Aging in Place - HomeCare. I explained to my audience that I was there from the Sustainability Hub because Aging in Place *IS* a sustainability issue. This seems to be a new idea. How will FGN support this kind of outreach?

We love this kind of connection-making — thank you! This is exactly the kind of intersectional thinking we want to support and build upon. Aging in Place connects to sustainability via housing access, public health, infrastructure and community resilience.

Going forward, we aim to offer educational resources to help groups articulate these connections, trainings and workshops on how social issues intersect with climate and opportunities for cross-movement collaboration through webinars, calls and events.

Is this global in scope, or limited to Canada? Are there any financial organizations involved with FGN?

FGN currently only supports groups based in Canada. While we learn from and are in solidarity with movements globally, our network is designed for and by Canadian grassroots organizers.

There are currently no financial institutions involved with FGN.

Our group needs help with grant writing and fundraising. How can we access skill share support?

Skill sharers are available to onboarded FGN member groups. If your group is already a part of the network, you can apply for skill-sharing support via [this application form](#). We'll match you with a volunteer who has expertise in your chosen the area.

I want to connect with other climate-focused groups to understand best practices. Is that still a goal for FGN?

This is still a goal for FGN. However, while connecting climate groups is important, FGN is moving toward intersectional, anti-oppressive organizing. We believe the best practices emerge when we recognize how climate intersects with systems of power and oppression. FGN will continue to host spaces that allow for shared learning and connection across climate-focused groups while expanding that lens to include justice-focused work.

This is my first contact with FGN as my group had just decided a few weeks ago to join. I now understand applications are closed so I guess this action will be on hold for us?

Yes, applications are temporarily closed as we build capacity and revise our strategies. We expect to reopen registration for new member groups by early 2026.

I would like to know if FGN will provide financial support.

FGN previously offered up to \$1000/year per group, but due to changes in our funding model, we currently can't offer direct financial support. We recognize how critical this funding was and are seeking opportunities to reinstate it in the future.

In the meantime, we aim to support groups through our skill-sharing program, learning and training opportunities, relationships and resources.