

COMMITMENT TO RACIAL JUSTICE ORGANIZING

FOSSIL FUEL DIVEST HARVARD

2020-2021 ACADEMIC YEAR

The current moment calls us to critically examine and re-evaluate how we show up for and support the aspiration of Black liberation and the Movement for Black Lives. We created this document in order to hold Fossil Fuel Divest Harvard accountable to our stated goals of advancing racial justice. We parsed our approach towards bettering FFDH into three categories: how to improve our internal culture, how to better show up as allies, and how to fight for racial justice in our core organizing work. At the bottom of the document, we also reflect on the work we have already done.

1. INTERNAL CULTURE SHIFT

We recognize that dominant cultural norms center and celebrate whiteness while decentering and devaluing Black bodies and bodies of color, as well as those that are differently abled, trans, gender nonconforming, queer, and intersex. We commit to creating a regenerative internal culture within our own organization and critically examining our internal behavior with the goal of making FFDH an accessible, inclusive, anti-racist, and liberation-focused space.

Short-term:

- Hold a campaign-wide white supremacy culture/anti-racism training during September/early October in order to explicitly identify aspects of white supremacy culture that exist within FFDH internally
- Recommit to our [culture shift goals document](#) in order to reach a shared vision of what a liberation-focused internal culture can look like
- Host an internal training/workshop about the connections between the climate crisis and racial capitalism this semester

Medium-term:

- Check in at least semesterly on these goals to reflect and revise based on members' feedback

Long-term:

- Develop an internal culture that interrupts norms of anti-Blackness. All members should be proud of our culture and understand why and how we share power in the way that we do

2. ALLYSHIP

We operate with the understanding that there is no climate justice without racial justice. We commit to showing up for BIPOC-led organizing and our allies who fight for racial justice by:

Short-term:

- Amplifying the work of racial-justice focused Harvard groups such as HAACC, HPDC, HOOP, HESC, AOD, TAPAS, and others during group meetings and via our social media, alumni and student email lists, and other communication channels

- Commit to supporting local climate justice groups and frontline community efforts and volunteer/show up for at least 2 frontline justice events this semester
- Host an external-facing event on the connections between the climate crisis and racial capitalism this semester
- Help advance the newly-formed Endowment Justice Coalition

Medium-term:

- Build trust and strong relationships with BIPOC-led campus groups and frontline communities in order to take joint action towards climate and racial justice

Long-term:

- Co-create a community around the endowment justice coalition and help build deep solidarity among campus groups

3. CORE ORGANIZING

We cannot be successful in our fight for climate justice work unless we align the core work of our campaign towards Black liberation. The Movement for Black Lives [Invest-Divest platform](#) calls for “investments in the education, health, and safety of Black people” and “divestment from exploitative forces including prisons, fossil fuels, police, surveillance and exploitative corporations.” To support M4BL ideology in our core work, we commit to the following:

Short-term:

- Continue to highlight the disproportionate harms of the fossil fuel industry’s practices on BIPOC communities in our advocacy
- Create a reinvestment working group to advocate for alternative investments that would further the goals of Black liberation and creating a healing economy

Medium-term:

- Integrate key ideas and demands in the movement for Black liberation into our regular organizing
- Increase our calls on Harvard to reinvest its endowment in ways that further racial justice

Long-term:

- Educate the Harvard community and beyond about the connection between the exploitative forces of the fossil fuel industry and the perpetuation of racial capitalism
- Use the fight against the fossil fuel industry as a vector to provoke broader conversations about morals and justice in our current economic system

WHAT WE HAVE ALREADY DONE:

Internal Group Culture:

- Updated our “Community Norms” and “Group Norms” documents with more guidelines around participatory organizing and an inviting culture
- Started internal education effort within the campaign
 - Created position of Internal Education Coordinator
 - Held internal anti-racism and white supremacy culture training(s)
 - Held internal training to solidify a Just Transition framework

- Dedicate a segment of our Divest Book Club to readings on racial justice
- Integrated BLM regularly into our discussion at general meetings and events

Allyship:

- Gave \$500 to City Life/Vida Urbana, \$250 to the National Bail Fund, and \$250 to the NAACP Legal Defense Fund in June 2020
- Invited speakers from other student collectives to our actions and showed up for theirs
- Co-led the formation of the Endowment Justice Coalition that launched in April

Core Organizing:

- Organized a Summer Speaker Series, centering racial justice in the Q&A and collaborating with Black affinity and liberation groups
- Highlighted connections among COVID, climate, and racial injustice through an educational “covidxclimatextracism” Instagram series
- Amplified efforts for racial justice in our social media, mailing lists, and other communications
- Amplifying racial justice movements’ actions in our Summer Power Hour Series
 - Put out statement of solidarity with M4BL after the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmed Arbery, and Tony McDade