

# CASE STATEMENT



**CLIMATE  
EMERGENCY  
FUND**

Climate Emergency Fund supports disruptive, nonviolent climate activism because it is the fastest way to create transformative change

# Executive summary

**T**he climate crisis poses an existential threat to humanity. Our window to prevent catastrophic runaway heating has nearly closed, and if emergency decarbonization does not begin in earnest in the next five years, Earth will be locked into an unlivable future. Continued inaction will bring about mass death and human suffering on an unprecedented, unfathomable scale.



Yet at this critical moment, the fossil fuel industry has captured tremendous power globally, especially within the government of the United States, which now aims to supercharge US fossil fuel extraction and roll back thirty years of environmental legislation across the board. Its attacks on the earth's climate system are proceeding hand-in-hand with an unprecedented evisceration of government institutions and assaults on civil liberties.

Now more than ever, we need a nonviolent, disruptive, people-powered movement that can stop the rise of authoritarianism and create the political conditions for rapid decarbonization.



Extinction Rebellion UK march through central London in April 2022.

History has shown over and over again that organized people disrupting business-as-usual can bring about incredible societal transformation. Numerous academic studies have documented the large positive impact and cost-effectiveness of disruptive protests. Yet today, these movements are critically underfunded.

Climate Emergency Fund exists to fill that gap. We fund the bold, nonviolent, disruptive climate groups building the much-needed people power that can push back against the power of the fossil fuel industry. By funding

these groups and campaigns with huge ambitions in their early stages, our grant-making can create outsized impacts.

From 2022 to 2025, Climate Emergency Fund made grants to 136 organizations. In those four years, our grantees have mobilized over 440,000 people for climate protest and generated over 230,000 news stories covering their activities.

We have funded the groups responsible for almost all of the bold, disruptive protests in the United States and Europe that have garnered international media attention. Across the world, our grantees are at the absolute forefront of the climate movement, and we are proud to support their brave activities.

As a non-endowed fund, we raise all of the money that we grant out. While we are proud of raising approximately \$5 million a year, and granting approximately \$4 million a year for the past 3 years, we remain unable to fully cover the needs of the disruptive climate movement.

With additional funding, we believe we could provide enough support for the movement to reach a pathway of exponential growth, building enough power to win the transformative climate policies we so desperately need.

# Disrupting normalcy

## THE POWER OF PROTEST

World leaders have known about the threat of climate breakdown for decades. Their continued inaction is not driven by a lack of awareness or a lack of technological solutions. Fossil fuel extraction continues because the fossil fuel industry wields incredible power, and it uses that power to ensure that government policies continue to protect fossil fuel profits at all costs. If climate catastrophe is to be prevented, humanity must find a way to marshal a force more powerful than the money and influence wielded by the fossil fuel industry. There is only one potential source for that power: organized people using strength in numbers to achieve their goals. For groups of organized people seeking to exert power, nonviolent disruptive protest is the most efficient and most effective approach.



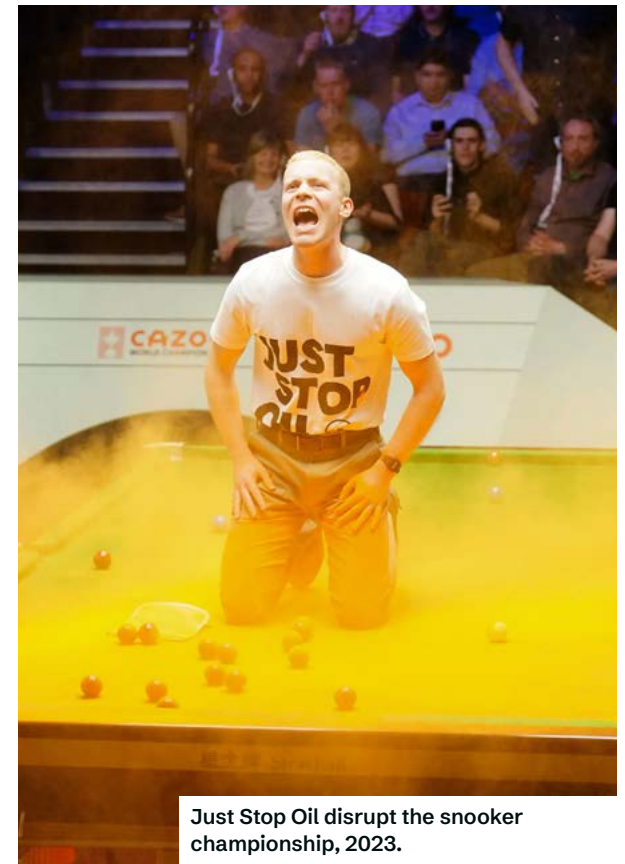
Disruptive nonviolent protest has many unique characteristics that make it more impactful than other methods of advocacy. By disrupting business-as-usual, protesters can inflict a tangible cost on climate villains for their crimes in the form of lost profits, or on political leaders for their inaction in the form of damaged

**“The unfortunate truth for climate organizers is that disruption is essential to generate press coverage.”**

reputation. The costs imposed by disruption allow protesters to directly exert hard power in a way that no other tactic can, making their actions impossible to ignore.

The dramatic scenes generated by disruptive protest also allow organizers to break through into the media, dramatically amplifying the message behind the protest. In fact, disruptive protest is often the only way for organizers to force the media and the public to pay attention to the issue at hand. For example, [Google Trends data comparing Extinction Rebellion’s “Big One” and Just Stop Oil’s Snookers disruption in April 2023](#) show that it is possible for a high-level disruptive action from one person to generate as much interest as 100,000 people marching peacefully in the streets.

More anecdotally, ask yourself: How many climate protests did you hear about in the



Just Stop Oil disrupt the snooker championship, 2023.

past year? And how many of those were disruptive? If you are reading this, you are probably somewhat in the “climate bubble.” Try asking someone in your family or social life how many climate protests they have heard about in the last year. The protests they are likely to mention—[throwing soup](#), or the [US Open Disruption](#)—were some of the most shocking disruptions of “normalcy” that occurred. The unfortunate truth for climate organizers is that disruption is essential to generate press coverage.

In early 2022, Climate Emergency Fund established an internal policy to only fund groups that engage in or directly support disruptive tactics. The performance of our grantees before and after we implemented this “disruption-only” criteria clearly demonstrates the narrative power of disruptive protest. For all forms of measurement, disruptive grantees received greater than 10x the press coverage than non-disruptive grantees. The difference in media hits per protest attendee is especially striking—an individual protester on average generated 39 times as much narrative impact from participating in a disruptive protest as a non-disruptive protest. When looking at median performance, disruptive protest had 290 times the impact per attendee. The choice is clear from the perspective of an individual activist—if they want to maximize their narrative impact, they must engage in disruption.



Building narrative power through media attention is a critical first step in the process of winning policy victories. Disruptive protests change the political landscape on which policy decisions are made by fundamentally reframing the issue.

The concept of the Overton Window offers a useful heuristic for understanding how this process plays out: By changing the political landscape, protests can help move a policy

STATISTIC	DISRUPTIVE	NOT DISRUPTIVE
Media Hits - Median	135	8
Media Hits - Average	905	66
Media/\$1k - Median	3.04	0.11
Media/\$1k - Average	11.36	0.81
Media Hits/Attendee - Median	0.567	0.002
Media Hits/Attendee - Average	5.828	0.148

solution from the “radical” political fringe squarely into the realm of “common-sense” solutions. In addition, protests can raise the salience of an issue, pushing it to the forefront of an incredibly overcrowded media ecosystem and forcing people across the political spectrum to engage with the issue. If the protesters have a common-sense demand that has widespread popular support, raising the issue’s salience leads directly to an



Stopp Oljeletinga, Norway.

increase in popular support, which in turn indirectly leads to positive policy outcomes.

Disruption not only forces leaders and reporters to pay attention to the protests, it also has transformative impacts on the thoughts and feelings of the public. Humans are social creatures; when we go about our daily lives and see the people around us act as though everything is fine, we subconsciously assume that it is. But when we see someone put themselves in danger during a protest, the illusion of normalcy is shattered, making the climate crisis feel real.

If bold climate policy is to be passed, millions of people will need to transition from feeling like things are “normal” to feeling like the world is ending. Perhaps the fastest way to bring about that large-scale shift in consciousness is for people to see thousands upon thousands of people acting as though the world is ending by participating in disruptive protest.

# Proven effectiveness

## HISTORY, CLIMATE POLICY WINS & SOCIAL SCIENCE

History has proven that disruptive protest wins powerful victories over and over again. From labor strikes in the early 20th century winning crucial worker protections, to the Civil Rights movement ending legal segregation, to the immigrants rights movement successfully pushing Obama to institute DACA, movements have proven that governments respond to people power. All of these successful movements relied extensively on disruptive tactics to force corporations and governments to meet their demands.

Climate Emergency Fund grantees have also proven the effectiveness of disruption. In the last three years, our grantees have secured many concrete victories against polluting industries, from banning new gas infrastructure across New York State to halting oil and gas exploration in the UK's North Sea to protecting millions of acres of Alaskan Wilderness from fossil fuel extraction.

Our grantees have also played a critical role in winning large-scale policies such as the Great British Insulation Scheme.

Even when disruptive campaigns do not secure short-term material victories, their nonviolent protests still have huge positive ripple effects across the political landscape. These effects are well documented in social science research.

For example, protests have an unrivaled ability to set the terms of political discourse, dramatically raising the awareness and salience of key issues, including by generating media coverage, which forces elected officials to respond. And although this impact is not guaranteed, protests have been repeatedly shown to build significant public support for a cause, for the climate movement specifically, as well as for a range of other issues.



In addition, many researchers have found that protests are very effective at securing election outcomes aligned with the interests of protesters. From the Civil Rights Movement to the Black Lives Matter movement to the

**Our Literature Review offers a deeper dive into the mechanisms and impacts of protest movements.**



Extinction Rebellion UK, 2022.

climate movement, protests were a driving force for support to candidates that align with the priorities of protestors.

A healthy movement ecosystem includes many groups pursuing many different, complementary methods to create change, all of which play an important role in securing policy change.

Without a disruptive component, movement ecosystems are often rendered toothless, with non-disruptive tactics all too easily ignored by leaders. When a movement does

In 2025 we granted



**\$4.1M**

to the Climate Movement



Planet over Profit / Summer of Heat in NYC, May 2024.

have a disruptive flank, on the other hand, groups pursuing more insider-focused strategies find themselves with significantly higher negotiating power.

The disruptive elements of a movement ecosystem can open up new possibilities for change by altering the political landscape itself; once that occurs, insider-focused groups are perfectly positioned to consolidate momentum and secure wins. These dynamics are well-understood in academia—in a [recent survey of social movement experts](#), “the strategic use

of nonviolent disruptive tactics” was named as the most critical element determining an overall movement’s likelihood of success.

Disruptive protest is the engine that drives major social change. Without it, the climate movement will remain incapable of overcoming the power of fossil fuel corporations, and governments will continue to enable the destruction of the Earth’s climate for the sake of private profit.

From the perspective of an individual protester, disruptive action is the most effective way to

get their message across. And from the perspective of a philanthropist, funding disruptive protest is arguably the most cost-effective way to fight the climate crisis. A 2021 analysis by [Giving Green](#) found that each dollar spent on protest could lower emissions by 6 metric tons of carbon through the impact on legislative outcomes. [Another study](#) published in the *Stanford Social Innovation Review* found that giving to Extinction Rebellion or the Sunrise Movement was 6-12 times more impactful than giving to top-rated climate charities.

# How protest drives policy

## TWO IN-DEPTH EXAMPLES

**J**ust Stop Oil (JSO) UK's highly provocative protests have made them one of the most notorious social movements in history. Yet although this group is very well-known, few people are aware of the massive victory secured by JSO UK in 2024 as a direct result of the group's organizing.

With seed funding from Climate Emergency Fund, Just Stop Oil UK launched in April 2022 with a simple demand: No new oil and gas licenses in the North Sea. Their consistent disruptive protests, including blockading oil terminals, shutting down major roads, and cultural disruptions such as throwing soup on (covered) paintings and interrupting sports events, pushed the climate crisis to the top of the political conversation within the UK and around the globe, creating unprecedented media break-throughs.

JSO UK's protests have generated at least 100,000 press hits since their launch. When Just Stop Oil UK launched, the Tories were in power and were granting new oil and gas licenses at a blistering pace, with Rishi Sunak pledging to "max out" exploitation of reserves.

But in Spring 2023, Just Stop Oil received huge news: the Labour Party confirmed its



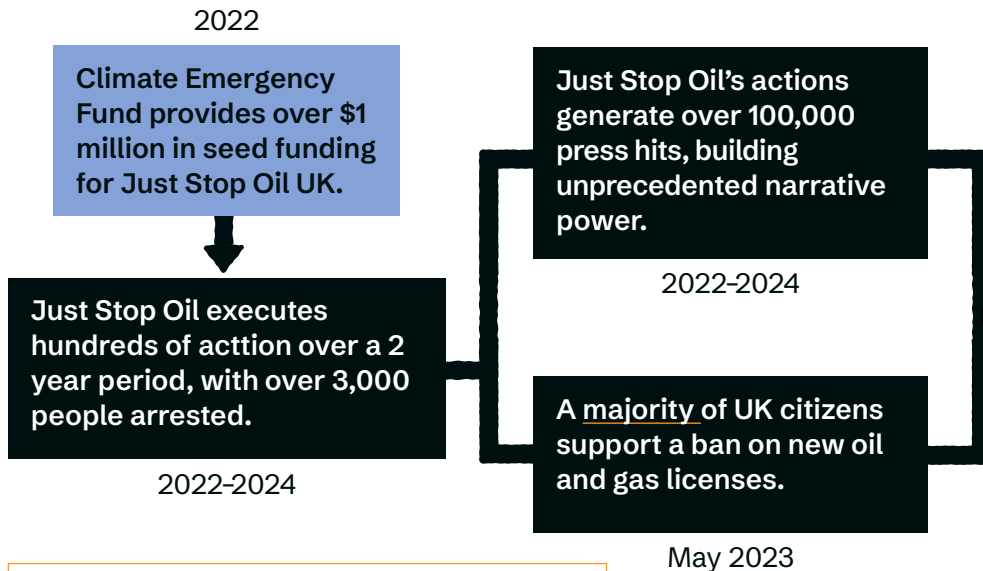
Just Stop Oil activists throw soup on Van Gogh's Sunflowers, 2022.

**“Their consistent disruptive protests, pushed the climate crisis to the top of the political conversation within the UK and around the globe”**

pledge to halt all new oil and gas licenses if it won power.

In July 2024, the Labour Party reclaimed control of the UK government for the first time in 19 years in a landslide victory. The Labour Party has since confirmed its commitment not to issue new licenses to explore new oil and gas fields, making the UK the first major fossil fuel-producing nation in the Global North nation to halt its oil and gas expansion, a massive win for JSO UK and for the climate movement as a whole.

# ACTIVIST WIN: UK BANS NEW OIL AND GAS LEASING



If Just Stop Oil UK deserves 10% Credit:  
Emissions Reductions 27.3 tons per \$

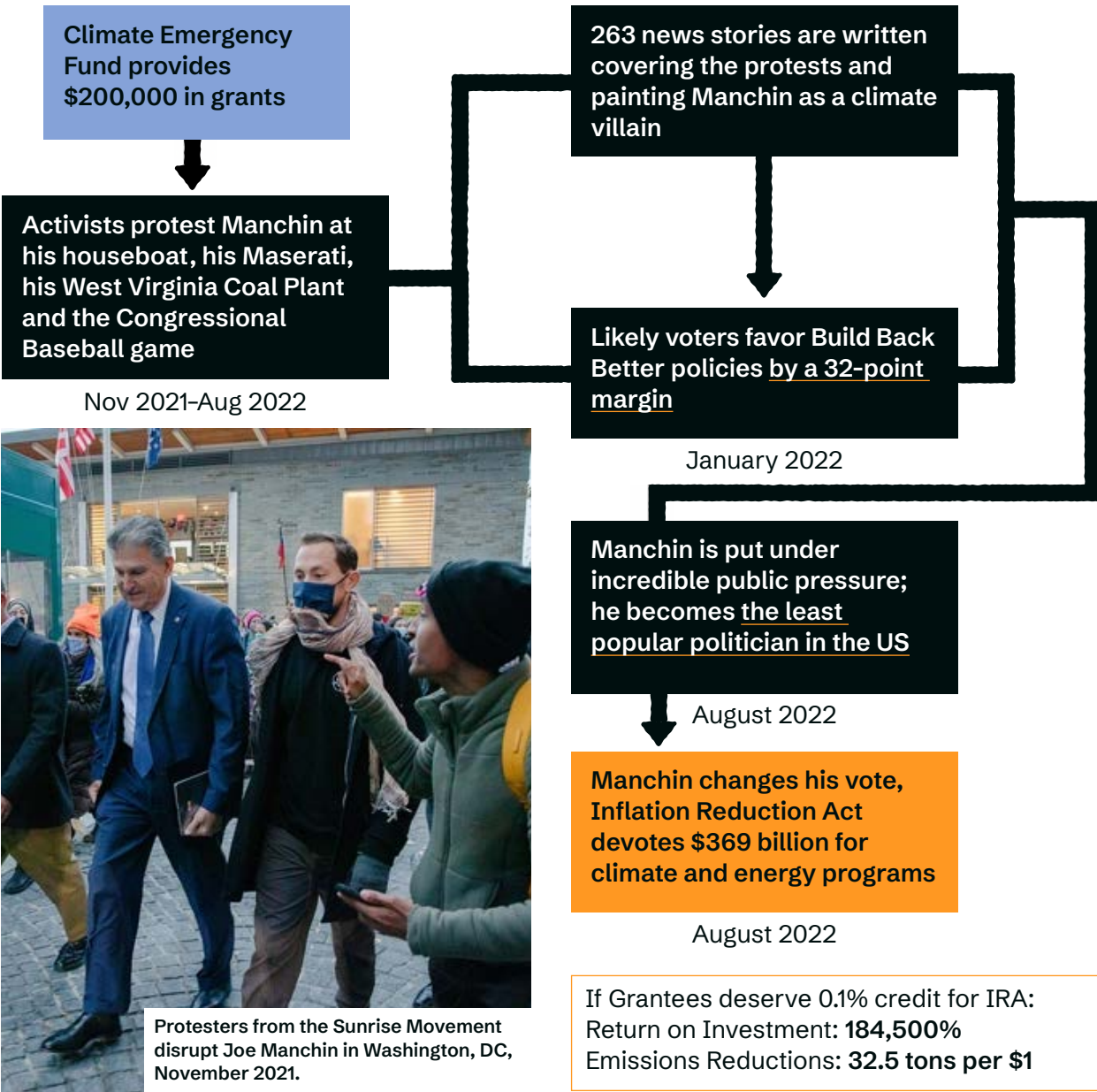


A [2023 analysis from the North Sea Transition Authority](#) suggested that there may be over 16 billion barrels of oil remaining in the North Sea, with 2 billion already discovered. Assuming that roughly 4 billion barrels would be economically viable to extract and burn under a business-as-usual scenario, and given that each barrel of oil burned releases 0.43 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e, a cessation of new oil and gas licensing could result in over 1,720,000,000 metric tons of carbon remaining untapped and unburned, equivalent to over 5 years of the UK's annual country-wide emissions.

Just Stop Oil spent approximately £5 million, or \$6.3 million, between its launch in April 2022 and the Labour victory in July 2024. Assuming they deserve 10% credit for Labour's decision to uphold their pledge to halt new oil and gas leases, each dollar spent on Just Stop Oil resulted in an astronomical 27.3 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e staying in the ground. To put that 27.3 tons per dollar number in perspective, the top-rated climate charity identified by [Founders Pledge](#) in terms of emissions reductions per dollar, Clean Air Task Force, yielded 0.1-1 ton of carbon emissions reductions per dollar spent in 2018.



# ACTIVIST WIN: INFLATION REDUCTION ACT



The passage of the Inflation Reduction Act in the US provides a more complex but equally compelling example of the stupendous impact of funding climate protest. The passage of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) in the United States, a multi-part compromise version of Biden’s originally proposed Build Back Better plan, was a highly complex process, but climate protests played a key role in bringing those bills into existence. Taken together, the IIJA and IRA were essentially a watered down Green New Deal (GND).

The Sunrise Movement deserves credit for placing the concept of a GND onto the political agenda and elevating climate into a top issue in the 2020 election cycle. Their breakthrough protest in Nancy Pelosi’s office in 2018 helped spark explosive growth for the movement. Over 300 Sunrise chapters emerged across the US, which in turn executed thousands of protest actions.

As a result of the momentum built by Sunrise, alongside efforts by other movements including the Youth Climate Strikes, the 2020 presidential election was the first in American history in which climate was named as a key issue. Every major Democratic presidential candidate endorsed the Green New Deal. In September 2020, climate was the top concern for voters. Sunrise helped to create incredible political willpower for climate action, which eventually culminated in the IIJA and the IRA.

Between 2018 and 2022, Sunrise spent a total of roughly \$37 million. The IIJA and IRA

**“Grantees repeatedly targeted Manchin and successfully drew national attention to his climate villainy.”**

invested a combined \$416 billion in energy and climate measures (\$47 billion from IIJA and \$369 billion from IRA). Even if Sunrise only deserves 20% of the credit for the IIJA and IRA (a very conservative estimate), each \$1 spent on Sunrise resulted in \$2,249 in investment from the government.

Measured another way, researchers estimate that the IRA alone will result in cumulative emissions reductions of at least 6.5 billion tons over the next decade. Still assuming 20% credit for Sunrise, each dollar spent removed a whopping 35.1 tons of carbon emissions, not taking into account the IIJA’s impact, or any other local or state policy Sunrise played a role in passing.

Without funding from visionary philanthropists supporting Sunrise’s efforts to fundamentally change the political landscape in the US, the IIJA and IRA would not have passed, and those emissions would still be entering the atmosphere.

Climate Emergency Fund grantees played a critical role in pushing the IRA across the finish line. While Manchin was blocking the



Protest at Senator Joe Manchin’s houseboat, Almost Heaven, in the Washington marina, September 2021.

final passage of the deal, Climate Emergency Fund grantees repeatedly targeted Manchin and successfully drew national attention to his climate villainy.

Climate Emergency Fund grantees targeted Manchin’s yacht, his coal plant in West Virginia, and his participation in the Congressional Baseball Game.

Together, these projects mobilized 800 people and were mentioned in the press over 1,500 times. We believe this pressure was instrumental in securing a yes vote from Manchin.

By August 2022, he was polling as the least popular politician in America. Ultimately, he announced his “yes” vote the night before the Congressional Baseball Game protest, possibly out of fear of enduring another negative media cycle.

In total, Climate Emergency Fund spent roughly \$200,000 on these hyper-targeted protests. Even if those protests were only 0.1% responsible for the final passage of the IRA, they resulted in \$1,845 of government investment and an astounding 32.5 tons of carbon removed for each \$1 spent on protest.

# CEF grantees generating breakthroughs worldwide

**B**eyond the in-depth examples listed above, CEF Grantees have been responsible for a wide range of concrete policy victories in the last several years.



In January 2024, [Climate Defiance](#) played a major role in one of the biggest wins ever secured by the climate movement. The Biden Administration had plans in place for a massive buildout of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) export infrastructure on the Gulf Coast, which would have had combined annual carbon emissions nearly equivalent to the entire European Union, as well as devastating impacts on the people and ecosystems already ravaged by industrial pollution. But after being [repeatedly targeted](#) by Climate Defiance, the Biden Administration reversed course and announced that it was “pausing” [approvals of all new LNG export facilities](#), a truly monumental win.

On September 9, 2023, [Extinction Rebellion Netherlands](#) launched a sustained wave of disruptive protest, vowing to block the key A12 highway leading into the Hague every day until the Dutch government met their demand and stopped all fossil fuel subsidies. Day after

day, thousands of protesters kept coming back to execute the blockades, leading to over 9,000 arrests.

Despite [extensive use of water cannons](#) against the protesters, the disruptions [remained joyful](#). After 27 days, faced with this incredible pressure, the Dutch government finally capitulated. On October 10, the Dutch parliament [ordered a plan](#) for phasing out fossil fuel subsidies; in addition, the Dutch environmental minister is now [calling for the EU](#) to phase out fossil fuel subsidies as well.

Numerous Climate Emergency Fund grantees have led protests against the outsized climate impact of private jet travel by the rich. [New York Communities for Change](#) [blockaded a private airport in the Hamptons in May 2022](#). In Fall 2022, [Scientist Rebellion](#) helped coordinate a global wave of action against private jets, with

**“After 27 days, faced with this incredible pressure, the Dutch government finally capitulated.”**



Climate Defiance disrupts the White House correspondents dinner, 2023.

[actions taking place at 13 airports](#). And [Extinction Rebellion Netherlands](#) has [repeatedly targeted Amsterdam’s Schiphol Airport with major blockades](#). In April 2023, the movement against private air travel achieved its first major win when Schiphol Airport announced that it would [ban private jets as soon as 2025](#).

CEF grantees have been at the forefront of the fight to phase out fossil gas in buildings and homes. [New York Communities for Change](#) has helped win a gas ban both in [New York City](#) in December 2021, and statewide for the



Extinction Rebellion Netherlands, 2023.



New York Communities for change, 2023.

state of New York in May 2023. The [Washington DC chapter of Extinction Rebellion won a gas ban in the nation's capital in July 2022](#), and in July 2024 they pushed DC's utility regulator to [reject a \\$12 billion investment in gas pipeline infrastructure](#).

Even these impressive wins don't give the full picture of the impact of climate protests. The process of social pressure leading to policy change is extremely complex, with thousands of unique, deeply interconnected factors contributing to final outcomes.

**“Powerful protests have ripple effects on the fundamental playing field, creating new possibilities for progress in a way that no other strategy can.”**

Powerful protests have ripple effects on the fundamental playing field within which all of those factors are operating, creating new possibilities for progress in a way that no other strategy can.

All CEF grantees that are generating headlines, recruiting and training new leaders, and disrupting business-as-usual are bringing us closer to the transformative climate policies we so desperately need.

# The nonviolent disruptive climate movement needs funding

**D**espite the massive and proven impact of disruptive protest, the disruptive flank of the climate movement remains critically underfunded. According to ClimateWorks, only 1% of European foundation giving went to grassroots and movement building; only a fraction of that 1% actually funded disruptive protest. Similar data does not exist for the US, but we suspect the picture is even more dire.

Groups that want to register new climate-conscious voters, or run public awareness campaigns on social media, or lobby for technocratic climate policies have access to hundreds of millions of dollars of philanthropic funding. Groups seeking support to run disruptive protest campaigns have virtually no options for financial support besides crowdfunding/direct donations and the Climate Emergency Fund.

Most disruptive climate groups are unlikely to achieve large-scale success without financial support. There are many common costs connected to organizing that need to be covered: space rental fees, printing costs, art supplies, tech infrastructure, etc. If groups cannot secure funding for these baseline operating costs, their whole organizing effort will be held back, making them much less likely to break through and create a major impact.

But perhaps most importantly, movements need dedicated people in order to succeed, and people need money to survive.

Most successful movements, including the majority of Climate Emergency Fund's grantees, depend primarily on volunteers to move day-to-day work forward. But the addition of a handful of staff can dramatically boost a movement's capacity. Full-time organizers are much better equipped to coordinate work among dozens or hundreds of volunteers, keep an eye on the big picture, and ensure critical work doesn't fall through the cracks. Movements benefit immensely from having people who can devote all of their time and energy to the cause, rather than being forced to find time to organize alongside the demands of one or more other paid jobs. The majority of Climate Emergency Fund's grants go toward organizer wages.



Disruptive climate movements are able to achieve outstanding results on a shoestring budget compared to the annual fundraising of large climate NGOs, or even mid-sized climate advocacy groups. Movement staff hired by



Climate Resistance protests in London, 2025.

our grantees are often paid “needs-based” compensation, which means that their wages cover the cost of their living expenses and nothing more. In other words, movement staff are often paid relatively little, especially in relation to their counterparts at large NGOs. Movement staff treat their activities as an act of service, and not as a career. These modest wages, combined with low operational overhead and a high degree of volunteer commitment, allow protest groups to achieve the stunning return on investment described above.

# Our unique role

**\$22.5 MILLION IN GRANTS MADE TO 156 ORGANIZATIONS SINCE 2019**

While there are a handful of other philanthropies, such as the Equation Campaign and Movements’ Trust, that are willing to support disruptive climate activism in some cases, we are the only organization in the world that is fully focused on this theory of change. Activists seeking funding for disruptive protest will often tell us we are their only lead for potential support. And for many of our grantees, Climate Emergency Fund ends up covering 50%-95% of their annual operating costs.

Climate Emergency Fund acts as a bridge between funders and the disruptive climate movement. We help funders understand protest movements, and we help train activists in fundraising. Our extensive networks within the climate movement allow us to stay up-to-date on the most exciting and visionary projects that emerge and fund them in the critical early phases. And our experience evaluating

grantees helps us to identify applicants with strong potential and screen out those who are unlikely to succeed. We are funded by 5,800 donors, large and small.

Climate Emergency Fund provides a safe, tax-deductible way to support the disruptive climate movement. All of the activities supported by CEF grants are legal and 501(c)(3) compliant. Although we support groups that utilize disruptive tactics as part of their overall campaign strategy, CEF funds are used to support legal activities—public education, recruitment, training, and promotional expenses related to those campaigns, as well as organizer wages and other operating costs. We are guided by legal counsel with expertise in activism and social movements. Our donors are fully insulated from legal risk, and we accept anonymous donations.

YEAR	DONATIONS RECEIVED	GRANTS MADE
2022	\$6,088,911	\$4,996,164
2023	\$4,783,939	\$3,524,523
2024	\$5,560,000	\$4,320,000
2025	\$4,681,620	\$4,097,200



Utah Youth Environmental Solutions stages a “die-in”, 2022.

**“Climate Emergency Fund provides a safe, tax-deductible way to support the disruptive climate movement”**

# Our board and team

**O**ur Board of Directors includes former executive director and founding advisor, Margaret Klein Salamon, PhD, climate scientist and activist Rose Abramoff, naturalist and BBC presenter Chris Packham, award-winning filmmaker and producer Adam McKay, and environmental advocate and activist Steven Donziger. Together, they support the work of Climate Emergency Fund with their expertise in activism, communications, and with their extensive networks.



Our team brings a unique combination of activist experience, thought leadership, professionalism in development, and hard work.

Our executive director, Philip W. Eubanks, has over a decade of experience fundraising in international development. Philip's path toward climate leadership was further shaped during his time at the Committee to Protect Journalists, where he helped raise more than \$25 million over his five-year tenure at the organization. There, he was deeply moved by the courage of journalists covering environmental issues and exposing the role of the fossil fuel industry in driving climate breakdown.



**Margaret Klein Salamon, PhD**  
Board Chair



**Philip W. Eubanks**  
Executive Director



**Rose Abramoff, PhD**  
Board Treasurer



**Adam McKay**  
Board Director



**Crystal Craig**  
Development  
Operations Manager



**Felicianna "Fél"  
Marquez**  
Development Officer



**Steven Donziger**  
Board Director



**Chris Packham**  
Board Director



**Siobahn Haut**  
Operations Officer

At the same time, he grew increasingly concerned by what he saw as a "business as usual" attitude toward climate coverage, even as scientists warned of accelerating and irreversible harm. His academic training under civil rights leaders at Vanderbilt University continues to inform his leadership today, grounding his work in moral clarity, accountability, and purpose.

Drawing on this wide-ranging experience, Philip now focuses on strengthening the disruptive, nonviolent climate movement. He works to build the resources, strategy, and infrastructure activists need to drive meaningful change at scale—applying his expertise in fundraising, strategy, and movement-building to meet the urgency of the climate emergency.

# Climate Emergency Fund's grantmaking strategy

**C**limate Emergency Fund can be viewed as a “Venture Philanthropy” in terms of our preference for ultra-ambitious projects, i.e. “unicorns,” our willingness to take risks, and our interest in funding early-stage efforts. Climate Emergency Fund primarily supports three varieties of grantees:



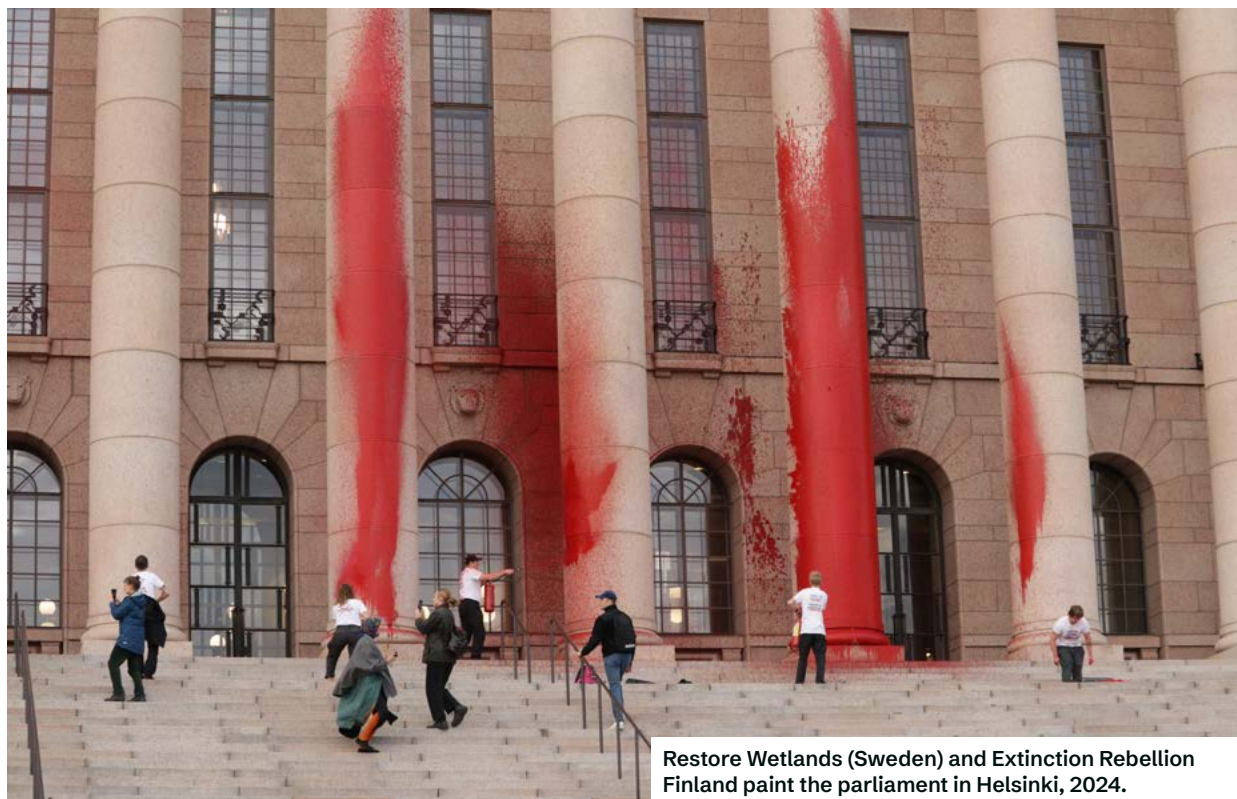
In countries with an under-developed climate movement ecosystem, we look to support groups who can execute bold, high-stakes, targeted actions that can capture the public imagination, push the climate crisis to the top of the agenda, and force politicians and regular people to re-evaluate how they engage with the crisis.



In countries with a well-developed climate movement with a healthy disruptive flank, we look to support groups who are capable of organizing large-scale disruptive climate protests with mass participation, building toward exponential growth.



We also support elements of movement infrastructure that create the pre-conditions for movement success or allow the movement to operate at maximum effectiveness, such as large-scale training programs, technological or financial infrastructure, or network-building projects that can coordinate actions among many groups.



Restore Wetlands (Sweden) and Extinction Rebellion Finland paint the parliament in Helsinki, 2024.

Across all grantmaking categories, we prioritize supporting multi-racial, cross-class organizing, including high-impact Indigenous- and BIPOC- led groups, as well as groups in the Global South fighting on the front lines of climate catastrophe. For all applicants, we look at a variety of factors to assess their likelihood of success, including: organizing

experience and expertise among core leaders; a bold and compelling vision of society that can build large public support; an advanced, well-thought-out organizing strategy; decentralized & volunteer-driven structures to move work forward; strong connections to other elements of the movement ecosystem; and healthy internal cultures.

In 2024 our grantees' actions generated over



**\$2.5 B**

in advertising equivalent



Action Justice Climat Paris, 2024.

We are also always looking to see growth potential in our grantees. While we will provide limited support for one-off actions in certain circumstances, we are primarily focused on supporting grantees who can not only make a major impact with their protests, but who also have a plan to transform that impact into growing momentum. To this end, we look for groups with the infrastructure and strategy in place to support rapid growth: decentralized structures, strong DNA, and a robust recruitment/onboarding system. We are constantly improving our grantmaking. In early 2022, we made several key

adjustments to our grantmaking strategies. We committed to only supporting groups that utilized disruptive tactics, which led to a dramatic increase in our grantees' performances. We also instituted a rigorous grantee evaluation system. We measure the degree to which grantees built active support by tracking the number of people joining groups and attending their activities. We measure passive support by tracking media and narrative impact. We also look for qualitative factors to assess grantee performance, such as progress toward policy victories and impact on the broader movement ecology.

These strategic adjustments yielded incredibly strong results. In 2021, only 40% of our grantees received a B- grade or above; in 2022 and 2023, 80% of our grantees scored a B- or above. Our quantitative results saw a massive jump as well, with our median media hits per \$1,000 granted jumping from 0.12 in 2021 to 2.7 in 2022—a 2,247% increase. Qualitative assessments of our grantees increased across the board as well. Our grantees have continued to perform at a high level since 2022, and the overall number of press hits generated per dollar granted by CEF has increased steadily.

# Grantmaking programs

**CEF PRIMARILY MAKES GRANTS IN THE FOLLOWING PROGRAM AREAS**



Extinction Rebellion NYC disrupts the US Open, 2023.

## FIGHTING FOSSIL FUELS

With mass protest, things happen fast. Momentum builds and opportunities open. In order to be able to make the most of these opportunities, activists need funds, fast. Our responsive grantmaking program allows us to remain flexible and fund promising projects when they arise. As one of, at most, a handful of philanthropies willing to support disruptive protest, we pride ourselves on funding most of the biggest and boldest climate protests being planned and executed anywhere on Earth.

**Example: Extinction Rebellion NYC**  
With Climate Emergency Fund support, in late 2023 XR NYC launched a series of high-profile culture jamming actions, including their disruptions of the US Open and the Met Opera, which created the largest media breakthroughs for climate protesters in the US since the Covid-19 pandemic.



Ultima Generazione part of A22 Network, Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice, 2024.

## SEED FUNDING FOR NEW MOVEMENTS

The climate movement is dynamic, with new innovative groups and campaigns popping up all the time. Climate Emergency Fund specializes in providing seed funding to high-potential groups when they need it most, at their very early stages of development. Our support usually helps an all-volunteer group to support 2 or 3 full activists full time, who are able to then coordinate much larger groups of volunteers. Early support from Climate Emergency Fund allows groups to establish a successful track record, which puts them on a long-term growth trajectory and makes future fundraising significantly easier.

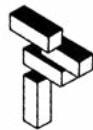


**Example: A22 Network**—Building on the successful model of Insulate Britain, CEF provided the majority of the seed funding for the launch of the A22 Network. More than two years later, members of the network are among the most prominent and most impactful climate campaigns in the world, and the network is now financially self-reliant.

## MOVEMENT INFRASTRUCTURE

Successful protest movements require a huge amount of behind-the-scenes work. We support groups that provide critical support to the disruptive climate movement including strategic consulting, training, press support, fiscal sponsorships, and more. This infrastructure support boosts the movement's overall capacity and increases the likelihood of breakthrough moments.

Example: Social Change Lab—This UK-based research organization conducts cutting-edge research on the efficacy of nonviolent protest movements, such as its empirical studies of the Radical Flank Effect and its survey of social movement experts, which allows protest movements to refine their strategies and maximize impact.



## CLIMATE JUSTICE AND DEMOCRACY

For the climate movement to win it needs to be a true mass movement. That means it needs to be multi-racial, cross-class, and global. Our Climate Justice program supports groups on the front lines of the climate crisis, be it poor and working class communities resisting local fossil fuel extraction in the US, or movements in the Global South working to reverse the toxic, fossil fueled legacy of colonialism.



Example: Students Against EACOP: Despite facing egregious repression, Students Against EACOP has built a powerful resistance movement opposing the destructive and exploitative East African Crude Oil Pipeline in Uganda. Working with allies around the globe.



Students Against EACOP, Uganda

## CLIMATE RESISTANCE INCUBATOR

The Climate Resistance Incubator identifies, trains, coaches, and accompanies core teams of activists to mount long-term, power-building campaigns. Led by movement experts with decades of experience, the group will grow the strategic capacities and skills of hundreds of promising climate leaders across the movement landscape, strengthen local and regional networks, and encourage activists to devise strategies that respond to shifting political conditions.



Climate Emergency Fund has partnered with these top practitioners to create a transformative piece of movement infrastructure. Without a new generation of strategic, coordinated leaders, the climate movement lacks the popular power needed to force transformative action and secure a livable future.



Oil and Gas Action Network.

# Conclusion

With time running out to avert the worst impacts of the climate crisis, and democracies under threat from authoritarianism, the need for a disruptive climate movement has never been higher. That movement will need funding in order to succeed. Climate Emergency Fund has identified a winning strategy to build movement participation and generate concrete results. Now, we need additional support to scale up our activities and push the global disruptive climate movement to the next level.

**“The need for a disruptive climate movement has never been higher.”**

Climate Emergency Fund does not currently have sufficient resources to cover the needs of the disruptive climate movement globally. While we have been able to achieve very strong results with the resources available to us over the past three years, we were forced to turn away many promising grantees and often-times make smaller grants than we would have liked. We estimate that an annual budget of \$12 million would allow us to provide full support for the disruptive climate movement. That amount of funding could unlock exponential growth within the movement, as groups begin to build momentum.



Climate Families NYC, November 2025, Young and old march together against pipelines.



info@cefund.org  
@climateemergencyfund  
climateemergencyfund.org



501(c)(3) • EIN 84-2151545  
Cover Image: Rising Tide Australia, 2024