



February 16, 2024

Re: Response to WSDOT Request for Qualifications

COMMUNITY CENTERED TRANSPORTATION LEADERSHIP TO CURB CARBON


Statement of Qualifications (SOQ) PACKET A

Front and Centered is excited to respond to the Washington State Department of Transportation's recent posting of the Request for Qualifications. In this Packet A, you will find a comprehensive SOQ of the expertise plan.

Our diversity of policy and capacity-building expertise, meaningful relationships, and statewide infrastructure qualify Front and Centered as a unique partner on this project with WSDOT. As the only statewide climate and environmental justice coalition led for and by overburdened and vulnerable communities (especially communities of color) we have a track record of success, including experience with various state agencies, in the specific deliverables WSDOT requires.

As described in the sections below, Front and Centered has been able to amplify the voices of overburdened communities to communicate the frontline issues of pollution and climate change. We have the capability of multifaceted **community outreach** given our expanding coalition across the state, convening and participating in policy and capacity listening sessions and collective priority setting of issues and resource needs, producing and co-creating **community education** tools for a variety of topics of community interests such as resiliency cards and bilingual climate justice board game (examples of innovative strategies for education and input). We have provided a variety of **technical assistance**, including strategic planning and organizational and infrastructure design for our coalition members. Finally, over the past ten years, we have built up our **community granting infrastructure** and have secured over **\$2M in new resources** for community engagement, programmatic expertise, project management, and institutional building. **Since 2020, our core team and operational budget have grown three-fold, so that we now manage a budget of \$3.3M.**

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1A. Qualifications/Expertise of Firms on Team

Listing of firms on the team

The Front and Centered team and coalition efforts have resulted in **activation, mobilization, and collaboration with overburdened community groups** to advance significant policy changes that address the intersectional issues of environmental health disparities, improve access to decision-making forums, and increase access to much-needed resources that can support community leadership and solutions.

In addition to the Front and Centered nonprofit coalition, **Disability Rights Washington**, a private nonprofit organization that protects the rights of people with disabilities statewide, will be an essential part of our team to ensure mobility justice and the most innovative and inclusive approach to this project. The mission of Disability Rights is to advance the dignity, equality, and self-determination of people with disabilities to ensure justice on matters related to human and legal rights as a free service to people with disabilities.


***Please note that nonprofits are not eligible for official Minority, Small, Veteran, and Women's Business Enterprise (MSWBE) certification because nonprofits do not constitute a business enterprise, but otherwise, Front and Centered meets all of the MSWBE criteria.**

Expertise of each firm

Front and Centered's work builds around our grounding in history and our lived experience that communities of color, people with lower incomes, and indigenous people are on the frontlines of climate and environmental change, that we are hit FIRST by extraction, pollution, and climate change; that these impacts serve to make existing health and economic disparities WORSE; and that frontline communities are often LEFT OUT of, or last to be included, in decisions which disproportionately impact our lives. However, our work also builds around our belief that communities of color and indigenous people have tremendous knowledge, experience, traditions, and expertise, vital in transitioning to a healthy, resilient, and sustainable future.

Since our founding in 2014, Front and Centered has emerged as a leading force in achieving groundbreaking policy victories and building a more inclusive and energized environmental movement throughout Washington state. As such, here are some factors that set Front and Centered apart as an organization:

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- We follow the leadership, knowledge, and expertise of frontline communities,
- We center racial and economic analysis to drive our policies and programming decisions, and
- We target our strategies to ensure BIPOC communities achieve equitable outcomes.

With a view to a future full of possibilities, the Front and Centered coalition is leading the state with a sense of urgency as our moment requires intentional action, not just for equity, but for [Accelerating a Just Transition](#) in systems of governance, stewardship of place, livelihoods and meeting needs, and resources creation and use. From listening sessions to convenings, our coalition members demonstrate the transformation from community dialogue, intersectional issue identification, and community innovation, resulting in new ways of developing resources and policies necessary for a just transition.

Since the coalition's founding in 2014, Front and Centered has evolved into a statewide center with extensive climate and environmental justice expertise. We have brought the collective wisdom of frontline community voices and ideas to state government, influencing policymakers and the public conscience about the critical challenge overburdened communities face with climate change and its exacerbating impacts on environmental health disparities. **Today, Front and Centered has a social impact model of community engagement that vertically integrates:**

- **A statewide reach and representation of a diverse and growing coalition of over 70 community groups in Washington State**, the largest and most diverse coalition in the Northwest region focused on climate and environmental justice;
- The coalition is **supported by a core team of Front and Centered experts** with the depth and breadth in policy advocacy and analysis, project development, and capacity building:
 - Front and Centered has approximately 30 years of combined policy advocacy and analysis experience, **developing climate and environmental justice policies, assessments, tools, and reports**. These form the foundation of the coalition's statewide advocacy efforts in our most overburdened communities. In partnership with our coalition members, who are leaders with multidimensional expertise of lived experience, cultural competencies, and community practices, the *Front and Centered* team has worked to advance and amplify the issues, analysis, and solutions alongside and on behalf of the most vulnerable frontline communities—the work comes together in our vision for a Just Transition, **focusing our efforts on issues of public import, from equitable energy solutions, pollution control, addressing health inequities, developing new ways of community planning, and community-oriented sustainable transportation access and infrastructure.**

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- For **capacity building services and expertise**, *Front and Centered* has a team with a combined experience of over 50 years—adapting our collective wisdom and strategies towards the coalition’s needs, **providing technical assistance, strategic planning, and organizational development, community infrastructure design, and funding over \$2M in the form of grants and participatory payments for community organization consultations** in sharing their leadership and extended collective work to steward the coalition. The Front and Centered team is uniquely positioned as a statewide center coordinating the most diverse and growing coalition of communities of color focused on climate and environmental justice. We manage a statewide community network to build a dynamic community infrastructure—seeking to connect existing and aligned partners and resources. **We engage, train, educate, learn from, and resource the coalition in critical ways that result in deep connections that demonstrate our core team serves as trusted messengers partnering to create a trusted and robust network** now known as the Front and Centered coalition.

Front and Centered has collaborated with Disability Rights Washington to successfully advocate for disadvantaged communities experiencing multiple barriers to realizing environmental justice. Disability Rights Washington has meaningfully weighed in on the Active Transportation Plan. They have been a vital partner in spotlighting Washington’s mobility inequalities and environmental justice issues, more fully informing and providing insight into an inclusive approach to defining “overburdened and vulnerable populations.” Disability Rights Washington has expertise in building a statewide outreach and engagement program that ensures an inclusive lens, especially regarding transportation infrastructure and accessibility. Their expertise in federal and state accessibility standards is matched with their effective community engagement strategies, with a demonstrated body of (award-winning) work that has involved multimedia tools and helped raise public education and awareness about issues, promoting community building and increasing civic engagement.

Front and Centered, in partnership with Disability Rights Washington, has supported community design and the launch of a successful advocacy program called Empower Washington to ensure more equitable public transportation for all. **Empower Washington is the first statewide disability mobility advocacy group of color in Washington.** Empower Washington has engaged with disadvantaged communities to understand their challenges and represented them by testifying before the state legislature, hosting press conferences, and facilitating community planning meetings. Through these community engagement efforts, Empower Washington has proposed sound, equitable policies and practical solutions to allow participants of these disadvantaged communities to overcome barriers of access for those with disabilities, geographic isolation, exposure to environmental degradation, safety risks, limited income, and cultural and linguistic challenges.

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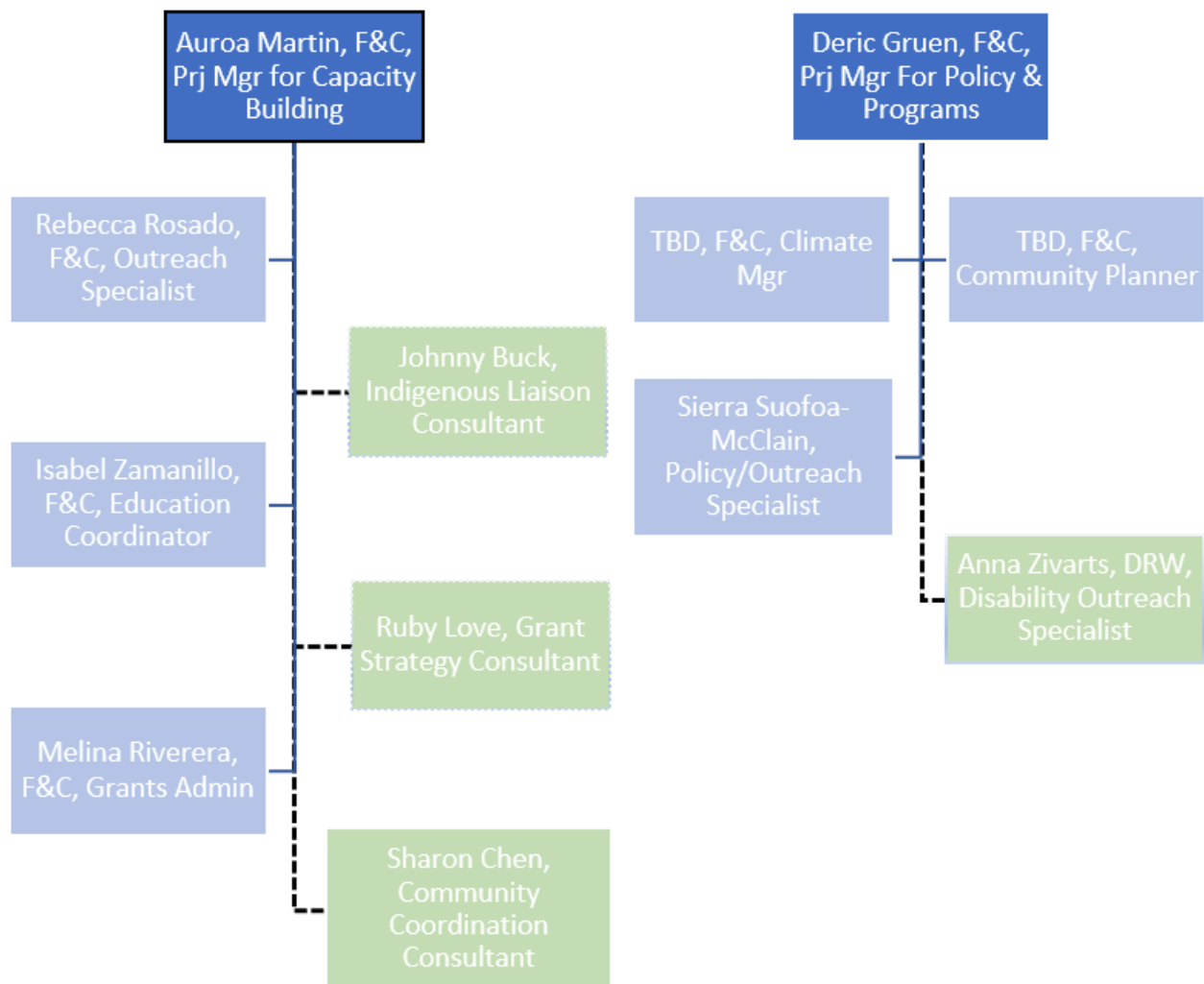
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Organization chart

Front and Centered has assembled a team of expert and experienced staff and subcontracting consultants with whom we have a trusted decade-long relationship and a track record of demonstrated success. In addition to the project team listed below, Front and Centered has deep community expertise to draw from within our coalition membership, representing a geographic diversity from several counties—Kitsap, Pierce, Whatcom, Skagit, Yakima, Spokane, and King. Our core team has also established relationships with community outreach experts and transportation professionals, especially those with mobility justice and transportation electrification expertise, that we can incorporate into our program as needed.



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1B. Staff Availability

The table below provides an estimate of availability by a staff person in hours per month. This availability is flexible, and staff will work more or less time depending on the project's needs.

Firm	Staff	Role	Hours per month
Front and Centered	Aurora Martin	Co-Project Manager	50
Front and Centered	Deric Gruen	Co-Project Manager	30
Front and Centered	Actively Recruiting	Climate Manager	20
Front and Centered	Actively Recruiting	Community Planner	60
Front and Centered	Rebecca Rosado	Community Capacity Building Outreach Specialist	30
Front and Centered	Sierra Suofoa-McClain	Community Policy Development Outreach Specialist	40
Front and Centered	Isabel Zamanillo	Community Education and Evaluation Coordinator	30
Front and Centered	James Lee	Communications Lead	20
Front and Centered	Melina Rivera	Operations, Grants, and Contracts Administrator	40
Front and Centered, core consultant	Johnny Buck, Prplbluj	Indigenous -Frontline Community Liaison	20
Front and Centered, core consultant	Ruby Love	Grant Strategist	20
Front and Centered, core consultant	Sharon Chen	Community TA Coordinator	20
Disability Rights Washington, Collaborating Partner Organization	Anna Zivarts	Community Outreach TA Advisor for Disability Population	20

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1C. Projects Demonstrating Expertise

Project	Expertise	Services	Value
Washington State Dept. of Health “HEAL Community! Fund”	Community Engagement, Education, Community Design, Project Mgt Community Grantmaking	Community-centered design of grant, grantmaking of 2023 HEAL proviso funds, along with community education about HEAL, report	\$400,000 2023-2024
Washington Dept of Commerce “Project to Prioritize Actions to Uplift Communities Disproportionately Impacted by Climate Change	Project management, Community Engagement, Policy analysis for equitable climate mitigation and resilience planning	Convening and coordinating community groups for identification of climate resiliency issues, strategies, written report synthesizing activities and findings published by the Department of Commerce	\$147,000 2022-2023
US Environmental Protection Agency - “Ensuring Environmental Justice, Human Wellbeing, and Ecosystem Recovery in Puget Sound” (Federal Grant)	Community Engagement, Community Design, Community Grantmaking	A key partner in federal grant collaborating with grant lead Na’ ah Ilahee Fund and another collaborating organization, WA Conservation Action. Front and Centered is a lead expert on the community designing for outreach, education, and participatory grantmaking in this multimillion-dollar grant-development program to co-develop a community-centered approach to education, outreach, and grantmaking, with special emphasis on overburdened communities in the Puget Sound area along the entire west coast of Washington State - from Southwest to Northwest Washington - with the goal of supporting activities aligned with the Puget Sound Action Agenda .	\$7,000,000 2024-2026

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2A. Project Manager Qualifications

Aurora Martin, Front and Centered, Project Manager for Capacity Building

Project Description	Dates	Client	Responsibilities
HEAL Community! Fund	March 2023 - October 2024	WA Department of Health	Coordinated and co-developed a grant program with community groups to scope the essential requirements and goals of the HEAL Community! Fund. Managed grant staff, chaired the community review committee, coordinated program administration of fund awards, liaised with agency/point of contact, and prepared reports and documentation.
COVID Community Emergency Relief Fund	March 2020 - March 2021	Front and Centered Community Project	Managed the distribution of over \$750,000 and coordinated the receipt of emergency fund donations, developed and facilitated community review committee, grant criteria, and overall program administration of direct emergency funds to coalition members (without administrative fees).
Front and Centered Community Grants and Participation Funds	January 2020 - Present	Front and Centered Community Project(s)	Managed annual funding of community grants (averaging \$100,000+), collaborative funding opportunities, and participation stipends (averaging \$50,000-75,000).

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Deric Gruen, Front and Centered, Project Manager for Policy and Programs

Project Description	Dates	Client	Responsibilities
Washington Dept of Commerce "Project to Prioritize Actions to Uplift Communities Disproportionately Impacted by Climate Change"	May 2022 - June 2023	Department of Commerce	Led overall team to scope, plan, ensure deliverables and contract compliance, and invoicing of the contract with the department to develop a community-led climate equity framework and recommend climate measures for comprehensive planning.
Washington State Transportation Electrification Strategy	January 2023 - December 2023	Contracted to RMI via the Department of Commerce	Developed scope, led technical team, and supervised achievement of deliverables for community engagement and policy development of Washington's Transportation Electrification Strategy.
Toward a Just and Equitable Future Community Co-Governance Framework	July 2021 - Present	Washington State Department of Social and Health Services	Supervised project coordinator, guided community engagement, and developed a framework for collaborative governance between state and overburdened communities


2B. Project Managers' Regulations/Procedures Familiarity

Aurora Martin has a demonstrated track record overseeing projects with federal and state regulatory requirements. Her 25-year leadership experience includes serving in successive terms as Assistant General Counsel/Assistant Deputy, Deputy Director, and Executive Director, ultimately overseeing a statewide nonprofit organization with a budget that ranged between \$6M and \$12M, including federal and state funding.

Aurora worked with an accounting and legal team to ensure compliance with essential regulatory and reporting requirements – from the development of internal controls, independent audits, and financial systems providing documentation of permissible costs and ensuring practices that are inclusive and non-discriminatory, altogether satisfying the federal and state regulatory requirements attached with governmental funding.

Today, as the Co-executive Director of Capacity Building at Front and Centered, Aurora also works with a growing administrative team, which includes the expertise of an Operations Director, Administrative Specialist, a Grants and Contracts Administrator, two independent accounting firms, and three separate law groups providing expertise in nonprofit, corporate, and employment law.

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Further, Aurora has reviewed and served as the contractual point person on recent state contracts/grants with the Washington Department of Health, Department of Commerce, and Department of Social and Health Services - all of which include a comprehensive approach to terms of billing, data, confidentiality, publicity, copyright, pay equity, insurance coverage, etc. In just four years, the core team and operations of Front and Centered have grown threefold. As we continue to manage our growth, we strategically build our administrative infrastructure and staffing to correspond to our expanded policy and capacity work portfolio. To this end, we are confident that our relationship with state agencies will continue to be critical for our coalition and, thus, a mutually beneficial one serving the public good. Finally, Aurora has familiarity with Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, issued by the United States Office of Management and Budget.

Deric Gruen is the Co-Executive Director for Policy and Programs at Front and Centered, where he has been instrumental in shifting policy in Washington State toward environmental justice for nearly a decade through policies like the Health Environment for All Act, the Clean Energy Transformation Act, and targeted climate investments. Deric initiated and co-created the Washington Environmental Health Disparities Map and served on the state's Growth Management Framework Task Force, the State Energy Strategy Advisory Committee, the Green Economy Work Group, and the Public Council of the Attorney General.

Deric is also a Senior Fellow at the Just Solutions Collective. He co-founded the People's Economy Lab, the Office of Sustainability at Bellevue College, and Critical Mass in Beirut, Lebanon. He was a Fellow at the Sightline Institute, a board member of the Sustainable Consumption Research and Action Initiative (SCORAI), and an alumnus of the Transatlantic Emerging Leaders in Environmental and Energy Policy Network (ELEEP). He received his master's from the University of Washington Evans School of Public Policy and Governance.


Deric was a researcher on the Transportation Demand Strategies for Schools Study, funded through the Washington State Department of Transportation to the Washington State Transportation Center.

2C. Demonstration of Project Managers' Abilities (schedule, scope, budget, and revisions)

Aurora Martin and Deric Gruen have repeatedly demonstrated effective project management. Aurora has skillfully navigated community-oriented grant-development projects, developing trusted coalition relationships and distributing funds to frontline community organizations representative of overburdened and vulnerable populations experiencing the severe impacts of climate change and environmental injustice.

The 2023-24 HEAL Community! Fund exemplifies how Washington State has trusted Front and Centered with the stewardship, ethical management, and equitable distribution of public

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funds. This fund is notably a grantmaking program not exclusive to Front and Centered member organizations. Indeed, the fund has already been granted to several community organizations that have yet to be active with HEAL state agencies. However, the fund and community education and consultation by Front and Centered to connect with new organizations will expand the civic engagement with state government from more frontline community participants.

As one of the first agreements of its kind whereby the funds were advanced to ensure the efficiency of community grantmaking, Aurora has managed the continuum of services from the **first stage of community-oriented scoping with 11 representative frontline community members** from various organizations and regions of the state, serving different overburdened and vulnerable populations - providing an orientation for the workgroup, and facilitating the discussions which led to defining grant goals, criteria, and categories for the new HEAL Community! Fund; to **the second stage of administrative grant program design with built in reporting and financial tracking**, with the establishment of business partnerships for grantmaking which are values-aligned, including a new partnership with a grant portal (national) via [JustFund](#) and new financial institutional partnership with a Corp B certified [Beneficial Bank](#), for not only segregation of HEAL Community Fund! grant funds but also partnering to engage in project innovations for community financing of future coalition projects; to managing the **third stage of community oriented grant awards review and award administration** by staffing the coalition's Power Building Committee of six organizational representatives, creating the rubric, communications, overseeing the quarterly schedule of application screening, consulting with applicants as needed, facilitating the grant review discussions, and connecting with grantees and applicants and awardees as appropriate; to finally, **the fourth stage of required grant reporting and evaluation** which is both monthly meetings and the production of required milestone reports to share insights and outcomes of the HEAL Community! Fund grantmaking program. A forthcoming HEAL Community! Fund grantee meeting will also be held next month, facilitating the connection between the cohort of Round 1 and 2 grantees with each other as a peer network and engaging with Department of Health program officers.

Throughout the project, which is set to conclude in October 2024, Aurora has served as the project manager with the necessary skill set to ensure that the primary goals of serving overburdened and vulnerable communities are achieved, and doing so with the executive capacity to lead, facilitate, and administer internal and external teams (while building and improving essential systems with ethical and legal safeguards and internal controls which address state and federal requirements), ultimately, ensuring the deliverables due under the state contract are satisfied.

Additionally, as a second demonstration of ongoing project management responsibilities in her portfolio of responsibilities, Aurora oversees the ongoing community grant and member

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participation funding, which has grown from community grants of \$100,000 annually to an average of \$250,000 in community funding. During the COVID emergency relief year, Aurora worked with a team to staff and distribute over \$750,000 of much-needed community grants to coalition members in desperate need of general operational grants, resulting in supporting well over 50 frontline community groups.

Managing the community funding portfolio requires resource development and resource management of the capacity investments, grants, advocacy impact grants, collaborative special projects, and participation stipends for ongoing community expertise shared in various coalition issue workgroups and forums, such as pollution, transportation, energy, and co-governance. Given the growing and diverse coalition of organizations across the state, with different levels of organizational capacities, Aurora is able to manage a team focused on community relationship management (CRM). Front and Centered's version of CRM for the coalition provides a suite of services, including strategic consultation, coaching, community education, assessment, data evaluation of coalition trends, and resource guidelines. With each category of funding, she has provided oversight of the grants and contracts, tracked multiple schedules involving different staff and funding streams, and ensured compliance with procedures essential to maintain the integrity of our nonprofit status, altogether making it possible for Front and Centered to experience successful independent audits since our nonprofit incorporation in 2020, in accordance with FASB Accounting Standards Codification (ASC) 958, Not-for-Profit Entities.


Deric Gruen adeptly managed the scope, budget, and team that delivered equitable climate planning guidance to the Department of Commerce. When changes in anticipated expenses arose, they swiftly communicated with the contract holder, proposing viable solutions without compromising project quality. Additionally, he demonstrated flexibility and adaptability when revisions to the scope of work became necessary to meet community and agency needs. Deric facilitated open discussions to evaluate the impact of proposed changes on project timelines and budgets, ensuring stakeholders were informed and aligned before implementing adjustments.

Deric maintained project momentum through his proactive approach and practical communication skills while accommodating necessary modifications, ultimately delivering a successful project within scope, schedule, and budget constraints.

3. Key Team Members Qualifications (Prime Consultant and Sub-Consultants)

Front and Centered's shared leadership model is a unique approach that has grown the coalition in power, ideation, and influence. We approach WSDOT's project to resource a Community Centered Transportation Leadership to Curb Carbon in the same way: through collaborative management of a cross-section of expertise on the team.

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Firm	Team Member	Role & Summary Experience	Responsibilities
Front and Centered	Aurora Martin	Co-Project Manager Executive leadership includes federal and state funding and contracts related to civil legal aid, NGO consultations and strategic planning, organizational development consultation	Project overall managerial oversight and coordination, serve as primary point of contact between WSDOT and Front and Centered
Front and Centered	Deric Gruen	Co-Project Manager Executive leadership includes climate and environmental justice policy management and advocacy, analysis, and special projects development	Provide project oversight of policy and programs team experts
Front and Centered	Actively Recruiting	Climate Manager Required expertise in program management and greenhouse gas reduction strategies	Provide supervision and direction on Front and Centered climate strategies
Front and Centered	Actively Recruiting	Community Planner Required expertise in transportation and land-use issues related to climate change and community informed planning.	Provide policy analysis and recommendations to community and government
Front and Centered	Rebecca Rosado	Community Capacity Building Outreach Specialist Community relationship management experience includes coordination of multiple product and support services interfacing with general public and especially for people living in overburdened and vulnerable communities, historically marginalized, drawing from healthcare industry and social services contexts	Connect community groups with project opportunities, coordinate activities related to community group insights and strategies other members of the team, with Community Policy Development Outreach Specialist
Front and Centered	Sierra Suofoa-McClain	Community Policy Development Outreach Specialist Coordinating community group engagement with coalition's statewide policy and programmatic work.	Connect community groups with project opportunities, coordinate activities related to community group insights and strategies other members of the team, with Community Capacity Building Outreach Specialist
Front and Centered	Isabel Zamanillo	Community Education and Evaluation Coordinator Bilingual research, writing, coordination, educational content and evaluations, and collaborations between community groups and academic institutions of the University of Washington and Stanford, and NASA, participant in various federal community research grants	Coordinate and co-develop community education content and strategies and evaluation methods

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Front and Centered	Melina Rivera	Operations, Grants, and Contracts Administrator Manages overall administration, drawing upon experience from medical clinics serving overburdened immigrant communities in the community-based health care industry funded by state and federal grants.	Oversee and ensure the grants and contracts compliance elements of projects, as well as the supporting procedures for the grantmaking process
Front and Centered, core consultant	Johnny Buck, Prplbluj	Indigenous -Frontline Community Liaison Enrolled Yakama Nation member with experience in human centered design, Native community engagement, organizing, outreach and education, especially with Native youth, and general policy advocacy support	In coordination with Capacity Building Outreach Specialist and Policy Development Specialist, engage in outreach and education activities to Indigenous communities
Front and Centered, core consultant	Ruby Love	Grant Strategist Resource Development strategist and coach experienced in community investment and grantmaking for multiple institutions and clients, including capital projects, community advocacy campaigns, community technology, and grassroots groups, with a special emphasis on historically marginalized overburdened communities	Design, facilitation support in community granting and related technical assistance
Front and Centered, core consultant	Sharon Chen	Community TA Coordinator Experience includes national and local resource development network development and technology project management, especially for donors of color and environmental justice	Design, facilitation support in community granting and related technical assistance
Disability Rights Washington, Collaborating Partner Organization	Anna Zivarts	Community Outreach TA Advisor for Disability Population Program director for mobility justice initiatives at statewide organization focused on advocating for people with disabilities, her experience includes strategic advocacy and creative multimedia communications production across many social justice issues, with knowledge of active transportation programs	Outreach, education strategist and coordinator of mobility justice community participants and liaison to WSDOT relationships

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4A. Project Delivery Approach

Work Plan Development Methodology

We will follow a collaborative co-governance approach based on a collection of participatory models and practices, formal and informal, through which government and communities work together to make collective policy decisions, co-create programs to meet community needs and ensure those policies and programs are implemented effectively.

Core steps in our work planning process include:

- Clarification goals, measurable objectives, and metrics
- Development of milestones and tasks leading up to milestones
- Assignment of timelines and responsibilities by role
- Compiling information in a work plan management system to track and report progress

Our work plan will be developed with consideration of the Front and Centered Transportation Justice Agenda, which calls for:


- Creating actionable standards and targets to complete the missing sidewalks and build back the public transportation network across the state,
- Making real investments that solve the problem towards closing the gaps in our transit service and safe sidewalks, a state transportation budget that supports climate justice and mobility justice for everyone in our state, and
- Facilitating a shift from building or expanding highways in frontline communities, those already most overburdened by pollution and racial and economic injustice in Washington State, and repairing the harm that's been done.

This is complimented by our recent work in transportation electrification, which identified core equity strategies, many of which were adopted in the State Energy Strategy; they include:

- Centering equity as a guiding principle early in the process and developing equity metrics,
- Embedding transportation electrification in the context of reforming the broader transportation sector,
- Investing in community capacity and engaging in multi-sector engagement to identify unintended consequences,
- Ensuring accountability for utilities and
- Requiring cleaner electricity and social/environmentally sustainable vehicles.

Work Plan Decision Points

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As shown below, decision points will occur within each element of the work plan as tasks progress through the queue. As described above, Aurora Martin will be responsible for grants and capacity building, and Deric Gruen will be responsible for transportation and climate sector policy and project readiness. The project manager overseeing a task will define the issues and related risks. The project manager will work collaboratively with their respective co-project manager to ensure that all aspects of a task are coordinated across the functional silos.

Work Plan Elements

The work plan elements include:

- Grantmaking
- Community Grants for Deliberation
- Community Grants for Leadership Capacity Building
- Community Grants for Implementation
- Community Assembly Programs
- Leadership Cohort Programs
- Final Report & Recommendations

The work plan will include the following tasks and sub-tasks.

Task 1: Grant Program Development/Design Co-create grant program

- Develop with interested community members, representing Overburdened Communities and Vulnerable Population, and WSDOT,
- Align grant program application, timeline, and deliverables to ensure that the resources will support community-centered carbon reduction strategies and
- Develop a grant decision-making process to ensure transparency in the allocation of resources.

Task 2: Application and Award Decision-making, with Technical Assistance


- Provide technical assistance for community members in the application process and
- Grant decisions made and communicated.

Task 3: Partnership with WSDOT

- Identify what the WSDOT partnership would entail,
- Report out on the progress of each grant and the resulting community effort, and
- Collaboratively identify additional partners—internally if WSDOT has expertise and funding, externally if another agency or partner is needed to realize community vision.

Task 4: Grant Delivery and Technical Assistance for Grantees

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- Provide facilitation, organization, and any other hands-on support to ensure community groups can meet the goals,
- Resources for this support role should be included in the Grant Stewardship Budget and not part of the grantee awards and
- Provide technical assistance based on the model established in the Community Centered Transportation Leadership to Curb Carbon.


Task 5: Grant Reporting and Close Out

- Provide documentation, allowing WSDOT to establish best practices for future grants, including a return on investment (ROI) assessment to document the positive impact, as well as a policy assessment reviewing barriers and identifying additional opportunities (July 2025),
- Document the grant process, including the application process, decision-making process, and deliverables (July 2024 and July 2025) and
- Provide a report to the State Legislature highlighting the successful partnership with WSDOT and communities across Washington (Progress report in April 2024 and Final Report in April 2025).

Work Plan Contingencies

Similar to other state projects Front and Centered has worked on, we understand that we must build a work plan that provides not only for the communication mechanisms and protocols to incorporate possible changes but that the work plan must also identify milestone moments for evaluation of progress and anticipated changes that may be necessary to adapt the schedule, deliverables, and outcomes. Given the accelerated nature of the one-year project to achieve the WSDOT's desire to create – and build upon what we believe could be an adaptable co-governance infrastructure between overburdened communities and state agencies, we envision the process in the following way:

- 1) **A two-part prework scoping set of sessions to be undertaken**, the first one with community participants facilitated by Front and Centered, and the second one with WSDOT and Front and Centered project teams,
- 2) **At the outset, a joint meeting between the WSDOT and Front and Centered project teams** will be necessary to clarify the project elements, especially the timeline, milestones, deliverables, points of project evaluation of progress and planned adjustments, and overall communication mechanisms,
- 3) **The communication mechanisms** should include **monthly status meetings** with the project leads of both WSDOT and Front and Centered teams, **quarterly written reports**, a **mid-project meeting** with project teams and community participants, and a **final community convening to share the project outcomes**, and

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- 4) **Reporting and evaluation** could be designed as a two-pronged approach that identifies the shared and distinct goals and metrics of evaluation (if distinguishable) of WSDOT and the community. By having routine status meetings in addition to quarterly reports, we are hopeful that the level of communication will ensure essential questions and concerns are addressed. Should there be a need for any modifications, documentation of such changes will be reflected in the status meetings and written reports, which will ultimately amend the project agreement for the deliverables.

4B. Conflict Resolution Approach


As a statewide coalition, Front and Centered has a track record of working with governmental agencies, providing input and analysis on state policies, and participating in state projects to advance the general public interest. By creating a clear and structured set of communication protocols and forums, in addition to milestone reporting periods, throughout the project schedule, we are hopeful that the experience of partnering on this project will be collaborative and coordinated. To the extent that disagreements may arise on the project, we expect that the WSDOT and Front and Centered Project Team Leaders will resolve any questions or concerns internal to their respective teams and that the project team leadership will also be able to engage in discussions for any conflicts which may arise between WSDOT and Front and Centered, and that we will agree to a third party facilitation/arbitration of any issues that are unresolvable at the project leadership level.


4C. Work Distribution (Front and Centered and WSDOT)

Front and Centered believes in a collaborative approach to ensure work is distributed efficiently and effectively. Our organization will be a partner with WSDOT, and we will take on more responsibility as needed or follow the WSDOT if required. Our focus will always be on getting the work done on time, on budget, and holding ourselves accountable for the highest standards.

As prime consultant for the project with extensive experience in climate and environmental justice supporting overburdened communities, Front and Centered has demonstrated skills in community outreach, education, and key technical assistance support services as it pertains to leadership and engagement for overburdened and vulnerable populations. As such, Front and Centered can take the leadership of community-centered design and implementation of the project, with key collaboration roles and functions for the WSDOT project team as applied to agency-specific expertise and procedures.

The WSDOT project team will have an active role by sharing information and participating in the assessment, ideation, co-learning, training, and adaptive implementation of the grantmaking and policy design of the resulting community infrastructure that results in a model program for “Community Centered Transportation Leadership to Curb Pollution.” That is, while

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Front and Centered serves as a kind of civic architect for this project's development, the WSDOT project team will be co-creating with the Front and Centered Team and community participants throughout the process.


4.D. Key Issues and Milestones

Please see the above Task Order Schedule for key details.

The relative timeline and milestones will be based on our established three-part process.

- 1) **(April 2024) Leadership Capacity and Formation of Committee**—A focused capacity-building dialogue among partners and stakeholders. Vulnerable populations will be engaged to ensure successful implementation.
- 2) **(May-June 2024) Community Planning to Scope Grantmaking and Projects** —A Co-Governance Process is a methodology for developing community proposals aligned with the government partners that will employ Community Assemblies Grants.
- 3) **(July-August 2024) - Administrative Systems - Funding Ready**—A replication of the award procedures used during the successful implementation of the HEAL Fund.
- 4) **(September 2024-June 2025) Distribution of Transportation Leadership Grants + Community Assemblies and Leadership Programming Support** - both initiatives will build upon and scale priority projects already in development by Front and Centered, with active participation by coalition member organizations located throughout the state.
- 5) **Reports and Evaluations** - Quarterly, Mid-year, End of Contract Term

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As part of its Statement of Qualifications, Front and Centered is including the following folio of activities, spotlighting recent community centered leadership to provide further demonstration of our fully integrated expertise in environmental justice capacity building and policy development. We hope you find this sampling of recent news and highlights helpful in understanding the breadth and depth of our coalition network, professional capacities as a core team, and trusted community infrastructure which we believe is an ideal match with WSDOT objectives for this new project intending to build a Community Centered Transportation Leadership program.

Front and Centered Coalition Folio of Activities: Spotlight on 2023 Community-Centered Leadership

Front and Centered Coalition in the News & Policy Highlights


Stay Up-to-Date on Coalition EJ Budget and Policy Issues with Front and Centered Blogposts:

- [Transportation Electrification Strategies for a Just Transition](#) (February 2024)
- [Comprehensive Plans and Climate Justice: HB 1181 in Action](#) (December 2023)
- [Legislature Falls Short on Community Climate Commitments](#) (September 2023)
- [Keeping the Power On in Extreme Heat](#) (August 2023)
- [In Troubled Times, Pride Matters More](#) (June 2023)
- [Washington's Largest Electric Utility Ordered to Strengthen Its Clean Energy Plan](#) (June 2023)

Front and Centered Coalition and Team in the News:

- CCA article in Seattle Times: <https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/environment/new-wa-air-quality-monitors-draw-critique-from-environmental-justice-advocates/>
- KOMO News story: [Washington state ramps up fight against air pollution with new data-collecting devices](#), Paul Rivera
- EmWa - Disability Transportation Justice Coalition Member in Seattle Times: [Why You Should Ditch Your Car for a Week in October](#)

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- Air Quality Policy Should Quantify Effects on Disparities, CoAuthored by Esther Min <https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/science.adg9931>
- FC Coalition Member El Centro de La Raza and Beacon Hill Community Council Representative - KNKX Story on [Climate Advocates Push To Amend Seattle's New Tree Ordinance](#)
- FC Coalition Member Familias Unidas por la Justicia in High Country News: [Washington to Adopt Rules Protecting Farmworkers from Wildfire Smoke](#)

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Our Pollution Prevention Agenda

Communities that have historically borne the worst effects of pollution due to redlining and institutional racism shouldn't continue to bear the ongoing harm being inflicted on their health, well-being, and even life expectancy today. Yet under laws today, permits that allow businesses to pollute do not consider the effects of our history of environmental racism and the cumulative health risk and burden the most impacted communities face. We all suffer when we allow these environmental injustices to continue, but we can do something about it:

The CURB (CUMulative Risk Burden) Pollution Act



Requires monitoring pollutants affecting health that currently go unaddressed



Specifies communities that have been disproportionately harmed by pollution for specific protections



Requires the Washington State Department of Ecology to deny or condition permit applications and permit renewals that add cumulative pollution effects, with the goal to reduce pollution over time



Elevates voices of community members through frontline community participation in permit evaluations process


Applying the Principles of HEAL in Permitting

Washington State recently passed the Healthy Environmental for All (HEAL) Act which embeds Environmental Justice into state agency policies, budgets, and plans. The law would take HEAL a step further by requiring that environmental justice be directly applied in pollution permitting.

Multiple states have begun adopting legislation that adds stringency to and enhances public participation in the pollution permitting process, all with the express acknowledgment that cumulative impacts must be dealt with. **Washington now has a chance not only to join these states, but to help lead the path going forward for the nation.**

Front and Centered is a diverse and powerful coalition of communities of color-led groups across Washington State, whose missions and work come together at the intersection of equity, environmental and climate justice. Together and with key partners, our coalition actively works towards the vision for a Just Transition. We are the largest and most powerful statewide coalition of frontline communities which supports and builds a more environmentally just future for our families, and in doing so, a better future for all. Visit FrontAndCentered.Org to learn more about our work.

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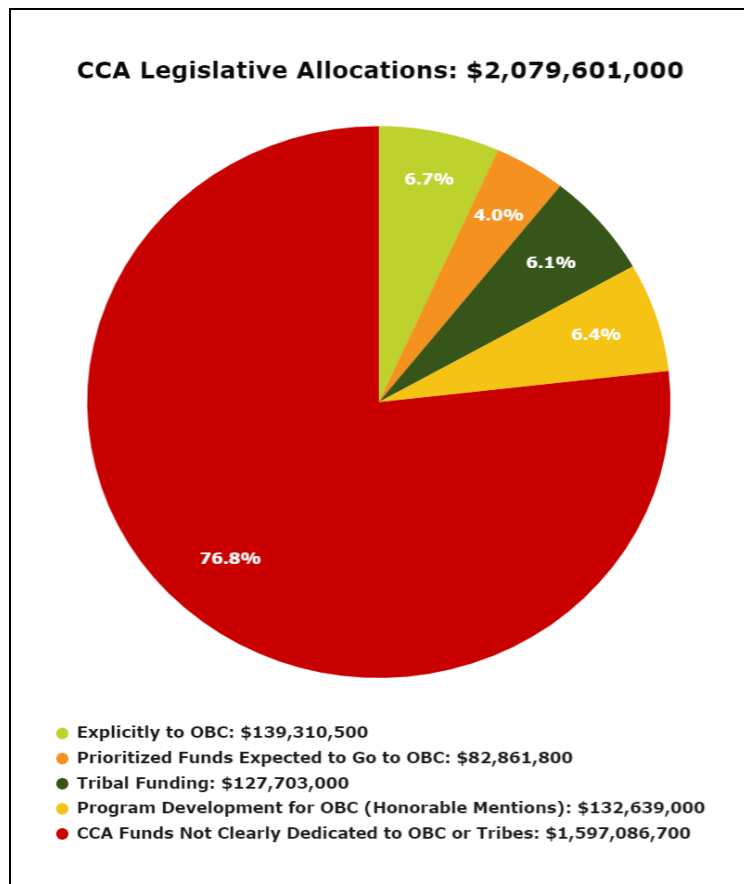
POLICY HIGHLIGHTS



Our Budget Analysis

To ensure frontline communities see the investments promised by the Washington State Legislature, Front and Centered conducted a review of the state budget for the 2023–2025 fiscal year, isolating for funds dedicated to non-governmental communities and funds not explicitly dedicated to Tribes or Tribal lands. **Relying on a literal reading of the bill language, we found that only \$139,310,500 (or 6.7%) of the expected \$2 billion in CCA revenue has been explicitly and exclusively allocated to non-Tribal Overburdened Communities in the budget bill.**

An additional 4% of the funding was loosely assigned to prioritize Overburdened Communities, bringing the total to \$222,172,300 or 10.7% ([download our full analysis](#)). Less than 5% of the monies focused on people with low incomes, but no specific amounts were codified. We also identified a number of funds marked for the development of program strategies to better serve Overburdened Communities. Because these funds do not provide direct and meaningful benefits, they are not included in our analysis but instead have been labeled as “Honorable Mentions” ([download our full analysis](#)).



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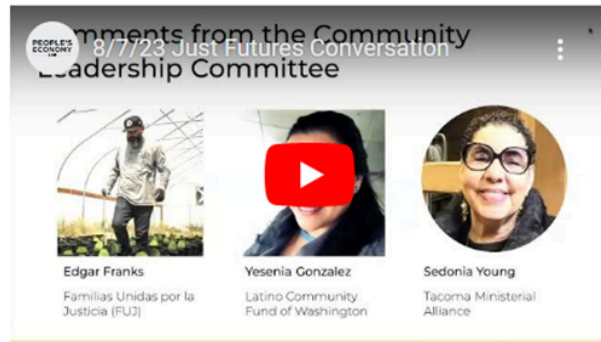
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Collaborative Governance & Community Assemblies

“A collection of participatory models and practices, formal and informal, through which government and communities work together to make collective policy decisions, co-create programs to meet community needs, and ensure those policies and programs are implemented effectively.” – Partners for Dignity & Rights and Race Forward’s *Co-Governing Toward Multiracial Democracy* Download the Just Futures project partners’ full report about the Just Futures project and the Cornerstones of Co-Governance for a Just & Equitable Future.



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