

# Co-Chair Invitation to Participate



## Community Ownership, Empowerment, and Prosperity (COEP) *Creating a Roadmap for the Chesapeake Foodshed*

*Community Decisions => Community Solutions*

The Chesapeake Foodshed Network (CFN) is launching the **Community Ownership, Empowerment, and Prosperity Action Team** for food system reform in the Chesapeake region. CFN defines Community Ownership, Empowerment, and Prosperity (COEP) as communities of color and other disenfranchised groups not merely being beneficiaries but drivers of positive change in their communities. The goal of this initiative is to grow economic opportunities for marginalized communities and build community ownership and resilience (as it relates to our regional food system) through the development of people-led, community-based solutions. In developing this new framework for action, we think that the people telling us how to invest funding and energy in our regional food system should be the people living and working on it every day.

We know that our food system is broken. We know that millions of families and children go without enough to eat. We know that people are getting more and more sick because of unhealthy processed food. We know that our food system exploits the people who are working in it, whether they are picking crops or cooking and serving meals. We know that our land and waterways are being damaged as well, as the quest for food system profits overshadows care for the earth and its inhabitants.

We also know that communities across the Chesapeake region are building responsive solutions to these challenges. Churches are organizing to grow and distribute healthy food in their cities. Farmers and fishermen are focusing on sustainable methods and finding new markets for a diverse array of produce, dairy, meat and seafood. Food and farm workers are organizing and fighting for higher wages, safe working conditions, and freedom from harassment and violence.

We know that leaders are rising up to create a just and sustainable food system. But, we also know that funding, policy and advocacy hasn't always supported the leadership of those who are most impacted by the challenges of our food system. We know that people of color, immigrants, people with low incomes, rural communities, and others continue to be disadvantaged when it comes to who gets resources and who makes decisions that shape our food system. **And we know that has to change.**



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**So we're asking YOU to join the Chesapeake Foodshed Network in this process.**

We're looking for two Co-Chairs of the COEP Action Team to:

- Provide thought leadership
- Engage stakeholders and connect work to a regional context
- Work in concert with other team members to develop solutions and priorities
- Interface with local, regional, and national networks
- Connect with the Chesapeake Foodshed Network, which provides a venue for regional collaboration and resource sharing

COEP Co-Chairs will receive:

- A stipend to support their leadership and participation
- Access to resources, experts, and technical advisors that can enhance your organization's capacity.
- Opportunities to collaborate on specific initiatives with partners and funders.
- New connections across sectors, communities, and geographies to regional and national efforts and networks.



**Want to learn more?** Find more details in the following pages.

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## What will the process look like?

We're looking for two co-chairs to guide a group of people in the development of prioritized strategies and guidelines for supporting community-driven, community-empowering solutions for the Chesapeake region's food system. We're calling that group of people the Community Ownership, Empowerment, and Prosperity (COEP) Action Team. This team will pilot the Action Team process and will develop Regional Equity Guidelines to offer clear strategies to build equity across all future Action Teams.

The COEP Action Team will figure out:

- What kinds of actions or policies actually build real equity and empowerment in the food system? Who in the region is doing this work well?
- What do organizations, policy advocates and funders need to be doing to support community empowerment and how do we know we've been successful?
- How should donors direct their funds to increase community ownership, empowerment, and prosperity?
- How can we develop a model for planning processes around food system funding that is actually equitable and driven by those most likely to be impacted?

## Total Awards:

There are two ways to participate in the COEP Action Team. Individuals or individuals representing community-based organizations can join the COEP regional Action Team as one of two **Co-Chair** positions, or as one of up to ten **Team Members**. Collectively, the Action Team members will represent perspectives from the diverse geographies, communities, stakeholders, and economies of the Chesapeake foodshed, and add depth and authenticity to the Action Team process.

1. **Co-chairs (two grant awards – each \$15,000)** - primary responsibility is to lead planning, convene team members, facilitate stakeholder engagement, and be responsible for grant deliverables.
2. **Team Members – (up to ten members representing the region's diverse geographies and communities from the Chesapeake Bay watershed including Washington DC, Delaware, Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia – each member will receive a grant of \$5,000)**; primary responsibility is to contribute to development of regional strategies and guidelines, facilitate locally relevant stakeholder engagement, and serve as liaison to home geographies or food-system

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sectors to foster regional connectivity. (Team Member Invitation to Participate coming late spring 2018.)

## Deliverables:

The COEP Team will complete the following:

- Development of DRAFT Regional Equity Strategies & Guidelines (6-9 months)
  - **What's out there?** Review and identify existing examples of food-system COEP strategies, projects, and solutions from across the region.
  - **What's getting in the way?** Conduct a regional policy scan to identify barriers to community empowerment and opportunities for growth.
  - **Which strategies should we pursue?** Develop a draft set of targeted COEP strategies for the region, specific neighborhoods, geographies, food-system sectors, or communities with greatest need that build COEP solutions on the ground.
  - **How do we know if our plan is working?** Identify clear ways to measure the success of COEP draft strategies.
  - **Help us keep our work equitable into the future.** Develop a draft set of Regional Equity Guidelines that will inform the work of future Chesapeake Foodshed Network and other food system stakeholders, ensuring that equity and inclusion are an integral, intentional, and relevant part regional food system reform.
  
- Stakeholder engagement and vetting of prioritized strategies (3-6 months)
  - **Who needs to have a say?** Develop a thoughtful stakeholder engagement plan that clearly maps out goals and methods of engagement; incorporates an inclusive understanding of who needs to be engaged; represents a diversity of stakeholder perspectives (including both proponents and opponents of food-system reform), communities, sectors, economies, and geographies; proactively addresses structural barriers to participation for those most likely to be impacted and historically underrepresented groups.
  - **What do they have to say about the plan?** Undertake stakeholder engagement through various methods outlined in plan (e.g. focus groups, individual interviews, surveys, video- or teleconferencing, etc.) to secure feedback on, further refine, and prioritize draft strategies.

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- Development of FINAL Regional Equity Strategies & Guidelines (~3 months)
  - **Where do we go from here?** Include a final, prioritized set of regional and targeted strategies for specific neighborhoods, geographies, food-system sectors, or communities with greatest need that build COEP solutions on the ground.
  - **What does success look like?** Identify final, prioritized indicators of success.
  - **What funds will we need?** Detail what funding is needed for implementation.
  - **Who's going to do the work?** Identify advocates to facilitate implementation.
  - **How do we institutionalize equity in our future work?** Include a final, prioritized set of overarching COEP strategies to guide the future work of the Chesapeake Foodshed Network and other stakeholders, ensuring that equity and inclusion are an integral, intentional and relevant part of food system reform.
- During the development of the Regional Equity Strategies & Guidelines and the Stakeholder Engagement phases:
  - **Co-Chairs** will contribute an anticipated 15 to 20 hours/month for 12 to 18 months. In addition, Co-Chairs will help select Team Members.
  - **Team Members** will contribute an anticipated 6 to 8 hours/month for 12 to 18 months. (Team Member Invitation to Participate coming late spring 2018.)



*Photo courtesy of Sonia Keiner*

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*Photo courtesy of DC Greens*

### **What we're looking for:**

A team of reviewers will evaluate all Co-Chair applications. Selection process will consider the following factors for each applicant during the review:

- **Strong Community Relationships.** A proven track record of Coalition building, established networks, and an ability to identify leverage points for action. Applicants should demonstrate a history of partnership and collaboration, including a recent history of coordination with multiple organizations.
- **Commitment to Equity.** Applicants should regularly employ inclusive, systemic approaches to equity in their work, seek to build the capacity of communities to act for themselves, and have a proven track record of respect, knowledge sharing, and accountable relationships with historically underrepresented communities.
- **Bridge-building.** A history of sustained working relationships with multi-sector collaborators. Applicants should have the ability to serve as bridge-builders across sectors and broaden the stakeholder base with nontraditional partners, including those with potentially opposing views.

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- **Coalition Leadership.** Experience leading and managing a successful, collaborative strategic planning initiative related to food-system reform. Applicants should have demonstrated capacity for establishing effective communication channels and coalition governance mechanisms to ensure accountability to stated goals. Applicants should also have an ability to analyze and synthesize feedback from a series of stakeholder conversations and distill it into useful summary documents, etc.
- **Capacity.** Sufficient capacity to manage administrative activities of the Action Team and complete grant deliverables, including an outline of the staffing plan. A clear fit with organization's [or individual's] strategic goals. A history of working on the regional level is also preferred. If from a nonprofit organization, demonstrated leadership support for applicant's involvement in the Action Team, including a letter signed by organizational leadership, indicating support for staff involvement in this initiative.
- **Justice Analysis.** Preferred is experience with root-cause analysis about why there is injustice in the food system and how this plays a role in the outcomes we see.

### Eligibility Criteria

Applicants must be non-profit organizations that are tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, unincorporated organizations with a non-profit fiscal sponsor, or individuals representing for-profit entities – such as farmers, community organizers and consultants. Applicants must be based in and their work must be in the Chesapeake Bay watershed, which includes Washington DC, Delaware, Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia.

## Background on the Chesapeake Foodshed Network

### Who are we?

The Chesapeake Foodshed Network aims to catalyze connections and collaborations to build a sustainable, resilient, inclusive and equitable food system that supports healthy communities, land, and waterways.

### Why are we launching the COEP Action Framework?

The Chesapeake Foodshed Network (CFN), in coordination with a team of food system leaders and funders, is launching the Community Ownership, Empowerment, and Prosperity (COEP) Action Team, an effort in what will ultimately become a multi-year, multi-pronged initiative to foster sustainable, resilient, inclusive, and equitable regional food system reform in the Chesapeake foodshed.

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The Community Ownership, Empowerment, and Prosperity (COEP) pilot will be the first test of the Action Team approach that we hope to use for other regionally significant food system priorities (such as farm-to-institution, workforce development, and food waste & recovery). Each Action Team will develop regional guidelines and prioritized strategies that are specific to its related food-system priority area. Those distinct guidelines and prioritized strategies will then be compiled into an integrated regional “roadmap” that drives food-system reform and guides the activities of stakeholders, CFN members and funders.

The success of this project depends on the deep community networks that exist in the region coming together to address the fundamental inequities of our food system. We want to build new, more just, and more meaningful relationships with the full range of people that are working on the food system. This includes making sure that members of communities who have historically been oppressed, disadvantaged, and excluded by the way that the food system works (and the way that funding usually works), are the people that make up this Action Team. **We’re hoping to meet people we’ve never met before, to build a truly inclusive network of partners for support and collaboration.**

*The Chesapeake Foodshed Network (CFN) has a goal of supporting, promoting, and modeling diversity, equity, and inclusion in all Network activities. The CFN therefore especially invites applications from people of color, groups from underrepresented geographies throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed, and small-scale, relatively underfunded groups or individuals.*



*Photo courtesy of Sonia Keiner*

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## Tell us about yourself!

We want to get to know you! We're so glad you're interested in being part of the Community Ownership, Empowerment, and Prosperity (COEP) Action Team and leading the process as a whole. Below are a few questions that will help us to get a sense of who you are.

We know that a written application may not be the best way to fully express who you are. We invite you to submit your answers in a way that best captures your work, your perspective, and your vision for a just food system- whether that is in writing, short cell phone videos, photos, or something else.

However you submit your answers, there are a few things we need:

- A Cover Page with all information requested below (as a Word or PDF document).
- Please answer all the Co-Chair questions. See more detailed instructions below about how to submit written responses, photos and videos.
- Please include a bio or resume for yourself and any other key staff that would be involved in the COEP Action Team (as a Word or PDF document)
- Please provide a list of references or letters of support from organizations/individuals from the networks you work with (3-5 references requested).
- If representing a nonprofit organization, please provide a letter, signed by organizational leadership, indicating support for staff involvement in this initiative.

## Cover Page Information

- Your name
- Name of the organization or business with which you are affiliated
- Organization or business website (if applicable)
- Organization or business mission
- Your job title or role
- Location of your work (County &/or State(s))
- Your email address
- Your phone number
- Indicate whether or not to automatically enter you into the Team Member pool of applicants for consideration, if you happen to not be selected for a co-chair position



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## Co-Chair Questions

1. What do community ownership, empowerment, and prosperity (COEP) mean to you when it comes to the food system? What does that mean more broadly to you and your work?
2. What does equity mean to you? How do you work towards it in the things that you do?
3. Why do you want to participate in a Regional Action Team working on community ownership, empowerment, and prosperity (COEP) in the food system? What do you want to see happen in this group?
4. What are some strengths that you and your organization would bring to food system work and the team? How do your strengths make teams you are a part of better?
5. Please describe your specific experience leading and managing successful, collaborative strategic planning initiatives related to food-system reform. What outcomes were achieved? Also, please speak to your organization's staff capacity to serve in this leadership role and complete grant deliverables.
6. It matters to us that action team members are bringing the voices and concerns of their networks to the table. Please describe the communities, networks, or coalitions you are part of - who do you work with and how do you work with them? What has been your role in those spaces?
7. What value could leading this Regional Action Team add to your community, network, organization, and/or your work? Please describe.
8. Please describe your initial thoughts about an approach to building and coordinating the regional Action Team and developing the COEP strategies and guidelines. What mechanisms will you establish to secure input and guidance from regional Action Team members and stakeholders? How will you ensure accountability to stated goals? If you have a history of working on a regional level, please also describe that work here.
9. Is there anything else you want to share about yourself (including relevant demographic information) and your work as part of this application? What should we have asked about you that we didn't? We're not looking for anything specific here! Just giving you more space to tell us what you think we need to know.

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Photo courtesy of DC Greens

### How to submit:

Please send completed applications via email to [info@chesapeakefoodshed.net](mailto:info@chesapeakefoodshed.net) by no later than Wednesday, June 27, 2018 COB. Be sure to include "COEP Submission" in the subject line of the email. For questions, call Christy Gabbard at 540-558-8010 or email at [info@chesapeakefoodshed.net](mailto:info@chesapeakefoodshed.net). If you wish to submit application materials by mail, please send to: CFN, 820 West Central Avenue, P.O. Box 264, Davidsonville, Maryland 21035-2323. Please note that any application materials sent via regular mail **\*\*MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE DEADLINE (not merely postmarked).\*\***

If you plan to submit a video, it must be no longer than five minutes. The video can be something you have already produced that represents the work of your organization, or it can be something that you create specifically for this process. It does not need to be professionally produced. Cell phone videos are perfectly acceptable! The video should help answer one or more of the questions above. However, the totality of your application should answer all the questions listed above. A supplemental written narrative (to cover questions not addressed in the video) is allowed. Please follow submission guidelines above for the written portion of your application, including cover page.

### UPLOADING THE VIDEO

To submit your video to us, it needs to be uploaded to an online video service so that you can include a link to the video in your application. There are several online video services you may use, such as YouTube, Vimeo, etc.

- **Naming Convention:** If you are creating a new video, please name it using this format: Last Name, First



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Name\_State-Abbreviation\_COEP (e.g., Doe, Jane\_VA\_COEP)

- *Video Status:* Select UNLISTED as the status for your video. Do not choose PUBLIC (everyone will be able to view your video) or PRIVATE (the reviewers will not be able to review your video).
- *Link:* Once your video is uploaded, copy the link and place it in the cover page Word document that has your introductory information and contact information.

If you have any questions about this process, you may call or email us at [christy@chesapeakefoodshed.net](mailto:christy@chesapeakefoodshed.net) and 540-558-8010.

### Key Dates:

Call for Collaborators Released – April 12, 2018

Applicant Webinar – May 24th 1:30-2:30 pm

To register for webinar, email [info@chesapeakefoodshed.net](mailto:info@chesapeakefoodshed.net) and be sure to include “COEP Webinar Registration” in the subject line of the email.

**\*\*NOTE:** Recordings will be available on the Chesapeake Foodshed Network website for those who cannot attend. ([www.chesapeakefoodshed.net](http://www.chesapeakefoodshed.net))

- Deadline for receipt of application – no later than 5:00 pm ET, June 27, 2018
- Co-Chair Applicants notified – Early August, 2018
- Grant/Action Framework Start Date – Mid October, 2018



*Photos courtesy of Sonia Keiner (part of the permanent collection at Busboys & Poets, Hyattsville, MD)*