YCEJ Environmental Justice Community Fellowships

Partner: Gather New Haven

**Who can apply?**

Currently enrolled YSE or YLS graduate students

**Key Information**

5-7 hours/week

Full academic year commitment: fall 2021 and spring 2022

Paid position $15.15/hour

Weekly commitment to meet with YCEJ staff, then bi-weekly as the project requires.

Includes participation in weekly reflective practice cohort

Partner-driven project, responsive collaboration is central

**About the YCEJ Environmental Justice Community Fellows Program**

The Environmental Justice Community Fellows Program employs Yale graduate students to do graduate-level environmental justice work or research with one of YCEJ’s local partner organizations. Student fellows work collaboratively on a partner-driven project with a host organization to co-develop solutions, usable knowledge, and resources.

Students may work independently or collaboratively in pairs to bring complex, interdisciplinary approaches necessary to meet the scope and goals of the project. Student fellows typically work 5-7 hours a week from September to May including participation in a weekly reflective cohort of Yale students engaged in community-oriented work and research with local groups.

**About the Opportunity**

Organization: Gather New Haven

Gather New Haven promotes health, equity, and justice for people and the environment by cultivating connections with each other and our local lands and waters, and by inspiring us to care for ourselves, our community, and the natural world.

Primary Issue Areas: Urban Agriculture, Public Health, Community Development, Education, Environmental Stewardship

Primary Contact: Brent Peterkin, Executive Director

Brief description:

Gather New Haven supports over 50 community gardens throughout the city of New Haven. Providing land, soil, infrastructure, seeds, seedlings, tools, and technical support helps individuals and families grow their own food. Gather New Haven also hosts a wide array of social gatherings in the gardens that are free and open to the public. These community gardens bring together over 800 family members each year to produce an estimated 15,000+ pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables and build community ties.

Community gardens are an important multi-purpose resource to community members and need to be designed to support multi-faceted social and environmental impacts including spaces for healing, deterring crime, and accessing healthy food. A long-term vision for a system of community gardens needs to reflect the diversity of community voices and composition as well as plan for equitable support across community garden sites. The Environmental Justice Community Fellow will work with Gather New Haven staff and community members to research a community garden program redesign informed by historic, current, and potential impact in New Haven as well as best practices around community garden policies to advance environmental justice. The EJ Community Fellow will draft recommendations in collaboration with organizational and community partners to inform the program redesign.

**Principal Responsibilities:**

Research

* Research history of the vision and structure of Gather New Haven’s community gardens
* Interview staff to identify key organizational goals for the community garden program, current impacts and potential or desired impacts
* Support staff in community outreach to research what local residents want from the garden sites in their communities
* Research best practices in community garden policies to promote social and environmental justice impacts
* Develop recommendations for program redesign based on organizational goals and research findings.
* Community outreach to educate, develop, and organize residents of affected communities to advocate for environmental policies that will improve health.

Communications and Outreach

* Participate in planning and hosting community meetings with Gather New Haven staff
* Draft and distribute outreach communication in multiple formats and assist in translation as necessary
* Develop communication materials in appropriate format to share back research with participating community members, staff, and other primary audiences as determined by Gather New Haven

**Location:**

Candidate must have a willingness to conduct in-person site visits across New Haven for research, planning, and community outreach based on Gather New Haven’s organizational policies and activities. Some of the work may be performed remotely. The candidate must have access to reliable transportation to travel to on-site locations across New Haven. Employment will remain in compliance with Yale’s [Workplace Guidance](https://your.yale.edu/work-yale/workplace-guidance) and [Health & Safety Guidelines](https://covid19.yale.edu/health-guidelines).

**Desired skills and experience:**

1. Experience with interviewing or qualitative research methods
2. Experience synthesizing complex information to formulate recommendations
3. Understanding/interest of urban planning, urban design/landscape architecture, environmental planning and the built environment.
4. Understanding/interest of urban ecology
5. Understanding/interest of urban ethnography
6. Strong interest in food justice and community-led placemaking
7. Sense of humor and lightheartedness

**Project outcomes:**

Outcome 1:

Community meetings successfully engaged local residents to participate in contributing to community garden design vision.

Outcome 2:

Report on findings from desk research, staff interviews, and community meetings.

Outcome 3:

Co-developed recommendations for community garden program redesign in alignment with organizational goals and research findings.

**How to apply:**

1. *View the* ***position descriptions available*** *for the 2020-2021 academic year. You can apply to multiple projects, but students will not work on more than 1 project during the year.*
2. *Please* ***submit 1 PDF document*** *via email to* [*kristin.barendregt-ludwig@yale.edu*](mailto:kristin.barendregt-ludwig@yale.edu) *by 11:59pm* ***September 8, 2021****. In the PDF please include:*
   * + - * *Resume (2 page maximum)*
         * *Answer the EJ Community Fellow Application Questions*

**Environmental Justice Community Fellow Application Questions**

**Instructions:**

As part of your Environmental Justice Community Fellowship application, please complete the following questions. Please limit responses to less than 250 words per question - more concise answers are completely acceptable and encouraged.

1. **Please state the degree you are pursuing, Yale school you are attending, anticipated graduation year, and if you are enrolled to take courses this fall.** (Incoming students taking a gap year are not eligible to apply.

1. **List the project(s) for which you would like to apply in the order of interest and why you are interested in the project.** (A student will not work on more than one project during the year, but you are welcome to apply to any of them.)

1. **Describe the specific skills, traits, and/or experience you would bring to the project(s)? For skills, please state skill level (e.g., novice, some experience, extensive experience, expert).** **If the project lists a desire for specific skills (e.g., geospatial experience), please describe this here.** (If you have identified more than one project you are interested in working on, please indicate skills and experience for each project if they differ between projects.)

1. **What do you hope to learn through the project(s) you chose and how does that connect to your long-term goals?**

1. **Describe your learning style.**

1. **What kind of mentorship do you hope to receive if selected to be an Environmental Justice Community Fellow?**