



CATALYST

*Transgender
Leadership Program*

WELCOME TO Catalyst. Basic Rights Oregon's transgender leadership development program is a year-long training cohort program that addresses the personal, cultural, civic and professional needs of emerging transgender leaders in Oregon. In the program's inaugural year, Catalyst will work to centralize the leadership of transgender people and build empowered leaders who hold a lifelong commitment to fighting for transgender justice and creating lasting change in both the LGBTQ and wider communities.

Through training, fellowship, and project based learning participants will spend 12 months exploring what it means to be an advocate and leader for transgender justice work through a lens of racial and economic equity. We understand that transgender justice, racial justice and economic justice are closely linked and that as transgender people we face deep economic disparities that are exacerbated for transgender people of color. You will also gain skills to support and expand work you are doing in your community. Specific elements that will be addressed include deepening analysis and unpacking both internalized and interpersonal transphobia; identifying and implementing political strategy and advocacy tools rooted in a social justice framework; building a multi-generational network of peers; and navigating and dismantling systems of oppression.

The Catalyst Leadership Development Program is one part of the solution to our movement's need for a national network of training opportunities for transgender leaders, which is crucial to advancing social, transgender, and queer justice movements intersectionally. We expect all Catalyst participants to remain committed to creating lasting community change.

Overview

In 2007, Basic Rights Oregon (BRO) worked in coalition with other social justice organizations across Oregon to pass the Oregon Equality Act. With this legislation came broad legal protection from discrimination and harassment on the basis of gender identity as well as sexual orientation. BRO has since worked to recognize and center the needs of the transgender community, who have too often been pushed to the margins of the wider LGBTQ movement. Toward this goal, in 2010 BRO and Basic Rights Education Fund (BREF) launched the Transgender Justice Program. Through this work we envision:

- *A vibrant transgender community that can support and advance transgender justice.*
- *A broader LGBTQ community that is truly invested in transgender justice*
- *A group of empowered transgender leaders who are committed to a common agenda.*
- *A transformative shift in the discourse around transgender issues and identities.*

Transgender justice has since become a primary focus of our work. In response to the alarming rates of unemployment and underemployment in the transgender community, BREF has created the Fair Workplace Project. The Fair Workplace Project takes an upstream approach to addressing transphobic discrimination and harassment by offering transgender justice trainings to employers across the state, thereby reducing the workplace oppression faced by transgender employees. BREF

also offers support to various administrative bodies in altering systems to be inclusive of transgender identities.

In another facet of the Transgender Justice Program, BRO recognizes both (1) the need to undertake specific policy initiatives to advance legal and lived equality for transgender people, and (2) that transgender people, as the affected community, should spearhead efforts to create such policy. The Transgender Justice Working Group (TJWG) was founded in 2010, and for five years this vibrant group of transgender leaders worked to shape groundbreaking policy initiatives. The TJWG worked in collaboration with coalition partners to achieve significant policy victories including transgender-related healthcare coverage for Oregonians covered by the Oregon Health plan as well as private insurers based in Oregon.

Catalyst seeks to engage emerging transgender leaders in social justice arenas including and beyond legislative advocacy. Like the TJWG, this cohort will assist in shaping policy; however, the goals of the program reach further—we hope to help build leaders with a lifelong commitment to fighting for transgender justice in every corner of the social justice movement.

Program Goals

1. Develop the skills and analysis of participants for campaign and movement leadership.
2. Increase transgender leadership in Oregon's LGBTQ and social justice movement at large.
3. Build lasting relationships among participants and with community leaders through team efforts, peer to peer learning, and networking with established leaders.
4. Address the specific needs of transgender communities through identifying solutions and active project based learning.
5. Prepare leaders to take on decision making and influential positions in non-profit, government, civic, and private organizations.
6. Deepen analysis and work toward dismantling the many forms of oppression experienced within the transgender community, including transmisogyny, sexism, cissexism, internalized transphobia, interpersonal transphobia and classism.

Key Activities

- *Building and leading activities that address the specific needs of transgender people and work towards creating the world we envision:*

Participants will use the skills and resources provided to identify solutions to issues impacting trans people throughout Oregon and build and launch projects for transgender justice movement building.

- *Ongoing training:*

Multiple full-day trainings will cover the following areas: organizing, self-care, power analysis, community building, leadership development, issue analysis, campaign and field strategy, legislative advocacy, and more. Participants will build skills to support social justice campaigns and movements within and beyond the program.

- *Assist Basic Rights Oregon in setting 2019 legislative agenda:*

After receiving extensive training on the history and current state of transgender justice legislation in Oregon, participants will work to help shape Basic Rights Oregon's policy initiatives and legislative priorities for the 2019 legislative session.

Calendar

The primary time commitments for *Catalyst* participants will be 3 weekend retreats and two day-long Saturday meetings over the course of 12 months. Selected applicants must be available to attend all three weekend retreats. The first retreat is scheduled (see below). Dates for the second and third retreats are currently tentative and will be confirmed with selected participants upon acceptance.

Transportation and other accommodations will be provided and arranged by Basic Rights Oregon staff. Physical attendance at the two Saturday meetings will be strongly encouraged, but virtual attendance options will be made available for cohort members whose schedules do not permit them to be present.

WEEKEND RETREATS:

December 8-10, 2017: Corbett, OR

May 4-6, 2018: Location TBD

November 9-11, 2018: Location TBD

SATURDAY MEETINGS:

March 10th, 2018

September 15th, 2018

Other time commitments will include:

- Project work sessions and actions scheduled by participating project members

- Small group relationship building: participants will be divided into small groups that will work together to schedule social time together
- Opportunities to attend and volunteer at BRO events and actions throughout the year

Participants will gain

- Invaluable experience playing key roles in Basic Rights Oregon's efforts to pass policy initiatives related to transgender justice
- Real life skills, analysis and experience that will position them to move into leadership roles in campaign, community organizing and movement work
- In-depth and ongoing trainings and continued leadership development opportunities
- A lasting network of colleagues, activists and community leaders

Cost

All materials, transportation, room and board are provided. Reimbursement for childcare may be available upon request.

Participant Criteria

To Be Eligible:

- Self-identify as a transgender, nonbinary and/or gender-nonconforming person¹
- Reside in Oregon
- Be 18 years of age or older
- An interest in building a movement for justice that is united across identity
- Commit to full participation of program trainings, events and activities

Ideal Candidates will possess:

- Demonstrated experience working with transgender and/or LGBTQ communities and a commitment to the mission of the organization.
- Previous community, student, electoral or other organizing experience – as a volunteer or in a paid position
- Strong written and verbal communication skills
- Strength in relationship-building

¹ Here “transgender” is used as an umbrella term to refer to anyone whose gender identity is different from the sex they were assigned at birth.

To Apply

Please complete [this application](#) to be considered for *Catalyst*. The information you provide will help us determine whether you are a good fit for this program and make sure that the training and other features of *Catalyst* meet the needs and experiences of participants. Please upload your responses to the written questions as a word document or PDF.

If you would like to upload a current resume to be considered in your application, you are welcome to do so; however, a resume is not required in order to apply. If you have any questions or concerns or need this application provided in a different format, please email chase@basicrights.org.

About Basic Rights Education Fund

Basic Rights Education Fund (BREF), is affiliated with Basic Rights Oregon, a 501(c)4 organization that grew out of the community response to anti-gay attacks that began in Oregon in the late 80's. In 1999, BREF, a 501(c)3 organization, was established to conduct education and advocacy to ensure LGBTQ Oregonians experience equality. More information at: www.basicrights.org.