



## ***Oregon Housing Justice Forum: Catalyzing Change, Building Power***

Virtual Kick-Off: May 12, 2022

In-Person Gathering: June 27-29, Lincoln City, Oregon

### **Event Overview and Invitation to Apply**

Friends and partners,

Meyer Memorial Trust is planning a statewide gathering in June 2022 of advocates and organizers active in affordable housing and related issues. This will be a multi-day convening of housing advocates from across Oregon to take stock of opportunities, challenges and strategies to advance a broad sustainable movement to meet the housing needs of all Oregonians especially those who have historically experienced systemic housing injustices.

The last few years have been full of urgent housing challenges, tireless and smart advocacy, and dramatic victories in public policy and new resources for housing needs. We hope the 2022 event will serve as an important occasion for advocates to gather together and take a breath and a step back, and think about what's next: how do we all contribute to sustaining and growing a broad and resilient statewide movement around equitable housing outcomes?

Our intent is to center this conversation around the needs and priorities of communities of color, and particularly to nurture and promote emerging leaders working with those communities and others that have been historically neglected, marginalized, and deprived of the ability to secure suitable housing.

***To apply or nominate someone else to attend both the May virtual kick-off and the 3 day main event in June, please complete the online application available at: <https://tinyurl.com/2p98a3cb> by February 22, 2022.***

#### ***Why should you consider coming?***

We think this will be an energizing, challenging and joyful event! This is going to be an extraordinary opportunity to:

- Connect with peers and allies from across the state working on similar housing challenges: you'll have a chance to meet new people, deepen existing relationships, and learn from some of the most dynamic leaders in Oregon
- Plan and strategize around housing justice in a unique way: you'll have a chance to engage in a deep and ambitious conversation, defining an agenda around housing justice, setting some big picture goals for collective advocacy work, and refining your own strategies to help your community achieve its goals
- Come away with new clarity, ideas and tools for your own advocacy work

Meyer is setting the table for this multi-day event, but this is a space for activists and housing advocates to define their own action priorities and policy goals and connect with allies and partners eager to work on the same things.

### ***Who will be there?***

A planning committee including Meyer staff and a small group of housing advocates connected with a wide range of communities will be building a list of invitees drawn from the pool of people who submit a nomination form. We anticipate much more interest in attending than we can accommodate if we keep the group to a manageable size consistent with COVID-safe practices (30-35 total attendees), and are looking to assemble a group of people that represent as much of the urgent housing needs and activity in Oregon as possible.

The full list of criteria are shown below, but basically we want to assemble a group that represents the full diversity of the State and centers the voices, priorities and experiences of those who have historically experienced systemic housing injustices. We're looking for a mix of experienced and emerging leaders and a range of perspectives and approaches to solving housing issues.

This event is not just for folks who primarily identify as "housing" advocates! We know that people active in environmental justice, workers' rights, access to health care, etc. see strong connections with housing issues and can be savvy and effective allies in housing focused work.

### **What about COVID?**

Our hope and expectation is that the multi-day event can happen in-person. We will look to the relevant guidance from the US Centers for Disease Control, the State of Oregon, and our hosts the Siletz tribe, and if it is not possible to hold an in-person event in June, we'll likely look to reschedule later in 2022.

### ***What happens after I apply? What if I'm not able to come?***

We expect to invite people selected to participate by the end of March 2022. While we expect the June event to be special, it's not a one-off or stand alone opportunity. We see this as the beginning of a broader conversation that will engage more activists around the state as it picks up energy and focus. Our intent is to draw on the pool of applicants to help grow the networks and strengthen the work growing out of the June event. If you aren't able to come, for whatever reason, we will identify ways you can connect with that broader conversation and other opportunities to build relationships and collaborate with peers and allies.

*For more information on the event, contact Michael Parkhurst at [michael@mmt.org](mailto:michael@mmt.org) or 971-230-0532*

Selection Criteria: Oregon Housing Justice Forum

**We're looking for PARTICIPANTS who:**

- Are actively engaged in advocacy (broadly defined) whether focused specifically on housing issues, or other advocacy with a strong connection to housing: for example people who are working on health, transportation, labor, or environmental justice issues who can describe a strong connection with housing issues
- Have a commitment to equity and inclusion reflected in their actions and relationships in community
- Have strong connections to communities of color and other groups whose housing experiences are defined by structural disparities
- Are actively working on changing unjust systems, and bring vision and creativity to the conversation - people who can see and describe the big picture of the future they want, and make connections across issues
- Are leaders and advocates - especially from BIPOC communities often denied these kinds of opportunities - eager to increase their impact on housing issues in their communities, by building stronger relationships with others, deepening their understanding of housing issues and opportunities, and collaborating on a larger vision of housing justice

**We're looking for a GROUP that collectively will:**

- Represent all corners of Oregon
- Reflect the diversity of the State (in terms of race, ethnicity, life experience, sex, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, class background, and religion) and center the voices, priorities and experiences of those who have historically experienced systemic housing injustices
- Include both more experienced housing leaders and emerging leaders looking to expand their connections and trusted relationships within housing advocacy, with a focus on supporting and elevating leaders and communities who have often been excluded from past planning and strategy around housing
- Include a range of ideological and policy approaches to solving housing issues
- Include people with a mix of roles and connections to housing work, including grassroots organizers, policy experts, direct service providers working for systems change, and people with lived experience of housing challenges
- Have good connections to related issues including health, labor, environmental justice, and transportation advocacy
- Be eager to expand the circle of engagement and collaboration beyond this group