

Seeking Advisors for Institutional Investment Accelerator Program

With the generous support of the Kresge Foundation, the Wallace Center is launching a new initiative aimed at catalyzing and increasing institutional investment to accelerate the development of more equitable food systems. Institutions have pivotal roles to play in shifting the structure of our regional food economies to be more just and resilient. For years, many institutions have committed to using their procurement dollars to address a variety of concerns, from rural farmer viability to the social determinants of health. These commitments often fall short due to the lack of an established pipeline of food and farm businesses to sell into their market channel. The development of more equitable, regionalized food systems requires institutions to look beyond procurement commitments and actively invest resources in a pipeline of food and farm businesses that builds community wealth, especially for people of color. This allows them to meet their purchasing commitments and support the health and well-being of their communities. The Wallace Center is seeking to accelerate this emerging practice.

At the core of this initiative is a cohort of six teams doing this work in their communities. Each participating team will be made up of three organizations looking to use institutional investment to enhance and build equitable supply chains in their communities. These self-organized teams will be composed of community-based organizations, value chain enterprises, economic development agencies and others whose collaborative work can leverage resources from anchor institutions to develop supply chains that create more equitable communities. This Institutional Investment Accelerator Cohort will participate in retreats, learning journeys, peer to peer learning, and receive tailored technical assistance and training over a period of 18 months. Progress and learnings from the teams will be shared broadly through articles, webinars, videos, and visual guides. Our goal is to support community food systems leaders in catalyzing and directing institutional investment into equitable local food supply chains.

Our work is guided by a deep belief in and respect for the lived experience, expertise, and creativity of the people and communities working to build healthy, equitable, racially-just and sustainable food systems, especially those most impacted by the extractive industrial system. The Wallace Center [commits](#) to centering anti-racism, racial equity, and inclusion in our programs, operations, and culture. Black people, Indigenous people and other people of color are highly encouraged to apply for this opportunity.

Qualifications

We are seeking advisors to support the development of the program and work with teams throughout the accelerator. Advisors should have deep experience working with teams and knowledge of one or more of the following areas: Institutional procurement, value chain coordination, financing food businesses and infrastructure, and developing cross-sector partnerships. The advisors we're seeking would bring an anti-racist lens to their work, with a demonstrated track record of working with leaders of color and centering racial equity.

Activities:

- **Program strategy and thought partnership:** Provide thought-partnership to the Wallace Center staff, other team advisors, and training/facilitation partners through quarterly leadership team calls and e-mail communication. Areas of input will include:
 - Thought partnership on the overall conceptual framework,
 - Connecting to relevant partners on the project,

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- Informing program strategy including sequencing of technical assistance and support and making recommendations for adaptations during implementation,
- Development and implementation of the Institutional Investment Accelerator including participating in cohort selection,
- Sharing learning and findings throughout including debriefing at the end of the project.
- **Direct support to teams:** Conduct monthly check-in calls throughout the accelerator (January 2021-June 2022) with assigned teams to track progress, encourage connections to other teams, make recommendations and connections, identify technical assistance needs, and share relevant progress with Wallace Center team via quarterly calls and written summaries.
- **Accelerator events (in-person or digital):** Participate in the kickoff leadership retreat in Q1 of 2021, interim site visit/ learning journey and wrap up at 2022 Wallace Center Conference.
- **Knowledge products:** Speak on at least one FSLN call or webinar to share learnings with the broader network.

Deliverables:

- Partnership with Wallace Center in developing framework, program strategy, and design.
- Feedback and scoring of team applications
- Complete monthly check-in calls with teams
- Participation in accelerator events and public call or webinar for FSLN members
- Feedback on the content, quality, and process of the Institutional Investment Accelerator

How to Apply

- Send an email to Ellie (ellie.bomstein@winrock.org) with your resume and responses to the following questions:
 - Why are you interested in serving as an advisor?
 - How do you meet the qualifications above?
 - What steps have you taken in the past to address racial inequities in the food system?

Timeline

- Applications open through 6pm ET on October 12th
- Engagement: November 2020- July, 2022

Commitment:

- Total compensation per advisor: \$20,000

Please contact Ellie (ellie.bomstein@winrock.org) with any questions.

About the Wallace Center

The Wallace Center has been a leader in the development of healthy regional food and farming systems for over 35 years. Our mission is to strengthen communities through resilient food and farming systems by developing partnerships, piloting new ideas, and advancing solutions. We seek to foster more effective community-based organizations, increase the impact and viability of mission-driven food and farm businesses, and leverage the food system for equitable place-based economic and community development. The Wallace Center is driven by servant-leadership and our engagement and capacity-building efforts are informed by participatory planning and driven by community needs and vision.

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