



CALIFORNIA
STRATEGIC
GROWTH
COUNCIL

PARTNERS
ADVANCING
CLIMATE
EQUITY



PACE FINAL REPORT

JUNE 2022

Partners Advancing Climate Equity (PACE)

PACE PILOT PROGRAM VISION, STRUCTURE, AND EARLY OUTCOMES

Launching a New Cycle of Capacity Building and Community Empowerment



TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>ABOUT PACE</u>	<u>8</u>
BACKGROUND	8
VISION & VALUES	10
PACE LEADERS	11
PACE PROJECT TEAM	13
<u>PHASE 0: DESIGN & LAUNCH</u>	<u>15</u>
TEAM GROUND SETTING	15
PROGRAM DESIGN	16
COHORT RECRUITMENT & SELECTION	19
<u>PHASE 1: CULTIVATE & CO-CREATE</u>	<u>22</u>
PACE CURRICULUM	22
VISION MODULE SUMMARY	25
ASSESSMENT MODULE SUMMARY	29
STRATEGY & TIMELINE MODULES SUMMARY	33
<u>PHASE 2: PROPAGATE & ACTIVATE</u>	<u>38</u>
PHASE 2 VISION	38
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE STRATEGY	39
SUMMARY OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDED	45
<u>PROGRAM EVALUATION</u>	<u>49</u>
EVALUATION STRATEGY	49
EVALUATION RESULTS	50
PILOT IMPACTS & EARLY OUTCOMES	65
CONCLUSION	73



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PARTNERS ADVANCING CLIMATE EQUITY (PACE) PILOT

Communities of color, Indigenous communities, and low-income neighborhoods have been shaped and carved out by deliberate and exclusionary public policies of disinvestment and redlining. These frontline communities have borne the brunt of generational disparities in socioeconomic and health outcomes, and suffer “first and worst” from the escalating and cascading impacts of climate change.

Moreover, frontline communities not only suffer a disproportionate burden of pollution, poverty and inequities, but have also long been excluded from the decision-making processes that impact their lives and neighborhoods. Even as funding for climate action in California continues to grow, frontline communities are still unable to successfully navigate and access State funds to address community needs.

PACE aims to shift power to frontline communities by building the capacity of community leaders to develop actionable plans, access State resources, and mobilize partners for collective impact and community self-determination.

Following the passage of [SB-1072 \(Leyva, 2018\)](#), the [California Strategic Growth Council \(SGC\)](#) developed the Partners Advancing Climate Equity (PACE) pilot program with a multi-disciplinary team including [CivicWell](#), [Climate Resolve](#), [Urban Permaculture Institute \(UPI\)](#), [People’s Climate Innovation Center](#), and [The Greenlining Institute](#).

THE PACE PROJECT TEAM



The PACE Project Team collaboratively developed and administered the pilot to explore new models for building the capacity of frontline communities to access State funding.

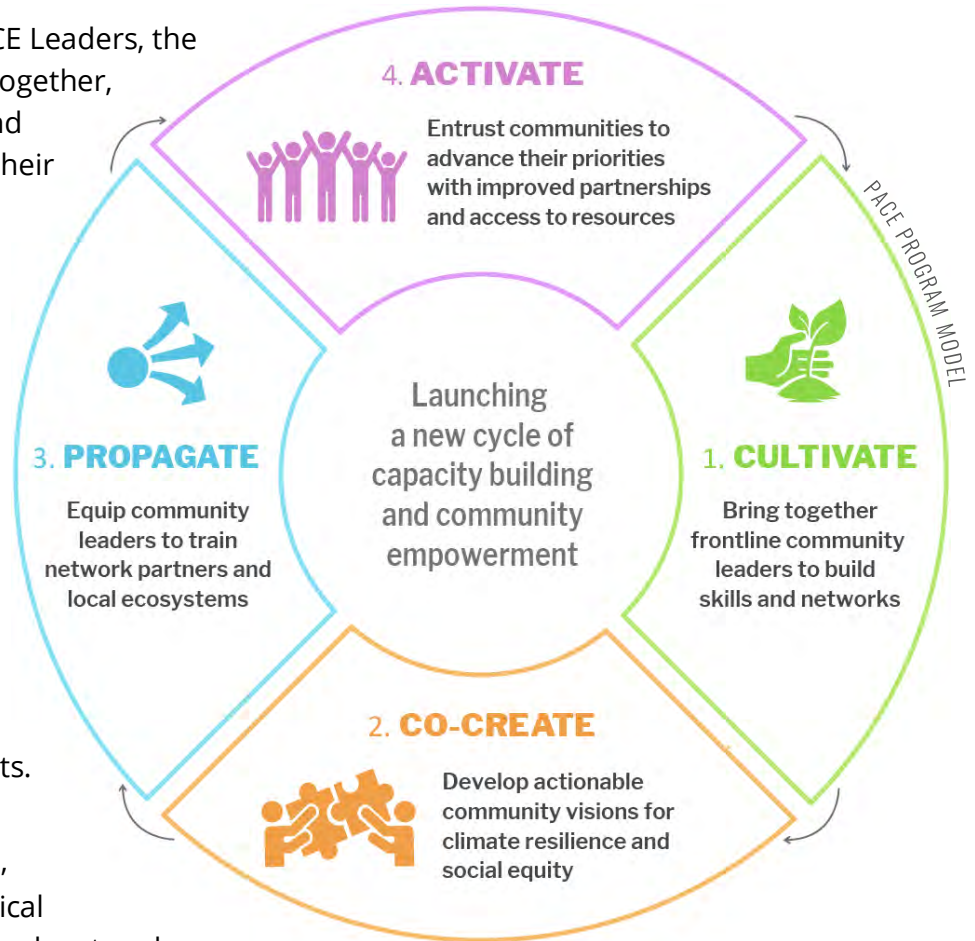
In its pilot year, PACE brought together a multigenerational, multiregional, diverse, and committed cohort of 22 community leaders from across California.

Collectively referred to as PACE Leaders, the cohort spent a year learning together, tackling shared challenges, and building capacity to advance their climate equity objectives.

The pilot was structured into two 6-month phases, the first phase taking place from February 2021 to July 2021 and the second phase, from October 2021 to March 2022.

Phase 1, Cultivate & Co-Create, focused on delivering the PACE Curriculum through cohort-based experiential learning and development of community needs assessments.

Phase 2, Propagate & Activate, provided individualized technical assistance to support PACE Leaders to advance their climate equity visions and activate their communities and partners for collective action.



PACE CURRICULUM LEARNING OBJECTIVES

	<p>Leverage available resources to advance local climate resilience and social equity priorities</p>		<p>Create data-driven, community-led needs assessments and action plans</p>
	<p>Form and sustain cross-sector partnerships that enhance collective impact</p>		<p>Navigate State funding programs, policies, and resources</p>

The PACE Curriculum covers a diverse range of topics – from climate risks, impacts, and strategies to participatory budgeting, grant writing, and project management; from State policies, programs, and tools to community assets, power mapping, systems change, and more. PACE’s holistic approach to capacity building featured a variety of experiential learning activities to deliver the PACE Curriculum, primarily interactive workshops, community needs assessments, hands-on trainings and demos, peer-led presentations and discussions, networking sessions, and one-on-one technical assistance.

Foundational to the pilot was its flexibility, intentionally designed to provide meaningful value to PACE Leaders in light of their unique strengths, diverse needs, and ongoing capacity constraints. The PACE Team sought frequent input and feedback to iteratively refine, adapt, and improve the program’s structure and activities, while also providing pathways for PACE Leaders to shape their experience to meet their individual needs. In many ways, the PACE pilot was co-created by cohort members and the project team.

For a pilot that only recently ended, the early outcomes reported by participants are striking – and as time goes on, the impact and influence of having participated in PACE is likely to continue growing.

PACE was AMAZING! The facilitating team was very knowledgeable, welcoming, supportive and did an excellent job of building community in a virtual context. Participants were kind, shared openly and made this program so worthwhile.

The tools, resources, guidance and TA were exactly what I needed and helped me grow in my skills and confidence to bring climate equity resources to my community.

PACE Leader

The PACE pilot was a fully virtual program implemented during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, facilitating a diverse, capacity-constrained community leaders towards an ambitious set of learning objectives. Despite these challenges, the pilot has had a profound impact on the work being led by PACE Leaders across multiple domains.

Roughly half of the cohort reported that PACE influenced grant applications; over a dozen of these applications have since been awarded. Participants also reported that increased knowledge and skills led to meaningful process changes in their work and that they feel more equipped to be effective leaders with greater awareness and confidence. PACE Leaders cited numerous examples of new and expanded partnerships, plans, and programs, all influenced through their PACE experience, that are now helping them socialize and advance their climate equity visions in their communities.

There is a clear demand for capacity building support in frontline communities, and the tangible benefits delivered to the diverse PACE Cohort demonstrate the pilot's replicability.

The PACE program received over 150 cohort applicants but in its pilot year, PACE was only able to invite 22 community leaders, less than 15% of all applicants.

As climate change worsens and community needs continue to go unmet, the diverse ecosystems of individuals, organizations, and coalitions working to advance community-led solutions will likely grow. The PACE pilot has demonstrated how capacity building programs that involve experiential cohort-based learning and individualized technical assistance can provide tangible benefits for both existing and emerging community leaders seeking to advance climate equity.

““

The PACE experience is gentle and nurturing yet also complex and demanding. You'll be immersed in a community of experts and learners. PACE Leaders and PACE Advisors alike grow individually and teach each other from our diverse lived experiences. You'll learn you have much more to learn, but you'll exit the program with a well-organized resource library and a cohort of peers to continue consulting.

What's possible for humanity may well be determined by what we collectively do – or don't do – in the next decade, given the rapidly collapsing environment. The PACE program will help guide participants to realize transformative change in communities all over California.

PACE Leader

””

““

This program was the best I have ever been in, over the past 20 years. It was very timely, effective, and necessary. It was an honor and a privilege to be a part of such an incredible process and experience. I learned so much and now will continue to apply that knowledge and share it in my community. I also want to acknowledge and thank the [PACE] Team, from day one they ensured the experience was inclusive, thoughtful, and the curriculum was dynamic and thorough.

I can't express in words enough how this program should be the standard for all state programs moving forward.

PACE Leader

””



The **PACE Final Report** provides an overview of the pilot's goals, structure, activities, and evaluation results and is accompanied by the PACE Recommendations Report and the PACE Curriculum. These additional resources aim to share and expand upon PACE Learnings and propagate further capacity building throughout California.

- The **PACE Recommendations Report: Capacity Building with Frontline Community Leaders: Best Practices & Recommendations** offers capacity building best practices, structural challenges faced by frontline communities, and recommendations for State programs and policies, based on the collective experiences and learnings from the pilot.
- The **PACE Curriculum** includes a suite of resources from the pilot's first phase, intended to support other community leaders in building capacity:
 - A **Community Needs Assessment Toolkit**, a robust set of prompts and resources to guide the development of actionable, community-driven plans.
 - **Facilitator Resources** including template agendas, sample activities, and additional guidance and resources for facilitators interested in replicating any and all of the sessions organized.
 - Key **recordings** and **presentations** led by the PACE Team and PACE Leaders from the pilot's cohort sessions, peer exchanges, and supplemental trainings.
 - A **Resource Library** that compiles existing reports, resources, case studies, and tools relevant to the PACE Curriculum.



ABOUT PACE

BACKGROUND

Although funding for climate action in California continues to grow, many communities across the state have not been able to access these funds to implement local projects and address community needs. These include frontline communities that have borne the brunt of generational disparities in socioeconomic and health outcomes, suffer “first and worst” from environmental harm and escalating climate impacts. These are the communities the State should be prioritizing for investments.

Frontline communities have been excluded from the decision-making processes that impact their lives and neighborhoods, and often require capacity support to successfully navigate and access State funding.

[SB-1072 \(Leyva, 2018\)](#) responded to these gaps by directing the scaling up of capacity building and technical assistance infrastructure in frontline communities.

PACE Definition of Frontline Communities

For the purposes of this program, and drawing from the environmental justice movement, the PACE Team defined frontline communities as **historically marginalized communities that experience the first and worst consequences of climate change and other injustices.**

These include Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) communities and other marginalized communities that have shouldered the largest health burdens and face the greatest economic barriers.

Several mapping efforts were used to define geographic eligibility for the program, including SB-1072 Under-Resourced Communities, SB-535 Disadvantaged Communities, AB-1550 Low-Income Communities, and the Integrated Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Program's Vulnerable Communities.

SB-1072 defined capacity building as “the process of strengthening local coordination, leadership, knowledge, skills, expertise, and access to resources in under-resourced communities with the goal of helping to develop or increase the ability of that community to independently compete for grants and implement projects in the future.”

Following the passage of SB-1072, the [California Strategic Growth Council \(SGC\)](#) created the Partners Advancing Climate Equity (PACE) pilot program to explore new models for investing in and building the capacity of frontline communities. SGC funded and partnered with a multidisciplinary team – [CivicWell](#) (formerly Local Government Commission), [Climate Resolve](#), [Urban Permaculture Institute \(UPI\)](#), [People’s Climate Innovation Center](#) (formerly Climate Innovation at Movement Strategy Center), and [The Greenlining Institute](#) – to collaboratively design, develop, and administer the PACE pilot.



In its pilot year, PACE brought together a cohort of 22 frontline community leaders from across California – collectively referred to as PACE Leaders – to learn together, tackle shared challenges, and build capacity for advancing climate equity objectives, both locally and throughout the state. The pilot program took place from June 2020 to March 2022, with core program delivery taking place between February 2021 and March 2022.

TIMEFRAME	ACTIVITY
June 2020 – October 2020	Program Design & Curriculum Development
November 2020 – January 2021	Application Period & Cohort Selection
February 2021 – July 2021	Phase 1 Implementation
August 2021 – September 2021	Mid-Program Evaluation & Phase 2 Design
October 2021 – March 2022	Phase 2 Implementation

VISION & VALUES

The Partners Advancing Climate Equity (PACE) pilot program envisions a connected and mutually supportive network of emboldened community leaders with the capacity, partnerships, and drive to facilitate and catalyze local climate action. This vision is premised on a belief that collective liberation can be achieved by enabling communities to determine their own paths to climate resilience.

At its core, PACE aims to shift power to frontline communities to lead equitable, climate-resilient community solutions and shape State priorities and programs.

PACE's holistic approach to capacity building included experiential learning, community needs assessments, workshops, peer exchanges, one-on-one technical assistance, networking opportunities, customized templates and toolkits, and other tailored activities and resources. PACE was designed to advance four primary objectives for participants:



As a pilot program, PACE strived to **replace existing extractive models with a new, self-replicating, community-centered model** that fundamentally shifts interactions between community-based organizations (CBOs), government, and other institutions to restore community decision-making power. The program was grounded by the following values.

Honoring, uplifting and growing community leadership and knowledge

Building authentic, symbiotic relationships for meaningful collaboration

Full transparency and collaborative governance every step of the way

Courage to address root causes rather than pursuing simple solutions

Respect and care for participants' time and capacity

Shifting and restoring community power to enable self-determination and liberation

PACE LEADERS

In its pilot year, PACE convened **a cohort of twenty-two incredible community leaders** from across California. We welcomed a multigenerational, multiregional, diverse, and committed cohort of PACE Leaders working in partnership with coalitions or at nonprofit organizations that prioritize and uplift community-led initiatives.

Recognizing the variety of challenges faced by frontline communities throughout the state, the PACE Cohort includes representation from the North Coast, Bay Area, Sacramento Area, Sierra Nevada, Central Coast, San Joaquin Valley, and Coastal and Inland Southern California. PACE Leaders worked on an array of issues at the intersection of climate and equity, including affordable housing, air quality, youth and resident empowerment, water and wildfire resilience, clean energy access, multi-modal mobility, community gardens and food security, and urban greening and forestry.



Amy J. Wong

ActiveSGV



Anita M. López

Cesar Chávez Service Clubs



Christian Torres

Comite Civico Del Valle



Christy Garcia

National Indian Justice Center



Danielle Dynes

East Oakland Collective



Fatima Malik

Del Paso Heights Growers' Alliance



Felipe Escobar

Pacoima Beautiful



ileana Ortega Brunetti

Watsonville Wetlands Watch



Irene Calimlim

Little Manila Rising



Jessa Calderon

Sacred Places Institute



Karina Andalon

Alianza



Lil Milagro Henriquez

Mycelium Youth Network



Marissa Fierro

California Indian
Environmental Alliance



Martha Armas-Kelley

Environmental Justice Project of
Catholic Charities in Modesto



Nancy Faulstich

Regeneración Pájaro Valley



Raymond Gutteriez

Wuksachi Indian Tribe



Red Cloud Manuel

Central Valley
Empowerment Alliance



Sarina Vega

Casa Familiar



Tere Almaguer

PODER SF



Veatrice Jews

Inland Empire Concerned
African Churches



Victoria Vasquez

Sacramento Tree Foundation

Forever a part of PACE and in our hearts...



Felecia "Fe Love" Lenee Williams

Mar 30, 1980 – Mar 3, 2021

Co-Founder, Compassionate ARTS in Action

PACE PROJECT TEAM

PACE was led by a multi-disciplinary team of organizations that have been, and continue to be, deeply engaged in advancing climate resilience and equity in California. The PACE Team cultivated an encouraging environment for collaboration, creativity, and adaptability, leveraging the diversity of experiences, connections, strengths, and perspectives that each partner brought to the table. From curriculum development to technical assistance, designing and implementing the PACE pilot was a true collaborative effort to create a new model for cohort-based capacity building.



**CALIFORNIA
STRATEGIC
GROWTH
COUNCIL**

The [California Strategic Growth Council \(SGC\)](#) funded the PACE pilot program and actively collaborated with the team to support program design and delivery. Key SGC staff included [Coral Abbott](#), [Sarah Risher](#), and [Kirin Kumar](#).



CIVICWELL

[CivicWell](#) served as the project manager and supported all aspects of program design and delivery. In addition to managing the overall

project to ensure smooth team and cohort coordination, CivicWell led the design and development of the PACE website, the cohort selection process, the Community Needs Assessment Toolkit, supplemental trainings, peer exchanges, the technical assistance strategy, the program evaluation strategy, the final report, and final PACE Curriculum publishing. Key staff included [Julia Kim](#) (project manager), [Kelsey Wolf-Cloud](#), [John Vandervort](#), [Ryan Bodanyi](#), [Catherine Foster](#), and [Tia Tyler](#).

CivicWell, formerly the Local Government Commission, is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization supporting sustainable solutions and the community leaders who implement them. CivicWell inspires, equips, connects, and cultivates leadership for local innovation and community change, especially for leaders responding to the climate crisis and its impacts on their communities.



**Climate
Resolve**

[Climate Resolve](#) served as an implementing partner for PACE and as the Southern California technical assistance lead.

Specifically, Climate Resolve led development of the PACE application and recruitment outreach strategy, communications and logistics support for cohort sessions (including PACE Bulletins), external advisor coordination, development of the online PACE Resource Library, and writing of curriculum module summaries in this report. Key staff included [Natalie Hernandez](#), [Bryn Lindblad](#), [Anne Shalamoff](#), [Yema Conteh](#), [Emmanuel Vega](#), and [Lia Cohen](#).

Climate Resolve is a nonprofit organization that advances local solutions to global climate change. Climate Resolve develops cutting-edge strategies that maximize greenhouse gas reductions, climate adaptation, and co-benefits such as improved housing, transportation, and public health outcomes. Climate Resolve works with residents, policymakers, planners, and project teams to inspire actions for a just and resilient future.



UPISF

[Urban Permaculture Institute \(UPI\)](#) led the development of the PACE Curriculum and Phase 1 full cohort and learning group sessions. UPI also partnered on other aspects of the program such as technical assistance and implementation of the program evaluation strategy. Key staff included **Ei Ei Samai**, **Antonio Roman-Alcalá**, and **Kevin Bayuk**.

UPI facilitates capacity building and other learning experiences around earth-based and afro-indigenous practices to promote community resilience. This mission is carried out through Permaculture and Social Permaculture Design Courses, People’s Planning projects, custom curriculum design, technical assistance, and group governance consulting



[People’s Climate Innovation Center](#) served as a strategic advisor to support all aspects of program design and implementation. Key staff including **Michelle Gabrieloff-Parish** and **Corrine Van Hook-Turner**.

People’s Climate Innovation Center (formerly Climate Innovation at Movement Strategy) is a Movement Strategy Center network partner.

Founded in 2001, Climate Innovation has been a center for strategic and sustainable movement building, social transformation, and transition. People’s Climate Innovation Center brings a whole systems approach to movement building with transformative solutions by removing barriers to frontline innovation and community-driven solutions.



[The Greenlining Institute](#) co-sponsored SB-1072 (Leyva) to build the capacity of California’s most under-resourced communities. Greenlining then served as a strategic advisor to the PACE program, with an eye towards ensuring that equity was foundational to PACE’s values, praxis, and outcomes, and led the development of the PACE Recommendations Report. **Emi Wang** served as staff lead.

Greenlining works toward a future when communities of color can build wealth, live in healthy places filled with economic opportunity, and are ready to meet the challenges posed by climate change. Our multifaceted advocacy efforts address the root causes of racial, economic, and environmental inequities in order to meaningfully transform the material conditions of communities of color in California and across the nation.

A photograph of several small green seedlings growing in a dark brown soil tray. The seedlings are in various stages of growth, with some having two leaves and others just starting to sprout. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green.

PHASE 0: DESIGN & LAUNCH

TEAM GROUND SETTING

In order to navigate the demands, constraints, complexities, and uncertainties of designing and delivering a new, fully virtual capacity building program during a global pandemic, establishing trust within the team was an absolute necessity. The trust-building that started in the proposal development stage continued as the program launched and through the completion of its pilot year.

The PACE Team first engaged in a series of ground setting discussions to co-create the [program's vision and goals](#), which expanded upon SGC's original vision and also included a set of shared values, definitions, and intended program outcomes. Additionally, a set of [decision-making and conflict resolution protocols](#) were developed to establish clear roles and processes, as well as to demonstrate collaborative decision-making in action.

This ground setting stage enabled the PACE Team to establish a guiding compass and a set of accountability measures to ensure all aspects of program design and delivery embodied the PACE vision and values while modeling equitable, collaborative approaches to program administration.

Quarterly review meetings were conducted to reflect on team values and dynamics and assess the program's effectiveness in achieving intended goals and meeting participant needs. These meetings provided dedicated space for the PACE Team to reflect on program values and opportunities for improvement, considerations that often get overlooked when program implementation is underway due to budget and time constraints or when planning for project activities takes priority.

PROGRAM DESIGN

Upon the completion the ground setting stage, the PACE Team turned its attention to designing the pilot year’s virtual structure, the PACE Curriculum, and the cohort application and selection process. The PACE Team first translated the program’s four primary objectives into near-term intended outcomes for participants, which served as the basis for PACE Curriculum development and informed key topics covered through training.

PACE PRIMARY OBJECTIVES	NEAR-TERM INTENDED OUTCOMES FOR PARTICIPANTS
<p>Leverage available resources to advance local climate resilience and social equity priorities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lay the groundwork to support successful grant applications • Clearly articulate your community’s vision and priorities for equitable climate resilience • Connect with peers and mentors from across California
<p>Form and sustain cross-sector partnerships that enhance collective impact</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map out local and regional opportunities for new partnerships • Learn about effective methods for building consensus and achieving collective breakthroughs • Lead trainings to build the capacity of your networks and local ecosystems
<p>Create data-driven, community-led needs assessments and action plans</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use tools like Cal-Adapt, CalEnviroScreen, and Healthy Places Index to understand neighborhood-level data • Learn how to analyze community assets, strengths, barriers, and needs to inform action • Learn about case studies and models for addressing climate change and social equity issues
<p>Navigate state funding programs, policies, and resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand State goals related to mitigating and adapting to climate change • Become more well-versed in California Climate Investments and other State resources • Establish contacts at key State agencies to support ongoing engagement

The PACE pilot followed a fully virtual format and was implemented through two 6-month phases. This structure enabled PACE Leaders to learn a common set of core skills, tools, and frameworks with their cohort peers while also receiving individualized assistance that addressed their specific needs and priorities.

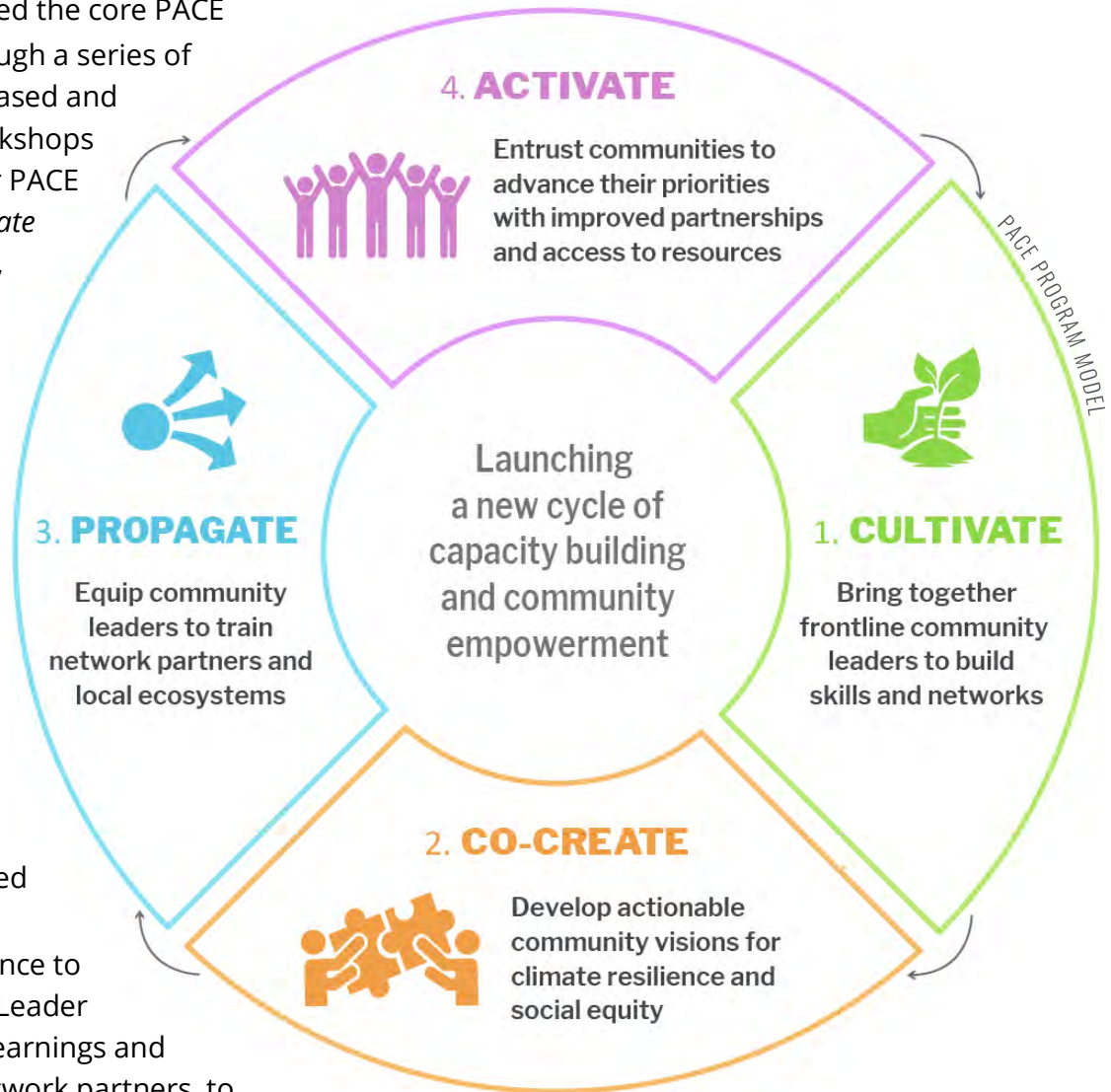
Phase 1 delivered the core PACE

Curriculum through a series of weekly cohort-based and small group workshops and activities for PACE Leaders to *cultivate* key connections, skills, and field knowledge and connections. PACE Leaders also worked to *co-create* their community's climate equity vision and actionable community needs assessments.

Phase 2 provided

individualized technical assistance to help each PACE Leader *propagate* new learnings and skills to their network partners, to set in motion an ongoing cycle of capacity building. Technical assistance also helped PACE Leaders apply new learnings to their work and *activate* new partnerships, projects, and pathways for bringing their community's climate equity vision to life.

PACE an iterative, multi-faceted approach to program design, delivery, and evaluation, with numerous avenues for participants to provide input and feedback on the program's direction and activities.



This enabled the PACE Team to remain responsive to the diverse and evolving priorities of PACE Leaders, working in partnership with each participant to shape their program experience in ways that meet their own specified needs. An iterative, flexible approach was critical to testing new models and strategies for cohort-based learning, capacity building, leadership development, and virtual programming, especially in the program's pilot year.

Addressing known accessibility issues and capacity constraints faced by many frontline community leaders was another essential element to the PACE design.

In recognition of language accessibility issues that create barriers for frontline communities to access, participate in, and benefit from State-funded programs, the PACE Team decided to offer a bilingual (English/Spanish) program with translation and interpretation services, based on cohort member needs and preferences. Additional resources were also secured through a U.S. EPA grant in order to provide each cohort member with an \$8,000 stipend to support their participation, and careful attention was paid to ensure the program's time commitment was manageable for participants.

PACE aimed to utilize a train-the-facilitator model, an approach that prepares participants to facilitate what they participated in – in this case, collective impact strategies and capacity building activities for their communities and partners. The program was designed as an experiential learning opportunity and, throughout both phases, facilitator agendas, worksheets, slide decks, and other resources were shared with PACE Leaders to use, adapt, and replicate similar workshops for their own networks. These materials have since been adapted and published to share learning materials and facilitator resources with frontline community leaders across California as a way to amplify the pilot's impact.

“The PACE experience is gentle and nurturing yet also complex and demanding. You'll be immersed in a community of experts and learners. PACE Leaders and PACE Advisors alike grow individually and teach each other from our diverse lived experiences. You'll learn you have much more to learn, but you'll exit the program with a well-organized resource library and a cohort of peers to continue consulting.

What's possible for humanity may well be determined by what we collectively do – or don't do – in the next decade, given the rapidly collapsing environment. The PACE program will help guide participants to realize transformative change in communities all over California.

PACE Leader

COHORT RECRUITMENT & SELECTION

The PACE Team developed a set of [Participant Selection Criteria](#) first to establish eligibility requirements and prioritization factors for the inaugural PACE Cohort, which then informed the application process and outreach strategy.

The PACE application was designed with the understanding that interested applicants and their organizations are likely experiencing capacity constraints.

The application included a combination of open-ended and multiple-choice questions and was available in both [English](#) and [Spanish](#). The application was hosted as a Google Form and a downloadable document template was provided to allow applicants to draft their responses prior to submission. An optional nomination form was also available for applicants to demonstrate support from other community leaders. The nomination form was meant to gain additional insight into the applicant’s leadership experience and their overall fit and potential to benefit from program participation.

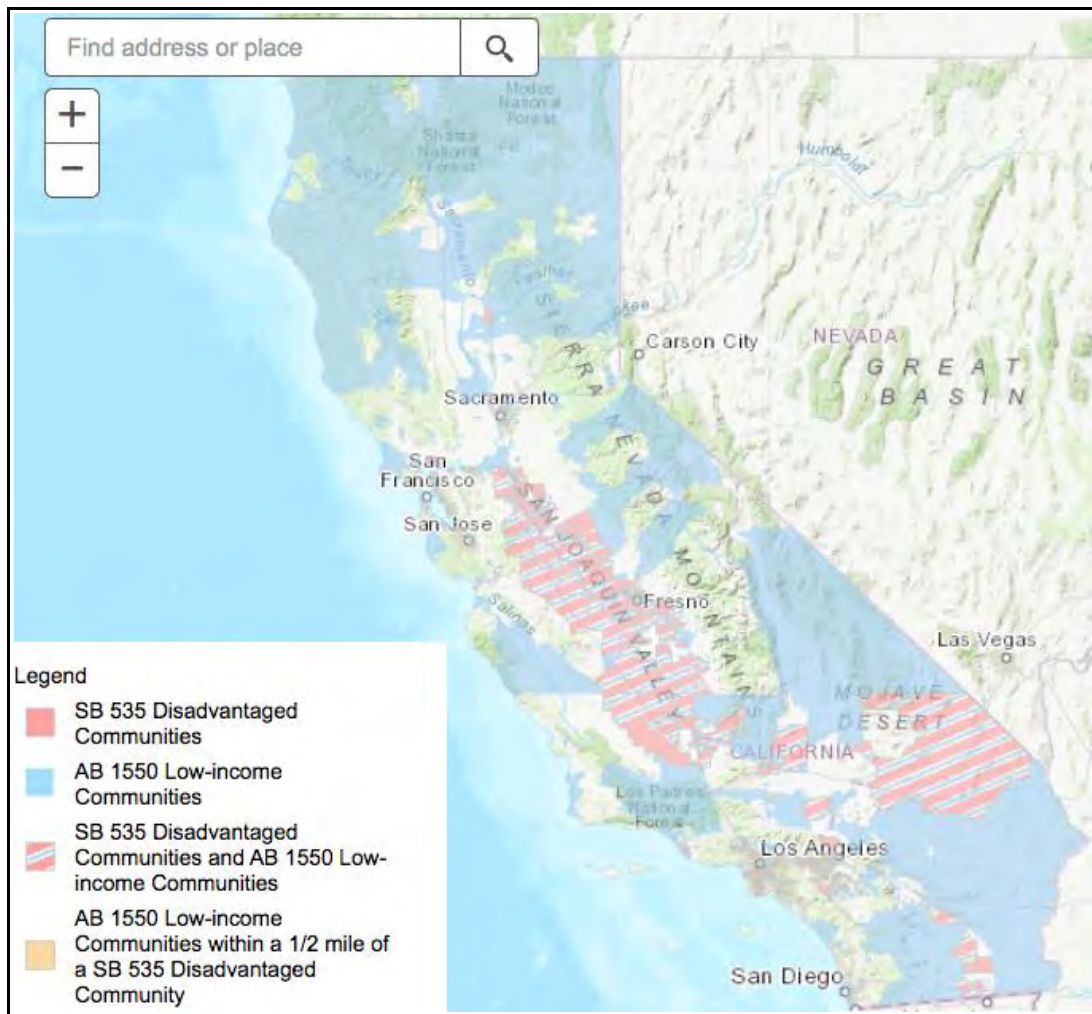



Figure 1. Geographic eligibility for PACE pilot applicants.

The PACE Team collaboratively devised and supported a multi-pronged outreach strategy to promote the program, which included the following key elements to reach frontline community leaders throughout the state and in priority regions.

- **The PACE website**, created in both English and Spanish soon after the team's ground setting stage, featured pertinent information about the PACE pilot in a streamlined way and by using accessible language. The website concisely compiled information on the PACE vision and objectives, the application process and timeline, the benefits and expectations of program participation, the PACE Team and our guiding values, and a brief contact form. Questions asked through the contact form were automatically sent to a team email listserv to enable speedy responses.
- **An informational webinar**, which included Spanish translation and interpretation, to introduce PACE to potential applicants. Webinar recordings were posted on the PACE website for interested applicants who were not able to join the webinar.
- **An FAQ webpage**, updated on a weekly basis, to publish responses to questions raised during the webinar and in subsequent communications to the team throughout the application period.
- **Targeted outreach to key regions** that may be difficult to reach through traditional methods, including those with: limited capacity, resources, or staff to engage in State programs; large amounts of low-income households, marginalized populations, non-English speaking community members, or rural or suburban communities, and/or; limited social infrastructure or active networks of community-based organizations. These key regions included the North Coast, Sierra Nevada, Greater Sacramento Area, San Joaquin Valley, and Inland Southern California.



Community members at the only edible sidewalk garden in the San Fernando Valley.
Felipe Escobar, Pacoima Beautiful

- **Non-traditional partnerships** to extend the team’s reach in priority regions, as well as to reach Tribal Nations (both federally recognized and unrecognized) and Native-led organizations throughout California.
- **Promotional kits** in English and Spanish with sample language and graphics for email blasts, newsletter blurbs, direct emails, and social media posts, shared with promotional partners for broad and targeted outreach.

Overall, more than 1,000 eligible organizations were contacted including Tribal Nations and Native-led organizations, organizations serving AB-617 communities, CalEPA Environmental Justice grant recipients, and members of trusted environmental and social justice networks.

Over **150** applications were submitted with only **22** seats available for the pilot cohort, demonstrating a high need for capacity-building programs like PACE.

The PACE Team developed a multi-step [application review and selection process](#) that included a common scoring rubric, a rubric test, application scoring and averaging, finalist selection, finalist interviews, and, finally, cohort selection. Multiple rounds of full team deliberations were organized throughout this process (in addition to regular biweekly team meetings). Deep deliberation took place when developing the rubric and selection process, as well as the finalist selection and cohort selection stages. In addition to considering application scores, selection criteria and prioritization factors, and overall fit, cohort diversity was another important factor. To the extent possible, the PACE Team sought to bring together a cohort that exhibited diversity in terms of participant demographics, demographics of communities served, region, and climate issue of focus.

“ The intercultural learning of interacting with people of diverse communities and recognizing everyone’s efforts to fight for their community was really special. There aren’t many other spaces like that.

PACE Leader”

The PACE Team selected 22 incredible community leaders working on a variety of connected issues across California to participate in the pilot year. The multiregional and multigenerational PACE Cohort represented diverse lived experiences and demonstrated tremendous dedication, drive, creativity, initiative, and resourcefulness in pursuit of a brighter future for their communities. Participants were also at varying stages of capacity building, which enabled valuable peer-to-peer learning throughout the program.

PHASE 1: CULTIVATE & CO-CREATE

PACE CURRICULUM

Phase 1 delivered the PACE Curriculum to help PACE Leaders build core competencies and skills to become effective agents of change and advance climate equity objectives in their communities. The PACE Curriculum was structured around the Vision-Assessment-Strategy-Timeline (VAST) model created by the Urban Permaculture Institute.

VAST has been used to build community capacity and eco-literacy to address the challenges of adaptation and resilience planning, especially in communities that have experienced generations of marginalization and exclusion.

1. **Vision:** Development of explicit, aligned, and collective goals.
2. **Assessment:** An assessment of assets and existing conditions in a community as well as thorough understanding of the jurisdiction and motivations of stakeholders.
3. **Strategy:** A process to consider multi-benefit solutions that align visions, assets, issues, and opportunity.
4. **Timeline:** A preliminary timeline for the implementation of the strategies organized by various characteristics, including time, resources, and responsible party.

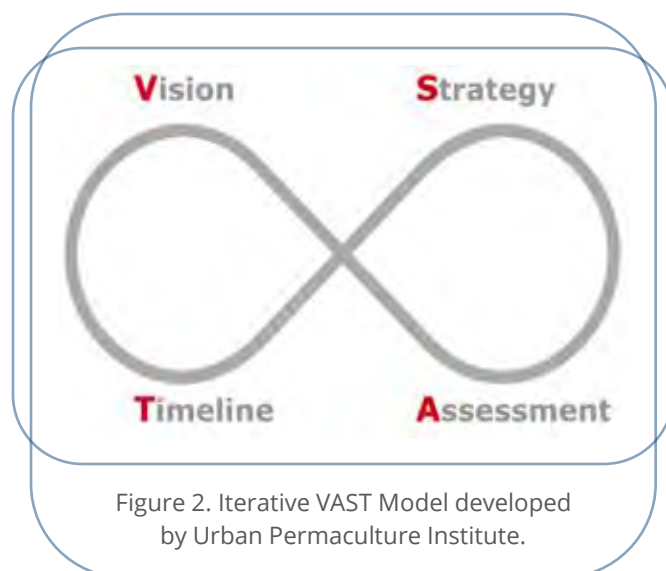


Figure 2. Iterative VAST Model developed by Urban Permaculture Institute.

Vision

- Increased understanding of the broader causes, impacts, and connections of climate change
 - Ability to articulate the connections between climate change and equity
 - Increased knowledge of community-driven planning and strategies to move towards community ownership
 - Ability to demonstrate how community priorities align with or are impacted by climate change
 - Ability to identify key factors contributing to effective partnerships
-

Assessment

- Greater understanding of local ecosystems and partnership opportunities
 - Increased knowledge of State climate policies
 - Increased understanding of how to navigate existing climate tools
 - Ability to utilize tools to extract neighborhood-level data
 - Ability to identify community assets to inform actionable strategies
-

Strategy

- A more concrete understanding of solutions that can be applied to their community work
 - Increased knowledge of state resources including funding, policies, and decision-making processes
 - Increased understanding of the financial landscape supporting climate solutions
-

Timeline

- Increased understanding of grant writing process and best practices
- Increased understanding of co-developing grant applications with partners
- Ability to identify and clearly articulate community needs and priorities

With more tangible learning objectives in hand, the PACE Curriculum was iteratively developed to identify core training topics to cover (e.g., asset mapping, power mapping, State climate policies and grant programs, partnership development, grant writing, facilitation, and project management) and determine how to best deliver each training. The PACE Curriculum was ultimately delivered through a combination of training sessions and the experiential learning process of developing community needs assessments.

- **Full Cohort Sessions:** Mandatory biweekly 2-hour sessions were organized for the full cohort to connect, learn, and grow together. These virtual sessions included presentations from the PACE Team and guest speakers, breakout group discussions, interactive activities, reflection time, and networking opportunities.
- **Learning Groups:** Mandatory biweekly 1-hour sessions were organized for smaller group discussions. The cohort was split into four Learning Groups to enable participants to build deeper connections, reflect upon and integrate learnings from the Full Cohort Sessions, and provide feedback to facilitating PACE Team members.
- **Supplemental Trainings:** Throughout Phase 1, additional trainings were offered to supplement the topics covered through Full Cohort and Learning Group Sessions. PACE Leaders had the option to attend these virtual trainings based on the training topic's relevance and their existing level of understanding.
- **Peer Exchanges:** PACE Leaders signed up to organize their own sessions to lead presentations, share skills, facilitate discussions, and network.
- **Community Needs Assessments:** Community Needs Assessments (CNAs) served as a core pathway for PACE Leaders to learn new skills and build capacity through experiential learning. The PACE Team developed a CNA Toolkit, organized and released by VAST module, to provide a set of guided prompts, resources, templates, and tips to assist PACE Leaders in developing their CNA.

Phase 1 also offered the following additional resources to support program participation.

- **PACE Bulletins:** Weekly PACE Bulletin emails were sent to share key programmatic updates with the cohort. These included information about upcoming workshops, materials from past workshops, individual assignments, helpful resources, and administrative reminders.
- **Office Hours:** Two one-hour office hours were held each week to provide PACE Leaders with opportunities to receive additional guidance, support, and mentorship.
- **Resource Library:** A Resource Library was developed to serve as a one-stop-shop for resources, case studies, and tools relevant to the PACE Program, including Curriculum materials and session presentations.

VISION MODULE SUMMARY

Vision is the initial step in the VAST framework and thus the first module in the PACE Curriculum. As with all of the steps of VAST, Vision is intended to be an iterative process with capacity for revisioning, which can serve as a source of ongoing motivation and a tool for evaluating alignment between intent and praxis.

The goal of Vision is to develop explicit, aligned, and collective goals that tap into cultural identity and values while building trust and meaningful relationships.

Goal Setting

Visioning creates space for individual, organizational, and community-wide goal-setting that can allow our busy and accomplished PACE Leaders to reflect on how their various efforts and aspirations tie together towards a cohesive vision of community well-being. By establishing a direction and setting concrete goals, we can then work backwards (in later modules of the curriculum) to determine actionable steps towards achieving those goals.

PACE Leaders created Vision Boards, visual representations of their aspirations for their communities. While the Community Needs Assessment is more text-based, vision boards



Figure 3. A virtual quilt of individual PACE Leader Vision Boards created through Prezi.

are largely image-based, making them a particularly fruitful tool for visual learners and thinkers. Additionally, visuals can be easier to share and parse, decreasing language and educational barriers to imagining a brighter future.

Once all PACE Leaders submitted their vision boards, they were arranged into a virtual quilt to weave a collective PACE vision for healthier, happier, and more equitable communities throughout California, shown in Figure 4. Recurring themes in the vision boards submitted include the practice of cultural traditions, food sovereignty, racial justice, community healing, and connection to the land.

Asset-Based Approach

Starting from an asset-based approach can be a source of continuing motivation and empowerment. Frontline communities are often framed by external entities based on their struggles, and are forced to emphasize their challenges when competing for grant funding.

Visioning is about imagining what can be when a community has its needs met and can reach its maximum potential. This promotes an abundance mindset rooted in self-determination, cultural context, and opportunity.

During the very first PACE Full Cohort Session, we began with Sankofa, the Adinkra symbol of the Akan People (Present-day Ghana and Ivory Coast) that means “go back and fetch it.” It embodies three concepts: honoring the past, finding one's purpose in the present, and discovering one's destiny.

PACE Leaders reflected on a family or community member in their lives who showed them what it means to be strong, to bounce back when life gets hard and knocks you down, through personal reflection, writing, and drawing. PACE Leaders then shared about their person in small breakout rooms and a Google Jamboard, focusing on this individual's values and community vision.

PACE helped me step into my true self – connect with my inner power and desires for my community. The people, tools, discussions and guidance emboldened me to take uncharted steps in bringing climate equity to my community.

PACE Leader

This exercise serves as a reminder of the immense interpersonal connections and intergenerational knowledge that PACE Leaders have and the resiliency and capacity present in their lives and communities.

Trust Building

Trust is a vital component of any collaborative effort. Trust building is particularly important when working with frontline community leaders, due to the trust that has often been broken in relationships between historically marginalized communities and governments, institutions, and other decision-makers.

When starting a new collaborative planning or design process, opportunities for storytelling and knowledge exchange can play a vital role in establishing familiarity, connection, and with time and intentionality, also trust.

Activities, such as Sankofa and the vision boards described above, as well as other structured and unstructured networking activities can help to create safe spaces for deeper engagement around values and needs. PACE Leaders also participated in a “Web of Connections” activity during the first Learning Group sessions. In this activity, participants are invited to take turns sharing one thing they hope to gain from the PACE program, an ongoing need that they have, and a resource that they can share with others.

For example, one PACE Team member stated that their hope is to connect with environmental justice practitioners throughout the state, their need is childcare so they could do their work, and their resource is connections to food sovereignty practitioners.



Printing native habitat art cards at an Earth Day event.
Nancy Faulstich, Regeneración

This exercise taps into an individual's vision for the PACE program, creates space for vulnerability and context-sharing, and prompts us to consider what we can do for others. In addition to the activity being bonding in itself, it can lead to further connection by surfacing opportunities for future mutual aid by matching needs and resources.

Community Needs Assessment: Vision Module

The Vision Module of the Community Needs Assessment (CNA) Toolkit guided PACE Leaders in defining the scope of their CNA and beginning to create a clear vision for climate equity in their communities. The Vision Module includes the following four components.

CNA TOOLKIT COMPONENT	COMPONENT OBJECTIVE
<p>1. Community Profile</p>	<p>Characterizing your community's demographics, and crafting a compelling story of your community's experience and aspirations.</p>
<p>2. Racial Equity Evaluation</p>	<p>Identifying racial equity issues in your community and how they could be exacerbated by climate change, and exploring your organization's commitment to racial equity.</p>
<p>3. Relationship Mapping</p>	<p>Identifying key partners and stakeholders representing and/or serving the community, including both existing partners and new partnerships that could be cultivated.</p>
<p>4. Community Priorities</p>	<p>Understanding existing community priorities for social equity and climate resilience based on past and ongoing community engagement efforts.</p>

Conclusion

It's often said that relationships move at the speed of trust. Visioning work allows us to determine if there is a natural alignment, if compromise is needed, or if the collaboration may not be a good match altogether. It creates excitement, hope, and a light to continually strive towards.

Dedicating the time upfront to collective Visioning, as opposed to skipping or rushing this step, can create more efficient and aligned project teams capable of producing higher quality work and ultimately achieving greater transformation.

ASSESSMENT MODULE SUMMARY

The goal of the Assessment Module is to deepen the understanding of community needs by gathering an inventory of existing conditions through the mapping of present-day political, cultural, and physical assets and challenges. Typically, the longest step in the VAST design process, Assessment requires identifying community assets and barriers, key climate change risks and impacts, decision-makers in the planning processes, and key levers for change. A thorough understanding of the jurisdictions and motivations of each stakeholder is a time-consuming, yet critical, component of informed planning.

Culturally-Fitting Principles

Culture provides the overall framework wherein humans learn to organize their thoughts, emotions, and behaviors in relation to their environment. Within California exists an infinite number of geographically- and identity-based subcultures with varying norms, standards of acceptable behavior, power structures, and patterns of decision making.

The realities of nuanced cultural differences between communities dictates that we cannot successfully have a “one size fits all” approach to planning.

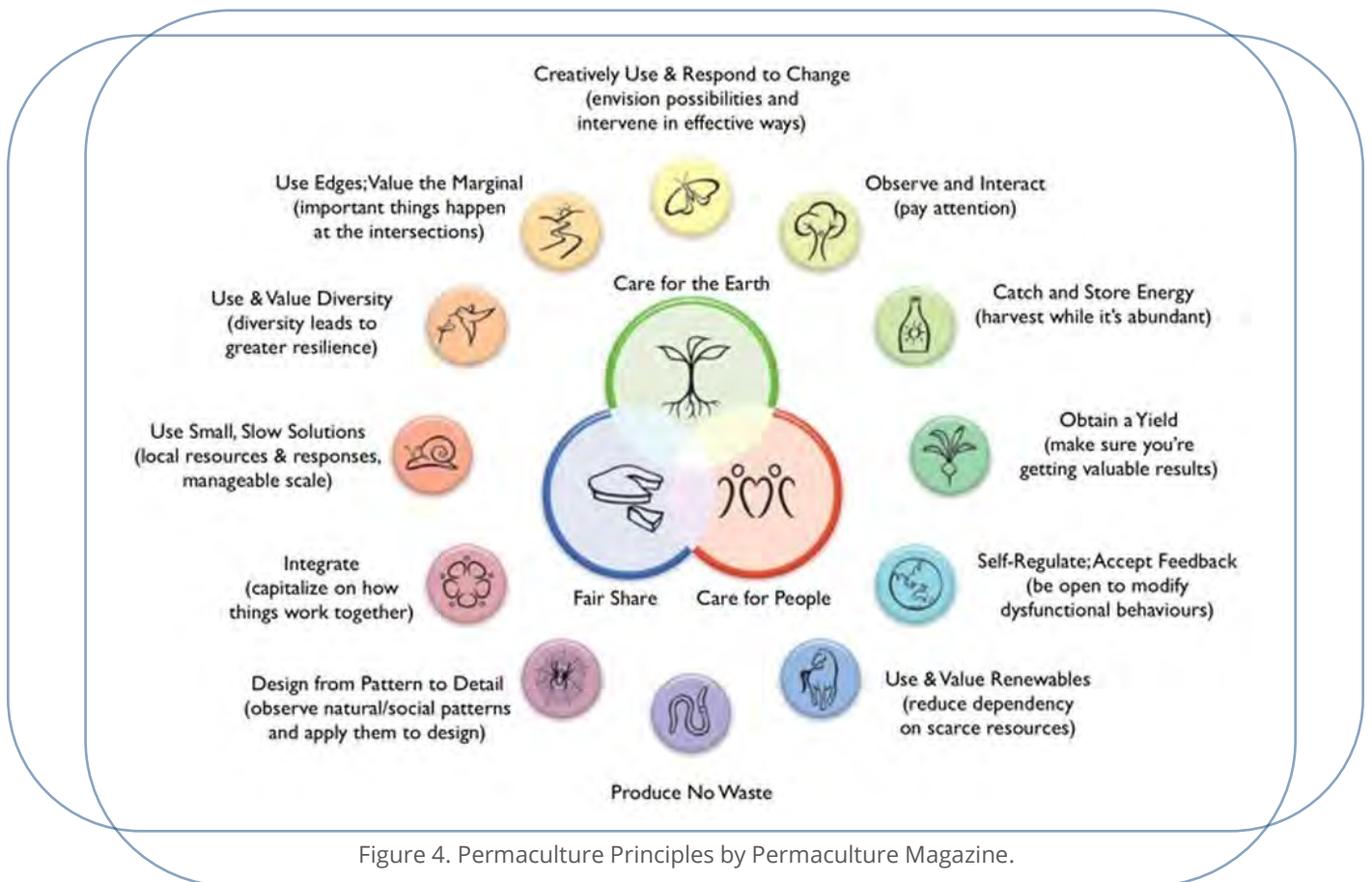


Figure 4. Permaculture Principles by Permaculture Magazine.

PACE Leaders reflected on what works well in their community to support life and thriving, and distilled from that some culturally-fitting principles that can serve as useful guides for their regenerative design work. By bringing these common-sense principles to the forefront, communities can use them as a filter to evaluate potential solutions for consistency with their values and to determine if that community’s definition of success will be met. One example principle that rang true for many of the PACE Leaders was: it is from a thorough understanding of the problem that the solution will reveal itself. Permaculture principles were referenced as one set of foundational truisms that its followers believe describe the systems that will repair the earth and make people a force for good.

Group Governance

It is never too early for power-building movements to think about decision-making structures and to articulate the extent of the collaboration that is required for reaching different types of decisions. This spectrum of collaboration ranges from independent decisions, to majority rule, to implicit consent and, finally, explicit consensus. Groups may choose to utilize their limited resources more efficiently by designing group structures that do not require everyone’s participation in all conversations and decisions.



Figure 5. The “Fist to Five” voting method by Creative Collaboration: Tools for Teams.

Intentional communities have a shared vision, clear group agreements, and invest in skill building on communication and decision making.

PACE Leaders reflected on governance processes that work well in their communities, as well as aspects in various decision-making processes that should be reconsidered. They made note of ways that power sometimes exists outside of formally articulated group structures, and strategized ways for bringing greater transparency and accountability to group governance systems. They also were introduced to the Fist to Five voting method as a tool to help groups identify the extent of support behind a proposal, as well as the objections and potential risks that may deem further attention before proceeding.

Understanding Assets & Barriers with Data & Stories

Assets are the broad range of strengths and resources available to a community that can include physical infrastructure, natural ecosystems, cultural knowledge, human capacity, social networks, financial capital, and government services. On the contrary, barriers are obstacles to desired outcomes that often have a structural component such as upstream social determinants of health and institutional disenfranchisement.

Understanding a community’s assets and barriers is the necessary foundation to designing solutions that will work for that community.

Knowledge about a place and its people is often scattered throughout and within members of any given community. Unfortunately, the dispersed and personal nature of this information can create challenges in harnessing it for official proposals, such as grant applications. Assessment creates space to combine quantitative data with qualitative narrative to create a written record of known community realities. It compiles on-the-ground Healthy Places experience into something that those from outside the community can digest. With community members leading Assessment, it allows communities to frame and name the issue area in a way that reflects their lived experiences and represents their community in the way that they want to be represented.

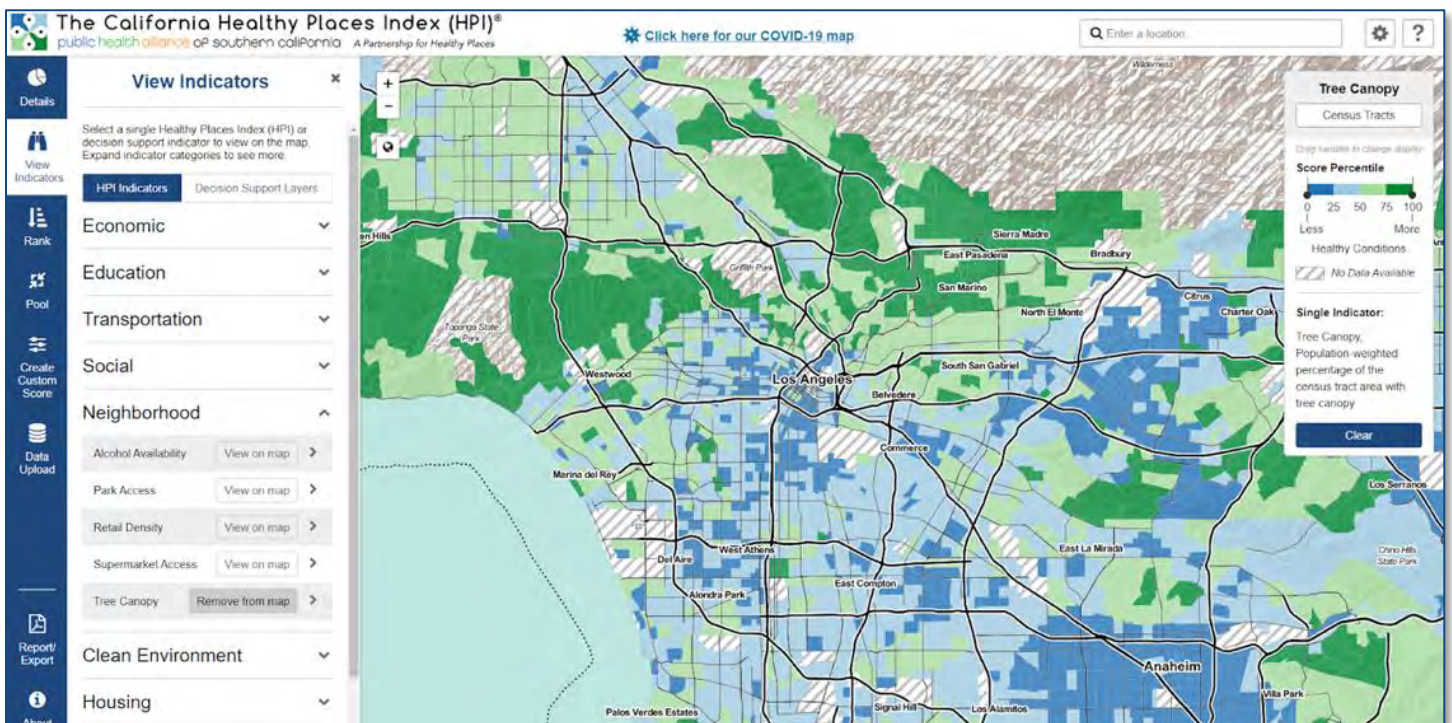


Figure 6. A screenshot of tree canopy data available on the California Healthy Places Index Map.

Through a tool demo and scavenger hunt, PACE Leaders familiarized themselves with different data tools, including Cal-Adapt, Healthy Places Index, and CalEnviroScreen. They practiced accessing data on how climate change is impacting their community, the adaptive capacity and built environment characteristics of their community, and the pollution burden that their community faces. PACE Leaders reflected on how data indicators can be used in powerful ways to tell their community story, but they also turned a critical eye to the data sources, noticing ways that data does not always tell the whole story. They reflected on what was missing from the data, thinking of new ways for data collection that

could more accurately reflect their lived experiences. They recognized that it is important to not only use data to understand the problems as they manifest today, but to also use data to understand and describe how we got to where we are today. Asking different questions leads to different answers, and it also matters who is asking the questions.

Community Needs Assessment: Assessment Module

The Assessment Module of the CNA is intended to deepen a community’s understanding of its needs at this snapshot in time. This portion is commonly the most time-consuming aspects of this process, as it requires locating, compiling, and evaluating large amounts of information and data, and creating a narrative that defines community needs while being careful to respect community agency and self-determination. The Assessment Module includes the following three components.

CNA TOOLKIT COMPONENT	COMPONENT OBJECTIVE
<p>5. Asset Mapping</p>	<p>Understanding your community’s social and physical assets and how they can be best leveraged to achieve social equity and climate resilience goals.</p>
<p>6. Climate Equity Analysis</p>	<p>Assessing key climate change risks facing your community and evaluating disproportionate impacts for marginalized populations burdened by historic and ongoing inequities, disparities, and barriers.</p>
<p>7. Power Mapping</p>	<p>Understanding how decisions impacting your community are made, including assessing who holds comfort and control in planning processes and identifying key levers for change.</p>

Conclusion

Communities understand their own needs better than anyone else can.

Quantitative data or external research alone cannot fully capture the nuanced context, assets, barriers, needs, and aspirations of a community. Assessment involves compiling quantitative data and formalized research with qualitative narrative of lived experience and on-the-ground work to create a culturally contextualized record of existing conditions. This understanding and documentation are vital for creating and tailoring strategies (the next module of VAST). Assessment establishes necessary background information instead of beginning from scratch and ignoring the important context within which this work occurs, running the risk of creating ineffective or even harmful approaches.

STRATEGY & TIMELINE MODULES SUMMARY

The final steps in the VAST framework involve developing a menu of possible solutions that are tailored to community needs and utilize a multi-benefit approach, and then to identify near-term priorities and develop a plan for implementing those solutions. Since the VAST framework is meant to be an iterative process, a solutions game plan that guides actions in the here and now must not necessarily be the blueprint for all time. As community needs and priorities evolve, so too should community-driven solutions.

The PACE Curriculum aims to encourage meaningful near-term progress while keeping the bigger picture in sight, but to not let uncertainties about the future be too insurmountable a barrier to the present-day movement.

Stacking Functions for Robust Solutions

Stacking functions is a way to design solutions that achieve multiple goals at once. As a way to consider a range of benefits that could potentially all be rolled into a robust solution proposal, the curriculum encouraged PACE Leaders to think through different system levers for change. These include practical solutions, such as modifications to metrics and measurable things, material changes such as the flow of resources, and changes to feedback loops and standards of progress. Structural solutions are harder to implement but can ultimately result in more substantive shifts; these include changes to information rules and power, such as creating a new feedback loop or democratizing innovation.

Even harder still to implement are cultural solutions that change goals, beliefs, and values, as these involve changes to perception of purpose and the public mindset.

Questions for Cultural Organizing

Who are you/we as a community?

How have you/we come to believe what you believe? What experiences have led you/us here?

Who are the people you/we look up to and why?

What makes you/our soul come alive?

What is the essence of your/our community, even as people come and go?

What are the things that make us who we are, the things we must make sure our children learn?

What's important that we don't lose as we change and evolve? What makes _____ so important?

Who are the storytellers, the knowledge holders, the fire keepers? What support do they need?

What's a song that everyone here knows, a dance that everyone knows how to jump in and do?

Who taught you how to fight, pray, play, tend, mend, build?

PACE Leaders were asked to reflect on examples of effective cultural organizing that operate at the level of identity and paradigm, rather than at the issue level. They observed that communities in the struggle have often used art to tell their story, and that there’s always been an intertwining between art and activism. By tapping into love and pride and honoring cultural practices, such organizing strategies are able to impact mindsets, beliefs, and values in the interest of social justice.

Prioritizing Actionable & Strategic Efforts

Besides determining what are the robust solutions – the how, the who, and the surrounding context also need consideration. In order to prioritize some set of solutions and be able to develop an actionable and strategic game plan, desirability, feasibility, and viability (availability of funding) should be considered in that order. That way, ideas and dreams do not get shut down before they are even properly entertained. With an approachable set of solutions prioritized, then to make them actionable, those solutions should get broken down into manageable, concrete steps to achieve key phases. These phases might include background research, design and

Solutions prioritization helped guide and build off the visioning activities my organization has done over the last 18 months to see a path forward to areas we want to step into or out of as we work with community in producing results.

PACE Leader

development, construction, implementation, and sustaining operations. To be strategic, one should leverage all possible tools and avenues for achieving the intended outcomes, and remove potential barriers and obstacles that stand in the way. Collaboration, and determining tasks that do not all fall on one individual and instead operate in tandem with one another, is one such powerful avenue for realizing solutions.

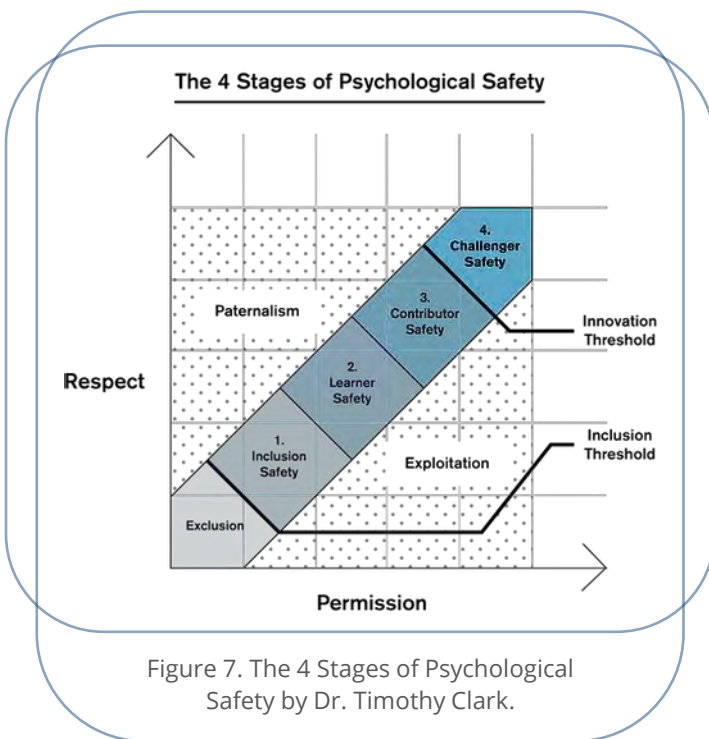


Figure 7. The 4 Stages of Psychological Safety by Dr. Timothy Clark.

The graph shown in Figure 8 on the stages of psychological safety was shown to highlight that only when sufficient trust is built, can innovation occur. PACE Leaders examined what makes for successful collaboration. Some of the key

ingredients that they identified were diverse inclusion of people with different types of expertise and perspectives from the get-go, shared visions, and transparent communications to keep people on the same page and to build trust and respect.

They also examined power structures that influence how solutions are chosen; who decides what is possible and impossible; how budget allocations are made; who decides what is urgent and should be prioritized; who holds space, who does unpaid emotional labor, and who is recognized; and whose opinion matters more than others.

Existing power structures typically stunt the potential to build trust and successful collaborations for change but, by being aware of these dynamics, PACE Leaders can be effective advocates for systematic rebalancing of power.

Resources Make It Happen

Bringing solutions to life requires resources. The curriculum distinguished between funding that does not need to be repaid, such as grants, sponsorships, donations, and earned fees, as opposed to financing that does need to be repaid. The pros and cons of each were explored, as well as variations, such as pro-bono support and in-kind donations, which can also be valuable resources.

The curriculum took a look at what funding opportunities look like in California, as well as the process that is behind developing the California state budget and ways that advocates can work to try to get the budget to reflect their priorities. We did some workshopping on

Power above and below? Blue skies and word clouds? The NeighborWoods Community Grant facilitates the creation of the Green Team, seen here completing Tree Planting Leader Training on the property of fellow grantee, Asian Resources, Inc. who received grant funds to irrigate their community center to accommodate trees provided by the local utility, SMUD.

Victoria Vasquez, Sacramento Tree Foundation



effective grant-writing tips, such as code switching to align with funders’ values and priorities, as well as flexible budgeting techniques and the importance of grant reporting as a way to maintain long-term funding that adjusts to meet evolving needs.

We also hosted a Resources Fair with representatives from State funding agencies as a way to build relationships and get some two-way communication going about PACE Leaders’ needs, the State’s existing role as a funder, and how any gaps could potentially be bridged.

Participatory budgeting processes were of particular interest to PACE Leaders as a way to fund community-centered proposals. The ladder of budget decision making, shown in Figure 9, was referenced to describe

processes that, the higher up the ladder, are more interactive, take community insights more into account, result in more community recommendations being pursued, and offer more return on time invested for community members. In these more democratic processes, broader discussions occur, community members participate directly in decision-making, and thus the outcomes reflect community input.

Participatory budgeting is achieved by first designing the process, then brainstorming ideas, developing proposals with cost estimates and getting buy-in from the implementing agencies, collecting votes, and ultimately funding the winning project ideas.

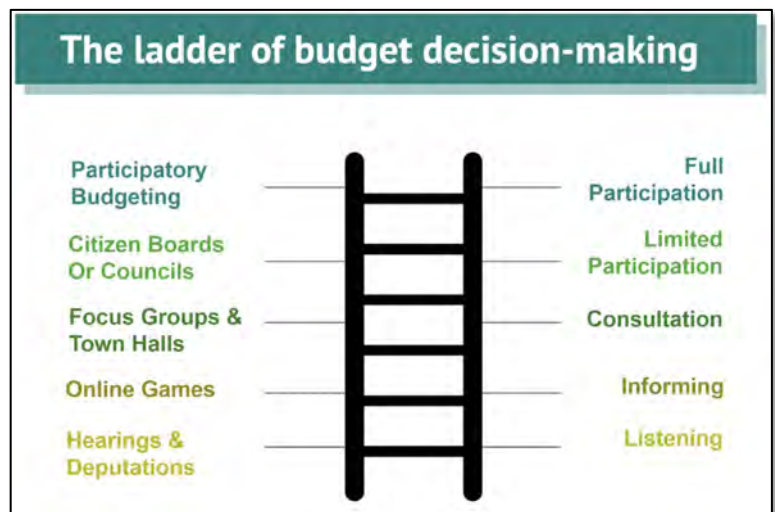


Figure 8. The Ladder of Budget Decision-Making by Participatory Budgeting Project.

Community Needs Assessment: Strategy & Timeline Modules

Strategy and Timeline, the final module of the CNA Toolkit provides a framework for identifying actionable, multi-benefit solutions and a game plan to catalyze collective action, build network capacity, and mobilize partners and community towards a shared vision for community resilience and social equity.

This module encourages packaging strategies together to form more holistic solutions, including collaboration with partners and allies for collective impact. It also focuses on defining a socialization strategy to engage partners and decision-makers and developing a

high-level 6-month work plan with clear milestones and tangible near-term actions, all while keeping an eye on the big picture system changes that one is working towards. The Strategy & Timeline modules include the following three components.

CNA TOOLKIT COMPONENT	COMPONENT OBJECTIVE
8. Solutions Menu	Creating a menu of potential solutions that could be implemented to build community and ecosystem capacity, address community needs, and advance your community's vision.
9. Solution Prioritization	Identifying your top priority solution and conducting an analysis of strengths, opportunities, and potential pitfalls.
10. Solution Game Plan	Creating a clear, actionable game plan for the priority solution to build capacity and catalyze collective action to implement solutions and work towards your community's vision for social equity and climate resilience.

Conclusion

With a collaboratively-developed game plan in hand, community leaders are equipped to present their vision, theory of change, proposed solutions, and implementation steps to partners that could help enable it.

Articulating this game plan in a way that resonates with potential partners and solicits their allyship might entail making data-driven arguments, utilizing art-based cultural organizing techniques, and proposing collaborative power-sharing decision-making structures. It might not be reasonable to expect one person or organization to be able to pull all of that off themselves.

A collaborative approach is likely the most effective way, and in many cases, the only way, to implement lasting, holistic community solutions.

“

Before PACE, we had \$0 because we did not have a fiscal sponsor or the confidence, capacity, or skills to apply for state grants. We have now received our first state grant and a few local grants and contracts as a result of this program.

”

PACE Leader



PHASE 2: PROPAGATE & ACTIVATE

PHASE 2 VISION

The second phase of the PACE program, which spanned six months, took on a more individualized technical assistance approach compared to the primarily cohort-based learning style of Phase 1.

PACE Team Vision for Phase 2

The individualized technical assistance provided through PACE will help each PACE Leader build capacity to become effective drivers of change.

The capacity built will not start and end with the cohort – it will extend to their organizations, partners, and communities.

PACE Leaders will confidently communicate their climate equity visions with partners and use their Community Needs Assessments as tools for elevating community needs, expanding and deepening partnerships, building network capacity, and catalyzing collective impact.

By the end of Phase 2, each PACE Leader will be mobilizing stakeholders around a shared vision. They will be working in collaboration with their partners to advance climate equity priorities by forming coalitions, engaging decision-makers and funders, creating enabling environments, and conceptualizing a pipeline of collective impact projects.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE STRATEGY

During the 2-month period between the end of Phase 1 and the beginning of Phase 2, the PACE Team focused on finalizing the technical assistance strategy to ensure our approach would support meaningful capacity building for participants. The PACE Team drew upon our collective experiences in both providing and receiving various forms of technical assistance, past cohort survey results, and reflections shared by PACE Leaders during Phase 1 sessions to begin identifying structural options for Phase 2. A mandatory, cohort-wide survey was then conducted to present these options and gather additional input. Key questions from this survey are included in the table below, each of which was followed by a comment box for participants to expand on their responses or provide other suggestions.

SURVEY QUESTION	RESPONSE STRUCTURE
<p>Please indicate your level of interest in the following topics that you would like to receive training and/or targeted mentorship on.</p>	<p>A list of options, such as <i>data mapping/visualization, project management, navigating local politics, and specific sectors/impacts</i>, for participants to rate on a scale from <i>very interested</i> to <i>very uninterested</i>.</p>
<p>Please indicate your level of interest in the following activities and types of technical assistance that may be provided in Phase 2.</p>	<p>A list of options, such as <i>mentorship calls, customizable templates, introductions, and support for identifying relevant funding opportunities</i>, for participants to rate on a scale from <i>very interested</i> to <i>very uninterested</i>.</p>
<p>How frequently would you like to connect with the PACE cohort?</p>	<p>Options included <i>biweekly, monthly, and bimonthly</i>.</p>
<p>Can you provide a rough estimate of your monthly capacity (hours) to participate in Phase 2?</p>	<p>Open-ended response followed by multiple-choice scheduling questions.</p>

The survey was purposefully designed to obtain higher-level feedback to inform the next stage in our design process: interviews. One-on-one interviews were conducted with each PACE Leader to further explore their priorities for capacity building and technical assistance, as well as to discuss ideas and opportunities to enhance their overall PACE experience. Interviews focused on deepening our understanding of each PACE Leader’s specific needs and preferred formats for receiving technical assistance, any real-world challenges they were seeking to overcome, and other ways in which the team could structure the program to provide as much value as possible.

Phase 2 was ultimately structured to utilize regular one-on-one mentorship calls as the primary method of providing capacity-building support and technical assistance, which were conducted with a PACE Team member, as well as external advisors to address gaps and provide deeper support. Similar to the first phase, Phase 2 also included a set of cohort sessions, peer exchanges, and supplemental trainings and resources.

Priority Topics for Technical Assistance

The surveys and interviews conducted with PACE Leaders revealed both cohort-wide and individual technical assistance priorities along six common themes.

Relationship Building

Networking with State agencies, local government agencies, nonprofits working in their region, and academia and researchers, and support for partnership development, coalition building, and collaborative formation.

Funding & Financing

Training, guidance, and resources for locating and navigating State and federal grant opportunities, effective grant writing and budgeting techniques, braided financing methods, and participatory budgeting strategies.

Operations & Management

Operational support and guidance for nonprofit sustainability, project management, strategic planning, organizational budgeting, conflict management, communications strategies, and recruitment and hiring.

Community Involvement

Community engagement and capacity-building techniques for youth engagement, leadership development, Participatory Action Research, organizing trainings and workshops, and deeper, more inclusive community involvement.

Policy Engagement

Mentorship, guidance, and resources for tracking new State legislation, navigating State climate, organizing collaborative advocacy efforts, and learning about and engaging in State and local policy development to effectively advocate for community needs and priorities.

Content Knowledge

Technical trainings and mentorship on specific sectors, climate impacts, and solutions, such as air quality, affordable housing, clean energy, urban greening and forestry, community resilience hubs, permaculture design, extreme heat, and wildfire resilience.

Liaisons One-on-One Mentoring

Based on their individual priorities and needs, each PACE Leader was matched with a PACE Team member with the most relevant experience and expertise provide tailored mentorship, referred to as their Liaison. Together, the PACE Leader and their Liaison co-developed a technical assistance work plan, which was specifically tailored to address the needs and aspirations of that individual Leader. Focus areas for capacity building included:

1. **CNA Socialization:** Strategic guidance to support the completion and advancement of the Community Needs Assessments that PACE Leaders started in Phase 1, including socializing their community visions and priority solutions with community members, partners, and decision-makers.
2. **Connections:** Introductions to State agencies, local governments, nonprofits, networks, and other organizations requested by PACE Leaders or suggested by Liaisons, including advice on building, sustaining, and deepening relationships, developing new partnerships
3. **Capacity Building:** While all of these areas help to build capacity, this focused on targeted organizational capacity-building initiatives, such as navigating State grant programs, sustainable funding and operations, partner network structures to establish a strong foundation for collective impact, and other topics requested by PACE Leaders to remain responsive to new and evolving priorities.
4. **Content:** Technical trainings and mentorship to deepen their understanding of specific climate change risks, impacts, and opportunities, and other topics including concepts and frameworks introduced in the PACE Curriculum during Phase 1.
5. **Skills:** Hands-on mentorship and resources to support skill development and greater proficiency in grant writing, budgeting, project management, data mapping and visualizations, facilitation, advocacy,

On a bi-weekly basis, regularly scheduled Liaison mentoring calls provided an opportunity for PACE Leaders to practice their skills in a low-pressure environment and get feedback from the PACE Team to help them hone their approach. Liaisons functioned as coaches, providing insights and asking probing questions to help PACE Leaders chart their own paths forward. The PACE Team tracked the technical assistance needs of each Leader throughout this phase; doing so allowed the Team to recognize shared needs and organize small group troubleshooting sessions to create opportunity for peer-to-peer learning whenever possible.

“PACE is an organized set of climate change equity power tools delivered by a diverse and inspired team of instructors.
Reverent power building.”

PACE Leader



PACE Team member, Emi Wang, helping to clean up the International Garden of Many Colors in Sacramento as part of a community and team service day organized by a PACE Leader. *Fatima Malik, Del Paso Heights Growers' Alliance*

Technical Assistance Providers

To supplement the ongoing mentorship provided by Liaisons, the PACE Team mapped the experiences and areas of expertise of individual team members based on technical assistance requests and topics of interest shared by PACE Leaders. Liaisons referred to this matrix to route requests to appropriate team members throughout Phase 2 and PACE Leaders were invited to directly contact other team members, as needed.

To address gaps within the team, as well as to provide additional tailored support to PACE Leaders, the following external advisors were recruited to deliver presentations and provide individualized mentorship.

- **Center for Excellence in Nonprofits** on nonprofit formation, governance, management, funding models, and other aspects of nonprofit operations.
- **Center for Community Investment** on collective impact and community investment models, frameworks, and strategies.
- **California Community Economic Development Association** on community development corporations and local economic development strategies.
- **Participatory Budgeting Project** on models, approaches, examples, and overall guidance on participatory budgeting – both internally for organizational budgets and with community stakeholders.

Cohort Sessions

Whereas in Phase 1, full cohort sessions took place on a bi-weekly basis (with small learning group sessions in the off weeks), in Phase 2, the PACE Team reduced the frequency of these full cohort sessions to once per month. The intention was to create more opportunity for Leaders to work on advancing their CNAs within their local partner network and to focus their limited bandwidth on the more individualized technical assistance offerings.

The six cohort sessions that were offered in Phase 2 focused on themes that had broad appeal among the majority of Leaders, including project management best practices, organizational power structures and maintaining sustainability through staffing transitions, and democratizing government and other funders' budget allocations through participatory methods.

The PACE Team aimed to remain responsive to the cohort's expressed interests and priorities, some of which required a balanced approach. For example, we responded to requests to include partners from their local networks in these full cohort training sessions, making half of the cohort sessions open to Leaders' partners. The remaining half were designed to deepen intra-cohort connections and foster a sense of mutual support and collective achievements among the Leaders to celebrate progress and successes throughout their PACE experience.

As a highly valued part of the program to-date, the PACE Team continued to emphasize peer-to-peer connections among the PACE Leaders during the monthly full cohort sessions and by continuing peer exchanges.

Peer Exchanges

PACE Leaders had opportunities throughout Phase 2 to organize peer exchange session, a highly valued aspect of Phase 1. The team created calendar slots with to-be-determined topics, and encouraged Leaders to sign up to organize sessions, both individually and by collaborating with their cohort peers and partners. These leadership opportunities provided a space for PACE Leaders to exchange ideas and learnings, identify opportunities for collaboration, and continue building lasting relationships with their peer Leaders.

A variety of peer exchanges were organized where PACE Leaders led skill-share sessions, hosted group troubleshooting sessions, organized networking activities, and facilitated group discussions on shared topics of interest. Some of the topics explored in Phase 2 peer exchanges included redistricting and civic engagement, working with academia, cultural burning for ecosystem benefits, and how to host a healing circle.

Supplemental Trainings and Resources

Similar to Phase 1, additional optional trainings were offered to supplement mandatory cohort sessions and remain responsive to PACE Leaders' evolving needs and requests. These included presentations and trainings focused on fiscal sponsorship and nonprofit formation, State legislative and budget processes, project management, and budgeting, as well as the development of new templates for budgeting, work planning, task tracking, establishing labor allocations, and more.

Memberships and Tool Subscriptions

To support PACE Leaders in continuing to build capacity beyond the PACE pilot year, the project's remaining budget was used to purchase memberships and tool subscriptions for PACE Leaders. Eligible memberships and tools were shared with the cohort and each PACE Leader had the opportunity to select their preferred options. These included multi-year memberships to BoardSource, California Association of Nonprofits, and Center for Excellence in Nonprofits, for PACE Leaders to access additional resources, templates, trainings, and technical support, as well as one- or multi-year subscriptions to tools to support their efforts, including ArcGIS, GrantHub, Tableau, Blue Sky Timer, and Konveio.

Both in my professional and personal life, the PACE program has taught me so many valuable skills, provided resources, templates, knowledge, tools, networks, and connections that will help me for a lifetime. The model itself is amazing and I will continue to apply and replicate it in my work and community.

PACE Leader



A field trip to the Cesar E. Chavez National Monument for youth.
Anita Lopez, Cesar Chavez Service Clubs/SoyLopez Consulting

SUMMARY OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDED

Technical assistance offered throughout Phase 2 focused on five key areas of support for Community Needs Assessments, connections for building relationships and partnerships, capacity-building initiatives for network partners, content-focused training, and skills-focused mentorship. Various forms of technical assistance were delivered through cohort-wide or small group trainings, one-on-one or small group mentorship calls, and ongoing strategic guidance to support PACE Leaders in achieving their desired outcomes and building a strong foundation for collective impact.

1. CNA Socialization

PACE Leaders received technical assistance to support the development, finalization, and socialization of their Community Needs Assessments (CNAs) including ongoing strategic guidance for strategically leveraging their CNAs to support collective action and advance their local visions for climate equity.

The PACE Team provided hands-on mentorship to assist PACE Leaders in developing components of their CNA, particularly for the final Strategy & Timeline module focused on creating a menu of potential solutions, identifying a priority solution, and creating an actionable game plan to catalyze collective action. In several instances, direct staff support was also provided to assist capacity-constrained PACE Leaders with research, data collection, literature reviews, copyediting, document formatting and design, and overall CNA organization and promotion.

PACE was a full immersion into Climate Equity in California, centering the most impacted communities to be the leaders in creating the solutions needed on our communities.

PACE Leader

The PACE Team also reviewed and provided feedback on the content and structure of CNAs including providing guidance on how to best organize and synthesize CNA findings into a compelling presentation for their target audience, which included community members, funders, network partners, and public agencies. Many PACE Leaders leveraged their one-on-one mentoring sessions with their Liaisons to practice presenting to receive constructive feedback in a safe space and participated in co-working sessions with their peers to exchange ideas and best practices. Several PACE Leaders took a creative approach to finalizing their CNA materials including creating infographics and concept maps, creating data visualizations and stories through StoryMaps, and developing desk guides to support grant writing efforts.

What aspects of Phase 2 have you found to be most beneficial and valuable?



Biweekly check-ins, connections to PACE Team and Leaders working or sharing their experience on issues that we take on, [and] continued PACE peer exchanges that show the passion behind PACE Leader's work.

Being able to share the struggles of our communities with others who are also having similar issues (knowing that you are not alone).

Meetings with agencies, peer exchanges and the sharing of grant opportunities on the listserv.

Networking with colleagues and others in the field... [and] research support for my CNA.

[One-on-one] support and thought partnership with my PACE Liaisons... [the] required full cohort sessions have been wide-ranging and valuable.

I've liked the check-ins in terms of having one-on-one support as I talk through my professional development goals, which helps keep me accountable to making progress on them. I also like the safe space created where I can talk about my personal work-related struggles and opportunities for growth.

Getting bridged to other organizations and agencies with expertise in our requested TA support.



2. Connections

Recognizing the importance of developing partnerships to address deeply entrenched equity challenges and to advance holistic solutions for equitable climate resilience, the PACE Team facilitated connections for PACE Leaders to build new relationships.

The PACE Team provided introductions and facilitated introductory calls between PACE Leaders and key state agencies administering grants, such as Transformative Climate Communities (TCC) program staff; community foundations and national philanthropic institutions; local government staff and elected officials; and other key agencies and organizations in their regions, such as air districts, Community Choice Aggregation programs, and regional staff of state agencies. While connections to funders and public agencies account for the majority of requests from the PACE Cohort, several PACE Leaders were connected to researchers and workforce development programs, such as local colleges and universities, California Volunteers, and various fellowship programs.

3. Capacity-Building Initiatives

Technical assistance was provided to help PACE Leaders build the necessary capacity and resources to advance their priority climate equity solutions through collective action.

The most common technical assistance requests focused on identifying and pursuing funding opportunities and organizational capacity and sustainability.

The PACE Team provided guidance on a number of active and upcoming State grant programs including the Transformative Climate Communities (TCC) Program's planning and implementation grants, the Regional Climate Collaboratives grant program, and the Community Economic Resilience Fund. Various forms of technical assistance were provided to help PACE Leaders navigate and assess funding opportunities by compiling lists of active grant programs, developing background memos to synthesize grant guidelines, and providing mentorship for evaluating program fit and readiness, forming partnerships, creating timelines and work plans for grant applications, and developing budgets and scopes of work. Ongoing mentorship was provided throughout Phase 2 to help PACE Leaders troubleshoot specific challenges, such as to obtain buy-in from local government partners and engaging stakeholders in a virtual, COVID-impacted environment.

Technical assistance was also provided to support PACE Leaders in building organizational capacity and on various aspects of nonprofit management and operations. Several PACE Leaders navigating nonprofit fiscal sponsorship challenges received guidance from the Project Team on the structure of fiscal sponsorships, negotiation strategies, conflict resolution strategies, and potential options for new fiscal sponsors. Additional support was provided through coaching sessions and research memos on nonprofit administration, board expansion and governance, strategic planning, succession planning, leadership

development, staffing structures and salary levels, organizational budgeting and accounting, grant management, navigating internal politics and leadership changes, and developing charters to formalize coalition efforts. Overall, the PACE Team remained responsive to PACE Leader needs, such as immediate cash flow and fiscal solvency issues by providing information on available grants, financing mechanisms, strategies for developing sustainable budgets, and direct connections to potential funders and sponsors.

4. Content-focused Mentorship

Mentorship on specific content-focused topics was provided by the PACE Team and external advisors, primarily through one-on-one or small group mentorship calls but also by developing research memos, sharing existing resources and learning opportunities, and facilitating peer-to-peer connections to leverage the wealth of knowledge and experience within the PACE Cohort.

Key topics included State climate change policies, building and capital acquisition, Community

Development Corporations, Community Benefits Agreements, affordable housing, zoning and other aspects of urban planning, green workforce development (particularly for youth and BIPOC communities), climate grief and related mental/psychosocial health impacts, youth engagement and leadership development, urban forestry and equitable tree canopy, permaculture, clean energy solutions, battery storage and non-diesel generators, and energy efficiency rebates.

5. Skills-focused Mentorship

Mentorship was provided to help PACE Leaders build critical leadership, management, and facilitation skills to become effective agents of change and advance their climate equity visions. Mentorship and coaching provided by the PACE Team and external advisors, were primarily through one-on-one or small group mentorship calls.

Key topics included project management, budgeting and budget management, project work planning, staff allocations tracking, equitable decision-making structures, partner management, internal team management, event planning and sponsor recruitment, stakeholder engagement, facilitation, coalition coordination, participatory design processes, survey methodology, evaluation models, capacity-building and technical assistance frameworks, legislative advocacy, and document formatting and design. Mentorship was also provided on specific tools, such as ArcGIS and survey platforms, and the PACE Team provided tailored templates and samples to help PACE Leaders translate frameworks and strategies into specific activities and workflow improvements.

The tools, resources, guidance and TA were exactly what I needed and helped me grow in my skills and confidence to bring climate equity resources to my community.

PACE Leader



PROGRAM EVALUATION

EVALUATION STRATEGY

Evaluation was a cornerstone of the PACE program and two separate evaluations were conducted in alignment with their corresponding phases: *Phase 1* and *Phase 2*. The methodology for both Phase 1 and Phase 2 evaluation utilizes the [Learning-Transfer Evaluation Model \(LTEM\)](#), which is specifically designed to help organizations get feedback to build more effective learning interventions and validate learning results. LTEM differentiates between knowledge, decision-making, and task competence, enabling learning teams to target more meaningful learning outcomes.

The Phase 1 Evaluation Strategy was implemented throughout Phase 1 (February - July 2021) and served two purposes:

1. **Feedback** from the PACE Cohort and the PACE Team in order to improve programmatic activities to better meet cohort needs.
2. **Evaluation** of the overall effectiveness of the PACE pilot program in achieving intended results, particularly in achieving and applying PACE Curriculum learning objectives.

A separate evaluation strategy was developed for Phase 2 that built upon the Phase 1 Evaluation Strategy and the Technical Assistance Strategy. Due to time constraints, however, the Phase 2 Evaluation Strategy was not implemented in its entirety as there were no opportunities to evaluate the successful transfer of skills required by the LTEM model.

In order to gather participant data on the impact of the PACE program, five surveys were conducted throughout Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the program at key intervals. Each provided an opportunity for PACE Leaders to provide individual feedback and self-report the effectiveness and value of PACE activities and deliverables.

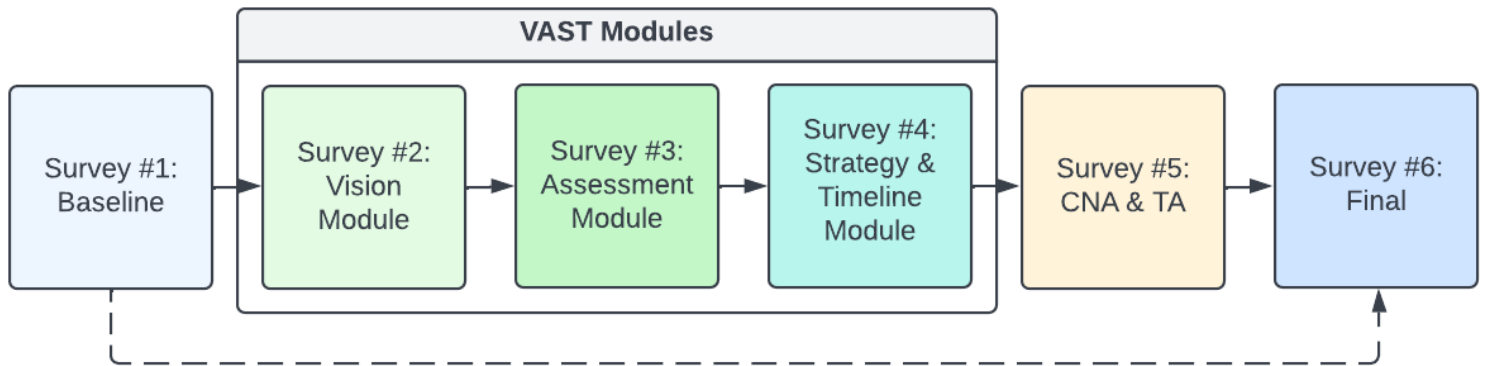


Figure 9. A schematic of the six mandatory surveys administered throughout the PACE pilot; Survey #5 included Phase 2 Input questions.

The vision, goals, and intended outcomes of the program also served as guides and indicators for the entire program evaluation strategy. These included the [goals](#) that were defined as part of the PACE Team’s ground setting meetings and objectives defined in program outreach materials during the cohort application and recruitment stage. It is important to note that this strategy was not able to evaluate all aspects of the program’s vision and goals due to the project timeline and long-term nature of the capacity-building focus of the program. The evaluation focuses on a particular period of time (January 2021 - March 2022) but the full impacts of this program are likely to be felt for years to come. This is a challenge for all capacity-building programs but is still important to call out as the results detailed below are likely to be conservative.

EVALUATION RESULTS

Participant Objectives

Participants were asked about their objectives and interests in the PACE program in an initial survey that aimed to establish a baseline before cohort activities commenced. PACE Leaders were asked to rank the 12 key learning objectives and intended benefits of participating in the program in order of importance. Respondents were asked to rank objectives between 1 (least important) and 12 (most important) and the four priority columns include the count for each benefit. *Highest Priority* reflects the number of respondents who ranked the learning objective as their top priority; *High Priority*, the number of respondents who ranked the learning objective in their top three; *Low Priority*, in their bottom three; and *Lowest Priority*, as their lowest priority. The average takes into consideration the weight of each response as determined by its rank. A higher average indicates that more individuals selected the benefit as a high priority.

PACE LEARNING OBJECTIVE	AVERAGE (1-12)	HIGHEST PRIORITY	HIGH PRIORITY	LOW PRIORITY	LOWEST PRIORITY
Articulate community's vision and priorities for equitable climate resilience	8.55	4	12	3	1
Lay groundwork to support successful grant applications	7.91	4	9	2	2
Learn methods for building consensus and collective breakthroughs	7.14	2	7	5	1
Map out local and regional opportunities for new partnerships	7.05	2	3	2	0
Learn case studies/models for addressing climate & equity	6.95	2	7	4	0
Analyze community assets, barriers, and needs to inform action	6.82	2	7	5	2
Connect with peers/mentors across CA	6.41	2	4	5	1
Become more well-versed in CCI and other State resources	5.86	2	6	7	3
Understand State climate goals	5.77	1	3	6	2
Use tools to understand neighborhood-level data	5.68	0	5	7	4
Establish contacts at key State agencies	5.18	0	2	9	1
Lead trainings to build network capacity	4.91	1	1	11	5

Table 1. Responses to the Cohort Baseline Survey question, *please rank the following PACE learning objectives/participant benefits in order of importance for you.*

As shown in the table above, most individuals shared that they were particularly interested in gaining skills to “articulate [their] community’s vision/priorities for equitable climate resilience.” Other high interest areas included “successful grant applications,” “building consensus,” and “collective breakthroughs.” Of the benefits/objectives included, “lead[ing] trainings to build network capacity” had the lowest level of importance at the group level;

however, it is important to note that one of the twenty-two participants ranked this as their most important objective. This reflected the heterogeneity and diversity of needs across the cohort and the range of goals that PACE Leaders were hoping to achieve through their participation in the PACE pilot program.

When asked about other PACE benefits, responses were varied, as shown in Table 2. Responses tally to more than 22 as some responses applied to multiple themes. Many (almost half) shared that they were interested in uplifting their region, project, or cause by leveraging the skills and connections acquired through program participation. One participant shared that they were interested in “helping shift messaging around climate change to center on justice, health and well-being of all.” Another participant shared that they were interested in “leadership and facilitation skills to bring together local and regional partners to address larger systemic issues affecting my community's climate equity.” An additional area of interest was in obtaining funding, new opportunities for investment, and more resources to support their work.

ADDITIONAL BENEFITS OF PACE PROGRAM PARTICIPATION	COUNT
Ability to Uplift Region / Project / Cause	8
Funding / Investments / Resources	5
Partnership Building / Collaboration / Expand Network	4
Leadership Skills / Confidence	3
Policy Development / Advocacy	3
Greater understanding of another topic	2
Writing / Communications	2
Employment	1
Evaluation	1
Facilitation	1
Hands-On Experience	1
Tools / Technology	1

Table 2. Responses to the Cohort Baseline Survey question, *please rank the following PACE learning objectives/participant benefits in order of importance for you [open-ended]*.

Comprehensive Understanding

As part of the PACE Cohort Baseline Survey, which was conducted before program activities commenced, PACE Leaders indicated their level of agreement with a set of statements focused on their current understanding of key topics related to PACE learning objectives. PACE Leaders were asked to review a set of statements to rate their level of agreement on a scale of “Strongly Disagree” (quantified as a score of -2) to “Strongly Agree” (quantified as a score of 2).

The results of the Cohort Baseline Survey showed a low level of agreement with the following statements:

- “I have a comprehensive understanding of state decision-making processes” (Cohort Average Score: -0.32).
- “I have a comprehensive understanding of the State’s climate change mitigation and adaptation goals and policies” (Cohort Average Score: -0.27).
- “I have a comprehensive understanding of Grant programs and funding opportunities to achieve my community’s vision” (Cohort Average Score: -0.23).

The same statements were included as part of the Final Evaluation Survey and respondents indicated a higher level of agreement across all twelve learning objective statements. The before and after numbers are the averages across all respondents; the percentage change is measured against the range.

The greatest change was seen in the cohort’s understanding of grant programs and funding opportunities to achieve their community’s vision.

The cohort average score of -0.23 (Neutral/Disagree) from the Cohort Baseline Survey rose by 36% to 1.20 (Agree/Strongly Agree). The cohort reported the lowest level of change for the statement on “connections between climate change and social equity.” This is likely due to the PACE Cohort being comprised of existing frontline community leaders and respondents having reported strong levels of agreement before the program launched. This statement received an initial average cohort score of 1.50 (Agree/Strongly Agree), which was also the highest scoring statement from the Cohort Baseline Survey.

PACE was AMAZING! The facilitating team was very knowledgeable, welcoming, supportive and did an excellent job of building community in a virtual context. Participants were kind, shared openly and made this program so worthwhile.

PACE Leader

STATEMENT	% CHANGE	BEFORE	AFTER
Grant programs and funding opportunities to achieve my community's vision	36%	-0.23	1.20
The State's climate change mitigation and adaptation goals and policies	34%	-0.27	1.10
Available resources for advancing local climate resilience and social equity priorities	34%	-0.09	1.25
Community needs assessment and action planning processes	33%	0.18	1.50
Where to go to obtain data about my community and climate change	33%	0.23	1.55
State decision-making processes	31%	-0.32	0.90
Partnership and collective impact frameworks, models, and strategies	28%	0.23	1.35
Capacity building strategies	23%	0.19	1.11
My community's assets, strengths, barriers, and needs	17%	0.91	1.60
Consensus-building strategies	15%	0.32	0.90
How climate change is impacting my community	10%	1.27	1.65
My community's vision and priorities for social equity and climate resilience	9%	1.00	1.35
The connections between climate change and social equity	4%	1.50	1.65
AVERAGE	24%	0.38	1.32

Table 3. A comparison of responses between the Cohort Baseline Survey and Final Evaluation Survey question, *please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements: I have a comprehensive understanding of...*

Necessary Skills

Similar to the above question, PACE Leaders self-reported their level of agreement as to whether they possess the necessary skills to implement and actualize PACE objectives before the program began.

STATEMENT	% CHANGE	BEFORE	AFTER
Clearly articulate State climate change mitigation and adaptation goals and policies	31%	-0.27	0.95
Create data-driven community needs assessments and develop action plans	28%	0.18	1.30
Navigate tools including Cal-Adapt, CalEnviroScreen, and Healthy Places Index	27%	0.14	1.20
Leverage available resources to advance local climate resilience and social equity priorities	26%	0.00	1.05
Engage in State decision-making processes	26%	-0.14	0.90
Write effective grant applications and proposals	16%	0.41	1.05
Clearly articulate the connections between climate change and social equity	16%	0.82	1.45
Clearly communicate climate change risks and impacts to the public	16%	0.73	1.35
Analyze community assets, strengths, barriers, and needs	13%	0.77	1.30
Establish and maintain partnerships for collective impact	11%	0.86	1.30
Facilitating trainings and capacity building activities	6%	0.86	1.10
Clearly articulate my community's vision and priorities to decision-makers and funders	2%	1.09	1.15
Build consensus	-1%	0.67	0.65
AVERAGE	17	0.47	1.13

Table 4. A comparison of responses between the Cohort Baseline Survey and Final Evaluation Survey question, *please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements: I have the necessary skills to...*

Participants were asked to rate their skills on a scale of “Strongly Disagree” (-2) to “Strongly Agree” (2). The initial analysis showed a low level of agreement with the following statements:

- “I have the necessary skills to leverage available resources to advance local climate resilience and social equity priorities” (Cohort Average Score: 0.00).
- “I have the necessary skills to engage in State decision-making processes” (Cohort Average Score: -0.14).
- “I have the necessary skills to clearly articulate State climate change mitigation and adaptation goals and policies” (Cohort Average Score: -0.27).

In the Final Evaluation Survey, respondents noted higher levels of agreement across 11 skills-focused learning objectives. Respondents were given a 5-point scale ranging from “Strongly Disagree” (-2) and “Disagree” (-1) to “Agree” (1) and “Strongly Agree” (2). The before and after numbers are the averages across all respondents; the percentage change is measured against the range. As shown in Table 4, the greatest level of change was seen in having the necessary skills to “clearly articulate State climate change mitigation and adaptation goals and policies.” The initial cohort average score of -0.23 (Neutral/Disagree) rose by 31% to a final cohort average score of 0.95 (Neutral/Agree). Of all the skills-based statements, the statement on “build[ing] consensus” received the only negative change pre- and post-program participation. While the PACE Team was not able to further evaluate these results, the change is relatively small in magnitude (-1%).

Successful Results

A final set of statements were presented to PACE Leaders in the Cohort Baseline Survey, which asked participants to self-report their past and current ability to “effectively and successfully” implement a set of PACE objectives. Respondents rated their level agreement with a set of statements following a scale of “Strongly Disagree” (-2) to “Strongly Agree” (2). The initial analysis showed a low level of agreement with the following statements:

- “I have effectively and successfully created a data-driven community needs assessment and action plan” (Cohort Average Score: 0.00).
- “I have effectively and successfully identified and pursued local strategies that advance State goals related to mitigating and adapting to climate change” (Cohort Average Score: 0.00).
- “I have effectively and successfully engaged in State decision-making processes to influence policy and/or program decisions” (Cohort Average Score: 0.05).

Upon completion of the program, PACE Leaders reported higher levels of agreement across all 12 results-focused statements.

In particular, the statement on effectively and successfully “creat[ing] a data-driven community needs assessment and action plan” saw the greatest positive change. The initial cohort average score of 0.00 (Neutral) rose by 32% to 1.26 (Agree/Strongly Agree).

STATEMENT	% CHANGE	BEFORE	AFTER
Created a data-driven community needs assessment and action plan	32%	0.00	1.26
Extracted neighborhood-level data from tools like Cal-Adapt, CalEnviroScreen, and Healthy Places Index to inform plans and/or projects	27%	0.23	1.32
Engaged in State decision-making processes to influence policy and/or program decisions	21%	0.05	0.90
Identified and pursued local strategies that advance State goals related to mitigating and adapting to climate change	21%	0.00	0.84
Leveraged resources to advance local climate resilience and social equity priorities	16%	0.55	1.20
Analyzed community assets, strengths, barriers, and needs to inform concrete action	14%	0.95	1.50
Led grant applications and proposals	9%	0.77	1.11
Facilitated the achievement of collective breakthroughs	6%	0.64	0.89
Integrated climate resilience and social equity into my work	6%	1.18	1.40
Mobilized decision-makers and funders around my community's vision and priorities	5%	0.95	1.16
Created new partnerships and coalitions	5%	1.32	1.53
Facilitated trainings that increased the capacity of my community and/or network	5%	0.91	1.10
Increased community awareness and understanding of climate change risks and impacts	4%	1.05	1.20
AVERAGE	13%	0.66	1.19

Table 5. A comparison of responses between the Cohort Baseline Survey and Final Evaluation Survey question, *please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements: I have effectively and successfully...*

Of all the skills-based statements, the statement on “build[ing] consensus” received the only negative change pre- and post-program participation. While the PACE Team was not able to further evaluate these results, the change is relatively small in magnitude (-1%).

Participants reported the lowest level of change on having “increased community awareness and understanding of climate change risks and impacts.” While the reason behind this outcome is unknown, it is possible that the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic created barriers to community outreach and education efforts. This statement also received the third highest average score of 1.05 (Agree/Strongly Agree) in the Cohort Baseline Survey; as such, the potential for positive change was already limited.

Community Needs Assessment

PACE Leaders began developing their Community Needs Assessments (CNAs) in Phase 1, supported by a newly developed, robust CNA Toolkit developed by the PACE Team, and continued developing, finalizing, and presenting CNA findings throughout Phase 2. The CNA development process is intended to be one that is iterative given the evolving nature of community needs, climate risks and impacts, and emerging opportunities.

While some participants completed their CNAs by the end of the program, others have decided to dedicate additional time to develop their CNA due to capacity constraints encountered during the program, or to turn their CNA into a living document to continue informing their priorities as new information becomes available. One participant noted that they “intend to continue to build out and constantly revise [their] CNA on an ongoing basis as a living document...” and another shared how they already began “asking colleagues to support the data collection for the 2nd iteration.”

INTENDED BENEFIT OF CNA DEVELOPMENT	% RESPONSE
Clearly articulating your community’s vision and priorities for climate equity	94%
Learning how to analyze community assets, strengths, barriers, and needs to inform action	88%
Laying the groundwork to support successful grant applications	88%
Using tools like Cal-Adapt to understand neighborhood-level data	75%
Mapping out local and regional opportunities for new partnerships	69%

Table 6. Responses to the Final Evaluation Survey question, *please rate the effectiveness of the CNA development process in providing the following intended benefits* [% Responding “Effective” or “Very Effective”].

Overall, PACE Leaders shared that they found the CNA development process to be very effective at “...articulating [their] community’s vision and priorities for climate equity” and for “learning how to analyze community assets, strengths, barriers, and needs to inform action.” Several respondents noted how the mapping components of the CNA development process (power mapping, asset mapping, partnership mapping, and identifying unreached constituencies) were particularly helpful for advancing their work. PACE Leaders reported how “power mapping exercises [were] used to support new and ongoing initiatives,” “mapping out schools as part of Power Mapping and Asset Mapping improved COVID outreach... it was super helpful to do a scan of who [we] were missing in our existing COVID-19 outreach... [it] allowed us to reach more subpopulations, like Tribes and Native organizations as well as local pharmacies [and] hospitals,” and “power mapping has helped me plan out my efforts and think critically about what it means to do equity related to climate... for me, that means community-driven projects.”

ACTIONS TAKEN	COUNT	% OF RESPONDENTS
Used CNA info to improve existing programs	11	69%
Presented CNA info to potential partners/funders	10	63%
Presented CNA info to organization	9	56%
Used CNA info to form new partnerships	9	56%
Presented CNA info to existing partners/funders	8	50%
Used CNA info to support a grant application	9	50%
Presented CNA info to community members	3	19%

Table 7. Responses to the Final Evaluation Survey question, *which of the following actions have you taken as a result of your CNA development process?*

Although it may be too soon to evaluate the full impact of the CNA development process for PACE Leaders, early successes reported by PACE Leaders paint a promising picture for how CNAs can be utilized to support a variety of initiatives.

Three respondents shared that their CNAs were being actively used in efforts to secure fiscal sponsorship. One participant commented, “I use it all the time to help guide our work.” Another shared that, “in some ways [it’s] hard to say exactly what from [my] CNA has been specifically presented because it [has] influenced my thinking and I’ve integrated

information and themes into how I talk. One clear outcome has been a series of small group [conversations] with community leaders to discuss the Transformative Climate Communities program. Another has been bringing racial equity issues more clearly to gatherings of environmental [organizations and] colleagues.”

Moving forward, respondents cited multiple uses for their CNA, both internally and externally, and many indicated plans for using their CNA to support funding proposals. One shared, “we hope to have it be a part of our three main flagship programs.” Another commented, “I expect to continue to draw[ing] on it for grant proposals [as a] central place of storing solution ideas [and a] source of developing analyses and timelines for solutions.” Externally, respondents said their CNA would be used to “bring awareness to elected city officials about the needs of the community members from their point of view.” Numerous PACE Leaders reported both completed and planned efforts to meet with local elected officials, local government agencies, and potential funders. One PACE Leader noted, “it will allow for us to be at the table when funding opportunities are being discussed.”

Political leaders are not the only constituency that PACE Leaders may have an easier time reaching by leveraging their CNAs. One participant shared plans for “utilizing some of the CNA to do a [city]wide community engagement process to update our Sustainable Neighborhood Plan (planning report created through Transformative Climate Communities Planning grant).” The value of CNAs in enabling communities to understand and advocate for their own needs also comes through in the response shown below to the final survey evaluation question on future CNA plans.

“ Giving a visual understanding of the resident's challenges in the AB-617 Priority 1 Area to the Public Steering Committee, and posting it on the AB-617 website (currently in development) will help to shape messaging about air quality in a way that is useful and digestible. Residents and community members who receive the messaging can use the same story map to encourage their neighborhoods to understand the connection between their health and their air. The community leader I've trained will use his newly formed list of neighbors, gathered through door-to-door canvassing to take personal action to clean the air, like prompting neighbors to plant trees with the partnership of my org.

Because the leader is now on the AB-617 Public Steering Committee, he can be the link between the neighbors and the committee to direct the actions of the committee when applying pressure to local officials to strengthen policy against air polluters and to advise local agencies like public works and active transportation to prioritize building irrigation into street renovation projects like the Franklin Blvd Complete Street TCC project, to facilitate vegetative borders that clean the air. Pointing to the barriers of achieving clean air in story form will welcome stakeholders to break them collaboratively.”

Program Participation

PACE Leaders shared that they spent between 2 hours to 15 hours on average per week to participate in PACE program activities. Many participants noted that there was a noticeable difference between the time they spent during Phase 1 compared to Phase 2; respondents self-reported that they spent less time during Phase 2. This was an intentional outcome of Phase 2 planning efforts to feedback received during Phase 1 regarding time and capacity constraints. Taking all of this into consideration, most participants spent between 1 to 5 hours per week participating in PACE activities; this averaged out to be about 5 hours/week for all participants. However, estimates varied within the cohort; the highest estimate provided was 10-15 hours per week. As one respondent reported, “[I] wish [I] had more time to work on the CNA - hard to carve out more time given workload.”

AVERAGE HOURS PER WEEK	COUNT	% OF RESPONDENTS
1-5 hours	14	70%
6-9 hours	4	20%
10 or more hours	2	10%

Table 8. Responses to the Final Evaluation Survey question, *on average, on a weekly basis, how much time did you spend participating in the program?*

Participants shared that a key factor that enabled their participation was the set schedule of program activities in both phases, which allowed them set aside times for PACE activities. Many noted that the participant support stipend was another enabling factor.

PARTICIPATION ENABLING FACTORS	COUNT	% OF RESPONDENTS
Advanced scheduling of PACE activities	18	90%
I scheduled dedicated times to work on PACE activities	14	70%
Participant support payment	14	70%
Colleagues were supportive	13	65%
Other (please specify)	12	60%

Table 9. Responses to the Final Evaluation Survey question, *what are some of the factors that allowed you to participate?*

Additionally, five participants mentioned flexibility as an important factor to support their participation. Participants also cited the fact that the PACE Curriculum was relevant to their lives and work; their own commitment to the program; the support they felt from the PACE Team and peer PACE Leaders; and the overall program structure. The cadence of PACE activities was intentionally designed to keep the cohort connected and engaged, and one participant shared that they “would have been somewhat lost if [they] had not met.”

“[PACE] felt like it was a BIPOC-led space and that made it relevant personally. [I] felt like equity was also centered, which made it a program that was challenging the way we already do things. Some things didn't have to [be] explain[ed] but enter[ing] the space with like-minded people... made it easier.”

PACE Leaders shared that a variety of factors presented challenges to sustaining their participation in the PACE program with scheduling conflicts and capacity constraints reported as the top two barriers. One respondent commented that “due to community needs, I felt very stretched in capacity. This was one of the most difficult organizing years of my 21 years at [my organization].”

PARTICIPATION LIMITING FACTORS	COUNT	% OF RESPONDENTS
Scheduling conflicts with existing work/life activities	12	60%
Time required/lack of capacity	12	60%
Other (please specify)	10	50%
COVID-19 impacts	8	40%
Lack of support from partner nonprofit	4	20%
Financial need	3	15%

Table 10. Responses to the Final Evaluation Survey question, *what are some of the factors that made participation difficult for you?*

Some PACE Leaders faced difficulty in obtaining buy-in and support from their organizations to fully participate in the program. One respondent indicated that they felt reluctant to take “away from their time” by asking other staff to engage in collaborative aspects of the PACE program. Respondents also cited encountering challenges with “information overload,” “taking things I learned and trying them but finding more

roadblocks than how it should be,” and “not being taken seriously when trying to make real connections to make a difference in the community.”

Eight PACE Leaders reported that COVID-19 impacts played a significant role in their ability to fully participate in the program.

One participant shared that they had to manage significant grief and loss from losing family members and friends on an ongoing basis. The impact of COVID-19 also extended beyond their personal lives – one respondent expressed how “COVID-19 not only affected personal participation in PACE but surveying that was being done in community for CNA, and staff capacity.” Others cited more generally that “dealing with grief” or “pandemic anxiety” served as impediments. One respondent cited “personal hardship such as having to leave my home due to water damage and loss of my husband.”

“The horizontal leadership and collaborative spirit of learning from each other was a highlight. Empathetic leadership showed up in the flexibility the team had for Leaders, in the weekly reminders, and the generosity given to us. It was important during pandemic times.”

Distribution of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and safety guides for essential workers.

Christian Torres, Comite Civico



Cohort Culture

From the program’s design to how we engaged with cohort participants and worked together as a team, the PACE Team aimed to model collaborative governance, build authentic relationships, and demonstrate respect and care, every step of the way. The success of the pilot relied upon the trust we could build – both with and within the cohort – to maintain a safe space for participants to share about their lived experiences and real-world challenges, explore out-of-the-box solutions and incubate nascent ideas, and express themselves freely amongst a group of peers.

“The healing nature of having a place where people believe in you and support you is unparalleled – the best capacity-building program I have ever participated in.”

RATING	COUNT
10 (Always, without fail)	12
9	6
8	2

Table 11. Responses to the Final Evaluation Survey question, during your participation in this program, to what extent did you feel listened to, heard, and respected by the PACE Team? [Scale from 1 “Never, not at all” to 10 “Always, without fail”].

In the Final Evaluation Survey, PACE Leaders were asked to the extent to which they felt listened to, heard, and respected by the PACE Team; over half of respondents responded, “always, without fail.” The average for the group was 9.5 out of 10-point rating scale and no respondent shared a score below 8.

PACE Leaders emphasized that the culture created by the PACE Team and Leaders was collaborative, affirming, inclusive, generous, and supportive.

“A form of non-profit therapy,” as one participant put it.

PILOT IMPACTS & EARLY OUTCOMES

The PACE pilot program was an entirely new program designed from scratch, during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, and aimed to help capacity-constrained community leaders achieve an ambitious set of learning objectives in a relatively short period of time.

Despite these challenges, evaluation results have demonstrated how the PACE program has had a profound impact on the work being led by PACE Leaders across multiple domains.

Funding

Laying the groundwork to support successful grant applications came in as the cohort's second highest priority out of the twelve learning objectives listed in the cohort baseline survey, with over half of the cohort flagging this objective as part of their top three objectives of greatest importance in their individual responses.

In the pilot's final evaluation survey, roughly half of the cohort reported that participating in PACE already influenced grant applications and funding proposals and, in several cases, their proposals were awarded. For a program that only recently ended, this is striking – and as time goes on, the impact and influence of having participated in the PACE program is likely to grow.

Reflections shared by PACE Leaders in the Final Evaluation Survey demonstrated the program's effectiveness in helping participants build capacity to access and successfully apply for funding. This is most evident from one PACE Leader's experience: "Before PACE, we had \$0 because we did not have a fiscal sponsor or the confidence, capacity, or skills to apply for state grants. We have now received our first state grant and a few local grants and contracts as a result of this program." Another respondent noted how "a lot of the narrative in recent Wellness Foundation grant applications [came] from my CNA about wanting to build out capacity and grow the base of people working on these issues. It worked; we got the three-year grant."

As part of the Final Evaluation Survey, respondents reported that participating in the PACE pilot program influenced a number of grant applications to a variety of funders and grant programs, as shown in Table 12. For several grant programs and foundations, multiple PACE Leaders submitted applications. Respondents shared additional awards from smaller grant programs and sponsorships, which are not fully captured in the table.

PROPOSALS AWARDED	PROPOSALS SUBMITTED OR IN PROGRESS
Ben and Jerry Foundation	
CalEPA Environmental Justice Small Grants	
Commission on the Status of Women and Girls, Women’s Recovery Response Grant	Building Healthy Places Network
If Foundation	CAL FIRE Urban and Community Forestry Grant Programs
Mosaic	CEC IDEAL ZEV Workforce Pilot
Patagonia Foundation	Clean Mobility Options Voucher Pilot Program
Sacramento Food Policy Council	Outdoor Equity Grants Program
Sacramento Region Community Foundation	SGC Regional Climate Collaboratives Grant Program
Statewide Park Development and Community Revitalization Grant Program	SGC Transformative Climate Communities Grant Program
SGC Transformative Climate Communities Technical Assistance RFP	
Shift Health Accelerator	
Wellness Foundation	

Table 12. Responses to the Final Evaluation Survey question, *has your participation in PACE influenced any grant applications or funding proposals? If so, which grant program(s) and what’s the status of your application(s)?*

It is important to note that the program’s influence extends beyond the individual grant applications led by PACE Leaders. One participant shared the outcomes of their application to a grant program shared through PACE: “Last year I applied for a Clean Air Day grant which came to my inbox via PACE and we won it. It enabled us to facilitate an event at a park which has been the center of another project. We were able to engage residents [around] air pollution and transportation.”

Nearly all cohort participants reported that PACE increased their awareness of new funding opportunities and provided connections to networks and resources to help them stay informed of new opportunities after the program concludes.

“ I know how to access and organize participation in proposal writing now with the amazing templates provided and exercises in consensus building.”

PACE Leaders also reported improved skills related to developing funding proposals; one participant commented, "my grant writing now has a more holistic tone... I don't just focus on the quantitative impact of a project, but also qualitatively on what the long-term change will be for the community" and that PACE taught them "how to turn ideas into action via grants and funding opportunities." PACE Leaders also reported greater clarity in what they decide to apply for.

Partnerships

Assisting and encouraging PACE Leaders to develop partnerships and build coalitions was another cornerstone of PACE.

In the final evaluation, PACE Leaders provided numerous examples of how program participation influenced new partnerships – in their community and region, as well as with their cohort peers and statewide organizations.

Many participants collaborated with their peer Leaders to advance regional initiatives, to co-organize PACE peer exchange sessions and external presentations, as well as on focused topics and initiatives related to urban forestry, AB-617 community engagement, research, and advocacy efforts. Some partnerships were even formalized by teaming up on grant applications, which have since been awarded, or by establishing MOUs to cultivate longer-term partnerships.

One participant shared how a new partnership influenced their "first time getting involved in a general plan process," and how they were able to get the community more involved on land use and climate preparedness issues by "helping get the word out to increase community participation... suggest[ing] locations where people could more easily access the planning process, [which led to listening sessions being] hosted in a church." PACE also aimed to launch an ongoing cycle of capacity building by training participants to facilitate additional capacity building for partners in their network and region. The following story

PACE has changed the way I view funding opportunities, RFP's, payment disbursement types, and deliverables. PACE pushed me to think about what impacts can be had at the local level and to push for EJ solutions that work across technical (which can include community), research, and policy expertise.

Partnership with [a fellow PACE Leader from my region] has been one of the greatest benefits and joys of participation. Together we convened a series of community conversations and engaged 15-20 existing and new partners to discuss the [Transformative Climate Communities] opportunity.

shared by a Sacramento-based PACE Leader demonstrates how the program's train-the-facilitator model saw early successes and helped to generate tangible outcomes.

The [neighborhood association] is mistrusting of outside entities coming in and offering them grants and also suffers the hottest temps and lowest tree canopy in Sacramento. I was able to help two people create their own nonprofit to accept a grant and facilitate neighborhood climate enhancement through tree canopy maintenance. With a \$5,000 grant reallocated from a Prop 68 and CalFire grant, the new organization... launched two neighborhood campaigns to remove tree stumps at no cost to residents.

The residents then receive free trees to replace the stumps and assistance planting them through MUTP. They also purchased pole saws for neighbors to check out, like books from a library. These tools help to eradicate mistletoe, a harmful parasitic plant that preys on established neighborhood trees and spreads easily, weakening the trees that provide frontline air quality management. I've networked them with other local orgs, civic leaders, volunteers and shared my table with them at outreach events. I have shared a sturdy PACE foundation with them to keep their efforts going as their grant sunsets.

Methods

Although more challenging and nuanced to evaluate compared to funding and partnerships, the Final Evaluation Survey asked participants to share if and how the way in which they work changed as a result of participating in the program. This question aimed to explore any improvements to work approaches and methods as a result of attending cohort sessions and receiving technical assistance. While experiences were diverse, many participants reported positive changes. Participants also reported that the PACE program pushed them to think deeper and more holistically; as one participant put it: "an act that no one has ever dared this big thinker to do, and it's a muscle I intend to flex."

Additional reflections shared by PACE Leaders demonstrate the pilot's success in supporting participants in building the awareness and confidence to be more effective in their roles, as well as how increased knowledge and skills led to meaningful process changes in their work.

Reported changes in **AWARENESS** as a result of PACE program participation...



My work is more organized and rooted in the needs of the community, as opposed to trying to fit it into my organization's model of engagement.

PACE has been the only space where I've been able to interact with Native and Indigenous leaders, and it's made me aware of how my organization lacks those connections and could do a better job building bridges.

I think much deeper now about the connections between climate change impacts and equity than I did before.

I gained awareness of the gaps in my organization to achieve equity.

Reflecting on where my organization falls on the community engagement scale, as well as how power dynamics can be structured differently, was really eye-opening.

I have learned a lot about the need and value of finding out what certain community groups need in regards to the impact of climate change.

I now bring more aspects into my thinking about climate and social equity (e.g., tribal involvement). Doing land acknowledgements helped increase my awareness. I now want to work more with local tribes and advocate for their projects alongside them.



Reported changes in **CONFIDENCE** as a result of PACE program participation...



PACE helped me step into my true self - connect with my inner power and desires for my community. The people, tools, discussions and guidance emboldened me to take uncharted steps in bringing climate equity to my community.

I'm more empowered to push for [my community's] needs, instead of asking them to fit our mold and settle for limited participation.

My ability to connect my public health and equity work to the climate movement has exponentially grown.

I have been empowered, and in turn I empower others to build the agency they need to be heard, compensated, resourced, trusted, and engaged in the future of climate equity work.

Through PACE training, I was able to feel comfortable to be a part of a statewide grant proposal on climate equity for Hummingbird Farm. PACE trainings totally helped me through the process.

Having better vocabulary + confidence in speaking with local government and State agencies.

I have become more articulate about climate equity, more outspoken, and have helped influence multiple groups and networks.



Reported changes in **KNOWLEDGE** as a result of PACE program participation...



I know many new methods of determining priorities and leveraging data that already exist, rather than spending time and resources to gather it again.

Learning how to put together a CNA has been very beneficial because I've learned how to use new tools such as Cal-Adapt.

[I] can now think about the distinct differences between state agencies - like how OPR and SGC work together as sister agencies under the governor, or how decisions are made around the budget.

My understanding of the equity work and the healing around inequities have really resonated with how I approach this work (and message it!).

PACE helped inform the cooperative model for the new lending library that I launched.

It was helpful to get more knowledge[able] about Cal-Adapt and Healthy Places Index, which I didn't have much exposure to before.

The power-mapping has helped me plan out my efforts and think critically about what it means to do equity related to climate. For me, that means community-driven projects. I've come to realize more so that I don't know everything, and that I need to listen to people with lived experiences in communities. PACE opened my mind to that.



Reported changes in **PROCESS** as a result of PACE program participation...



Using 'Grant Decision Matrix' that was shared during the grant writing supplemental session to determine which funding sources to go after.

I use a lot softer language and not just technical language when I do facilitation. I've learned a lot from the group about how to talk about these issues in ways that resonate with my community.

I inspired members to change our bylaws to start thinking about sustainable projects.

We are [using] consensus decision making.

I am more inclined to find community partners to complete a project that my organization would have passed on due to limited capacity. For example, I encouraged [a partner] to find additional funding as opposed to canceling their tree planting event when irrigation was lacking. With less than \$100, they were able to purchase and install inexpensive drip irrigation... simple fixes like this can make big impacts on physical health of residents within a mile of the highways as CalTrans vegetative barriers are dying and not replaced.

PACE PM tools have helped to prioritize important deliverables/events, connected back to Basecamp. Led to efficiency gains – from being productive to being even more productive (critical as I manage more projects).

Before PACE, [my organization] used to mention [climate equity] in passing. Now it's become part of the weekly report and discussion.



CONCLUSION

While it’s still too soon to fully evaluate the outcomes of the PACE pilot, results from the Final Evaluation Survey and reflections shared by PACE Leaders throughout the program demonstrate how PACE successfully helped participants in building capacity and achieving tangible outcomes. Replicating the pilot – in its entirety or by applying learning from the PACE experience to existing and new capacity-building programs – can be an effective way to help additional community leaders build the capacity, confidence, skills, and connections to support collective action and meaningful progress towards their visions for community resilience and social equity.

OUTCOME STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Overall, I feel more equipped with the necessary connections, skills, and resources to advance my vision for climate equity.	17	2	0	1	0
Participating in PACE increased my confidence in my own abilities, and in the quality and value of my work.	14	5	0	1	0
Participating in PACE has connected me with a support network - people like me, who I can turn to for advice, ideas, and emotional support.	13	6	0	1	0

Table 13. Responses to the Final Evaluation Survey question, *please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.*

The replicability of the PACE pilot is further demonstrated in the accompanying **PACE Recommendations Report, *Capacity Building with Frontline Community Leaders: Best Practices & Recommendations***. The PACE Recommendations Report expands upon this report to share key best practices and recommendations for capacity-building programs, recommendations for addressing structural challenges faced by PACE Leaders and frontline communities, and recommendations for State programs, policies, and guidelines to increase accessibility and center equity.



CALIFORNIA
STRATEGIC
GROWTH
COUNCIL

PARTNERS
ADVANCING
CLIMATE
EQUITY