



AMERICAN CLIMATE
LEADERSHIP AWARDS

Sunrise School

SunriseMovement.org/campaign/sunrise-school/

This guide offers a successful and stepwise model for you to replicate in your community. It is part of a series featuring the award-winning programs from the finalists of the American Climate Leadership Awards 2021 by ecoAmerica.

PURPOSE

We are in an unprecedented crisis that will define our lifetime. With millions out of work, the Green New Deal provides meaningful work for all, not just a stock market injection. As our healthcare system buckles, the Green New Deal establishes the pathway to a government that prioritizes the wellbeing of all. With your support, we will train tens of thousands of young people and create a government to work for all Americans.

DESCRIPTION

With the news that the country would be under shelter-in-place orders, we quickly pivoted our training strategy to absorb the thousands of young people who were disproportionately affected by the shutdown. Our digital trainings have been centered around the creation of Sunrise School, a virtual classroom where thousands of participants gain political education and develop skills as organizers. This digital platform has allowed for Sunrise's message to spread across the country, greatly increasing accessibility and equity to the movement.

TARGET AUDIENCE

Every person, young or old, has something to lose to the climate crisis and to win under the Green New Deal. Our mission is to train thousands of young people across the country in key organizing skills and educate the general public about the dire threat of the climate crisis and the bold, equitable solutions proposed by the Green New Deal. Throughout the few short years of our existence, we have already popularized a story that resonates with millions of Americans: that the fossil fuel elite have rigged our democracy and our economy against our generation, and the best shot we have for good jobs and a livable future is through bold, equitable, federal climate action under the Green New Deal.



GOALS

- Register 30,000 people to Sunrise School, half of which are new to our movement.
- Train 20,000 people through a full Sunrise School course.

PRIMARY COMPONENTS OR ACTIVITIES

In Sunrise School, participants

- Build connections with others struggling for direction in a rapidly changing world
- Learn about the crises gripping our society and how to confront them
- Develop new organizing skills that can be used in our new online spaces and our in-person communities.
- Take action online and with small groups under social distancing for the Green New Deal.

In addition to modules for anyone to hone their organizing chops, Sunrise School will feature different tracks catered to the needs of different cohorts. Each of these tracks will include actions to take after the session, tailored to the content of the workshop, to frame the Green New Deal as a commonsense solution to the decades of austerity that have landed us in this crisis.

IMPACT & OUTCOMES

As our movement expands rapidly with the excitement for the Green New Deal, trainings play a key role in safeguarding our movement's values and culture. At the start of March, we announced a mass call to process our feelings about the pandemic and offer next steps to our base. Over 900 people joined that call. Just a few days later, we signed up more than 3,500 people for the first courses of Sunrise School. In just three weeks, the program trained more than 6,000 people in our core values and theory of change.

Sunrise School was one of most useful ways of bringing people into our movement. To date, Sunrise School has had over 19,000 people sign up for 66 courses, of which 7,500 were new to Sunrise totally. Of those participants, 42% were people of color and 40% were working class. This program was one of the best absorption programs we've ever had for people of color and working class people.

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

Sunrise is a decentralized movement, so we have spent the past few years perfecting an organizational infrastructure that lets anyone, anywhere plug into the movement. We specialize in rinse-and-repeat tactics, like our digital trainings, that can be carried out from the mountains to the coasts. Enshrined in our principles is the belief that any three people can take action in the name of Sunrise, experimenting and learning together, so long as we all uphold our values. We use our digital trainings like Sunrise School to disseminate these values, principles, and practices all across the country. To host a Sunrise School digital training in your own community, follow these steps:



- 1. Join a Sunrise Welcome Call:** <https://www.mobilize.us/sunrisemovement/event/354486/>
- 2. Request Help:** Reach out to your Regional Training Lead below to get help planning your training! You'll be connected with a Training Coach who will guide you through the training process, prep your material, connect you with resources, answer your questions, and troubleshoot problems!
- 3. Build your team:** you'll need someone to run tech on Zoom, to lead recruitment efforts, to run the training, and to follow up with participants.
- 4. Pick a Training Date + Format:** Get familiar with our Sunrise Online Training Curricula Library where you will find Orientation Trainings, Trainings on Hard Organizing Skills, and Political Education.
- 5. Recruit! Make a sign-up form for your training.** Make a copy of this template and edit to the needs of your training.
- 6. Trainer Prep** If your hub doesn't already have a trainer team with one Lead Trainer and three to four Trainers (most hubs don't!), reach out to your Regional Training Lead and Coach they'll connect you with trainers in your area.
- 7. Tech Prep** Tech Support read Sunrise's Best Practices for Video Conferencing Accessibility to make sure your training will be accessible to all participants.
- 8. On the day(s) of the Training** Meet in the Zoom Room 20 minutes before the training starts to get familiar with the tech, land together as a team, and to start welcoming participants as they arrive! Flow through your training! During breaks, meet as a Training and Tech Team to run through any challenges coming up.
- 9. After the Training** Send out a thank you email to all participants with a feedback form and action items for them to stay involved with your hub and Sunrise!

