

35+ Supporter

Movement Guidelines



Resources

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Welcome

Here at Sunrise, we know that everyone has something to lose to the climate crisis and everything to gain by stopping it. We recognize that we stand on the shoulders of giants and deeply respect and appreciate the wisdom, experience, and support of everyone in the organizing community and understand that we can learn a lot about social movements, fighting for justice, and what does and doesn't work. We also recognize that historically there've been gaps in mass organizing young people around the climate crisis. Because of this, Sunrise is a youth-led, youth-centered movement where we're focused primarily on organizing young people: 35 and younger. If that's not you, but you still want to support and organize with Sunrise, this document is the place for you!

Sunrise's decision to be youth-led and youth-centered is both a strategic and cultural one. In the climate crisis, young people face an unfortunate reality: every one of us will see the devastating effects of climate change in our lifetime. We have inherited a crisis that we did not create— and **there is a story to tell about a new generation of Americans who are standing up to protect their future.** Throughout history, we have seen that youth voices hold a unique moral clarity, and the climate crisis is no exception. **Choosing to focus on young people is a key part of our strategy to reach millions.**

Sunrise is also filling a cultural gap for young people in the movement. Young people today have grown up knowing that the stable climate that human civilization has depended on for millennia could crumble within our lifetimes. Yet, we've seen political leaders continue to fail us, [often laughing us off or calling us young and naive](#). That's been deeply discouraging for many of us. In our society, there aren't many spaces that trust and uplift the leadership of young people. Young people are searching for a space that would not only allow them to organize but would also give them the community they are searching for. Our youth-centered focus makes sure that we are building a community and an identity to raise the consciousness of our generation to understand ourselves as powerful political actors— vital ingredients to keep a movement together.

We still need the support of all of you— it just comes in a slightly different form. Throughout our movement's history, organizers of all ages have provided invaluable support by working to get out the

vote, sharing resources, and sharing wisdom. This 35+ Supporters document will provide key principles on how to be an ally with Sunrise, suggestions of how to uplift youth leadership, and roles to be taken on. We also have set up a #community-35-plus slack channel for our adult/elder allies to connect, coordinate and come together.

In addition, there are other movements such as [Arm in Arm](#) who are “organizing our communities to ignite a transformational era that ends the climate crisis by centering economic and racial justice.” Arm in Arm can be a powerful organizing home for 35+ supporters. Start a hub near you! [Third Act](#) is another great climate group that is organizing people over 60 to fight for much needed change.

Principles for 35+ Supporters

- **We respect the value of a youth-led movement.** While we all have much to lose to climate change, young people are the ones that will face the consequences of our actions today and should be at the forefront of our movement. Young people need youth-led and youth-centered spaces to come into their own as leaders, find their voices and to learn from one another. We trust the knowledge and skills that youth bring to our collective fight and *follow their leadership* as allies.
- **We are guides/supports, rather than leaders.** We understand that local and national leadership roles at Sunrise will be held by young people, and we are allies and supporters. We keep the space open for the voices of our youth leaders before we share our own. Our life experiences are valuable and add significant value to the movement but shouldn't take precedence over the ideas and thoughts of our youth members.
- **We are people from all paths of life.** We are people of all ages coming together for our future and appreciate that some members have many years of organizing experience and others are organizing for the first time. We respect what everyone brings and listen to everyone's experience.

Practical Tips

- **Talk to youth leaders about what support they need.** Don't assume what information or skills are needed, ask youth leaders how adult members can best help them and how adult members can best show up in youth-led organizing spaces.
- **Be aware of adultism.** [Adultism is the negative stereotyping of young people](#). We all have implicit biases and it's important for us to be aware of them before we speak. When you see it, take a stand against it with care and respect.
- **Speaking order.** Leaving space for youth members to share their ideas first is a great way to support youth leadership.
- **Stay in the “now.”** We celebrate the accomplishments of all activists of whatever age and value learnings from the past. At the same time, spending time recounting work from the distant past (outside of designated spaces) uses precious time we need to focus on what is happening now and in the future.

Roles

Here are some concrete roles that Sunrise's 35+ Supporters can step into (note: this is not a complete list but a good place to start):

- **Support our movement's work by making a contribution:** We're a grassroots movement, and we always need more resources to continue our growth! Climate philanthropy is still overshadowed by the amount of money and influence of fossil fuel executives and influences pour into anti-climate efforts, and we must step up to the challenge by not only giving more when possible, but also giving more effectively. [You can donate here!](#)
- **Utilize your network:** Maybe you have connections to an editor of a newspaper, a celebrity influencer or politicians. Maybe you have friends who can donate, or cook for the movement, or want to show up. We'd love it if you could use your network to help Sunrise.
- **Amplify Sunrise's message on social media:** We have a team of digital amplifiers, ready to share our message across social media platforms— help us get the word out.
- **Fundraise for Sunrise:** If you can't make a donation right now but want to join our volunteer Fundraising team, let us know!
- **Provide meeting space + housing:** If you have a space somewhere that could be a meeting space, or if you can host people during gatherings and trainings, let us know.
- **Show up at Sunrise actions:** We need everyone we can get at our actions— no matter your age. Show up, and be sure to uplift and center the leadership of the young people around you.
- **Show up as an ally at local Hub meetings/events:** Help out with your local organizing efforts, while being sure to check-in with and follow the lead of the young people who are in leadership roles in your area's Hub.

Stay in the Loop

Sign up for our [35+ Supporter Email Updates](#)! Sign up for 35+ Supporter emails and get info personalized for you! You'll still get most of the main Sunrise email content, but we'll send you special updates on the movement, and how people 35 and up can help Sunrise fight for a Green New Deal. Whether that's donating to specific programs we're launching, amplifying our message with your networks, providing meeting space or housing, or offering mentorship to our leaders - we need you!