

Public Banking for Climate Justice



Wall Street is Fueling the Climate Crisis

As the climate crisis worsens, Wall Street continues to pump massive sums of money into the extraction of destructive fossil fuels. Banks that hold NYC deposits – our public money – have provided \$1.2 trillion in fossil fuel financing since 2016 alone, accelerating climate change and taking a major toll on NYC’s frontline communities. We urgently need to *divest* public money from climate-destroying Wall Street banks and *invest* in community-driven climate solutions.

Public Banks Invest in a Just Transition

Public banks are created by local governments and chartered to serve the public interest. Through public banking, local governments can divest public money from Wall Street banks that fund fossil fuels and other destructive industries. Public banks also give local governments a powerful tool to invest in community-led, ecologically-sustainable energy solutions that create local jobs and build wealth and power in low-income, Black, brown and immigrant neighborhoods.

Hundreds of public banks exist around the world, helping address the climate crisis and achieve other critical public policy objectives. Costa Rica’s Banco Popular and Germany’s KfW, for example, finance renewable energy development, energy efficiency retrofits, and other sustainable infrastructure. Similarly, public banks in New York can help bridge persistent “financing gaps” for green infrastructure and sustainable development. Working with community-based organizations and local lenders, such as community development financial institutions, public banks can support projects like:

► **Community Solar**

Low-income, Black, brown and immigrant communities can tap into affordable loans to finance community-controlled solar infrastructure to reduce dependence on fossil fuels, ensure democratic governance over energy development, and help community members save on utility bills.

► **Sustainable Building Renovations and Equitable Electrification**

Nonprofit affordable housing providers can access affordable financing to rehabilitate and retrofit buildings – NYC’s single largest source of greenhouse gas emissions – dramatically reducing emissions, improving energy efficiency, and creating good-paying jobs.

► **Community-Controlled Green Space**

Community land trusts can access needed capital for community gardens, rooftop farms, and publicly accessible green space in Black and brown neighborhoods to support healthy and ecologically sustainable communities.

NYC Designated Bank	Fossil Fuel Financing, 2016-2021
Bank of America	\$232 Billion
Citibank	\$285 Billion
HSBC	\$130 Billion
JPMorgan Chase	\$382 Billion
TD Bank	\$141 Billion
Total*	\$1.2 Trillion

*Source: Rainforest Action Network, bankingonclimatechaos.org
These five banks hold approximately 87% of NYC municipal deposits.

Prepared by New Economy Project

Take Action: Tell your state legislators to pass the New York Public Banking Act and give local governments the tools they need to ensure public money works for public good.