



## Who are we?

The Black Environmental Initiative (BEI) is a non-profit organization based in Toronto, focused on engaging equity-seeking communities, particularly Black, and People of Colour (BIPOC) in environmental action. BEI works to address issues like environmental racism, climate change, and food insecurity, with a strong emphasis on sustainability and justice. Our programs aim to empower marginalized communities by providing access to environmental education, green job opportunities, and community energy projects. BEI fosters community involvement through workshops, outreach events, and partnerships with local organizations, advocating for environmental equity and creating pathways for BIPOC communities to thrive in green sectors. By integrating environmental justice with social equity, BEI contributes to both the environmental movement and the well-being of underrepresented groups, focusing on making environmental spaces and opportunities more inclusive.



## Roots for Resilience

The Roots for Resilience initiative is an urban agriculture program that connects Black and other marginalized youth in land-based learning at Maloca Community Gardens. Through hands-on workshops, participants gain skills in horticulture and urban agriculture, addressing food insecurity and offering sustainable solutions to climate change.

Focused on youth from the Jane and Finch community and York University Heights, the program provides access to organic, locally grown food while fostering a supportive community. Activities include soil preparation, gardening, and harvesting, all led by community experts.



# Outcomes

From 2024 to 2025, this initiative successfully engaged over 230 youth from a variety of backgrounds, predominantly Black and Brown, across different neighbourhoods in Toronto. Participants acquired essential skills in horticulture, food security, and sustainable living. The high level of engagement highlighted a significant interest among youth for programs that foster meaningful connections with nature and community. As the demand for sustainable living solutions continues to rise, our initiative plays a crucial role in empowering youth to take actionable steps against climate change and lead more sustainable lives. By teaching participants how to cultivate their own food, we help alleviate the pressure on industrial agriculture, which is one of the major contributors to environmental pollution. This program not only promotes environmental stewardship but also enhances community resilience, delivering long-term advantages for both participants and the planet. We aim to extend this initiative to more locations throughout Toronto.



# Program Budget

At full maturity, Roots for Resilience is projected to cost CAD \$117,800. This budget supports 200 participants over 26 weeks, aligning with the Southern Ontario growing season from May to October. The breakdown of expenses is as follows:

- Materials: \$15,000
- Facilitator Honorarium: \$7,800
- Food & Refreshments: \$5,000
- Marketing & Promotion: \$2,000
- Transportation: \$5,000
- Salaries: \$80,000

This investment will secure the program's long-term success, providing essential resources for participants and facilitators. Partial contributions are also welcome.

## Support Us! Get in touch!



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[@beantiracism](https://www.instagram.com/beantiracism)



[Our Programs](#)



# Testimonials

"Participating in the Roots for Resilience initiative has been an incredibly rewarding experience. I enjoyed learning alongside others and gained valuable skills in growing food and understanding the various uses of plants I previously viewed as weeds. For instance, I learned that clover can be used for food and medicinal purposes. The program provided a welcoming space away from work and school where I could connect with like-minded individuals who share a passion for the earth and sustainable practices. This sense of community and shared learning has greatly influenced my personal growth and well-being." — Julian



"Through the Roots for Resilience program, I gained valuable skills in plant identification and discovered the boundless resourcefulness of nature. Before participating, I didn't even know what a pepper plant looked like, but now I can confidently identify various plants and use that knowledge at home. This program has significantly enhanced my personal growth and well-being, as it allowed me to connect with nature and align myself with it. Applying the theoretical knowledge I had learned in practice has been incredibly beneficial." — Xavier



"My favourite part of the Roots for Resilience initiative has been meeting like-minded individuals who share my passion for the environment. The initiative provided a space to connect with nature and each other. I learned valuable skills in cooking and how to make the most of the fresh produce we grew, which has helped me be less wasteful. Now, I appreciate the intention behind the food we grow and consume. Participating in this program has been a sanctuary for me amidst the stress of school, fostering both my personal growth and my connection to the environment." — Mahalia

