

2026-2027

NEW ROOTS INSTITUTE

Fellowship Overview



new roots
INSTITUTE

for a just food system

WELCOME TO THE NEW ROOTS INSTITUTE FELLOWSHIP!

This program was created for students who are asking big questions about the world they've inherited—and who are ready to take responsibility for shaping what comes next. Factory farming sits at the intersection of animal suffering, the climate crisis, public health, and inequality. Addressing it requires more than passion alone. It requires leadership that is reflective, strategic, and grounded in values.

The Fellowship is an invitation to grow into that leadership. Fellows learn alongside peers who care deeply about these issues, are challenged by movement leaders with hard-won experience, and develop skills they can carry into any path they choose. We are honored to support them as they learn, experiment, and build change together.

MONICA CHEN
Executive Director



FELLOWSHIP OVERVIEW

Through interactive training, peer mentorship, and real-world advocacy experience, our fellows become powerful leaders in the movement to end factory farming.

LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

Fellows explore the impacts of our food system, develop leadership and advocacy skills, and learn how to challenge industrial animal agriculture in their communities. The Leadership Academy is the first phase of the New Roots Institute Fellowship.

ACADEMIC YEAR FELLOWSHIP

The Academic Year Fellowship is the second phase of the New Roots Institute Fellowship. Through real-world advocacy campaigns that shift norms and systems away from factory farming, fellows build the skills needed to become lifelong advocates.

TEACHING FELLOWSHIP

Select alumni return to the New Roots Institute Fellowship as Teaching Fellows, where they deepen their own leadership while training new fellows, creating a cycle of growth and sustained impact.

ALUMNI NETWORK

Fellows join a thriving community of 600+ advocates, with continued access to mentorship, community events, and resources that support their professional development.

LEADERSHIP ACADEMY OVERVIEW

The Leadership Academy serves as fellows' launchpad into meaningful change. Over six transformative weeks, they'll **dive deep into how factory farming really works—and more importantly, how it can be dismantled**. Fellows connect with other passionate changemakers, learn directly from movement leaders, and build the skills needed to create real impact on campus and beyond.

PROGRAM STRUCTURE



**Leadership
Labs**



**Community
Hours**



**Discussion &
Skill-Building
Groups**



**Reflection
& Applied
Learning**
(Asynchronous)

*Live Programming for the Leadership Academy takes place from
Tuesday – Thursday each week.*



LEADERSHIP LABS

Interactive workshops where fellows build the foundation for effective advocacy and leadership. Through dynamic, hands-on sessions, they deepen their understanding of the factory farming system, strengthen key leadership competencies, and learn the fundamentals of advocacy and movement-building.

EXAMPLE SESSIONS

- Values-Based Leadership
- Fundamentals of Factory Farming
- Transforming Our Food System for the Climate
- From Networks to Nuggets: How Social Science Can Change Our Plates
- Pathways for Impact: Careers in the Movement to end Factory Farming
- AI Foundations: Tools for Advocacy & Productivity
- Foundations of Animal Ethics

FREQUENCY

2-3 per day of programming (7-8 per week of programming)



*I used to think that effective leadership entailed being a decisive leader; someone who could quickly make the right choices with confidence. **But now I understand that great leaders hesitate, they stop to question themselves, actively ask for feedback from their team, and create space for people to feel comfortable sharing their ideas.***

COMMUNITY HOURS

Community Hours are fun, engaging sessions designed to foster connection and renewal. Fellows explore new ideas, discover different perspectives, and build a strong sense of belonging within a values-aligned community of peers.

EXAMPLE SESSIONS

- Building Community & Momentum
- At the Sanctuary: Meeting the Individuals We Advocate For
- Alumni Stories: Leveraging Careers for Change
- Ink & Inspiration: The Power of Poetry
- Good News Party

FREQUENCY

1-2 per week of programming

DISCUSSION & SKILL-BUILDING GROUPS

Small-group conversations where fellows reflect, exchange ideas, and challenge assumptions. They practice systems thinking, take part in activities that help apply new concepts, and strengthen problem-solving skills while building authentic connections.

EXAMPLE SESSIONS

- Building Sustainable Motivation in Advocacy Work
- Navigating Difficult Conversations and Public Pushback
- Organizing for Change: From Community to Campaigns
- Building Relationships and Strong Teams in Activism
- Turning Advocacy Experience into Career Pathways

FREQUENCY

1 per day of programming



REFLECTION & APPLIED LEARNING

In preparation for each day, fellows review multimedia materials, reflect on key ideas, and complete project-based assignments that strengthen their advocacy skills.

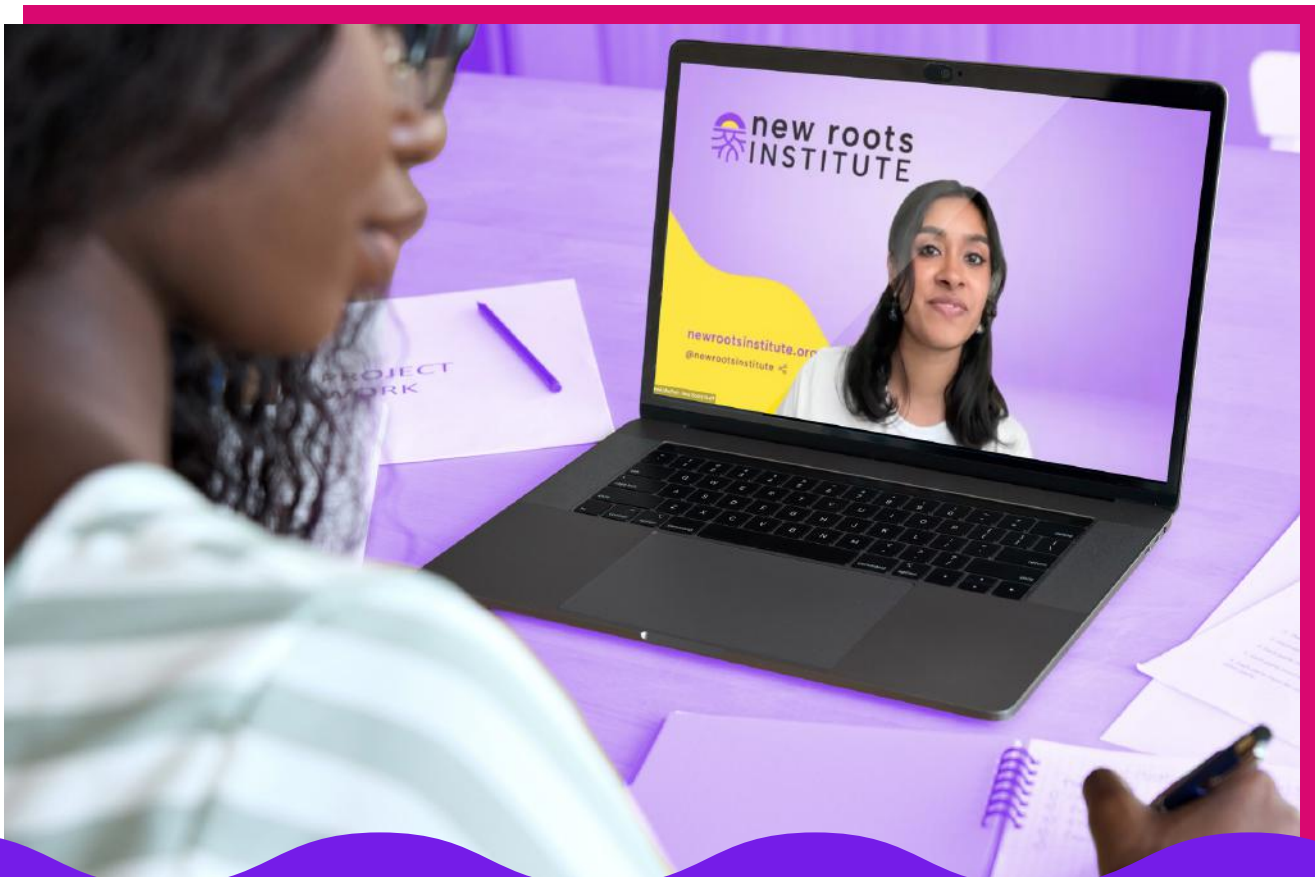
FREQUENCY

Every day of programming (an average of five hours per week of programming)



LYE D.

This fellowship has taken my self-awareness and critical thinking skills to the next level. Every session, whether it challenged my active listening skills or my personal philosophies, has allowed me to explore the power of curiosity and showing up in conversations free of judgement.



2026 SCHEDULE

MONDAY	TUESDAY + WEDNESDAY + WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
NO SCHEDULED PROGRAMMING	<p>Discussion & Skill-Building Groups</p> <p><i>Option A</i></p> <p>8–8:50am PT / 11–11:50am ET</p> <p>10 MINUTE BREAK</p>	NO SCHEDULED PROGRAMMING
	<p>Core Programming – Session 1</p> <p>9–10am PT / 12–1pm ET</p> <p>20 MINUTE BREAK</p>	
	<p>Core Programming – Session 2</p> <p>10:20–11:15am PT / 1:20–2:15pm ET</p> <p>20 MINUTE BREAK</p>	
	<p>Core Programming – Session 3</p> <p>11:35am–12:30pm PT / 2:35–3:30pm ET</p> <p>10 MINUTE BREAK</p>	
	<p>Discussion & Skill-Building Groups</p> <p><i>Option B</i></p> <p>12:40–1:30pm PT / 3:40–4:30pm ET</p>	



JESSICA C.

*Every year, seeing a new cohort of passionate New Roots Institute fellows gives me so much hope for the future. Seeing so many high school and college students dedicated to changing the food system greatly inspires me and **gives me hope that one day, we will fix our terribly flawed food system.***



WHAT FELLOWS LEARN

Effective leadership and communication

Fellows learn how to lead with confidence, collaborate across differences, navigate conflict, think strategically, give meaningful feedback, and communicate ideas with clarity and purpose in ways that inspire action.

Strategies of community organizing and social change theory

Fellows gain a foundation in systems thinking, community organizing, and campaign strategy, learning how social movements take root and scale. They develop tools to build power in ways that create meaningful, long-term change.

Impacts of factory farming

Fellows examine how factory farming impacts animals, the environment, workers, public health, and communities — and how these issues intersect. They analyze the systems behind industrial animal agriculture, the inequalities they create, and the solutions that can drive real change.

FOCUS AREAS

Environment & Sustainability

Examine the environmental impacts of factory farming and explore strategies for creating a sustainable food system.

Animal Ethics

Investigate how factory farming affects animal lives, including ethical considerations and the treatment of animals.

Social Justice

Understand how factory farming intersects with broader social justice issues, including labor, equity, and community health, and explore ways to drive systemic change.

Health & Well-being

Consider how factory farming affects human health, from individual well-being to community health outcomes, and explore strategies to promote healthier communities.

Law & Policy

Examine the limitations and barriers of existing laws and regulations around food systems, and learn how civic engagement and the legislative process can be leveraged to advance a more just and sustainable food system.

Business & Innovation

Explore the obstacles and opportunities in using technology and business to reduce reliance on factory farming and drive systemic change.

Media Arts & Journalism

Analyze the barriers to influencing public perception and learn how storytelling and media strategies can effectively shift opinion and support advocacy efforts.

PAST & UPCOMING SPEAKERS

Across the Leadership Academy and Academic Year Fellowship, fellows learn from experienced leaders working to transform the food system and strengthen their advocacy and leadership skills.



Dr. Michael Greger
*Founder and President at
NutritionFacts.org*



Miyoko Schinner
Founder at Miyoko's Creamery



Colleen Patrick-Goudreau
Author and Podcaster



Jo-Anne McArthur
*Founder, President, and
Photographer at We Animals*



Noa Dalzell
*State Policy Director
at Food Solutions Action
New Roots Institute Alum (2021)*



Dr. Shabnam Islam
*Academic Director
at Greener By Default*



T.K. Pillan
*Co-Founder at Veggie Grill
Senior Advisor at Beyond Meat*



Jasmine Perry
Filmmaker



Dr. Tushar Mehta
*Physician, Researcher,
and Educator*

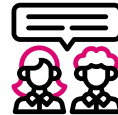
ACADEMIC YEAR FELLOWSHIP OVERVIEW

Leadership Academy graduates can take what they have learned and apply it to the Academic Year Fellowship. In this phase, fellows create and **lead campaigns that challenge the norms of a food system rooted in factory farming** while advancing just and sustainable alternatives.

PROGRAM STRUCTURE



All Fellow
Leadership Labs



Discussion and
Skill-Building
Groups



Peer Mentoring



Electives

The Academic Year Fellowship takes place over two 12-week terms, with a six-week break in between to coincide with most school terms.

This phase consists of both asynchronous and synchronous learning to allow time for fellows to work on their campaigns.

LEADERSHIP LABS

Monthly all-fellow sessions focused on building critical skills needed to be effective advocates and leaders.

EXAMPLE SESSIONS

- From Insight to Action: Data & Tools for Systems Change
- Building Capacity in the Movement to End Factory Farming
- Powerful Presentations: Communicating the Impacts of Factory Farming
- Fluent in Controversy: Communicating on Complex Issues
- Your Leadership Brand: Crafting Your Career Toolkit
- Amplifying Your Impact through Digital Storytelling

FREQUENCY

Monthly

DISCUSSION & SKILL-BUILDING GROUPS

Each week, fellows support each other in improving campaign effectiveness and overcoming challenges. They reflect on their learnings, consider different perspectives, develop systems thinking, and practice new skills.

EXAMPLE SESSIONS

- Leading with Professionalism
- Building Personal and Team Capacity
- Peer Coaching and Collaborative Problem-Solving
- Powerful Presentations and Public Communication
- Campaign Resilience and Creative Strategy

FREQUENCY

Weekly



PEER MENTORING

Fellows are paired with an alum or peer mentor. Through regular check-ins, mentor-mentee pairs set goals, reflect on personal and professional growth, navigate challenges, and apply what they're learning directly to their campaigns.

FREQUENCY

Five times per term

ELECTIVES

Electives let fellows explore topics that matter most to them—from deep-dive sessions with movement leaders to community-building experiences and career development opportunities.

EXAMPLE SESSIONS

- Social Media & Activism
- Journalism as a Tool for Change
- Zoonotic Threats: The Link Between Factory Farming and Pandemics
- From Resume to Role: Strategies for Creating a Competitive Application
- Ending the Use of Animals in Education

FREQUENCY

Weekly



UMA G.

*The most impactful aspect of New Roots Institute is their dedication to holding community. I am beyond-words grateful for the Alumni Network. **The supportive nature of this community is empowering**, providing inspiration for us all to grow new roots, together.*

CAMPAIGNS

New Roots Institute fellows have led successful, student-driven campaigns that **resulted in lasting institutional change across higher education, K-12 school districts, and public systems.** These campaigns demonstrate fellows' ability to conduct research, build coalitions, engage decision-makers, and secure tangible outcomes at scale.



DANAH D.

*I learned that creating change doesn't require one specific career path, there are many entry points to make an impact. Seeing how these sectors overlap helped me understand where my own passion for food systems and public health fits in the bigger picture. **It gave me confidence to pursue leadership opportunities** and build partnerships with people from different backgrounds.*



TYPES OF CAMPAIGNS

During the Fellowship, fellows hear directly from our campaign partners and learn about their work across the food system. They shortlist the partners they are most interested in working with, and we match them with campaigns aligned with their interests, strengths, and long-term goals.



SUSTAINABLE DINING

To improve the health, equity, and sustainability of campus and community food systems, fellows expand access to plant-based meals. They work to secure dining commitments and push for options that are affordable, appealing, and easy to find.

Examples include:

- Increase plant-based meals in dining halls
- Remove surcharges on plant-based options
- Add plant-based menu items to a local restaurant



LEGISLATIVE

To advance legislative and institutional interventions to industrial animal agriculture, fellows research local policy, build relationships with decision-makers, and organize community support. They work to pass targeted measures to reduce factory farming's impacts and promote sustainable food procurement in their communities.

Examples include:

- Introduce a bill to ban octopus factory farming
- Improve plant-based procurement in schools



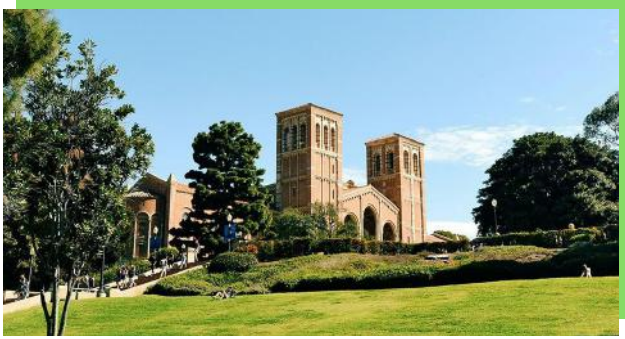
COMMUNITY AND EDUCATION

To create lasting shifts, fellows lead events, facilitate lessons, and advance curricula that integrate the impacts of factory farming. Through persuasive communication and strategic relationship-building, they share research-backed information and highlight practical, plant-forward solutions.

Examples include:

- Promote alternatives to animal dissection
- Lead classroom lessons about factory farming
- Host campus events

CAMPAIGN HIGHLIGHTS



Securing a **50% plant-based dining commitment at UCLA**, improving inclusivity and accessibility to plant-based food.



Winning a landmark legal case against the **Los Angeles Unified School District**, resulting in increased access to nondairy milk options.



Introducing landmark legislation to ban octopus farming in North Carolina.



Adding daily plant-based meals across a public high school district, expanding food options for students at scale.



Driving multi-year dining improvements at **Cornell University**, including expanded plant-based options and institutional commitments.

PAST CAMPAIGN PARTNERS



MERCY FOR ANIMALS



Humane World for Animals.



Friends of the Earth



PROGRAM GRADUATES

Our Alumni Network is a vibrant, growing community of over 600 advocates working across sectors—all united in their commitment to ending factory farming.

ALUMNI CAREERS



Executive Director
Fórum Nacional de Proteção e Defesa Animal



Congressional Intern in the House Agriculture Committee Democrats
U.S House of Representatives



Program Associate, Policy & Government Affairs
World Wildlife Fund



China Program Manager
Fish Welfare Initiative



Youth Climate Commissioner – District 3
Los Angeles County



Chief Strategy Officer
Upgrade Dining



State Policy Director
Food Solutions Action



State Advocacy Manager
Project Coyote

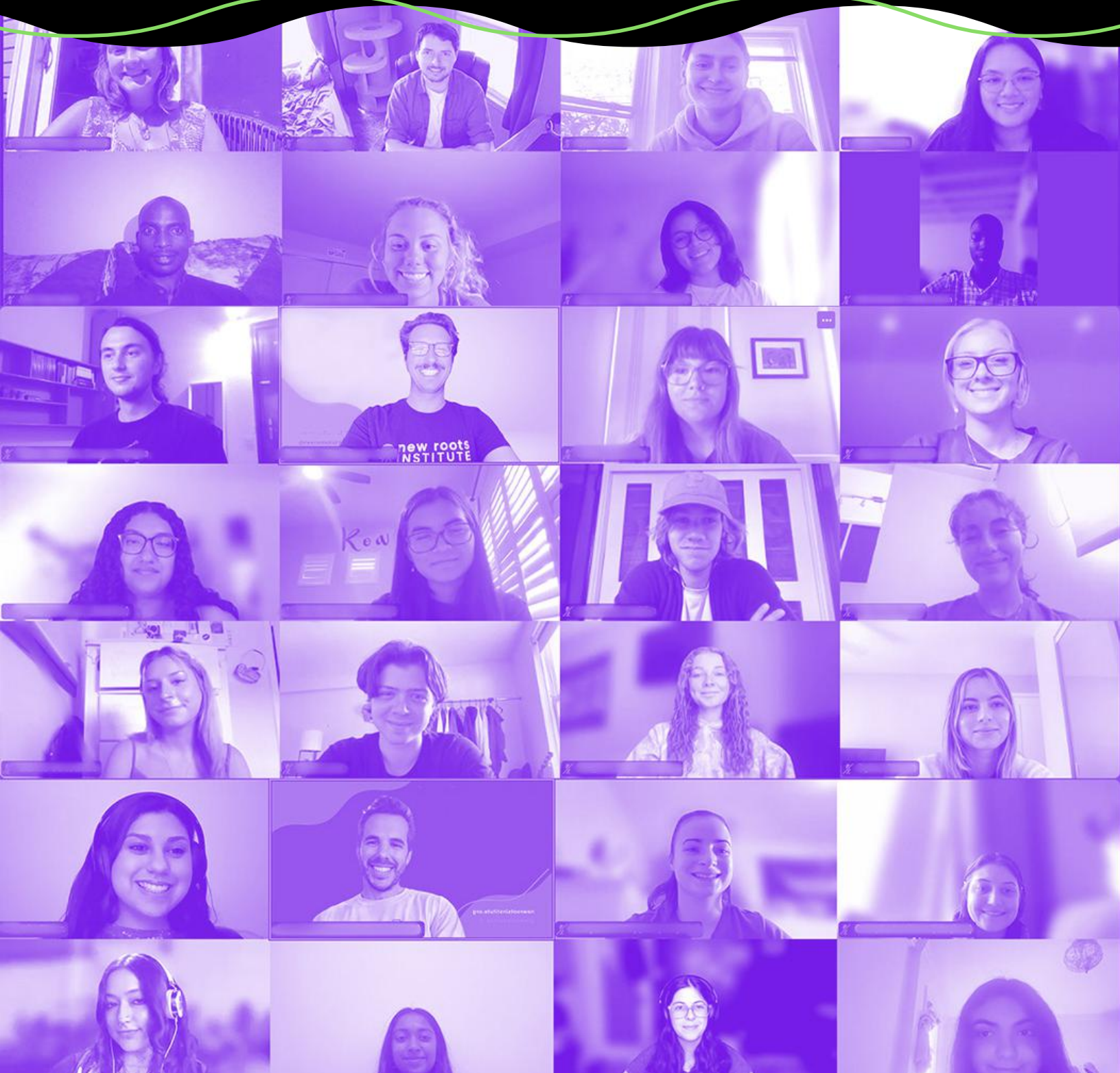


Trade Project Officer (Asia Pacific)
Eurogroup for Animals



LUCY W.

*New Roots has provided me with a community of peers and friends who have the same vision for a better food system as me. **One of my peers in the alumni network actually connected me with my current role** which is at an organization focused on food equity for all and paving the way for a plant rich food system to thrive.*



LEARN MORE: newrootsinstitute.org/leadership/overview

QUESTIONS? Email admissions@newrootsinstitute.org

CONNECT WITH US

