Common Ground is a center for environmental learning and leadership, inviting people across ages and identities to connect to their urban environment, build community, grow into their full potential, and contribute to a just and sustainable world. We accomplish this mission through three connected efforts:

- The nation’s longest-running charter high school focused on the environment – growing a new, more inclusive generation of successful college students and powerful environmental leaders.
- An environmental education center – each year connect more than 15,000 people of all ages with the natural world while helping them develop habits of sustainable living.
- An urban farm and 20-acre site – modeling sustainable agriculture, building community, and contributing to food justice for New Haven residents.
The Fellow would co-lead a crew of Green Jobs Corps members in work related to our site, kitchen, and urban farm, as well as provide hands-on support to Common Ground’s urban farm, mobile farmer’s market, and compost system.

**Job title: Farm Intern and Crew Leader**

Common Ground’s Green Jobs Corps connects more than 50 Common Ground High School students with paid environmental work, career and leadership development opportunities, and individualized supports both during the summer and throughout the school year. This summer, Corps members will take on a variety of work placements – stewarding neighborhood greenspaces, restoring habitat on and off of Common Ground’s campus, growing and selling produce from Common Ground’s urban farm, monitoring water quality in New Haven rivers, and more.

Common Ground seeks a PPSF to **co-lead our Green Jobs Corps Farm Crew, as they take on important agricultural and food security work.** The Fellow will help supervise and work alongside members of the Green Jobs Corps Farm Crew, in partnership with Farm staff. The Fellow will also take responsibility for developing and facilitating a learning opportunity for our Youth Crew, in partnership with other Common Ground staff. The topics will be selected based on the interest and skill set of the Fellow, and will be discussed with the Farm Director, Food Justice Education Coordinator, and Green Jobs Corps Manager prior to the start of Youth Crew. The Fellow can also have the opportunity to join other crews working on our site and in our kitchen. This work will give the Fellow an opportunity to build capacity and understanding related to youth leadership, youth development, youth employment, and education.

In addition to the work with Farm Crew, the Fellow will also take on **hands-on work on Common Ground’s urban farm.** Our ¾ acre sustainable, diversified market garden grows over 8,000 pounds of food and raises livestock in a unique urban setting. We sell our fresh produce and eggs at an on-site farm stand, through a Mobile Market and to our school cafeteria. The fellow will work under the guidance of our Farm Director, and alongside Common Ground students and other interns, in the following areas:

- Planting, cultivating and harvesting over 25 types of fruits and vegetables
• Running a farm stand and mobile farm market
• Record keeping
• Participate in weekly educational trips and workshops on farming and food justice related topics alongside other summer interns and youth in our Green Jobs Corps program

The proposed work schedule is as follows:
• **May 26-Jul 3**: 36.5 hrs/week with our farm, compost system, and supporting outreach for our mobile farm market; 1 hr/week planning learning opportunity
• **Jul 6-Aug 7**: 12.5 hrs/week on the farm; 25 hrs/week co-leading Farm Crew
• **Aug 10-14 (optional but desirable!)**: 37.5 hrs/week on farm

The Fellow’s work is a direct contribution to achieving Common Ground’s mission: inviting people across ages and identities to connect to their urban environment, build community, grow into their full potential, and contribute to a just and sustainable world. Specifically, the Fellow will directly impact two critical Common Ground programs – our Green Jobs Corps and Urban Farm.

• List specific skills/experience required for the project:
  • Experience in working with youth, preferably high school aged
  • Commitment to social justice, anti-oppression, inclusiveness, and work in racially diverse contexts
  • Good communication/interpersonal skills with people of all ages, especially youth
  • Good organizational skills and ability to multi-task
  • Willingness to get dirty and work in the heat
  • Ability to be work hard and be physically active for most of an 8 hour day
  • Demonstrated commitment, reliability, punctuality, and responsible behavior
  • An interest in learning about sustainable agriculture, food justice, and local food
  • Maturity, and the willingness to be a positive role-model and leader for young people (ages 14 – 18), while maintaining appropriate supervisory boundaries
  • Strong writing, research, and program planning skills
  • Flexibility with the ever changing needs of the farm and Green Jobs Corps program
• Additional requirements (e.g. a car or weekend working hours). If a car is required, include information regarding parking arrangements and mileage reimbursement):

A car is not necessary, as our site is accessible by the city bus or bicycle. However, parking is available if needed.

• Briefly describe the work that Yale PPSF Fellows have done with your organization in the past and present. If you have not worked with Yale Fellows, describe any work that Yale students have done with your organization.

Common Ground has been fortunate to host a Yale Fellow on several occasions, and our site and our students have greatly benefited from their contributions. In summer 2007, a Fellow worked in the Ecology Camp as a counselor for the 6-8 year old campers. She also put in many hours in the garden and at our Farmer’s Market stand. In summer 2008, we significantly expanded our summer camp program and our Yale Fellow was instrumental in the launch of many new camp sessions. Summer 2008 also benefited from the farm and farmer’s market help of an additional Yale Fellow, who labored in the garden, worked with our teenage Youth Crew, attended farmer’s market, and helped us design attractive new publicity materials for our farmer’s market stand.

Summer 2009 saw the start of a very popular Saturday Open Farm Day and a successful on-site farmer’s market stand, both of which relied on the capable, hardworking help of our Yale Fellow. In 2010, our Fellow ran a small work crew in the garden and helped to make the on-site farm stand more successful than in 2009. In summer 2011, our Fellow was a Green Jobs Corps Youth Crew Assistant Supervisor, managing a team of teenage workers on Common Ground’s campus. She developed original environmental and food justice curricula, and ran various workshops for the entire Youth Crew throughout the summer. In the summer of 2012, our Fellow was also a Youth Crew Assistant Supervisor. She proved to be a valuable member of the team; helping to supervise the Farm Crew, running a workshop on goal setting, facilitating various team building activities and leading impromptu discussions on various issues such as the food system and human rights. She was instrumental in helping the program run effectively. Our 2017 Fellow proved to be an integral part of running our farm, and gathered stories/information from alum that has helped us assess the effectiveness of our Green Jobs Corps program. Most recently, in 2018, our Fellow was instrumental in helping to run our farm (in the midst of a particularly short-staffed season), supported outreach and general operations support for our mobile farmer’s
market, and planned a 4-part “Food Stories” curriculum which addressed topics related to food security, food justice and food sovereignty, and culminated in an all-crew cooking event that allowed students to share dishes important to themselves and their families. Yale fellows have also worked on several occasions in our summer ecology camps.

Other students from Yale have also worked as tutors for Common Ground High School, as research interns, as volunteers in the garden, and as mentors for students in classes doing field work and research on the farm and in the forest.