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**BIPOC Leader and Equitable Food System Advocate Esperanza Pallana Named New Executive Director of Food and Farm Communications Fund**

*Collaborative Grantmaking Organization Reveals New Focus on Transformational Food System Narratives and BIPOC Media Makers*

April 5 - The Food and Farm Communications Fund, a collaborative movement led grantmaker investing in frontline and BIPOC communities to support and amplify their transformative narratives and solutions, has named Esperanza Pallana its Executive Director. Pallana is the first Executive Director for the organization.

Since 2012, the Food and Farm Communications Fund has awarded over \$3.5 million to community-based organizations, grassroots networks, and media efforts increasing grassroots leadership, access to nourishing food, community and economic wellbeing and ecological resilience. The Fund meets a critical need by investing in communications strategy and capacity building for organizations leading food systems change. ([See the Fund's recent grantees here.](#))

The Food and Farm Communications Fund is also known for its annual [Impact Media Awards](#), which spotlight strategic and influential media makers and platforms that are taking on big issues, challenging attitudes and beliefs, and activating audiences to take part in transformational food and farm systems change. 2021 winners included the film Gather and the Whetstone Media Podcast Point of Origin. 2022 winners will be announced later this month. Pallana will be moderating the closing plenary featuring celebrated BIPOC media makers at the upcoming [Sustainable Agriculture and Food System Funders Forum](#) in June 2022.

"Philanthropy has a critical role to play in seeding and sustaining efforts to revolutionize the food media landscape," said Pallana. "Uplifting culture keepers and culture makers -particularly BIPOC media makers and communicators - is an urgent need if we want systemic change." said Pallana. "By investing in frontline and BIPOC communities and amplifying their voices, we replace everyday narratives that marginalize those affected by food system inequities with narratives of those who have firsthand knowledge of systemic and institutional barriers. We shed light on community centered strategies and solutions so that an equitable food system can be made real. I'm honored to lead the Food and Farm Communications Fund in this important work."

Pallana has worked with nonprofits for over 20 years with an emphasis in leadership, systemic change, and policy advocacy. She has led several successful campaigns that resulted in institutional change and innovative policy as well as grantmaking programs advancing economic and racial equity. She was Executive Director of the Oakland Food Policy Council from 2011-16, and most recently was Director of Strategic Initiatives for Community Vision, a leading community development financial institution.

Pallana is a Fellow with the Castanea Fellowship, a cohort-based leadership training for mid-career food system professionals focused on leadership and change theory to build power that shifts structures and culture towards the creation of a more equitable, sustainable, and healthy food system for us all.

“Esperanza’s leadership at the Food and Farm Communications Fund signals a bold next chapter of our work to hold our funder collaborative to a higher standard of transparency and accountability. We are working together to shift power imbalances between funders and the communities advancing racial equity, social and economic justice, and environmental stewardship within our food and farm systems. We want the community members on the forefront of this challenging work to be recognized and supported,” said Jose Oliva, a grant advisory committee member, 2017 James Beard Award recipient, and movement leader.

Pallana brings direct experience as a culture change leader focused on issues like food systems change and racial justice. In 2021, she designed a podcast series called [The Food Future is Here](#). She was part of a media campaign launched in California called [The Food Change](#), and in 2015 won a [Taste Award](#) for the *Wine Soul Train*, an event that centered the need for economic and racial equity as a response to a racist incident on the Napa Valley Wine Train.

*For interviews or more information please contact Executive Director, Esperanza Pallana, at [esperanza@foodandfarmcommunications.org](mailto:esperanza@foodandfarmcommunications.org) or (415) 412-0585. For more about the Food and Farm Communications Fund, please visit <https://foodandfarmcommunications.org/>.*

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