THIS IS YOUR MOMENT. A TIME TO CONNECT TO YOURSELF. TO FIND COMMUNITY. TO DISCOVER A PASSION. WHEN YOU TAKE TIME FOR YOURSELF, SOMETHING DIFFERENT HAPPENS. NEW FRIENDS BECOME UNSHAKEABLE. LEARNING TURNS INTO PURPOSE. REFLECTION BECOMES EMPOWERMENT. TOGETHER BECOMES BETTER. THIS IS OUR MOMENT. BONNAROO IS OUR STAGE.
A MESSAGE TO OUR FANS

In 2017 you, the Bonnarooian community, supported a wide array of sustainability projects simply by buying your Bonnaroo ticket. This annual report is designed to you to let you know exactly how your hard-earned dollars were spent. Without you, we would be nothing! Nada! Zip! So thank you from the bottom of our hearts for being the best fans on the planet, and always challenging us to do more and be better.

Our first action after last year’s festival was to spend some time reflecting on our work. We wanted to find ways to deepen our relationships with our non-profit partners, our operations team’s work, and most importantly all you Bonnarooians out there in the wide world. It was an inspiring and uplifting process that helped us create several tools for our toolbox to make Bonnaroo’s sustainability work even better than ever.

We know Bonnaroo is more than a 4-day festival, that you are enriched by everything that happens on The Farm in your daily lives. To that end in 2017 we worked harder than ever to build connections, create ways for you to take action, and most importantly to champion the fun! For the first time ever we had a book club! Lo-Fi led us in an amazing book club discussion on inclusion from the Solar Stage. Thanks to Red Bull and Big Freedia, fans even got to start their day with some booty rockin’ twerkout classes.

Sometimes even the most iconic symbols need a refresh, so our trusty Planet Roo globe hands were retired in 2017. We want Planet Roo to stay fresh and beautiful, and we also want you folks to know right where you are while inside Centeroo, so we dedicated some of our 2017 funds to create an engaging and interactive entryway into Planet Roo. We were blown away with your positive reactions to the new Planet Roo entryway, and watching Bonnarooians interact with the new landscape brightened our day.

We are already looking forward to 2018 where we hope to make even greater strides in providing ways for each and every one of us to build connections beyond Bonnaroo. Until then, we hope you will continue to raise your voices as we saw you all doing so beautifully this past June on The Farm. Remember: together is better, together we become better. See you in 2018 on The Farm.

— THE BONNAROO TEAM
PLANET ROO
By the numbers

Planet Roo unites all you like-minded Bonnarooians and gives us the tools to be more socially and environmentally responsible in the every day. Planet Roo is where social innovation means taking action and having fun.

- Over 1,000 people meditated with the Art of Living.
- 400 people took a class in the Bonnaroo Learning Garden.
- Global Zero, a global initiative to eliminate nuclear weapons, gained 4,000 new members.
- 2,000 of you all talked to the fine folks at Headcount to register to vote or learn more about upcoming elections.
- Love, Hope, Strength took 503 swabs from patrons to get them on the bone marrow donor list.
- National Resources Defense Council talked to 1,500 Bonnaruvians about ways to preserve our natural resources.
- 68 senators were written to by 2062 highlighting ONE’s campaign on behalf of the world’s poorest.
- 2,500 of you signed Oxfam’s petition in support of reconsideration of the refugee ban, allowing more people fleeing their homes from violence to apply for asylum in the US.
- Tipitina’s Foundation interacted with 2,000 people, over 400 of those wrote cards to their music students about why music matters.
- 18 non-profits plan to collaborate with other non-profits they met on-site, furthering the festival’s goal for Planet Roo to become an incubator for collaboration and come up with even more ways to make the world a better place for everyone.
- We had 27 unique non-profits (11 of which were new to Planet Roo) enhancing the area with energy, spirit, and purpose.

Chef Hugh Acheson teaches a cooking class at The Academy.
From The Innocence Project, a group that uses DNA evidence and other advances in technology to get the wrongfully convicted off death row, “While my friends were out partying, I went to take a nap in the Planet Roo hammocks. I could not sleep as Randy Mills began sharing his nightmare story of being wrongly convicted. I had heard these types of stories before but to hear it in person was even more powerful. I knew I wanted to go to law school, but his story solidified my interest in being a criminal defense attorney.”

From To Write Love on Her Arms, a mental health organization, “Phillip met us in 2015 at our Planet Roo booth. He told me that was the hardest year of his life. His parents divorced and several of his close friendships came to an end. He is not alone in the feeling that perhaps he had a role in some of these painful moments. Despite being at the festival, Phillip felt fresh out of hope. He wandered by Planet Roo and stopped to view the prompt cards people filled out at our booth representing the things attendees most needed to say. He said that he spent several minutes staring one that read, “It’s OK to forgive yourself!” before he started to walk away. He said that I chased after him with the card and told him if he spent that much time with the card then he was well within his rights to take it home. It turns out that he still has it. He stopped by on the last day of the festival this year to share this story and to leave the same message in his own handwriting for the next “Phillip” out there. Before he left he said, “You guys are what make Bonnaroo a happy place for me.”

Seed Life Skills, is dedicated to creating home economics curriculum for educators as a means of teaching people how to cook and make better food choices. They did daily cooking demonstrations where folks walked away with a little more knowledge on the importance of nutrition and passing along cooking skills to the next generation. Throughout the weekend they discussed food activism and how consumers can make positive changes to our food system. After all the action of the festival wrapped up Chef Acheson told us, “We were honored to have Seed Life Skills included in Planet Roo this year. It was a great experience and such a privilege to see and meet all the different progressive causes and organizations present. Seed Life Skills made a lot in-roads to the heart of the amazing community that is Bonnaroo because of it and we hope to be back soon!”

Tipitina’s Foundation supports musical education in the great city of New Orleans where many of our most favorite Bonnaroo acts live and work. In an effort to inspire the next generation of New Orleans musicians, we partnered with them this year to do a campaign where you all wrote notes to their students about why music education matters. There were over 400 notes all of them generous and kind. The major theme was how important music is for bringing people together and putting smiles on their faces. We couldn’t agree more.
Our annual party on The Farm is the most fun ever, but it turns out we humans tend to make a little bit of a mess. Never fear, the Clean Vibes super heroes are here! Their tireless pursuit of getting the waste into the right waste stream and making sure only what has to go to the landfill ends up there inspires us all. Each year this team cleans up every single piece of confetti, every single cigarette butt, every tent left behind, and more. They do not rest until The Farm is pristine and ready for the next Bonnaroo.

A note on our 2017 diversion numbers: For past several years we hauled a large amount of waste that would have been landfill waste to WastAway to be recycled into fuel pellets. This year WastAway would not accept any of our material as they were not really operating their facility at the time of the event. This is the reason for the drop in our diversion. If we had been able to take material to WastAway, our diversion would have been the highest it has ever been.
Many of the great things that happen at Bonnaroo are inspired by you all or come directly from you. Our 2017, kick-ass team of gardeners emailed our Bonnaroo info account and asked about teaching classes. It is not surprising that this group of friends who have attended the festival together for many years created one of our best series of classes ever. The team are scientists, conservationists, and artists in real life and they taught classes to help get everyone started gardening whether you have access to 1 acre or a pot with dirt in it in your apartment.

They must have done something right with the classes that exemplified the spirit and ethos of Bonnaroo, because more of you than ever went to one! They brought an unprecedented energy and passion to the garden. A few of our favorite classes from 2017 were Beekeeping where we all learned about the importance of cute-fuzzy honey bees, How to Build a rain barrel to catch the most important of all gardening tools: water, and a perennial (pun intended!) classic Gardening 101.
CONTINUING PROJECTS

BONNAROOTS
Imagine 150 people, eating together family style at one long shared table, next to a stage at one of the biggest music festivals in the country. A team of volunteers from across the country prepares and serves the four-course dinner out of a makeshift kitchen tent. The ingredients for the feast come from local farmers, including women producers and immigrant growers. 100 percent of the ticket sales from the dinner are distributed from the Bonnaroo Works Fund, directly to Oxfam and Eat for Equity. This is Bonnaroots, a Bonnaroo tradition since 2013.

This year’s Bonnaroots menu was a fusion Southern meal highlighted flavors from immigrant populations in Tennessee. Tennessee has one of the fastest growing immigrant populations in the country that come primarily from Mexico, India, and China and we wanted to bring people together around these incredible flavors while incorporating them into Southern cuisine.

When we sit at a table with other people, it is an invitation to break bread together, build a bond and a cultural bridge. We see this happening at the Bonnaroots dinner as attendees sit at tables with farmers, Bonnaroo producers, artists, and activists. A shared table experience leads to shared stories. Shared stories lead to a stronger, healthier, and more welcoming community for everyone.

Once people have left the Bonnaroots dinner, we hope they are inspired to embrace the spirit of the dinners: To give what you can to support the kind of world you want to live in. Do what you know, whether it’s volunteering your time to causes you care about or using your purchasing power to make an impact either with local farmers or in local immigrant communities.

WEATHERIZATION + OFFSETTING WITH WE ARE NEUTRAL
For the last seven years, we have partnered with We Are Neutral to push the boundaries on how a music festival can become both an environmental and community leader. On behalf of Bonnaroo, we have been working in low-income communities by providing free energy retrofits and education to help families lower their monthly utilities bills. Along the way we have built a strong community of volunteers and supporters, and have brought hope to those most economically vulnerable.

Once on-site We are Neutral works with everyone to bridge the gap between their important community work and your carbon footprints at home! Explaining carbon offsets isn’t an easy thing to do. No one really understands what a “ton” of carbon emissions looks like, but everyone understands high utility bills.

Through encouraging everyone who passes through Planet Roo to offset the carbon footprint of their travel, they explain how carbon reductions are created. They connect the dots by highlighting our ongoing work of providing free energy upgrades for low-income families in Manchester, TN and surrounding areas.

Everyone on site feels empowered to take responsibility for their carbon footprint, knowing that their offsets are doing the most good. In addition, they leave with an understanding of how to lower their own carbon footprint when they get home, which makes Bonnaroo’s positive environmental impact year round and world-wide.